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NEWS RELEASE

October 30, 2014

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Regional Water Use Down 17 Percent in September

*Region relying on groundwater more in drought--but pumping less,
thanks to conservation*

SACRAMENTO--Sacramento-area residents used 17 percent less water in September and are using 19 percent less overall since January, compared to the same period last year, according to an analysis by the Regional Water Authority (RWA), which represents water providers in Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado and Yolo counties.

Moreover, thanks to conservation efforts, local water providers are pumping nearly 9 percent less groundwater this year compared to 2013--even though more agencies are relying on groundwater (rather than Folsom Reservoir and the American River) to meet customer needs during this severe drought, RWA found.

"The region's outstanding water conservation efforts are paying off on all fronts," said RWA Executive Director John Woodling. "Through conservation, we are preserving water in Folsom while still maintaining groundwater levels. As a result, the groundwater basin's condition remains healthy as we face a fourth year of drought."

Figures on groundwater levels come from RWA's review of monthly well monitoring data. Figures on water savings come from RWA's review of water use data submitted to

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the State Water Resources Control Board, which also required water suppliers to provide data for residential gallons per capita per day (R-GPCD) with September water figures.

R-GPCD is a measure of how much water the average resident uses in and around their home. RWA's analysis found that R-GPCD for the Sacramento region in September was 185 gallons.

"The figure for residential gallons per capita per day reflects our region's unique characteristics, such as large residential lots and hot summer days," said RWA Water Efficiency Program Manager Amy Talbot. In September, for example, the Sacramento region had 13 days with temperatures over 90 degrees (two days over 100 degrees).

R-GPCD, which varies across the region and the state, is influenced by many prominent factors such as population density, lot/landscape size, evapotranspiration rate, temperature, population fluctuations and growth.

"That's why our R-GPCD is different from...say... coastal cities, where higher-density housing and cooler weather mean gallons of water used per person per day will be naturally lower independent of conservation efforts," Talbot said.

Talbot encouraged residents to keep conserving water this winter. "The ability and willingness by customers to let their lawns turn brown during drought is a big part of what has allowed the region to achieve such significant water use reductions over the summer," she said. "Now it's time to look indoors for additional savings from replacing water-wasting fixtures, fixing leaks and changing habits."

Residents can learn about free services and rebates, learn more water-wise tips and find a list of local water providers and requested cutbacks at BeWaterSmart.info.

About the Regional Water Authority: *RWA is a joint powers authority representing two dozen water providers and affiliates in the greater Sacramento area. Its primary mission is to help its members protect and enhance the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.*

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