



MEDIA RELEASE

August 4, 2015

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Water Forum Receives Significant National Award *Amidst persistent drought, Sacramento region recognized for record of exemplary water resource management*

The American Water Resources Association (AWRA) selected the Sacramento Water Forum to receive the Csallany Institutional Award for Exemplary Contributions to Water Resources Management and will present the award at the 50th Annual Water Resources Conference this fall in Denver, Colorado.

The award is given to water resource institutions that have achieved a status of eminence in some aspect of managing the nation's waters. This prestigious award is only awarded at such time as there is a qualified nominee. In its 24-year history the award has only been presented to 10 other water organizations. Honorees exhibit success in implementing water-related policies or projects that demonstrate sustained success and contribute to the wise use of valuable water resources.

“The City of Sacramento has been a proud investor in the Water Forum for nearly two decades,” said Sacramento City Manager John Shirey. “The Water Forum is a unique resource for the Sacramento Region, and their contributions to navigating the region's challenges behind good stewardship of our water resources are extraordinary.”

The historic Water Forum Agreement represents a regional commitment to meet two co-equal objectives: to provide a safe and reliable water supply to support the region's economy and to preserve the environment of the lower American River. The Agreement provides a foundation for collaborating on water issues and challenges amongst diverse stakeholders, including water providers, environmental groups, and business leaders.

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"The Water Forum is much more than an organization or an agreement. It's a culture that allows the Sacramento region to work collaboratively to address challenges and resolve conflicts," said John Woodling, executive director of the Regional Water Authority, which represents water providers throughout the region. "This culture is being tested more than ever during the drought--as supplies are stressed for both people and the environment. The Water Forum Agreement continues to be resilient and a critical path to weathering the drought and achieving our long-term vision of a reliable water supply while preserving the environment that makes the Sacramento region unique."

The Water Forum is being recognized as a leader in the protection and enhancement of the lower American River ecosystem and its native species, including the endangered steelhead trout and Chinook salmon. For over 15 years, the Water Forum has been instrumental in implementing habitat restoration to create much-needed spawning and rearing habitat at key locations along the river. This project restores a resource vital to the river's delicate ecosystem.

In addition to ongoing restoration projects, the Water Forum has the resources and ability to quickly act when changing river conditions threaten endangered fish. The Water Forum partnered with the Bureau of Reclamation this spring in an unprecedented attempt to manage water temperature in real-time.

"As the drought persists, the Water Forum has collaborated with members to ensure the delicate balance of protecting the river and water supply continues," said Sacramento County Water Resources Director Michael Peterson. "Just as the lower American River is an invaluable resource to residents of the Sacramento Region, the Water Forum has served as an invaluable resource for water purveyors, environmentalists, and local governments."

The Water Forum has developed a new and innovative approach to managing the releases from Folsom Dam to improve conditions for fish and reduce water temperature. The new approach, called the Lower American River Flow Management Standard, incorporates an inherently adaptive system of minimum flows, water temperature management targets, a standing community oversight committee, and ongoing monitoring.

"This prestigious award recognizes the important work of the Water Forum in convening our region to come together and have collaborative conversations aimed at creating solutions that balance opposing and at times conflicting views," said Water Forum Executive Director Tom Gohring.

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