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Sanitation Districts Award Infrastructure Contract to Protect Local Waterways

Whittier, CA – Today, the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County (Sanitation Districts) awarded a \$630 million construction contract for the Clearwater Project to Dragados USA, Inc. The project will protect local waterways by addressing aging infrastructure and involves building a new 7-mile long, 18-foot diameter tunnel to convey treated water from the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant in Carson to existing ocean outfalls at Royal Palms Beach in San Pedro. Construction will begin this year and is scheduled to end in 2026.

The Clearwater Project was approved in 2012 after a multi-year evaluation of the Sanitation Districts' main sewer system, which serves more than 5 million people in Los Angeles County. This planning and environmental review effort included more than 500 public meetings to solicit input and identified the need for a new tunnel to ensure the reliability of the Sanitation Districts' system. The new tunnel will be constructed with a modern tunnel boring machine. This technology has been used throughout the world and extensively for Los Angeles' Metro system.

"As part of a thorough review of our system, we determined that the existing 60- and 80-year old tunnels are insufficient for our future needs," said Grace Robinson Hyde, the Chief Engineer and General Manager of the Sanitation Districts. "These tunnels are critical because the majority of our treated water flow must pass through these tunnels. A new tunnel designed to current earthquake standards and sized to handle future peak storm flows will make our system more reliable."

Dragados brings extensive tunneling expertise to the Clearwater Project. The firm has completed more than 530 underground projects in 20 countries, totaling over 800 miles of tunnel. For a recent project in Seattle, Washington, Dragados utilized a 57-foot diameter tunnel boring machine, which was the largest tunneling machine in the world at that time. "We look forward to working on this important infrastructure project," said Tom Robertson, Vice President of Dragados. "Our vast experience in tunneling through a wide range of geological conditions will be an asset for the Clearwater Project."

The Sanitation Districts are a regional agency that manages the wastewater (sewage) needs of over 5.6 million people in 78 cities and unincorporated county areas. The agency protects public health and the environment by constructing, operating and maintaining a regional system that collects, treats and recycles wastewater from homes and businesses.

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