



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

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METROPOLITAN GENERAL MANAGER'S STATEMENT REGARDING CONAWAY RANCH HABITAT AND WATER PROPOSALS

Jeffrey Kightlinger, general manager of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, issued the following statement regarding today's Memorandum of Understanding between the Yolo County Board of Supervisors and the Conaway Ranch ownership group:

“The new ownership group for Conaway Ranch approached Metropolitan seeking an initial payment for a limited quantity of water for a set period of time. This financing was seen as essential for the purchase of the Ranch and to complement longer-term transactions such as the sale of much-needed surface water to the cities of Woodland and Davis. Conaway and Metropolitan are now in the final stages of crafting this water transaction which would require approval of Metropolitan's Board of Directors.

“We recognize that this 17,000-acre ranch is a remarkably important resource for Yolo County as well as for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta ecosystem. It has the largest water intake structure on the Sacramento River for Yolo County. And its lands along the eastern channel of the Yolo Bypass are vital habitat for a salmon fish passage improvement project that is contemplated by the Bay Delta Conservation Plan. Given the many resource values of Conaway and the Yolo Bypass, Metropolitan seeks a collaborative, working partnership with Yolo County, the cities and other key local stakeholders as essential to achieve mutually beneficial objectives.

“The possible water purchase is to advance Metropolitan's primary interest of promoting the salmon habitat restoration proposal in the Yolo Bypass. Metropolitan is carefully structuring the habitat portion of this transaction to be in harmony with long-term agriculture production on Conaway and to not prejudice habitat proposals, such as the modification of the Fremont Weir in the northern Bypass that has generated local concern. This one-time purchase of Conaway water

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helps to secure the necessary habitat easements on a portion of the Conaway property. Metropolitan has no permanent interest in water from Yolo County.

“Local support is key for Metropolitan to play its role in a public-private partnership that provides surface water supplies to local communities, flood protection benefits, a new cooperative agreement between the Ranch and Yolo County and new salmon habitat for California.”

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The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a cooperative of 26 cities and water agencies serving 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs.