

**PRESS RELEASE - APRIL 17, 2017**

**ORO LOMA SANITARY DISTRICT NAMED A BAY HERO FOR INNOVATIVE PROJECT TO PROTECT AGAINST SEA LEVEL RISE**

Award recognizes concerted efforts to protect the San Francisco Bay shoreline and shore environment

San Lorenzo, CA, APRIL 17, 2017 –Oro Loma Sanitary District and Castro Valley Sanitary District are joint recipients of a 2017 Bay Hero Award. The Bay Hero Award was presented to the sanitary districts' boards by the San Francisco Bay Institute in recognition of their far-reaching vision and response to sea level rise, as well as their undaunted efforts to innovate toward a sustainable solution.

"This is a great honor that is well deserved by our districts' boards," said Jason Warner, General Manager of Oro Loma Sanitary District. "These individuals persevered through numerous obstacles to obtain the funding and collaboration needed to get the horizontal levee off the drawing board and make it a reality. We are extremely proud of their vision, and even more proud of what the horizontal levee means to our community and the shoreline."

The horizontal levee project is the culmination of the board members' and staff initiatives. The horizontal levee demonstration is a full-scale pilot of a sea level rise response, providing multiple benefits. These include robust flood protection, expansion of upland transition habitat (high ground during peak surge events), improved San Francisco Bay water quality, and lower costs compared to traditional sea barriers. It is located on the southern edge of the existing water pollution control facility jointly owned by Oro Loma and Castro Valley Sanitary Districts. Instead of a vertical wall to protect against storm surges, a horizontal levee uses vegetation on a gentle slope to break waves. The native plants and wildlife that live on horizontal levees can thrive while helping to further process cleaned wastewater from treatment plants.

Now that the pilot is constructed, its operation and benefits are being studied by a research team from UC Berkeley led by civil and environmental engineering professor Dr. David L. Sedlak. The research will quantify the water quality benefits. The pilot will also serve to demonstrate the quality of the habitat created by the horizontal levee.

Oro Loma and Castro Valley Sanitary Districts partnered to pay for the \$9M demonstration and equalization project. An Integrated Regional Water Management Program grant provided \$2.1M of the required funds.

The Board members recognized include:

Oro Loma Sanitary District  
Shelia Young, President  
Timothy Becker  
Roland Dias  
Rita Duncan  
Dan Walters

Castro Valley Sanitary District  
Melody Appleton, President  
Daniel Akagi  
Ralph Johnson  
Timothy McGowan  
Dave Sadoff

#### About Oro Loma Sanitary District

Oro Loma Sanitary District was formed on August 7, 1911, and is one of the oldest sanitary agencies in Alameda County, California. As a special district of Alameda County government, Oro Loma provides wastewater collection and treatment, solid waste, and recycling services. The District serves several communities in unincorporated Alameda County, including San Lorenzo, Ashland, Cherryland, Fairview, as well as portions of Castro Valley and designated areas within the cities of Hayward and San Leandro. Oro Loma's service area is located about 13 miles south of Oakland and 30 miles north of San Jose on the eastern shore of the San Francisco Bay.

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