



Press Release

Agencies Outline Responsibilities for Regional Recreational Growth

Perris, CA (April 26, 2017)—Five regional government bodies announced today the framework of an agreement that lays the groundwork for the long-term potential development of community recreational facilities surrounding Diamond Valley Lake.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Eastern Municipal Water District, city of Hemet, Valley-Wide Recreation and Park District and County of Riverside have presented the non-binding Memorandum of Intent (MOI) to their elected bodies. The MOI is a tool for planning and coordination purposes that does not financially or contractually obligate any of the parties.

Owned and operated by Metropolitan, Diamond Valley Lake—located near Hemet in southwest Riverside County—is Southern California’s largest drinking water reservoir. Body contact activities are prohibited at the reservoir to ensure the safety of the region’s drinking water.

“This agreement is pivotal toward ensuring that the respective agencies are coordinated so we may better accommodate future development opportunities of the area surrounding Diamond Valley Lake,” said Randy Record, chairman of Metropolitan’s Board of Directors and EMWD’s representative on the 38-member MWD board. “By having clearly defined responsibilities, we can ensure we act efficiently at the appropriate time that funding sources dictate the advancement of various projects.”

For more than a year, the agencies have worked to develop a document that would outline the responsibilities of each agency as it relates to the recreational and facility improvements that may one day be developed in the area surrounding the lake. Much of that development will depend on outside funding sources, including private investors or grant funding.

The MOI calls for an implementation committee to be formed within 90 days, with a representative of the five parties, along with at least one invited member from the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, California’s 28th Senate District, the local business community, the general public and the Western Science Center. All meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act to guarantee transparency and public trust.

The five parties to the MOI will have varying degrees of responsibility and coordination with the expansion of the facilities and recreational opportunities surrounding the lake. Those responsibilities may include maintenance, security, operations, water supply, facility improvement or marketing.

“Our agencies are committed to aggressively pursuing available funding opportunities and working with private developers to help expedite this process so that our region may continue to enhance what is already one of Southern California’s premier recreation destinations,” Hemet Mayor Linda Krupa said.

Among the potential improvements to the area are trail extensions and interconnections between Salt Creek, Diamond Valley Lake and Lake Skinner; improving access roads to Diamond Valley Lake that may extend the facility’s operating hours; a recreational lagoon; camping and RV accommodations; expanded leisure spaces; and an expanded sports complex.

“By proactively working to enhance recreational opportunities in this region, we are helping to further meet the needs of our residents and help promote the region as a world-class recreation destination,” said Riverside County Third District Supervisor Chuck Washington. “Doing so helps promote active, healthy lifestyles and economic development for the San Jacinto Valley and surrounding areas.”

EMWD’s Board of Directors approved the MOI in March and the other entities are anticipated to bring the item before their respective governing bodies in April. Because it is a non-binding agreement with no financial commitments, some entities presented the item for informational purposes and it did not require a formal vote.

“Along with our partner agencies, we have been able to develop a plan that will provide a unified vision for the future of recreation in this community,” Valley-Wide President Matt Duarte said. “Valley-Wide looks forward to continuing these collaborative efforts and doing its part to further enhance cost-effective recreational opportunities in the region.”

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