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WATER AGENCY AND CITY HOST DIGNITARIES FROM US BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Watsonville, CA – The Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency (PVWMA) and the City of Watsonville are hosting David Murillo, the Regional Director of the US Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region, and his staff for a tour of the Watsonville Area Recycled Water Facility, a project that was became a reality thanks to a \$20 million grant from the Bureau.

The PVWMA worked in partnership with the City of Watsonville under a novel partnership that is considered a model around the state. The City received the Bureau of Reclamation Title XVI funding to build the facility and PVWMA is entitled to the water produced for delivery in the coastal area impacted by seawater intrusion. Reduction of coastal pumping allows greater groundwater production basin-wide and helps with overdraft.

Since its completion in 2009, the Recycled Water Facility has produced over 25,000 acre feet (an acre foot is 325,851 gallons) of blended recycled water for irrigation of high value coastal crops including strawberries, lettuce, Brussel sprouts, and cut flowers.

Congressman Sam Farr has been instrumental in ensuring annual appropriations included funding for this critical project under the WaterSmart program. It is considered a capstone in his efforts to ensure agricultural viability in the Pajaro Valley which has a farm gate of over \$800 million per year. Mary Bannister, General Manager, noted that the commitment and grit of both the Congressman and the PVWMA past and present Board of Directors kept the project moving forward in spite of controversy and legal challenges to the Agency. “Because of the singular vision of the Congressman, the Agency Board of Directors (past and present) and the Watsonville City Council, farming has survived in the seawater intruded coastal area of the Pajaro Valley.”

The PVWMA is a public agency whose mission is to protect and preserve the water resources within the agency’s jurisdiction, generally the greater coastal Pajaro Valley.



Photo by Dennis Osmer

Picture of the purple pipe delivering blended recycled water from the Watsonville Recycled Facility to coastal agricultural lands, the treatment facility funded by the grant is visible in the background.

For more information on the WaterSmart program please go to:
<http://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/newsrelease/detail.cfm?RecordID=46906>



Photo by Dennis Osmer

Recycled water from the Watsonville Recycled Facility being delivered to coastal growers on Springfield Terrace.