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# California Water Service Launches Fifth Annual Classroom Conservation Competition

## Elementary students encouraged to submit water conservation projects

SAN JOSE, Calif., Oct. 09, 2018 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- California Water Service (Cal Water) (NYSE: CWT) and the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) today announced the launch of the fifth annual Cal Water H<sub>2</sub>O Challenge. The free, project-based competition invites fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade classrooms in Cal Water service areas to develop and implement solutions for water issues. To date, more than 200 classrooms have participated in the program. This year, Cal Water will also launch a new individual competition, in which students can submit art and media pieces that focus on water conservation, to expand the program and engage more students in caring for water.

The Cal Water H<sub>2</sub>O Challenge asks students to identify a local or global water issue and work together to address their chosen issue through research and experiments over four to eight weeks. Students and their teachers then submit a project portfolio that includes descriptions of their work and student/teacher reflections. Participating teachers are also provided with technical and monetary support through educational resources and consultants.

"The Cal Water H<sub>2</sub>O Challenge is an immersive experience for everyone involved; it gives students and educators the chance to view water conservation through a unique lens," said Martin A. Kropelnicki, Cal Water President and CEO. "We are pleased that, through this ongoing partnership with NAAEE, we can continue to provide quality, service, and value to the communities we serve by engaging our future leaders—and often our best ambassadors—in the importance of water use efficiency and other water supply issues."

Christiane Maertens, Deputy Director, NAAEE, adds that the project incorporates Common Core State Standards for English, Language Arts, and Math while complementing Next Generation Science Standards. "Participating educators and students are offered an interdisciplinary approach to enhancing students' understanding of water-based science concepts in their community and the world," Maertens said.

The winning classroom will receive \$3,500 and an all-expenses-paid camping trip to the Santa Monica Mountains with NatureBridge. Runners-up receive grants and additional prizes for students and teachers. In October 2018, teachers of prize-winning classes from Years 1-4 of the Challenge will attend NAAEE's 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Spokane, Wash., for a winners' summit and celebration.

Mr. Mike Buckley and his fifth-grade students from Murdock Elementary (Willows, Calif.) won the 2018 grand prize. The students tested their local water, met with an expert on groundwater, and installed 25 storm drain markers in their community. "Students became

aware that drinking water is a vital resource that many people around the world are lacking,” Mr. Buckley said. “Essentially, this is a great real-world assignment that they can take for the rest of their lives and pass on to others.”

Cal Water will soon launch another free challenge aimed at individual students in 4th-12th grades living in a Cal Water service area. In this challenge, students can create and submit original art, photography, or video (along with a short statement) about caring for water. Official judges and the public will both vote on submissions; winners will be highlighted on the Cal Water H<sub>2</sub>O Challenge site and receive up to \$250 in gift cards plus other prizes.

For more information about the programs and eligibility requirements, visit [challenge.calwater.com](http://challenge.calwater.com).

### **About Cal Water**

California Water Service serves about 2 million people through 484,900 service connections in California. The utility has provided water service in the state since 1926. Additional information may be obtained online at [www.calwater.com](http://www.calwater.com).

### **About NAAEE**

For more than four decades, the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) has been dedicated to accelerating environmental literacy and civic engagement through the power of education. NAAEE supports a network of 20,000 educators and 56 regional affiliate organizations working in environmental education in more than 30 countries. For more information, visit [www.naaee.org](http://www.naaee.org).