

Water official leaving Calaveras

By Dana Nichols

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Record Staff Writer

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SAN ANDREAS - Joone Lopez is leaving her position as general manager of Calaveras County Water District to accept the same job at a much larger water district in Southern California.

Lopez's last day working for the Calaveras water district will be June 15. That's two years and two weeks after she started.

"It is so bittersweet," Lopez said. "It is so sad because this is such a great organization. I have had such a good board and staff."

Lopez's husband and mother live in Southern California.

She will be working for the Moulton Niguel Water District that serves Laguna Niguel and portions of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, Mission Viejo and Dana Point.

During her time with Calaveras County Water District, Lopez helped obtain \$10 million in state and federal grants and plan for a new headquarters facility. Construction crews will break ground on that structure next month.

"Joone has provided CCWD with a level of professional competency that has had a profound effect upon the entire agency," Board President Don Stump said. "She has led this organization to a new level of efficiency, with a status and respect within the industry that the district had never attained in the past. CCWD was lucky to have Joone, and we all wish her the very best as her career advances."

When Lopez came to the district in 2010, she was hired for a base salary of \$145,000 annually. At Moulton Niguel, she will start with a base salary of \$179,900.

Lopez replaces General Manager Robert C. Gumerman, who is retiring after 10 years there.

Moulton Niguel has more than 50,000 water and sewer connections, and a district population of about 167,000. In contrast, The Calaveras district has about 12,500 water connections and 4,500 sewer connections. The county has a population of about 45,000, although many residents are served by other utility districts or use their own well and septic systems.

Contact reporter Dana M. Nichols at (209) 607-1361 or dnichols@recordnet.com. Visit his blog at recordnet.com/calaverasblog.

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