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**No landing here; birds and airports do not mix
*To prevent birds from landing on a newly constructed reservoir near
the Redlands Airport the reservoir will be covered
with 7.5 million floating balls***

If there is a reservoir along the Pacific Flyway, birds will find it.

That is not usually a problem except at the recently constructed Citrus Reservoir where migrating birds could pose a risk to aircraft flying in and out of the neighboring Redlands Municipal Airport.

San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, in collaboration with San Geronimo Pass Water Agency, has come up with a solution that will not only protect the birds and aircraft but will also prevent algae buildup and reduce evaporation from the reservoir. Valley District will cover the 130-million-gallon reservoir with 5-inch, black plastic balls to camouflage the reservoir.

Valley District released the first 80,000 of a total 7.5 million Rhombo Hexoshield floating balls (or rhomboids) last week. At a cost of \$0.24 each, the total cost to install the 7.5 million rhomboids is \$1.8 million and will take nearly one year to install. They require no construction, parts, labor, or maintenance, aside from occasional rotation.

“We think this is a terrific solution to a very difficult challenge,” said Valley District General Manager Douglas Headrick. “The rhomboids will keep the birds from being attracted to the reservoir while enabling us to cut back on the need for chemicals to treat the water for algae. Covering the reservoir this way will also reduce evaporation by 20 million gallons each year, enough water to meet the indoor and outdoor watering needs of 120 homes for one year.”

This alternative aligns with certain mitigation requirements as outlined in the Wildlife Habitat Mitigation Plan. This product was chosen because it will provide the necessary protection and deterrent to water fowl while at the same time allowing firefighting helicopters to access the water in the reservoir when fighting wildfires.

Located in Mentone, an unincorporated area of San Bernardino County east of Redlands, Citrus Reservoir holds enough water to supply 800 homes for one year. The reservoir and associated pump station were completed two years ago as part of the final stage of the State Water Project’s East Branch Extension which carries water from Northern California through Highland eastward to Mentone, Cherry Valley, Beaumont and other communities in the San Geronimo Pass.

About San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District

Valley District is a State Water contractor that provides supplemental water to 13 retail water agencies from Rialto to Yucaipa, meeting the water needs of over 700,000 business and residential customers. In addition to providing supplemental water from Northern California, Valley District is responsible for long-range water planning throughout its 350 square mile service area, including importing supplemental water, groundwater management, and wastewater and storm water disposal. Visit sbrvmwd.com for more information.

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