

For Immediate Release

Media Contact:
Patrick Atwater, Project Manager
patrickatwater@gmail.com
(818) 259-2709

CA Water Data Collaborative Honored by the White House

Innovative partnership of seven utilities included in national “Water Summit”

Calabasas, CA (March 25, 2016) – This week, the White House hosted its inaugural Water Summit to recognize innovative and pioneering efforts across the nation that promote water use efficiency and management. The California Data Collaborative was among the projects selected to be honored at the Summit.

The California Data Collaborative, a joint effort among East Bay Municipal Utility District, Eastern Municipal Water District, Inland Empire Utilities Agency, Irvine Ranch Water District, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, Moulton Niguel Water District and Santa Margarita Water District, was established to accelerate smart water-use efficiency by leveraging water-use data from the 3.7 million people served by the agencies.

The Collaborative has tapped into the resources of academic institutions, including UC Davis, UC Riverside and Stanford University, to bring “big data” applications to the water industry, a strategy that has proven to be effective and successful in private sectors and other large municipalities. With more than a thousand water providers serving some 35 million Californians, the need for comprehensive and consistent data has been a long-standing obstacle to forging meaningful and practical water policies. As the focus on conservation and water efficiency continues to increase, the ability to apply data is critical to evaluate conservation efforts, identify opportunities, and develop new strategies that strike a balance between efficiency and local supply investment.

The Summit provided an opportunity for the California Data Collaborative to be recognized as an ideal project for innovative water resource management. “You can’t manage what you can’t measure. Having water usage data fragmented across hundreds of local water retailers makes it unnecessarily difficult to achieve comprehensive water-use efficiency,” said Patrick Atwater, Project Manager of the California Data Collaborative. “Water use data may seem arcane and abstract, but the White House, an Op-Ed in last week’s New York Times, the Western Governors Association and others have called for precisely this data integration.”

The integration of customer water usage data across utilities will enable a more robust conservation framework than today’s “one-size-fits-all approach” based on utility averages. What makes the CA Data Collaborative ground-breaking is that to date, state agencies and regulatory institutions collected reported information from agencies, but it didn’t go deep enough to analyze and understand the behavior of actual water users. However, individual customer privacy is protected, as only their usage data is incorporated into the project.

--more--

CA Data Collaborative
Page 2 of 2

Additionally, the California Data Collaborative is testing the integration and standardization of data collection and analysis, relieving the burden on agency staff and reducing analytic costs to taxpayers. The “bottom-up” approach of the California Data Collaborative has received broad interest and support statewide.

The current drought is the worst in 500 years, and California faces substantial water supply uncertainty. The CA Data Collaborative believes water agencies can be better prepared to take on future challenges and serve California’s growing population by making better use of shared data and applied technologies.

About the California Data Collaborative

The California Data Collaborative is a coalition of municipal water utilities dedicated to sharing water usage data to enable smarter water conservation. The goal is to have agencies throughout the State work together to help each other to better serve all Californians.

#