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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Rancho Water Awarded Nearly \$12 Million in Grant Funding
for Regional Water Conservation Projects**

Projects will benefit customers in Riverside & San Diego Counties

Temecula, Calif. – The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has announced grant awards for their 2022 Urban Community Drought Relief Funding program, with Rancho California Water District (Rancho Water/District) receiving nearly \$12 million for projects. Expansions of the District’s groundwater storage and agricultural CropSWAP program will increase water reliability for the region, saving up to three billion gallons of water and decreasing the need for costly imported water.

The groundwater storage expansion project was awarded \$6.8 million to build a 40-acre recharge pond which will allow Rancho Water to purchase and store less expensive raw water during wet years, and then withdraw it from the groundwater basin when needed. Rancho Water is involved in a number of groundwater recharge projects to help mitigate the effects of future drought conditions and take advantage of the times when there is heavy local rainfall or when there is the availability of excess imported water. The 40-acre pond will store approximately 10,000 acre-feet of water per year, increasing the availability of local water supplies for Rancho Water customers.

The second project included in the grant awards is the Regional Agricultural Drought Response Program, an expansion of Rancho Water’s successful CropSWAP program which has converted more than 160 acres of crops from high water-intensive plants to lower water-using and climate-appropriate crops. The DWR grant for \$5 million will allow the expansion of this program to water districts serving farming communities in Riverside and north San Diego Counties. The program will provide financial incentives at a rate of \$750 per acre-foot of water savings and will implement water demand reduction activities. Typical crop conversions in this program include avocado-to-wine grape or citrus, citrus-to-wine grape, and avocado rootstock upgrades. The program is expected to save approximately 8,888 acre-feet of water, increasing water availability for urban use and creating water sustainability for future years.

“We appreciate the Department of Water Resources’ support of projects that increase drought resiliency and stress the importance of continued water conservation,” said Rancho Water General Manager Robert Grantham. “The District’s groundwater banking program is creating a lasting benefit for our community and helps to advance the state’s

water storage objectives. In addition, I am particularly excited to expand our CropSWAP program which supports local growers in southwest Riverside County and north San Diego County, helping to preserve the agricultural nature of our community.”

The 2022 Urban Community Drought Relief Funding program allocated \$510 million in financial assistance to advance water conservation in California’s communities and help water agencies and farmers prepare for California’s hotter and drier future. For more information about the DWR grant program, visit water.ca.gov. For further information about Rancho Water’s CropSWAP program and other District projects, please visit RanchoWater.com.

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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 more than 46,000 service connections in Temecula, Murrieta, and parts of unincorporated Riverside County.*



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