



PROJECT OF THE YEAR:

ENVIRONMENT

MORE THAN \$75 MILLION

Groundwater Reliability Improvement Program Recycled Water Project

Managing Agency: Water Replenishment District of Southern California

Primary Contractor: J.F. Shea Construction, Inc.

Primary Consultant: GHD Engineers

Nominated By: Water Replenishment District of Southern California

As the largest groundwater management agency in the State of California, the Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD or the District) manages two groundwater basins—the Central Basin and West Coast Basin—in Los Angeles County. These basins provide about 40% of the drinking water supply for 43 cities and almost four million residents—about 10% of all California residents. WRD has ensured a reliable supply of high-quality groundwater by managing and replenishing the groundwater basins since 1959.

California experienced a historic drought 2012-2016 and faces continued challenges with insufficient or unreliable water supplies. Nearly 51% of the water consumed in WRD's service area is imported from the Colorado River and/or from the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta, in Northern California. The Delta and Colorado Rivers are both severely stressed and over-subscribed, and the reliability of these water supplies is uncertain. The cost for imported water is projected to rise substantially as solutions are implemented to protect environmental resources in the source areas and improve water quality. In 2010, WRD established the Water Independence Now Program (WIN) to accomplish the goal of eliminating the District's need for imported water. The Groundwater Reliability Improvement Program Recycled Water Project is a cornerstone of that effort.



A regional leader in sustainability, WRD developed the Groundwater Reliability Improvement Program Recycled Water Project with the goal of creating a local, sustainable, and reliable water supply using advanced treated recycled water. Prior to completion of this project, WRD used 21,000 acre-feet-per-year (AFY) of imported water to replenish the Central Basin. 21,000 acre-feet is equivalent to the average water use of 40,000 households. In July 2019, when the project is fully operational, WRD will eliminate use of imported water for Central Basin replenishment.

The facility, which was recently named the Albert Robles Center for Recycled

Water & Environmental Learning, is located on a 5.2-acre parcel in the City of Pico Rivera, California, and is directly adjacent to the San Gabriel River. Construction was substantially complete on December 31, 2018.

Permit coordination for the diversion structure was complex and required nearly a year to complete. The diversion structure permit required work with LACSD, County Public Works, ACOE and others. Because all parties understood the complexities and need for this regional project, they worked with WRD to overcome challenges related to permits.