



Westlands Water District

3130 N. Fresno Street, P.O. Box 6056, Fresno, California 93703-6056, (559) 224-1523, FAX (559) 241-6277

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Gayle Holman
(559) 241-6233

Drought Resiliency Grant Awarded to Westlands Water District

FRESNO, CA – The [U.S. Bureau of Reclamation \(Bureau\)](#) announced a \$750,000 WaterSMART Initiative grant to the Westlands Water District as part of the Bureau's drought resiliency response program. These funds are intended to help communities mitigate future drought impacts. The Bureau of Reclamation awarded the grant to assist drought risk areas in the planning and implementation of actions designed to increase water supply reliability. The WaterSMART grant allows Westlands to move forward with the Pasajero Groundwater Replenishment Project, which includes the construction of a 60-acre groundwater recharge basin and pump station that would be used for aquifer recharge as well as storage recovery.

"This grant will assist Westlands in developing infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of drought and improve water supply reliability," said general manager Tom Birmingham. "Reclamation's award of this grant for the Pasajero Project recognizes the interrelationship between the allocation of Central Valley Project water and the ability of local communities to replenish their groundwater when surface water is available." Birmingham added, "Westlands greatly appreciates Reclamation's award of this grant."

This grant, and the project for which it was awarded, is particularly important given the anticipated implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). As the designated Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Westside Subbasin, Westlands is developing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan to achieve sustainability in the basin. The recent Westlands' [June newsletter](#) focuses on the importance of adequate and reliable water allocations for the urban and rural communities managing their water supplies and replenishing their groundwater.

The Bureau's grant for the Pasajero Project will create an immediate benefit to the growers in the District as they invest in infrastructure that will increase water replenishment and develop a groundwater plan for the region.

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Westlands Water District is the largest agricultural water district in the United States, made up of more than 1,000 square miles of prime farmland in western Fresno and Kings Counties. Under federal contracts, Westlands provides water to 700 family-owned farms that average 875 acres in size.