



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Regional Water Authority Honors Jim Sequeira
With New Distinguished Service Award**
3 Water Professionals Also Recognized for Achievements in 2002

SACRAMENTO, Calif – The Regional Water Authority (RWA) has presented its first-ever Distinguished Service Award to Jim Sequeira, retiring director of the City of Sacramento’s Utilities Department.

In addition, three individuals have received the Authority’s annual Water Statesperson of the Year Award for their role in securing a \$22 million grant for RWA in 2002. The recipients are Vanessa Nishikawa, a supervising engineer with Montgomery Watson Harza; John Woodling, chief of the Conjunctive Water Management Branch of the California Department of Water Resources; and Ed Winkler, executive director of the RWA.

Lyle Hoag, a member of RWA’s Executive Committee and a director of San Juan Water District, said the award recipients have been instrumental in advancing programs to provide a reliable water supply for the region. “These awards are RWA’s way of giving recognition to people whose efforts have resulted in exemplary achievements,” Hoag said. The awards were presented December 4 at the Authority’s annual holiday social.

Sequeira, who began his career with Sacramento’s Utilities Department in 1967, was honored for his years of leadership and contributions to the region’s water community. He played a key role in developing the Water Forum Agreement to address the Sacramento area’s water supply needs. The six-year effort resulted in agreement among a diverse group of business, agricultural, environmental and local government interests on a regional water plan that ensures a reliable water supply while protecting the environment.

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The Distinguished Service Award, established this year and sponsored by RWA Executive Committee member William Porter, recognizes service and leadership in the water community over a period of years.

Nishikawa, Woodling and Winkler were honored with this year's Water Statesperson of the Year award for their work in securing a \$22 million grant for RWA from the California Department of Water Resources. The grant, announced in August 2002, will support RWA's American River Basin Regional Conjunctive Use Program, a collection of 12 projects that will strengthen efforts to manage the Sacramento region's surface and groundwater resources.

Nishikawa has more than eight years of experience in the field of civil and environmental engineering and water resources planning and management. She was instrumental in preparing the 4,500-page grant application package for seven of RWA's member agencies.

Woodling oversees programs for conjunctive use and groundwater management for the California Department of Water Resources. Over the past three years, he has worked closely with Sacramento area water agencies in developing the regional conjunctive use program.

Winkler became executive director of RWA last year and led development of the regional conjunctive use program and a water efficiency program. Under his leadership, RWA was formed and has actively engaged in several collaborative efforts to secure reliable, affordable and high quality water supplies for the region.

The Water Statesperson of the Year award was presented for the first time in 2001. The first recipient was Rich Plecker, general manager of the Fair Oaks Water District.

The RWA is a joint powers authority representing 18 water providers in the greater Sacramento area. Its primary mission is to help its members protect and enhance the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.

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