

# Establishing Water Conservation Certification

## *A New Criteria For Statewide Water Benefits*

by Frances Spivy-Weber

Over one million low-flow toilets have been installed in Los Angeles. Any day now water agencies in the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's service area will reach the two million mark on low-flow toilets. These achievements coupled with new conservation technology such as satellite-directed systems for landscape watering, low water use X-ray machines, water-saving brooms for outdoor cleaning, and water-efficient washing machines for home and commercial laundries are making water conservation a major contributor to meeting California's water needs in the future. But not everyone, even among large agencies, is pursuing conservation, and that must change.

The development of these new technologies and impressive successes in Los Angeles, for example, has occurred in part because many water agencies throughout the state signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 1992 with environmental groups, including the Mono Lake Committee, volunteering to develop programs to test new technologies and make those that are cost effective available to their customers. Now this voluntary program is poised to grow significantly larger when the CALFED Bay-Delta Program mandate to create a certification plan for agencies interested in receiving CALFED benefits (state and federal grants and loans and possibly water from new investments) is implemented. (The CALFED Bay-Delta Program combines the efforts of federal and state agencies with regional water agencies, environmentalists, farmers, and

business interests to develop and fund projects and programs to restore the San Francisco Bay and San Joaquin/Sacramento Delta.) By the end of 2002, there will be a plan and recommended legislation, and with luck by the end of 2004 there will be a statewide certification program up and running.

The Mono Lake Committee and other environmental and water agency members of the California Urban Water Conservation Council have served as advisors to CALFED on a draft plan that focuses on water agencies with over 20,000 hook-ups. The plan will wind its way through extensive public outreach this summer; go to the Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee and CALFED Policy Group (federal and state agencies) this fall; then move to the legislature and governor in 2003; and finally travel through a regulation-writing process by the agency that is designated to implement the certification program. Whew!

If you are interested in knowing more about what is happening—up to the minute—and if you want to make sure that your own water agency is doing everything they can to ensure a successful program, do not hesitate to contact Fran ([frances@monolake.org](mailto:frances@monolake.org)) at (310) 316-0041. The draft plan and the schedule for public outreach will be posted at [www.monolake.org](http://www.monolake.org). ❖

*Fran Spivy-Weber is the Committee's Co-Executive Director of Policy. She is enjoying spending time in her second home at the north end of the Los Angeles Aqueduct in Lee Vining.*

## Spring Cleaning

*This spring volunteers Delinda Briggs, Paul McFarland, and Justin Hite along with Committee staff (at right) Greg Reis, Santiago Escruceria, Geoff McQuilkin, and Arya Degenhardt cleared everything from plastic bags to car tires and batteries from the Lee Vining Creek Trail. Volunteers are always needed to help keep the Creek Trail clean, so let us know if you would like to lend a hand!*

