



## NEWS RELEASE

October 30, 2006

### **Ministry of Nature Protection Basin Management Office Opens in the Akhuryan Basin**

On October 31, the USAID, with support from its implementing partner, PA Government Services Inc. (PA), will hold an opening ceremony at the newly rehabilitated offices of the Akhuryan Basin Management Office (BMO). The ceremony will be presided over by Deputy Minister of Nature Protection Hakob Matilyan and USAID Project Management Specialist Marina Vardanyan.

The Akhuryan BMO is one of five BMOs in Armenia established in 2003 under the Water Resources Management Agency (WRMA) of the Ministry of Nature Protection. USAID and PA, through the *Program for Institutional and Regulatory Strengthening of Water Management in Armenia*, have been working closely to assist with development of the Akhuryan, Sevan-Hrazdan, Ararat, and Southern Basin BMOs. The Akhuryan office opening marks a major step forward in water resources management for the country.

As fledgling organizations with an important mandate and diverse responsibilities, the BMOs have developed and become fully operational. To assist with BMO development the USAID Program has provided numerous strategic interventions in the form of training courses and technical expertise while also providing commodity support in the form of office rehabilitation, computer and office equipment, furnishings, technical equipment. Soon this will be followed by a vehicle for the BMO's field use.

BMOs are designated to play a critical role in water sector management in Armenia. They are tasked with developing and implementing water basin management plans under the National Water Policy and the National Water Program. They also accept water use permit applications and record water use permits issued by the WRMA while assuring water users' compliance with conditions set forth in the water use permits. Developing water extraction regimes and ensuring water resource protection are other BMO responsibilities.

One of the BMO's new and expanding roles is to serve as a direct link between the WRMA and the local water users served by the BMO. This function is nascent but as the BMO grows and develops, community and water user relations will become a core function of the BMO and its staff.

USAID looks forward to future BMO office opening ceremonies in the Southern, Ararat, and Sevan-Hrazdan BMOs.

For more information on USAID assistance to the water sector in Armenia by PA Government Services Inc., please visit [www.paconsulting.am/water](http://www.paconsulting.am/water) or contact: *Lusine Taslakyanyan* at (10) 586-012 telephone or [Lusine.Taslakyan@paconsulting.am](mailto:Lusine.Taslakyan@paconsulting.am)

***USAID Program for Institutional and Regulatory Strengthening of Water Management in Armenia***