



For Immediate Release

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East County Advanced Water Purification Joint Powers Authority Receives 'AA' Fitch Credit Rating

May 21, 2024 – Santee, CA – The East County Advanced Water Purification Joint Powers Authority (JPA) recently received a 'AA', outlook stable rating from U.S. credit rating agency, Fitch Rating. This rating is important because it shows an agency's ability to repay its debts.

Fitch assigned the 'AA' rating to \$415 million of interim notes that will be issued to finance the design and construction of the East County Advanced Water Purification (AWP) Program. The East County AWP Program will create a local, clean, safe and drought-proof drinking water supply using state-of-the-art technology to purify East San Diego County's recycled water. In 2020, Fitch Ratings assigned a 'AA' rating to a \$395.8 million Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loan. Fitch affirmed that rating in 2024 as well.

The cost of the Program currently under construction is approximately \$950 million. The plan of finance includes \$766 million in low interest loans, \$62 million in grants, and \$122 million in additional grants and/or loans.

According to Fitch, 'AA' ratings indicate a very strong capacity for payment of financial commitments. It is also a reflection of the unconditional take-or-pay purchaser contracts the JPA has negotiated with its Project Partners (Padre Dam Municipal Water District, San Diego County Sanitation District, the City of El Cajon, and Helix Water District).

"The AA rating from Fitch represents the JPA's strong financial profile and provides a positive signal to potential investors," said Padre Dam's Chief Finance Officer, Karen Jassoy.

The East County AWP Program will produce up to 30 percent of East County's drinking water supply once it goes online in 2026. The JPA members will send wastewater flows to the project and the JPA will sell the drinking water produced by the Program to Padre Dam and Helix Water District.

For more information about the East County Advanced Water Purification Program, please visit www.eastcountyawp.com or find us on social media @eastcountyawp.



A view of the East County AWP treatment facilities under construction. (Photo Taken May 7, 2024)

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