



Media Release

Los Angeles Water Board selects Susana Arredondo as its new executive officer

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SACRAMENTO – The Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board has selected Susana Arredondo, a Southern California native with an extensive background in the water and wastewater industry, as its new executive officer.

She succeeds Renee Purdy, who retired after serving multiple roles during her 24 years with the Los Angeles Water Board.

“We were unanimous in our selection of Ms. Arredondo, a multifaceted leader who comes to us with over 16 years of practical experience with our programs,” said Norma Camacho, chair of the regional board. “Of note is her deep commitment to addressing existing environmental disparities and inequalities within our disenfranchised communities. She will be instrumental in our efforts to identify issues of environmental justice in the planning, policy, permitting and enforcement processes.”

Arredondo, who officially starts her position May 2, earned a bachelor’s degree in anthropology from UC San Diego and a master’s in environmental management from Duke University Nicholas School of the Environment. The lifelong resident of San Ysidro, a community located three miles from the U.S./Mexico border, traces her interest in water issues to early exposure to chronic pollution problems in the Tijuana River Estuary.

“Growing up, although we liked to go to the beach, it was often closed due to the high levels of bacteria caused by stormwater sewage overflows,” she said. “That really impacted me. I thought, ‘One day I want to be a regulator,’ because that is how you can make the most change. When I saw this opportunity, with all its responsibility, it made sense. I feel I have a lot more to give.”

Arredondo most recently worked for the San Elijo Joint Powers Authority, a wastewater facility in northern coastal San Diego County that uses an advanced purification process to treat and recycle water for irrigation purposes. Her responsibilities included ensuring compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Ocean Outfall permit, the state directive for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) outfall testing, and the plume tracking field and model analysis of discharges from the Escondido and San Elijo ocean outfalls.



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

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Among her many accomplishments, Arredondo partnered with the Soquel Water District in 2018 on a study designed to further public acceptance of Pure Water Soquel's groundwater replenishment and seawater intrusion prevention project. The process involves recycling water through a multi-barrier advanced purification system and into the local underground basin to replenish the aquifer, restore protective groundwater levels and prevent further seawater intrusion.

Her findings provided valuable information to increase public awareness and acceptance of an alternative water source.

"Renee (Purdy) left a well-oiled machine," continued Arredondo, who also served as a laboratory manager/analyst and is a licensed Grade T2 Water Treatment Operator, "and I want to connect even more with the public to build trust among government, the underserved community and the regulated community."

With over 10 million residents, the Los Angeles Water Board regulates the most densely populated region in the state, including the coastal watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura County and small portions of Kern and Santa Barbara counties. The California Water Boards' mission is to preserve, enhance and restore the quality of the state's water resources and drinking water for the protection of the environment, public health and all beneficial uses, and to ensure proper water resource allocation and efficient use for present and future generations.