



Media Release

Los Angeles Regional Water Board Names Renee Purdy As Executive Officer

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SACRAMENTO – Renee Purdy, an environmental scientist and regional planner who has served in a variety of roles during her 20 years with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board, has been selected as its new Executive Officer in a recent vote by the Regional Board.

Purdy, who has been the acting EO for the past seven months, succeeds Deborah Smith, who retired after a distinguished 30-year career.

“Renee handled the transition with finesse and ease,” said Los Angeles Water Board Chair Irma Muñoz. “She stepped into the job as if she had always been there. We feel very fortunate to have someone who is highly regarded for her skill, talent and knowledge of water - locally, regionally and statewide. She has credibility on all levels and is delightful to work with, which never hurts.”

A native of Chicago, Purdy earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science from the College of William and Mary and a Masters’ degree in Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina. She began her career as a hydrogeologist with Westinghouse Environmental and Geotechnical Services, Inc., in Richmond, Va., then spent four years working in Massachusetts for the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Environmental Protection.

She was introduced to California’s complex water world in 1997 as an environmental scientist with the Santa Monica Bay/National Estuary Project, and two years later, was hired away by the Los Angeles Water Board. In one of her early accomplishments with the Board, she oversaw development of the state’s first pollutant control plan (known as TMDL or total maximum daily load) to address bacteria water quality impairments using an innovative approach known as the reference system approach – a concept that since has been used throughout the region and other parts of the state.

Known as a collaborative leader with a unique combination of expertise in both surface and groundwater, Purdy more recently oversaw efforts advancing the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permitting program by introducing provisions that enable cities to work together on a regional watershed basis to improve water quality, while enhancing the local



supply. “The long drought the state just experienced reinforced the need to treat stormwater as a resource,” said Purdy, who oversees a staff of nearly 170 engineers, scientists and geologists.

Though you won’t see her swimming in the nearby Pacific Ocean - “I love the beach, but I get cold very easily,” she says, laughing - Purdy’s fascination with water and water issues traces back to family vacations spent camping and waterskiing, and later, going on whale watching cruises along the Massachusetts and Maine coasts. These days, her favorite pastime is driving up the Pacific Coast Highway for a weekend of camping and whale watching around the Channel Islands.

Asked what she considers her most significant accomplishment, she cites her leadership on the MS4 permit that helped foster a countywide initiative to increase the capture of stormwater. “Most of the cities in the Los Angeles region are collaborating on watershed management programs,” Purdy added, “and the State Water Board has committed to a statewide strategy (STORMS) to support management of stormwater as a valuable resource. That is very gratifying.”

To learn more, visit the [Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board](#) website.

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