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New California Water Polluter Map Reveals Thousands of Violations *State Leaders Propose Rollbacks on Clean Water Law Enforcement*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 22, 2010

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On March 22, 2010, governments and organizations around the world celebrate World Water Day, through events highlighting the importance of clean water. California Coastkeeper Alliance (CCKA) is recognizing World Water Day through the release of its new series of maps that uncover information on pollution dischargers threatening Californians' enjoyment of healthy waterways.

California law requires the State and Regional Water Boards to issue mandatory minimum penalties (MMPs) for "serious" and "multiple chronic" water quality law violations. State databases show that 764 facilities statewide merited over 26,000 MMPs from January 2000 through March 2010, with the majority of MMPs occurring along the coast. Although over \$9 million in penalties have been collected since the law's inception in 2000, many penalties are never levied or collected by the Water Boards, and some facilities that trigger MMPs receive no enforcement action at all. Notably, the Water Boards have implemented an initiative to reduce the estimated 12,000 backlogged MMP violations, though work remains to be done.

The map is part of a larger effort by CCKA to increase the public's awareness of polluting facilities in their communities and to encourage the Water Boards to hold polluters accountable to laws protecting our waterways. CCKA and others are closely monitoring five bills currently before the California Legislature that would modify and, in some cases, significantly weaken the MMP program to allow violators to avoid penalties.

"Strong enforcement of laws protecting our waterways is an investment in clean water, which Californians cannot afford to go without," says Sara Aminzadeh, Programs Manager with California Coastkeeper Alliance. "Legislative proposals that roll back mandatory minimum penalties will limit the Water Boards' ability to fully enforce California's clean water laws and will send the wrong message to polluting facilities."

Visit www.cacoastkeeper.org to view the MMP Maps and find out more about CCKA's work to improve California water law enforcement.

The California Coastkeeper Alliance provides a statewide voice for safeguarding California's water, and its world-renowned coast and ocean, for the benefit of all Californians and California's future. Member organizations are Klamath Riverkeeper, Humboldt Baykeeper, Russian Riverkeeper, San Francisco Baykeeper, Monterey Coastkeeper, San Luis Obispo Coastkeeper, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, Ventura Coastkeeper, Santa Monica Baykeeper, Orange County Coastkeeper and its Inland Waterkeeper chapter, and San Diego Coastkeeper.

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