



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — February 5, 2016

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**IDAHO WATER RESOURCES BOARD AWARDS SMART WATER GRANT
TO LOCAL BLAINE COUNTY COALITION**

SUN VALLEY, IDAHO – Collaboration among the Sun Valley Institute for Resilience (the Institute), the Sun Valley Elkhorn Association (SVEA), and the Sun Valley Water and Sewer District (SVWSD) has yielded a \$12,212 grant from the Idaho Water Resources Board for “smart” water systems.

SVEA will install a “smart” landscape irrigation system at the Harker Center in Sun Valley, Idaho to serve as a pilot and potential model to be replicated throughout the City of Sun Valley and other areas of the Wood River Valley. The Harker Center is located in Elkhorn and is a high visibility and well-used common area of the community with tennis courts, swimming pool, park, and community center, among many other amenities. The goal is to save 500,000 to 600,000 gallons of water per year at the Harker Center. If expanded to all of the common areas within the SVEA, there is the potential to save one million-plus gallons of water per year.

“We are very excited about the potential for this pilot project,” stated Chuck Williamson, General Manager for SVEA. “If implemented by all the 1,630 Homeowners within the 13 subdivisions and 24 condominium or townhome associations of SVEA, we could save over 70 Million gallons of landscape irrigation water per year.” SVEA has contributed \$15,000 toward the 66% match requirement of the Idaho Water Resources Board.

“This project fits well with our conservation goals,” added Pat McMahon, General Manager of the Sun Valley Water and Sewer District. SVWSD contributed \$5,000 toward the match requirement of the grant.

“This is a perfect example of the kind of project the Sun Valley Institute for Resilience seeks to support in our community and we are so pleased to be collaborating with these partners to help make it happen,” stated Aimee Christensen, Executive Director of the Institute. “In our high-desert ecosystem, water is a valuable and scarce resource and inefficient water use threatens the availability of ground water in Blaine County and beyond. The use of smart water irrigation systems is one way our community can increase our resilience to the drought conditions we have seen and are likely to continue to see.”

Smart water systems rely on sophisticated controllers to deliver just enough water to keep plants healthy. Project consultant John Balint, who has over the past several years spearheaded the development of an effort dubbed the “Billion Gallon Project”, has been instrumental in the design of the project. Balint described the benefits, “Increasing the distribution uniformity of irrigation systems through proper head spacing and nozzle sizing along with the implementation of controls and special sensors are both key to deliver the right amount of water based on the moisture in the soil. Weather sensors calculate evaporation rates based on measurements of sunlight and temperature. Special sprinkler heads deliver water at slow, steady rates that allow the soil to absorb the moisture and limit unnecessary runoff or pooling.”

For this pilot project at the Harker Center, two Idaho companies, Baseline, Inc. and Silver Creek Irrigation, have generously donated a state-of-the-art Baseline controller to demonstrate the enhanced water management capabilities available utilizing today's technology. Evergreen Landscaping will be performing the installation with Balint serving as a Project Consultant. Evergreen will also be donating moisture sensing equipment to help assure water reduction goals are met.

All of these innovations have enough potential that government agencies are offering to help pay for homeowners and organizations to deploy them. To build on this opportunity, the newly-formed Galena Ground Water District recently joined with the SVWSD, SVEA, and the Institute to apply for a much broader smart water grant with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

"We have been working collaboratively with the SVEA and the Institute to raise matching funds for our proposal," stated McMahon, who also serves as chair of Galena Ground Water District.

Harry Griffith, Executive Director of Sun Valley Economic Development, noted, "Smart irrigation systems deliver water more efficiently and at less cost. This is a sensible investment that will save water while also generating financial returns. As a member of the boards of the Sun Valley Institute for Resilience and the Sun Valley Elkhorn Association, this was an opportunity to bring together the right partners to make this happen for our community."

The Harker Center pilot project will get going in earnest this spring when Balint begins work on the project. His Billion Gallon Project is partnering with local landscaping companies, homeowner associations, municipalities, and organizations such as the Institute on the widespread implementation of smart water irrigation systems with the aim of conserving a billion gallons of water in the Wood River Valley over four or five years. The Harker Center Project is a model for this ambitious effort.

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About the Sun Valley Elkhorn Association

The Sun Valley Elkhorn Association (SVEA) is the Homeowners Association (a nonprofit Idaho corporation) charged with the duties of managing the planned community known as Elkhorn. The Elkhorn area is approximately 4000 acres and makes up slightly over half of the total area of the City of Sun Valley. Elkhorn consists of 13 subdivisions and 24 Condominium or Townhome Associations. The mission of the Board and Staff of the Sun Valley Elkhorn Association shall be to maintain and enhance the property value and the quality of life in Elkhorn by: providing excellent facilities, amenities and accompanying services; prudently managing the finances of the Association; proactively keeping members informed of issues affecting them and the broader Elkhorn Community; preserving the beauty of Elkhorn by guiding the design of attractive residences and landscaping and by protecting Association-owned land; and assuring compliance with the approved rules, regulations, and governance policies.



About the Sun Valley Water and Sewer District

The Sun Valley Water and Sewer District is the water supply utility providing sewer and water services to residents of the City of Sun Valley. The District is deeply involved in long term planning to reduce the amount of water used for landscape irrigation. Water is the common bond that brings together Sun Valley's diverse population. Properly managing water resources continues to be critical to our overall quality of life.



About the Sun Valley Institute for Resilience

The Sun Valley Institute for Resilience advances policy leadership, public engagement and targeted investments to ensure economic prosperity, environmental protection and human wellbeing in its home community of Idaho's Wood River Valley and beyond. Leaders in the Wood River Valley founded the Sun Valley Institute for Resilience in the Spring of 2015 in world famous Sun Valley to both protect and enhance local quality of place by strengthening the area's ability to bounce back from harm, whether from wildfires, poor snowfall, or global economic conditions, and to serve as a resource for communities everywhere. The Institute is doing so by mobilizing investments to build more robust energy, food, transportation and water systems and diversify the economy in collaboration with and support of local governments, businesses, citizens and non-profits. The Institute provides thought leadership through research, data and tools development and dissemination with its academic partners, and hosts marquee events to further research, knowledge and deployment of community resilience. From the original Native American inhabitants to the miners and ranchers of the valley's early days, from the Union Pacific engineers who built the world's first chairlift to those who challenge themselves in its mountains and rivers today, Sun Valley is about history and tradition, grit and perseverance, well-being and quality of life. The risks, assets and values of Sun Valley make it the perfect home for an institute dedicated to resilience. For more information, visit sunvalleyinstitute.org and follow us on Twitter @SVResilience and @AimeeGlobal and Facebook at facebook.com/sunvalleyinstitute For more information, please visit: www.sunvalleyinstitute.org