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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 30, 2017

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MWA Taps Tom McCarthy as New GM

Kirby Brill Set to Retire in July

Apple Valley, CA—The Mojave Water Agency Board of Directors have selected Tom McCarthy, a professional civil engineer and geologist with more than 20 years of experience, to serve as the Agency's new general manager. Kirby Brill, the current general manager is set to retire July 21.

McCarthy's contract was unanimously approved at the May 25 regular Board of Directors meeting.

Kimberly Cox, MWA Board President, said the Board of Directors was looking for experience in key areas and the right people skills. "Tom McCarthy is a great fit for MWA. He brings experience in geology, engineering, project management, and in water adjudication. leader. We are fortunate to have found someone with his unique skill set."

Currently, McCarthy serves as the Acting Engineering Manager/Chief Engineer and Water Resources Planning Manager for Anaheim Public Utilities. In these roles he has managed an annual operating budget of nearly \$70 million, and a \$120 million five year capital improvement plan.

McCarthy will take the reins of MWA on June 12. He said he is ready to take on this new challenge.

"This is an incredible opportunity to be a part of the Mojave Water Agency that has a growing statewide reputation for quality and innovation," McCarthy said. "I am looking forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the region's stakeholders and the excellent staff to meet the region's future water challenges."



In addition to his experience with Anaheim Public Utilities, he brings private sector experience with MWH Global Inc. where he served as the Project Technical Lead for all water resource projects based in the Southwest, and led multi-disciplinary teams from around the world. He holds a Master of Science degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Geological Science from the University of Oregon.

Kirby Brill, has led MWA for the last 17 years as General Manager; an era marked by regional collaborative water management.

Cox said Brill leaves behind a legacy that has well positioned the Agency to face future water challenges.

“When Kirby joined MWA in 2000, the Agency’s reputation was less than stellar and its role was obscure as the Adjudication was in the early stages of implementation. Kirby opened the doors to our stakeholders to be a part of shaping the region’s water future. Instead of being told what MWA was going to do, our stakeholders had a seat at the table and participated in key decisions that have helped drought-proof our region, and provide a platform of sustainable water management to support land use decisions in the communities we serve.”

Brill said his departure is bittersweet. “I am proud of the work that we as a region have accomplished. Our Board of Directors had the courage to make tough decisions, and our staff has worked collaboratively and creatively to accomplish some high goals. I will miss working with such an extraordinary group of people. It’s truly been a blessing.”

Among the key initiatives developed during Brill’s tenure were capital investments in recharge projects in the Morongo Basin, Newberry Springs, and the Victor Valley including the Regional Recharge and Recovery project that delivers water from the California Aqueduct in Hesperia to recharge sites in the floodplain aquifer along the Mojave River in Hesperia and southern Apple Valley for later extraction.

During this era, MWA made strategic water purchases, and initiated a science-based decision-making process by instituting a data collection and evaluation program for the region’s water supply to effectively manage each basin. Additionally, MWA’s award winning Small Water Systems Assistance Program was developed. This program offers expertise to small systems to improve efficiencies, comply with new state regulations, and provide assistance with grant applications.

Using the growing collaboration in the region as a foundation, per person water use was decreased by 48 percent through programs such as the Cash for Grass Program for homeowners and large institutions, replacement of water wasting home fixtures, as well as public education efforts.

An active member in the California water community, Brill served as the Vice Chair of the California Groundwater Coalition and a member of the Board of Trustees with both the Southern California Water Committee and the State Water Contractors Association.

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