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## Study Confirms Overwhelming Support to Create New Water District in Santa Clarita Valley

**December 12, 2016 (Santa Clarita, Calif.)** -- More than 71 percent Santa Clarita Valley residents support creating a new public water district for the region, according to a study released Tuesday by the Newhall County Water District (NCWD) and Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA). The study found that the cost savings, regional water management improvements and modernized governance structure were highly desirable traits in a new district.

The opinion report follows an operational and financial assessment of the new district that found upwards of \$14 million in savings in the first decade of operation and improved regional water reliability. That report was released in November.

“The economic analysis proved there are strong, tangible benefits of a new district. But we also need to know how our customers feel about potential changes,” said Steve Cole, General Manager for Newhall County Water District. “The results of the opinion study confirm that the public is eager to pursue savings and efficiencies, even if it means changing how water is managed in the Valley.”

Matt Stone, General Manager for CLWA continued:

“Our current water districts work generally well. But we know we can do better. The opinion study confirms the public agrees and would like us to bring about efficiencies, savings and stronger reliability on their behalf. This is a public directive we take seriously.”

The study focused on specific policy proposals developed as part of a year long exploration process, including:

- 71 percent of Valley water customers support the creation of a new district, even when explained the current structure would change
- 82 percent of residents support the cost-savings of a new district
- 80 percent support a new district’s regional focus rather than the current structure
- 60 percent of the region support their elected water leaders to form the new district

The study also informed participants of specific challenges and proposed solutions to gauge support and levels of comfort with the proposal.

- 72 percent of customers preferred the districts’ gradual approach to implementation, even if it delayed full cost savings
- 70 percent preferred the newly proposed division-based governance structure, even if it meant losing their current governance structure
- 64 percent preferred a firewall to protect from sharing old debts between the new district



The Districts have also been engaged in a public engagement process to ensure customers are aware of the potential changes. These efforts appear to have worked, as awareness of the process and potential for a new district has effectively doubled in the past several months.

The full study can be viewed at [www.YourSCVWater.com](http://www.YourSCVWater.com).

The study was conducted by Probolsky Research and included a scientific sample of Santa Clarita Valley registered voters. The study has a 95 percent confidence rating and 5.8 percent margin of error. It included both mobile phones and landlines and was conducted in both English- and Spanish-speaking households.

