



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Note to editors: A photo of Derrick Whitehead is available in electronic format.

**Regional Water Authority Honors Derrick Whitehead
As Water Statesperson of the Year**
2 Other Water Leaders Also Recognized for Career Achievements

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The Regional Water Authority (RWA) has presented its annual Water Statesperson of the Year award to Derrick H. Whitehead, environmental utilities director for the City of Roseville.

In addition, two long-time water leaders received the Authority's Distinguished Service Award for their career contributions to the region's water community. The recipients were Walter G. Pettit, a former executive director of the State Water Resources Control Board who recently served as interim general manager of Fair Oaks Water District, and Joseph P. Alessandri, an outgoing member of the San Juan Water District Board of Directors.

Paul Selsky, a member of the Carmichael Water District Board of Directors and chair of the RWA Awards Committee, said the award recipients have been instrumental in building partnerships and furthering programs to improve the region's water supply reliability. The awards were presented December 8 at the Authority's annual holiday social.

Whitehead, who has overseen Roseville's water, wastewater, recycled water, solid waste and stormwater utilities since 1994, was honored for his role in promoting regional collaboration and advancing efforts such as the Diamond Creek Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project, the update of Water Forum Best Management Practices (BMPs) for urban conservation, and the establishment of a new flow standard for the American River. He also played a key role in securing federal funds for water supply and efficiency projects in the region through the Water Resources Development Act passed by Congress.

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“Derrick has served his community and the Regional Water Authority by providing vision and initiating the action needed to bring complex issues into focus,” said Mitch Dion of California-American Water Company, who presented the award to Whitehead. “He has distinguished himself through his commitment to regional collaboration and his willingness to address difficult challenges.”

RWA has presented the Water Statesperson of the Year award annually since 2001 to recognize specific achievements in building successful alliances in the RWA service area.

Pettit and Alessandri were honored with this year’s Distinguished Service Award, established in 2002 to recognize service and leadership in the water community over a period of years.

Pettit was recognized for his innumerable contributions and achievements during his 40 years in the water industry. In addition to his recent service to Fair Oaks Water District, he served as interim general manager for the Sacramento North Area Groundwater Management Authority, Sacramento Metropolitan Water Authority and Sacramento Suburban Water District. He also served as executive director of the California Urban Water Agencies and had a long career with both the State Water Resources Control Board and the California Department of Water Resources.

Alessandri’s award reflected his many years of water-related service to the Sacramento region. During his long career in the private and public sector, he has served as a director and vice president of the San Juan Water District, director and president of the Fair Oaks Water District, and director of the statewide Association of California Water Agencies. A registered civil engineer, Alessandri currently serves as a member of the Regional Water Authority Board of Directors as well as the Sacramento Groundwater Authority Board of Directors. He previously served as chief of water resources for Sacramento County.

RWA is a joint powers authority representing 22 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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