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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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IS THE DROUGHT OVER? NOT AT LAKE HENSHAW

Vista Irrigation District's reservoir remains only 29% full as rainy season comes to an end.

Vista, CA—

While a series of late season storms has improved hydrological conditions in northern California, with snowpack water content projected to be well above average, they have done little to increase the already low water level at Lake Henshaw, the Vista Irrigation District's (VID) local water supply.

Rainfall totals at Lake Henshaw, which is located 60 miles northeast of San Diego at the foot of Palomar Mountain, measured 33 inches or 123% of normal as of April 30. Unfortunately, the lingering effects of consecutive dry years have yielded minimal rainfall run-off, the lake's primary water source. As a result, the lake level peaked in early May at just over 29% of its capacity.

Unlike many reservoirs in the northern part of the State, which are replenished by a combination of rainfall run-off in the winter and snowmelt in the spring and summer, Lake Henshaw is filled primarily by rainfall run-off during winter and early spring. Once the rainy season ends, the lake level reaches its peak for the year and water begins to be released for treatment and delivery. Groundwater pumped from a well-field near the lake is used to sustain water levels in the lake during the summer and fall and during extended dry-periods.

Until the Lake Henshaw area receives several years of average to above average rainfall, surface water run-off totals will not appreciably increase the lake level nor will a significant amount of groundwater recharge take place.

Historically, about 30% of the district's water supply has come from the lake, (this supply is referred to as local water), with the remaining 70% coming from the Colorado River and northern California (imported water). However, with the lake level being low, it is anticipated that just over 20% of the district's water supply will come from Lake Henshaw in the coming fiscal year (July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2010). The district will need to purchase imported water from the San Diego County Water Authority (Water Authority) to meet the balance of customer needs. The continuing shortage of local water is contributing to region-wide shortages and water conservation mandates.

The Vista Irrigation District is a public agency governed by an elected five-member board. The district provides water service to more than 123,000 people in the city of Vista, and portions of San Marcos, Escondido, Oceanside, and unincorporated areas of San Diego County.

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