



**Our Region's Trusted Water Leader**  
**San Diego County Water Authority**

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## **Media Statement**

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### **San Diego County Water Authority General Manager Issues Statement on Colorado River Conditions and Sustainability**

June 14, 2022 – *Sandra L. Kerl, general manager of the San Diego County Water Authority, issued the following statement on U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Camille Touton's testimony today before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on the severity of the drought on the Colorado River and need for near- and long-term innovation and investment:*

“The water situation across the state and Southwest is dire, as historically dry conditions exacerbated by climate change shrink water storage levels at Lake Mead and Lake Powell and threaten the loss of power generation. One look at the river system today communicates as no words can, how devastating these impacts are and the need for all parties – the seven Basin states, federal government, tribal nations and our neighbor to the south, Mexico – to make the kind of changes needed to ensure that this precious resource will be available for future generations.

“Two decades ago, after experiencing severe drought and shortages in our own local water supplies, the Water Authority Board of Directors and San Diego County ratepayers made the difficult decision to simultaneously invest in the largest water conservation program in the West, while reducing per capita local water consumption by more than 40%. It hasn't been easy, but the fruits of our labor have been realized by dramatic increases in efficiency in agricultural production in Imperial County and by securing a highly reliable water supply for San Diego County. Importantly, land was not fallowed, people did not lose their jobs and all environmental impacts were fully accounted for.

“San Diego's water conservation agreement with the Imperial Irrigation District was made possible by legislation passed decades ago in Sacramento that can be a model for how to sustain environmental, agricultural, and urban water needs while using significantly less water. Under the leadership of Governor Newsom and with Adel Hagekhalil now at the helm of the Metropolitan Water District, the state and all Southern California are poised for innovation and to build on this successful model.

“Our public policy must be focused first on making conservation and reclamation work, and on recognizing that it will cost money. We cannot succeed with policies that unintentionally fail to connect the benefits of conservation to the ratepayers who foot the bill.

“The Water Authority is fully committed to working together with all parties to promote innovation and to the long-term sustainability of our most precious resource, and to protecting the human right to water. Our collective success is vital to our communities, farms, environment and the economy.”

-- Sandra L. Kerl, General Manager, San Diego County Water Authority

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*The San Diego County Water Authority sustains a \$240 billion regional economy and the quality of life for 3.3 million residents through a multi-decade water supply diversification plan, major infrastructure investments and forward-thinking policies that promote fiscal and environmental responsibility. A public agency created in 1944, the Water Authority delivers wholesale water supplies to 24 retail water providers, including cities, special districts and a military base.*



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