



SAN GORGONIO PASS
WATER AGENCY
A California State Water Project Contractor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local Workshop Series Helps Region Grow Water Security from the Ground Up

BEAUMONT, CA (March 12, 2026) – Residents across the Pass area recently turned out in force for a climate-ready tree workshop, part of an ongoing water conservation education series led by San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA) in partnership with the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District (IERCD) and the UC Master Gardener Program. Through interactive demonstrations and expert guidance, the partnership is equipping residents with the tools to conserve water and strengthen the region’s long-term resilience.

“We are truly inspired by the turnout and energy we are seeing from our community,” said Sarah Wargo, SGPWA Board Secretary and Chair of the Water Conservation and Education Committee. “When neighbors take time out of their day to learn how to save water and care for their landscapes responsibly, it speaks volumes about the values we share here in the Pass area. Our partnership with IERCD and the UC Master Gardeners is about giving people practical skills to build a water-wise future together.”

As a State Water Contractor, SGPWA imports water through the State Water Project to supplement local groundwater. That water travels roughly 500 miles across California before reaching the San Gorgonio Pass. Using water efficiently helps reduce demand on imported water and preserve critical water resources during drought.

At the latest workshops, which drew a total of 100 residents, attendees received regionally suited fruit trees such as pomegranate, persimmon, and fig. Each session explores a different topic, including drought-tolerant landscaping, efficient irrigation practices, and improving soil health. Participants receive hands-on support and leave with tips they can apply at home.

Outdoor irrigation accounts for up to 50 to 70 percent of residential water use in Southern California, making it the single greatest opportunity for meaningful conservation at home. By shifting to climate-ready trees and efficient irrigation systems such as drip lines and smart controllers, households can reduce outdoor water use by 20 to 50 percent. Fruit trees provide shade that can lower cooling costs and require far less water than traditional turf once established.

The series is the product of SGPWA and IERCD’s Water Conservation Programming Partnership, which delivers ongoing water education across the region. This year’s coordinated outreach is projected to include 10 community events and workshops expected to reach

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hundreds of residents, alongside 60 classroom presentations reaching about 1,800 students. With conservation at its core, the series will continue to turn education into action throughout 2026.

IERCD is a locally governed special district serving Riverside and San Bernardino counties, protecting natural resources through education and conservation. From classroom programs for local students to community workshops, technical assistance, and water-wise landscaping initiatives, IERCD delivers science-based solutions that promote soil health, habitat stewardship, and efficient water use. Through its partnership with SGPWA, this expertise reaches residents across the Pass area.

The University of California Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Program is a volunteer-led, research-based public education program that brings trusted horticultural expertise to local communities. UC-trained Master Gardeners provide science-backed guidance on sustainable landscaping, soil health, pest management, and climate-appropriate plant selection in partnership with SGPWA and IERCD.

Together, SGPWA, IERCD, and the UC Master Gardeners are helping the San Gorgonio Pass grow smarter, conserve more, and prepare for long-term water security. Learn more at sgpwa.com.

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About San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency

Formed in 1961, SGPWA is a State Water Contractor that serves a 225-square-mile area of western Riverside County. The service area includes the cities of Calimesa, Beaumont, and Banning, and the communities of Cherry Valley, Cabazon, and the Banning Bench. In addition to importing State Water Project (SWP) water from Northern California to augment local groundwater sources, the Agency builds local system infrastructure, participates in water transfers, partners in statewide water projects and collaborates on regional water reliability and conservation efforts.