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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Multi-Year Rate Changes Approved for Rancho Water Customers

Rancho Water service rates remain among the lowest in Riverside county

Temecula, Calif. – At the June 10, 2021 meeting, the Rancho California Water District (Rancho Water/District) Board of Directors approved a three-year plan for water and wastewater rate changes. Rate changes will become effective on July 1, 2021 for customers in the Rancho Water service area. Second and third year rate changes will go into effect on July 1, 2022 and July 1, 2023 respectively. The vote to implement rate changes will mark the first increase since 2019 due to the Board of Directors deciding to delay any increase in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on customers.

Rancho Water serves more than 150,000 people in the cities of Temecula and Murrieta and the surrounding areas. Customers receive local water from District-owned groundwater basins as well as imported water purchased from Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) that may come from as far as 500 miles away from the Sierras and Colorado River. As a customer of MWD and Southern California Edison (Edison), Rancho Water is subject to annual rate increases imposed by both of these agencies. In the coming years, it is projected that MWD and Edison will increase their costs substantially, resulting in nearly \$5 million in additional fees for Rancho Water.

As stewards of public funds, Rancho Water utilizes a number of tactics to mitigate these costs to customers. The District used \$1.9 million in savings to lower the rate increases during the three years of approved changes. In addition, Rancho Water maintains solar energy facilities; implements water efficiency measures; has applied for and received more than \$15 million in active grant awards; leases out District-owned properties to generate income; and employs some of the leanest staffing levels of any water district in the region.

In consideration of the multi-year rate proposal, the Board of Directors participated in 12 public meetings from January through June 2021 including a public hearing at the June 10 meeting. The public was invited to voice concerns, ask questions of the Board and staff, and submit a formal protest letter if they opposed the increases. Customers were mailed a rate change notice 45 days in advance of the public hearing that detailed the proposed rate increases and explained how to join the hearing to make comments. The Board of Directors ultimately adopted the rate proposals (6:1 vote).

In the Rancho Division of the Rancho Water service area, which serves 81% of the

customer base generally covering the city of Temecula and Wine Country, the rate increase will be 3.9% per year for the next three years – an average monthly bill impact of approximately \$1.60 for a typical residential customer. In the Santa Rosa Division, an area that serves 19% of the customers covering portions of the city of Murrieta and communities of De Luz, Tenaja, and La Cresta, the increase for water rates will be 5.6% per year – an average monthly bill impact of approximately \$4.00 for residential customers. Even with the rate increases, Rancho Water continues to have some of the lowest water service rates amongst all the water districts in the area.

“Rancho Water remains committed to providing excellent service and high quality, reliable water for less than a penny a gallon,” said Robert Grantham, Rancho Water General Manager. “We continually evaluate the cost of providing service, balancing expenses and revenue needs to adequately address system operations, maintain infrastructure and equipment, comply with regulations, and maintain financial stability. Although the District only increases rates when absolutely necessary, this action allows for Rancho Water to move forward with implementing the initiatives and projects that ensure our community will continue to have safe and clean water whenever they need it.”

The rate change notices are posted on the Rancho Water website: [Rancho Division | Santa Rosa Division](#). For more information about the rate changes, visit [RanchoWater.com/ratechange](#).

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About Rancho California Water District: *The mission of Rancho Water is to deliver reliable, high-quality water, wastewater, and reclamation services to its customers and communities in a prudent and sustainable manner. Rancho Water is a local, independent Special District, organized on August 16, 1965, servicing approximately 150 square miles and about 45,000 service connections in Temecula, Murrieta, and parts of unincorporated areas of Riverside County.*

