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NEWS RELEASE

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Sacramento-Area Residents Honored as "Blue Thumb Ambassadors"

SACRAMENTO--The Regional Water Authority (RWA) and local water providers on April 10 launched their 2011 Blue Thumb Pledge Drive by honoring 11 Sacramento-area residents and organizations as "Blue Thumb Ambassadors" for their dedication to landscape water efficiency.

Nearly 40 individuals and organizations were nominated by water providers and landscape advisors. Ultimately, 11 were selected because of their passion for using water wisely outdoors and their work as environmental educators, resources for their neighbors and stewards of our local water supplies.

"Sometimes it's difficult to appreciate the need for water efficiency after such a wet winter," said RWA's Water Efficiency Program Manager Linda Higgins. "Our Blue Thumb Ambassadors understand that water is a limited resource that shouldn't be wasted no matter the short-term weather and water supply conditions. They also know firsthand that that beautiful landscaping and water efficiency go hand-in-hand."

With the Sacramento region's hot, dry climate and long summer season, it's estimated that more than 65 percent of a household's yearly water consumption typically goes toward landscape irrigation. Of that, 30 percent is lost to overwatering or evaporation. RWA estimates that

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Sacramento-area residents could collectively save almost 100 gallons of water per person per day during the irrigation season (April through October) by using water wisely and eliminating water waste outdoors. That's enough water to meet the drinking water needs of more than 135,000 families for a year.

Blue Thumb honorees range from landscape experts and contractors to a homeowners association and park district, and stretch from Rocklin to Sacramento to El Dorado. They include:

- **Chuck Ingels of Sacramento**, Interim Co-County Director for the UC Cooperative Extension, an expert in the field of landscape water efficiency and sustainable landscaping practices.
- **Crosswoods Homeowners Association in Citrus Heights**, represented by Property Manager Paul Schorno and Resident Bob Acrea. Crosswoods HOA removed 25,000 square feet (about the size of a football field) of thirsty lawn and replaced it with beautiful, water-efficient landscaping, a drip irrigation system and weather-based irrigation controller.
- **The City of Sacramento Water Conservation Ambassadors**, represented by Maureen Johnson, resident-volunteers that help neighbors learn to use water efficiently.
- **Robert Makimoto of Roseville**, owner of Tri-Asian Enterprise, a landscape maintenance and installation company in Roseville, whose advocacy for weather-based irrigation technologies has motivated his commercial clients to reduce their water use to the benefit of the bottom line.
- **Judy McClure of Sacramento**, Water Quality Outreach and Master Gardener Program Coordinator for the UC Cooperative Extension, an expert in the field of water-efficient landscaping and gardening.
- **Rosemary Carey of El Dorado**, President of the El Dorado Chapter of the California

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- Native Plant Society whose endeavors have included meeting one-on-one with 37 homeowners to advise them about incorporating low water-use native plants into their landscapes as part of a grant from the Sierra Nevada Alliance.
- **Joe Zaniker and Gregg Coffin of Sacramento**, transformed their thirsty Land Park yard to a beautiful, water-efficient landscape that features original sculpture and other artistic elements.
- **Paul MacGowan of Rocklin**, a 30-year educator and Professor/Department Chair of the Horticulture Department at American River College.
- **Sue Jennings of Sacramento**, an "environmental crusader" who formed Sacramento Citizens for Sustainable Landscapes and maintains sacgardens.org.
- **Robb Munn of Carmichael**, owner of English Garden Care, a landscape design and maintenance company in Rancho Cordova, who specializes in sustainable landscaping, water-wise landscapes and environmental restoration.
- **Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District in Carmichael**, represented by Parks Director TJ Newman. Mission Oaks Recreation and Park District installed moisture-based irrigation controllers and other water-efficient irrigation measures.

The 2011 Blue Thumb Ambassadors were honored Sunday, April 10 during a pre-game ceremony at the Sacramento River Cats game. Their stories will also be featured on the Blue Thumb Web site at **BeWaterSmart.info**.

About the Regional Water Authority: RWA is a joint powers authority representing 21 water providers in the greater Sacramento area. Its primary mission is to help its members protect and enhance the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.

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