Western acquires first-ever local groundwater right

RIVERSIDE, CA – In a move that expands Western’s local water supply while saving customers money, Western Municipal Water District (Western) has acquired its first-ever groundwater right in the San Bernardino Basin.

In June, Western completed the purchase from MD Water LLC, a private individual shareholder. Western acquired nearly 23,000 shares of common stock in the Meeks and Daley Water Company (M&D).

Shares from M&D will bring Western customers more than 226 acre-feet of affordable local water annually, which is enough water to meet the yearly indoor needs of more than 800 families of four. Under a 1969 Court Judgment, rights to the groundwater will continue without end.

“The acquisition of M&D water is part of Western’s ongoing plan to decrease dependence on imported water, expand affordable local water supplies, and ensure long-term water reliability for our 25,000 residential and business customers,” said General Manager Craig Miller.

Thanks to a 2017 water wheeling agreement with Riverside Public Utilities (RPU), the M&D water will be extracted by and transported through RPU wells and pipelines into Western’s water system. Western will pay RPU all costs associated with transporting the newly acquired supply. The 2017 Western-RPU water wheeling agreement benefits both water providers by allowing Western to receive high-quality water at a lower cost, and providing RPU with an additional source of revenue to improve long-term rate stability.

“We see ourselves as more of a business than a bureaucracy, which is why we work tirelessly to ensure operations are as cost-efficient as possible,” said Miller. “Securing these rights is a testament to our work in securing local water sources to benefit customers.”

Western’s new water is less expensive than water delivered from Northern California; the M&D water-rights purchase will save Western customers nearly $3 million over the next 20 years compared with the cost of water imported from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta via the State Water Project.

The water-right acquisition supports Western’s strategy to increase local water resources, keep rates as low as possible, and ensure steady water service under challenging conditions such as state emergencies, natural disasters and droughts.

To learn more about Western’s commitment to reliable service, visit www.wmwd.com.

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Western Municipal Water District provides water supply, wastewater disposal and water resource management to the public in a safe, reliable, environmentally sensitive and financially responsible...