



NEWS RELEASE

Association of California Water Agencies

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ACWA Statement at “March for Water” Rally

Executive Director Calls for Solutions to Address Extreme Water Challenges

Los Baños –Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) Executive Director Timothy Quinn joined state, federal and local elected officials today at a major rally sponsored by the California Latino Water Coalition. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and other speakers discussed the urgent need for solutions to the state’s severe water challenges.

The rally drew an estimated 3,000 people to San Luis Reservoir near Los Baños and marked the end of the four-day “March for Water.” The march, which started Tuesday in Mendota, was aimed at raising the visibility of water shortages and their impacts on the Central Valley.

Addressing the crowd, Quinn said valley residents are feeling the brunt of water shortages triggered by drought and environmental problems. “You are at ground zero, but you are not alone. The entire state is experiencing serious water challenges. We need solutions now.”

Noting that the march highlighted “the human face of the misery evoked by water shortages,” Quinn said 2009 will be extremely challenging for many water agencies this year. “But there is no greater challenge than the one facing agricultural agencies south of the Delta that stand to receive a fraction of their water at best. Communities, farm workers and growers are seeing their livelihoods come to a standstill this year because of water shortages. That should be a wakeup call for the entire state that we need long-term solutions.”

Quinn applauded Interior Secretary Ken Salazar’s announcement earlier this week that \$260 million will be invested in California’s water infrastructure as part of the economic stimulus package approved by Congress, but emphasized that it is a partial down payment on a much bigger problem.

“Even more important than the money,” Quinn said, “is the promise of a meaningful partnership between the state and federal governments to solve the bigger water crisis in California. There is no time to delay. We need solutions now.”

ACWA is a statewide association of public agencies whose 450 members are responsible for about 90% of the water delivered in California. For more information, visit www.acwa.com.

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