



Media Release

State Water Board Approves \$35 Million for East Porterville Water Project

Board Action Just one of Three Aimed at Helping Struggling Communities in Tulare County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SACRAMENTO – The State Water Resources Control Board has approved up to \$35 million in Proposition 1 grants and loan forgiveness to connect East Porterville residents with dry and contaminated wells to a clean and reliable source of drinking water.

The approval was one of three separate actions by the Board this week aimed at providing financial assistance to small and disadvantaged communities in Tulare County, which has sustained some of the worst impacts of California's five-year drought. All told, the Board approved \$37,252,000 for emergency and long-term solutions to supply safe drinking water to residents of Tulare County.

Hundreds of East Porterville residents have had their wells run dry during the drought, and those who still have access to groundwater can't drink it because much of it is contaminated. As a result, residents of the unincorporated area in Tulare County have been relying on deliveries of bottled water and non-potable water to large temporary tanks installed on their properties.

In an unprecedented effort, state and local agencies are connecting approximately 1,100 eligible properties with dry or contaminated private wells to the city of Porterville's public water system, as a long-term solution to the drought emergency. Residents' connections to Porterville's water system will be entirely paid for by the state.

The project is a collaborative effort of three state agencies -- State Water Board, Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the California Office of Emergency Services -- and the governments of Tulare County and the City of Porterville.

The Board's approval of up to \$35 million will help construct a new and expanded water distribution system, and upgrade Porterville's current water system to meet the demand of additional customers from East Porterville. As of March 31, 2017, 330 homes in East Porterville have been connected to the water system. The home connections are expected to be completed at the end of 2017.



To learn more about the East Porterville Water Supply Project, see DWR's website:
<http://water.ca.gov/waterconditions/porterville.cfm>

In addition to the \$35 million, the Board approved \$252,000 to supply bottled water to the community of Seville, a small, severely disadvantaged community of about 400 residents facing water supply and water quality issues. The Board also approved \$2 million for Tulare County's Countywide Bottled Water Program for qualified, disadvantaged households that have a dry well or contamination.

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