

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **HUMBOLDT BAY MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT**

**To:** All Media

**Contact:** Carol Rische, General Manager, [gm@hbmwd.com](mailto:gm@hbmwd.com) or 707-443-5018

### **Another award for water resource planning process**

For Immediate Release--Eureka, CA--November 20, 2009. A process designed to educate and involve the Humboldt County community in long-term water resource planning took home another honor this month. The California Water Environment Association, North Coast Chapter (CWEA) honored Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District (HBMWD) as the **"Public Education Program of the Year"** at a Nov. 7 dinner at the Ingomar Club.

"The CWEA recognizes the long-term benefits of a well organized, clear and participatory process designed to understand the community's priorities regarding the Mad River and use of its water," HBMWD Director Tera Prucha said. "Part of the CWEA mission is to promote sound policies to benefit society through protection and enhancement of the water environment. HBMWD has the same goal, as evidenced in our water resource planning process, and we are proud to be honored for it."

This is the second award to go to HBMWD for its novel community involvement approach to water rights and rates. In September, Common Sense California gave \$7,500 to HBMWD for its outreach effort.

Phase 1 of the award-winning water planning process concludes at the Dec. 10 meeting of the HBMWD Board, where a community Advisory Committee (a group of over 30 individuals representing a wide set of stakeholder constituencies across Humboldt County) will present decision-making guideline recommendations distilled from numerous public forums held earlier this fall. If approved by the Board, these guidelines will be used to evaluate options and decisions about how to utilize local water resources.

"The Advisory Committee has put in hundreds of hours of work," HBMWD general manager Carol Rische said. "This is the first step in giving the board a clear picture of the evaluation criteria valued by a diverse group of stakeholders and the larger community - both of which the Board represents."

“Some organizations lean toward providing quick fixes to challenges,” Prucha said. “In so doing, they may not serve the long term interests. We are dedicated to taking the time to educate the public about our water issues and work with the community to find the best possible solutions.”

The Advisory Committee, a larger Citizen Study Group (approximately 50 stakeholders and randomly selected community members) and the public at large will assist the Board as it generates and evaluates options three more times over the next six months.

Phase 2 of the water planning process starts with an all-day “Water Workshop” on January 19, 2010 at Eureka’s Wharfinger Building. For more information, please visit [www.hbmwd.com](http://www.hbmwd.com)

[Submitted photo attached]

Photo Caption: The first phase of HBMWD’s award-winning water planning effort produced decision-making guidelines that will be considered by the Board on Dec. 10th.

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### **About Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District (HBMWD)**

HBMWD delivers 15 million gallons a day of treated drinking water to 80,000 customers in Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka and the community service districts of Fieldbrook-Glendale, Humboldt, Manila and McKinleyville. At its peak, the district delivered another 40 to 50 million gallons per day of untreated water to two pulp mills operating on the Samoa Peninsula. The closure of the pulp mills, use it or lose it state law with regard to surface water, and tens of millions of dollars in infrastructure needs for a 50-year-old delivery system sparked the unprecedented public education and outreach effort.

[www.hbmwd.com](http://www.hbmwd.com)

### **About California Water Environment Association (CWEA)**

Established in 1927 to train wastewater professionals, the CWEA has expanded to include protecting the water environment through education and training. It offers scholarships to college students in addition to public education workshops, instruction on new regulations, and technical certification. [www.cwea.org](http://www.cwea.org)