



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Wishtoyo Foundation and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program Reach Settlement with Waste Management Subsidiary G.I. Industries to Protect Arroyo Simi, Mugu Lagoon, and the Pacific Ocean from Polluted Stormwater Discharges**

*G.I. Industries Agrees to Implement Pollution Prevention and Treatment Controls from its Simi Valley Waste Transfer Station to Protect Waterways from E.Coli, Trash, and Toxic Metals*

**Simi Valley, Ventura County, CA** - Wishtoyo Foundation and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program announced today the resolution of its lawsuit filed against Waste Management subsidiary G.I. Industries in March of 2014. The settlement agreement, filed in federal court along with a dismissal of the suit, provides for G.I. Industries to implement pollution prevention and control measures at its 8.2 acre Simi Valley municipal and commercial trash collection, hauling, and truck yard facility. The measures will ensure storm water discharges from its facility comply with the Clean Water Act and are protective of the ecological, recreational, and cultural uses of Arroyo Simi, Arroyo Las Posas, Calleguas Creek, Mugu Lagoon, and Ventura's coastal waters.

In addition, the settlement provides for Waste Management to provide \$40,000 as a Supplemental Environmental Project ("SEP") for Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy ("CAUSE") to conduct a minimum of 25 community street, storm channel, wetlands, lagoon, beach, and river trash clean up programs over the next three years. The purpose of the SEP is to reduce, prevent, and mitigate the ecological effects of storm water and wastewater discharges into Mugu Lagoon and Oxnard Coastal watersheds through community mobilization, education, and pollution remediation and prevention.

"Waste Management's commitment at its G.I. Industries Facility to protect the ecological, recreational, and cultural resources of Ventura County's inland and coastal waters for local residents, the Chumash Peoples, visitors, and native and migratory birds and other wildlife should be applauded" says Mati Waiya, Executive Director of Wishtoyo Foundation and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program.

In March 2014, Wishtoyo and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program filed its litigation under the citizen suit provision of the federal Clean Water Act alleging that G.I. Industries was violating the terms of

California's General Industrial Stormwater Permit. The Stormwater Permit, which is part of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System of the Clean Water Act, prohibits industrial facilities from discharging pollutants, including toxic metals, E. coli, trash, and total suspended solids, in excess of water quality standards and without applying the best available and best conventional pollution treatment technologies to their sources. Wishtoyo and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program filed its case after G.I. Industries consistently reported pollution levels well above applicable guidelines and benchmarks, and failed to take corrective action.

“The settlement not only protects Ventura County’s coastal waters, Mugu Lagoon, and Arroyo Simi from discharges of toxic metals, trash, and E. coli from the G.I. Industries Facility, but from other industrial facilities that otherwise may be ignoring the law to the detriment of our current and future generations,” said Jason Weiner, Wishtoyo’s General Counsel and Water Initiative Director representing Wishtoyo and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program on the case. “Ventura County industrial operations know that we are watching and won’t hesitate to actively enforce the Clean Water Act against polluters.”

**About the Wishtoyo Foundation and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program:** Founded in 1997, Wishtoyo is a 501(c)(3) non profit grassroots organization with over 700 members consisting of Ventura County’s diverse residents and Chumash Native Americans. Wishtoyo’s mission is to preserve and protect Chumash culture, the culture of all of Ventura County’s diverse communities, and the environment that our current and future generations depend upon. Wishtoyo shares traditional Chumash Native American beliefs, cultural practices, songs, dances, stories, and values with the public in its Chumash Discovery Village and through educational programs in schools to promote environmental awareness and natural resources stewardship. In 2000, Wishtoyo founded its Ventura Coastkeeper Program (“VCK”). VCK’s mission is to protect, preserve, and restore the ecological integrity and water quality of Ventura County's inland and coastal waterbodies for all beings in the County’s diverse community through outreach and education, restoration projects, scientific analysis, advocacy, litigation, and community organizing and empowerment. To learn more about Wishtoyo and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program, visit us at <http://www.wishtoyo.org/ventura-coastkeeper.html>.