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For Immediate Release: August 12, 2020

LOS ANGELES WATERKEEPER PREVAILS IN HISTORIC WASTEWATER RECYCLING SUIT
Precedent-Setting Decision Could Benefit 10 Million Residents

Los Angeles, CA (August 12, 2020) – The Los Angeles Superior Court issued a historic ruling, in favor of Los Angeles Waterkeeper, that compels the State’s Water Resources Control Board (California’s lead water quality agency) to analyze whether it is “wasteful” and “unreasonable” to dump billions of gallons of wastewater uselessly into the sea, when it could instead be used productively to ensure the sustainability of California’s water resources.

The plants – Hyperion, Tillman, Burbank and Los Angeles-Glendale -- **dump an average of nearly 270 million gallons of treated water into the Los Angeles River and Pacific Ocean every day. Hyperion alone discharges enough treated wastewater into the ocean to fill the Rose Bowl 2 ½ times over every day. During most days, treated discharge from sewage plants makes up the majority of flow in the LA River.**

The precedent-setting decision has the potential to:

- Benefit 10 million residents by increasing local waters supplies
- Reduce the carbon footprint associated with pumping nearly two-thirds of our water from Northern California
- Lower rates for utility customers, who now foot the bill for costly imports in an era of increasing water scarcity and insecurity
- Reduce the amount of pollution reaching the LA River coastal waters, which are historically home to the most fouled beaches in the state.

In the next two decades, agencies could be compelled to recycle and reuse nearly 500 million gallons of wastewater currently discharged daily into rivers and coastal waters. That’s enough water to meet the needs of approximately 1.5 million families in Greater LA each day.

While the ruling applies specifically to the four facilities that discharge water into the LA River and Santa Monica Bay, it may set precedent throughout the state. Other stakeholders now have legal footing to challenge sewage agencies that discharge treated wastewater into waterways or the ocean, particularly in areas where local water supplies are scarce.

Bruce Reznik, Los Angeles Waterkeeper’s executive director said, “The days are numbered for the environmentally disastrous and economically costly practice of pumping water great distances over mountain ranges, using it once, and then basically throwing it away. We are thrilled with the decision of the Superior Court.”

To learn more about the plaintiff and counsel and for additional quotes - [click here](#).
To read the full court decision – [click here](#).

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