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Congresswoman Matsui, Local Elected Officials Announce \$500k in EPA Funding for Sacramento County

SACRAMENTO, CA – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento) joined representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Sacramento County elected officials to announce a \$500,000 EPA Climate Showcase Communities grant awarded to Sacramento County to reduce carbon emissions in the region. Hosted by the Sierra Health Foundation, the event also highlighted the county's award winning River Friendly Landscaping Program, which is expected to reduce greenhouse gasses by over 10,000 metric tons annually.

Congresswoman Matsui's remarks, as prepared for delivery, are included below:

"Here in Sacramento, we are fortunate to be at the confluence of two great rivers - the Sacramento and the American - that are shining examples of why our community is a great place to live, work and play. But it is extremely important that we protect these treasures, so that future generations can enjoy them like we have.

"Today, we are here to announce a federal grant that will allow Sacramento to expand their award winning River Friendly Landscaping program and do just that. This Climate Showcase Communities Grant is one of the first federal grants to assist local governments in establishing and implementing climate change initiatives.

"As we all know, combating global warming will take strong leadership and collaboration. It will also require that we become more environmentally-conscious of our carbon footprint. The River Friendly Landscaping project encompasses both collaboration and a holistic approach that supports the integrity of our eco-system.

"In Congress, we are working to ensure and encourage these practices and collaborations. Last summer, the House passed the American Clean Energy and Security Act, which would put us on a path to energy independence and reduce the pollution that causes global warming. Included in the legislation, is a component I authored through the Energy Conservation through Trees Act. As friends of the River Friendly Landscaping program know, when properly placed, mature trees can reduce a buildings temperature by as much as 20 degrees, reducing summer cooling costs by 25-40%. Trees placed near asphalt also can cool the environment.

“Similarly, I introduced the Smart Planning for Smart Growth Act in Congress, and had it included in the climate change legislation. This legislation provides a comprehensive approach to limit vehicle miles traveled and gives communities the incentives they need to grow and prosper. The legislation creates the framework needed for states and communities to meet greenhouse gas reduction goals by offering incentives they need to grow and develop in a way that complements our national global warming strategy. And these are just some of the many smart initiatives that can help to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions - and the good news - is that there are so many more.

“What is wonderful about the County’s model is that it can be replicated across the country to promote the creation of sustainable climate management programs. These will be the foundation for stabilizing our climate, but also for creating jobs.

“The county’s proposal includes an expansion of their ‘Green Gardener’ training program for landscape design and maintenance contractors. This will lead to the adoption more whole systems approach to gardening and landscaping that benefits you the gardener as well as the community and the environment. And the River Friendly Landscaping program does exactly that.

“I am glad to have joined you today to help make this federal grant announcement. And I am glad the County has taken the initiative to help conserve water and energy, reduce our landfills, and protect our air and water. I look forward to working with you and the EPA as we continue to move our region forward.”

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