
Celeste Cantú
General Manager

*Santa Ana Watershed
Project Authority*



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Celeste Cantú joined the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) five years ago and has been working on the crest-to-coast, corner-to-corner Integrated Regional Watershed Management Plan called, One Water One Watershed (OWOW) that addresses all water-related issues, joins all entities and hundreds of stakeholders seeking to create a new vision of sustainability for the Santa Ana River Watershed.

SAWPA owns the Inland Empire Brine Line, a utility that collects salt from the upper watershed groundwater to improve water quality in the Santa Ana River and benefits the lower watershed.

Celeste served as the Executive Director for the California State Water Resources Control Board, which is responsible for water rights and water quality for the State.

During the Clinton Administration, Celeste served as the USDA Rural Development State Director for California.

Celeste was born and raised in the Imperial Valley to a pioneer family. There she served first as Planning Director for her hometown, Calexico, and later as Executive Director for the Imperial Valley Housing Authority. Celeste has a BA from Yale in Urban Planning and Policy and a Masters in Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. She lives in Temecula with her husband, Dr. Barry Stampfl, an English Professor at SDSU, Imperial Valley Campus. They have two sons.