



North Bay Water Reuse Authority

Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District | Novato Sanitary District | Sonoma County Water Agency
| Napa Sanitation District | Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Chuck Weir, Program Manager, 707-547-1923

President Obama Approves \$25 Million to Fund Local Recycled Water Projects

Local agencies in Marin, Napa and Sonoma counties were approved to receive \$25 million to help fund recycled water projects as part of the North Bay Water Recycling Program. The Omnibus Public Lands Management Act was signed into law by President Barack Obama on March 30, 2009. The Act authorizes a 25 percent federal cost share to plan, design and build several recycled water projects in the North Bay.

The federal government has previously, contributed \$1.25 million in matching funds for the program's engineering and environmental studies.

"These federal funds will allow us to move forward with a variety of projects to expand the use of recycled water for urban irrigation, including parks, schools and golf courses, and agricultural irrigation to supplement local water supplies," said Bill Long, Chair of the North Bay Water Reuse Authority, a group of local agencies that are working together to sponsor the projects.

In Sonoma County, Phase 1 of the plan is expanding the existing use of recycled water in Sonoma Valley to support urban and agriculture irrigation. In addition, recycled water from the project would be used to speed up the Napa Salt Marsh Restoration Project. The Marin and Napa county partners are also planning several projects in their service areas. According to Long, "every gallon of water that is recycled and used saves a gallon of limited potable water supplies for drinking, leaving it in rivers for fish and for other critical needs. We feel this program is a win-win for local residents, the environment and the economy."

The \$25 million authorization would help fund a total of about \$100 million in water recycling projects by the partners in the regional cooperative program. Participating agencies include Sonoma County Water Agency, Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District, Napa Sanitation District, Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District and Novato Sanitary District. North Marin Water District and Napa County also participate by providing financial and technical support for the regional program.

“This authorization is wonderful news for our local economy, environment and lifestyle,” Long said, referring to the \$25 million authorization. “I want to thank Congressman Mike Thompson, Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, Senator Diane Feinstein and Senator Barbara Boxer for their leadership in providing both the study funding and construction authorization.”

Long also pointed out that more than half of all water in the North San Pablo Bay region is used for outdoor irrigation, which, he said, is “an ideal use for recycled water,” because it is available even during droughts and saves supplies of increasingly limited potable water.

Meanwhile, he said, “Surface and groundwater supplies in the three-county North Bay region are strained, and some groundwater basins are over-pumped. The current drought and long-term impacts of global warming highlight the need for additional amounts of reliable and sustainable recycled water.”

Recycled water is already in use throughout the North Bay region, as well as elsewhere in the state and across the nation. It is not used for drinking water.

The NBWRA program is an example of cooperative, regional resource management that is gaining popularity around the country, and is now being recognized by Congress as an effective and efficient use of public funds.

Environmental studies for the North Bay Water Recycling Program are expected to be released to the public by May 2009. There will be public meetings to review the studies and ample opportunity for the public to participate in the decision-making process. For detailed information about specific recycling projects that have been proposed, visit the NBWRA website at www.nbwra.org.

More information about the North Bay Water Recycling Program can be found by clicking to www.nbwra.org, e-mailing info@nbwra.org or calling 707-547-1923.

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Did You Know....?

San Francisco's Golden Gate Park has been irrigated with recycled water since 1932. The California Department of Public Health sets strict standards for use of recycled water.

BACKGROUND ON THE Omnibus Public Lands Management Act

The Omnibus Public Lands Management Act is a collection of over 160 bills, and has been called one of the most sweeping conservation laws passed by Congress in recent years. It authorizes a broad spectrum of other water and conservation projects, and provides for expansion of the nation's park, monument, conservation area, and wild and scenic river systems, as well as other conservation measures.



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The federal government has previously, contributed \$1.25 million in matching funds for the program's engineering and environmental studies.

"These federal funds will allow us to move forward with a variety of projects to expand the use of recycled water for urban irrigation, including parks, schools and golf courses, and agricultural irrigation to supplement local water supplies," said Bill Long, Chair of the North Bay Water Reuse Authority, a group of local agencies that are working together to sponsor the projects.

In Marin County, Phase 1 of the plan is to provide recycled water to golf courses, school and park turf areas, and large landscapes, including the Fireman's Fund Companies and Valley Memorial Park Cemetery, and commercial users west of U.S. 101. Recycled water is also proposed for landscape irrigation at Hamilton Field, including the Coast Guard housing area. According to Long, "every gallon of water that is recycled and used saves a gallon of limited potable water supplies for drinking, leaving it in rivers for fish and for other critical needs. We feel this program is a win-win for local residents, the environment and the economy."

The \$25 million authorization would help fund a total of about \$100 million in water recycling projects by the partners in the regional cooperative program. Participating agencies include Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District, Novato Sanitary District, Napa Sanitation District, and Sonoma Valley County Sanitation District. North Marin Water District, Sonoma County Water Agency and Napa County also participate by providing financial and technical support for the regional program.

“Many of our local, regional and even statewide leaders have supported this project” Long said, referring to the \$25 million authorization. “I want to thank Congressman Mike Thompson, Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, Senator Diane Feinstein and Senator Barbara Boxer for their leadership in providing both the study funding and construction authorization.”

“This is great news for our economy and environment,” said Marin County Supervisor Judy Arnold. “I traveled to Washington, D.C. to explain the great need for this recycled water funding and am so pleased that it will be put to good use helping to meet our long-term local and regional water needs, while decreasing the impact of future droughts.”

Novato Councilwoman Carole Dillon-Knutson also participated in a delegation to Washington on behalf of federal recycled water funding and has supported the project for many years. “I am thrilled to learn of the \$25 million authorization,” commented Dillon-Knutson, “this is the kind of smart and sustainable program that benefits our whole community.”

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