



PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BOARD APPROVES PLAN TO BETTER MAP CUSTOMERS' IRRIGABLE LANDSCAPE AS PART OF RATE STUDY

Palmdale, CA – The Palmdale Water District (PWD) Board of

Directors voted unanimously Monday to hire an aerial mapping company to determine the actual square footage of customers' landscapes requiring irrigation. Knowing the accurate outdoor landscape size of each parcel will allow for better water allocation to customers.

The Irrigated Vegetation Mapping Program to be conducted by Eagle Aerial Solutions will assist PWD with the 2019 Rate Study, which will determine the water rates for years 2020-2024. With a 95 percent-plus accuracy rate, Eagle Aerial's mapping is expected to provide PWD with a near-perfect number for calculating how much water is needed for outdoor use by each customer.

Currently, PWD allocates 50 percent of the parcel's square footage for landscaping on single-family residence and 100 percent for irrigation accounts. This helps ensure the customers' water allocations are enough

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during the summer months.

“I am always supportive of the use of technology to better serve our ratepayers,” said Board Director Robert E. Alvarado. “If we can be more precise with determining water allocations, it is a win-win for our customers and for our agency.”

PWD serves about 26,000 accounts within its 45-square-mile boundaries. The cost for the contract with Costa Mesa-based Eagle Aerial is not to exceed \$31,500.

“This enables us to obtain the most accurate parcel level data for approximately \$1.25 per account,” said PWD Finance Manager/CFO Michael Williams. “It is definitely cost effective.”

According to Eagle Aerial’s proposal, it will use Geographic Information System (GIS)-based remote sensing analysis and expert manual air photo interpretation to determine the irrigated areas for individual parcels. The company will provide results to PWD as both a dataset and a visually mapped dataset. Each parcel will have information identifying the impervious (structure/hardscape), water, irrigated, irrigable but not irrigated (turf grass), and undeveloped and agriculture.

Eagle Aerial is the same company used by the California Department of Water Resources, which is gathering data for water districts so that it can deliver an aggregate landscape area number for each water agency’s efficiency target. The state will be averaging many individual parcel data and will not be providing parcel by parcel accuracy needed when setting individual customer’s outdoor allocation. By hiring Eagle Aerial, PWD will have the most accurate individual parcel data needed.

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PWD was the second agency in the state to adopt water budget rates. Now the state requires agencies to use water budgets for determining rates.

PWD has started the 2019 Rate Study with consultant RDN, which is currently collecting data and analyzing financials to develop water budget alternatives to present to the PWD Board of Directors. These alternatives will be shared with customers at an open house and community workshops before a public hearing in the fall.

Since 1918, the Palmdale Water District has provided high-quality water at a reasonable cost. We pride ourselves on providing great customer care; advocating for local water issues that help our residents; educating the community on water-use efficiency; and leading our region in researching and implementing emerging technologies that increase operational efficiency. For more information about PWD, visit www.palmdalewater.org.

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