

October 13, 2022

CONTACT INFORMATION:

South Coast Water District
Sheena C. Johnson, Public Information Specialist
949.289.0396
sjohnson@scwd.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Coast Water District Receives Unanimous Approval for Coastal Development Permit to proceed with the Doheny Ocean Desalination Project

San Diego, CA, October 13, 2022 – After more than 18 years of research, due diligence studies, outreach, and development, the South Coast Water District received unanimous approval for the Coastal Development Permit for the Doheny Ocean Desalination Project. Commission Chair Brownsey with “wholehearted support” gave the District the ultimate compliment in stating that she sees “this project as the model that I hope all applicants will aspire to.” Coastal Commission Senior Deputy Director, Dr. Kate Hucklebridge accurately stated the project is “well-planned” but “not without impacts” and with the feedback from commissioners added four changes to the 16 Special Conditions already identified. The changes included: the continuation of outreach after the Disadvantaged Community Study, consideration of solar and EV as part of the campground modernization, and the preference for local GHG offsets “to the extent available and feasible” – to which SCWD General Manager, Rick Shintaku emphatically agreed to.

After the meeting Shintaku stated that “SCWD strives to be recognized as a premier water district unsurpassed in customer service, reliability, environmental stewardship, and organizational excellence and today’s approval solidifies that status. We’re enthused that the Coastal Commission and staff all worked very hard to understand and ensure that we put forth the best possible project for our community and region.” The District’s collaborative partnership with State Parks was critical to today’s positive outcome.

The Coastal Development Permit is the second of three major permits (State Lands lease is the next) required prior to the District’s Board of Directors determining next steps toward full project implementation. When the project is fully approved to move forward, an alternative delivery approach, such as Design-Build-Operate-Maintain, is the anticipated contracting mechanism.

The [Doheny Ocean Desalination Project](#) would create a new, reliable, local, and drought-proof water supply that would also provide emergency water supplies should the delivery of imported water be disrupted due to earthquakes or other natural disasters. The facility’s proposed location between Pacific Coast Highway and Stonehill Drive next to San Juan Creek is within 100 yards of existing regional water



transmission lines. SCWD would build the facility on property that SCWD already owns, and the infrastructure is already in place with the Joint Regional Water Supply System to distribute desalinated water to SCWD customers and south Orange County, significantly reducing costs and construction impacts. The facility would have a capacity of up to 5 Million Gallons per Day (MGD).

South Coast Water District (SCWD) provides potable water, recycled water, and wastewater services to approximately 35,000 residents, 1,000 businesses, and 2 million visitors per year in south Orange County, California. SCWD's service area, divided into five districts, includes the communities of Dana Point, South Laguna Beach, and areas of San Clemente and San Juan Capistrano. A five-member elected Board of Directors oversees SCWD's policymaking, financial stewardship, rate-setting, capital programs, and long-term planning.

###