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Press contacts:

Liz Crosson, Los Angeles Waterkeeper, 310-394-6162 ext. 100, 541-944-5589 (cell)

Mati Waiya, Wishtoyo Foundation / Ventura Coastkeeper Executive Director, 805-794-1248

Jason Weiner, Wishtoyo Foundation / Ventura Coastkeeper General Counsel, 805-823-3301

Ron Bottorff, Chair, Friends of the Santa Clara River, 805-498-4323

Groups Reach Agreement to Protect Santa Clara River Watershed

Los Angeles, California – March 16, 2015 (Los Angeles, CA) – Recently the Los Angeles Waterkeeper, Wishtoyo Foundation, Wishtoyo Foundation’s Ventura Coastkeeper Program, and Friends of the Santa Clara River reached an agreement with Magic Mountain to address pollution in the Santa Clara River. The environmental groups filed a lawsuit in 2012 under the federal Clean Water Act, alleging that the amusement park’s stormwater discharges violate water quality limits.

“This agreement marks a significant step in the stewardship of the Santa Clara River – an incredibly important watershed to nearby communities and several endangered and threatened species,” said Liz Crosson, Executive Director of Los Angeles Waterkeeper.

Bonnie Rabjohn, Park President of Magic Mountain, stated “Magic Mountain is committed to protecting our environment and we look forward to working with these organizations over the next few years to improve water quality and support conservational business practices.”

In addition to making a substantial contribution to an environmental project designed to protect the Santa Clara River, Magic Mountain will develop and implement an improved Facility Trash Management Plan as well as new and improved best management practices to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act and to protect the Santa Clara River.

“Magic Mountain’s agreement to better management practices that affect the Santa Clara River will improve the health of the river and will give its wildlife and resources a chance to recover. It is our responsibility to protect the history of Chumash life to assure the continuum of our Traditions today and into the future,” said Mati Waiya, Chumash Ceremonial Elder and Executive Director of the Wishtoyo Foundation and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program.

“This commitment by Magic Mountain properly protects the birthrights of the communities we represent from Valencia, Santa Clarita, Piru, Fillmore, Santa Paula, Saticoy, El Rio, Ventura, and Oxnard to a clean and healthy Santa Clara River that contains an abundance of native species and ample recreational, wildlife viewing, and

educational opportunities,” said Jason Weiner, General Counsel for Wishtoyo and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program.

Flowing approximately 116 miles from the headwaters of the San Gabriel Mountains to the Pacific Ocean through a 1,600 square mile watershed, the Santa Clara River is southern California’s last naturally flowing major river system. In addition to being the largest wild river remaining in southern California, the Santa Clara River is home to as many as 17 species listed as threatened or endangered by state and federal governments, including the Southern California Steelhead, and provides unmatched recreational, cultural, aesthetic, and spiritual opportunities and resources in the region.

“The settlement agreement, the culmination of an involved legal process, represents a major step forward in protecting the water quality and wildlife of the Santa Clara River ecosystem,” said Ron Bottorff, Chair of the Friends of the Santa Clara River.

ABOUT LOS ANGELES WATERKEEPER

Founded in 1993, LA Waterkeeper’s mission is to protect and restore Santa Monica Bay, San Pedro Bay, and adjacent waters through enforcement, fieldwork, and community action. We work to achieve this goal through litigation and regulatory programs that ensure water quality protections in waterways throughout L.A. County. LA Waterkeeper’s Litigation & Advocacy, Marine, and Water Quality teams conduct interconnected projects that serve this mission.

ABOUT WISHTOYO AND ITS VENTURA COASTKEEPER PROGRAM

Founded in 1997, the Wishtoyo Foundation’s mission is to preserve, protect and restore Chumash culture, the culture and history of coastal communities, cultural resources, and the environment. Ventura Coastkeeper, a program of Wishtoyo, protects, preserves, and restores the ecological integrity and water quality of Ventura County’s inland water bodies, coastal waters, and watersheds.

ABOUT FRIENDS OF THE SANTA CLARA RIVER

Friends of the Santa Clara River formed in 1993 and is dedicated to the protection, enhancement and management of the resources of the Santa Clara River watershed.

Earthrise Law Center of Lewis & Clark Law School and Dan Mensher of Keller Rohrback in Seattle, WA represented Los Angeles Waterkeeper, Wishtoyo Foundation, Wishtoyo’s Ventura Coastkeeper Program, and Friends of the Santa Clara River as lead counsel in this matter.