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EPA Announces \$173 Million Investment to Strengthen Drought Resilience in Ventura, California

This investment is part of a \$38 billion for America's water infrastructure through WIFIA

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WASHINGTON — At an event in Ventura, California, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox today announced two Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) loans totaling \$173 million. With these loans, the City of Ventura will establish a new, local drought-resistant water supply to enhance the city's resilience to climate change while creating good paying jobs.

“Here in Ventura, drought is a significant issue that threatens the security of this great community. The upgrades made possible by EPA's \$173 million WIFIA loans will help the city increase its water supply by an incredible 20 percent and strengthen the area's economic vitality,” **said EPA Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox.** “This announcement demonstrates why water infrastructure investments are so central to President Biden's Investing in America agenda. Thanks to programs like WIFIA and the historic \$50 billion for water under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, EPA is rebuilding essential water infrastructure to address community needs while creating good-paying jobs in the process.”

Due to local drought conditions, the City of Ventura is facing a projected water supply shortfall by 2035. EPA's WIFIA loans totaling \$173 million will support the city in designing and constructing projects to increase potable water supplies by 20% with a combination of purified local recycled water and

groundwater. A new Advanced Water Purification Facility will produce up to 5,400 acre-feet of potable water per year. The project will upgrade the existing Ventura Water Reclamation Facility with up to six new groundwater injection and extraction wells, and an ocean outfall and discharge pipeline.

President Biden's Investing in America agenda is rebuilding infrastructure and boosting U.S. competitiveness while creating good-paying jobs. In Ventura, EPA's WIFIA loans will save the city approximately \$53 million while construction and operation are estimated to create approximately 1,100 jobs. EPA is accelerating upgrades to critical drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure with a historic \$50 billion investment provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

"Climate change has made access to clean water and the health of our waterways two of the most critical issues facing the Central Coast. That's why, as my colleagues and I have crafted laws like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act, Water Resources Development Act, and our recent federal budgets, we have made sure to include robust investments in the drought resiliency and environmental preservation efforts that will help our communities," **said U.S. Congressman Salud Carbajal**. "I'm pleased to see those efforts result in more than \$170 million for the City of Ventura exactly for these purposes: guaranteeing a reliable and drought-resistant water supply for our neighborhoods and protecting a key estuary and its habitats. As weather patterns continue to swing to heavier extremes – like we've seen with historic drought giving way to nearly three months of atmospheric rivers – the more we will need forward-looking investments in resiliency for the Central Coast."

"In these unprecedented times, where we face more frequent and rapidly intensifying threats to our nation's infrastructure, it is imperative that we continue to invest in climate-resilient projects and a clean-energy economy. As part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda, the City of Ventura has secured critical funding to protect our water supply from persistent drought conditions and preserve an important environmental habitat, while creating good-paying local jobs," **said U.S. Congresswoman Julia Brownley**. "In strong partnership with the Biden-Harris administration, I stand ready to deliver the federal resources our communities need to not only grow the American economy, but uplift America's working families."

Assistant Administrator Fox was joined at the event by Ventura Mayor Joe Schroeder, California Water Board Chair Joaquin Esquivel, and other local officials.

"We are grateful to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for awarding the City of Ventura a transformative \$173 million WIFIA loan. This funding is a vital investment in our community's water infrastructure, ensuring the well-being and prosperity of our residents. With the EPA's support, we can now embark on crucial projects that will enhance our drinking water systems, improve wastewater treatment, and promote sustainable water practices," **said Ventura Mayor Joe Schroeder**. "This partnership exemplifies the power of collaboration and sets us on a path towards a resilient, thriving future."

"Adapting to California's hotter, drier climate requires investing in local efforts to create water supplies that can withstand drought and other extreme conditions. By managing water more holistically and connecting the drops across our watersheds, solutions like Ventura's advanced purification plant help ensure that people have access to clean water for the long-term," **said E. Joaquin Esquivel, Chair of the**

California Water Boards. “This federal investment goes a long way toward making water more affordable, especially when combined with California’s recent, historic water investments.”

In addition to bolstering potable water supplies, this project will protect valuable habitat for numerous sensitive and native species and support compliance with a consent decree by diverting flows away from the Santa Clara Estuary to be treated at the new Advanced Water Purification Facility.

Learn more about [EPA’s WIFIA Program](#) and water infrastructure investments under the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#).

Background

Established by the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014, the WIFIA program is a federal loan program administered by EPA. The WIFIA program’s aim is to accelerate investment in the nation’s water infrastructure by providing long-term, low-cost supplemental credit assistance for regionally and nationally significant projects. The WIFIA program has an active pipeline of pending applications for projects that will result in billions of dollars in water infrastructure investment and thousands of jobs.

EPA is currently accepting letters of interest for WIFIA loans. [Learn more about submitting a letter of interest for a WIFIA loan](#).

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