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Over 29,000 Gallons of Oil Spill Into Ventura County Inland Waters From a Crimson Pipeline, Warning Local Communities About the Consequences of Planned Expansion of Oil Extraction, Transporting, and Disposal Activities

Wishtoyo Foundation and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program urge state and local officials to protect Ventura County communities from the dangerous threats of oil

Ventura, CA- Early in the morning of June 23, 2016, a pipeline owned and operated by Crimson Pipeline spilled as much as 700 barrels, or over 29,400 gallons of crude oil into Hall Canyon Barranca within the City of Ventura limits. While staining the Barranca with toxins hazardous to humans and wildlife, the oil appears to have stopped short of reaching the waters of Sanjon Drain, Ventura County beaches, and the Pacific Ocean. The burst pipeline was carrying oil produced by Area Energy, an oil production company jointly owned by Shell and ExxonMobil.

“Wishtoyo Foundation and our Ventura Coastkeeper Program thank first responders for their timely response to the Crimson pipeline spill earlier today,” said Mati Waiya, Wishtoyo Foundation and Ventura Coastkeeper Executive Director and Chumash Ceremonial Elder. “This leaky, old pipeline spans for many miles along the California coastline and highlights the undeniable fact that pipelines are not safe because they spill thousands of gallons of toxic oil and pollute our communities on a regular basis. The only thing that will stop their negative impact to people, wildlife and waterways is to shut them down and keep fossil fuels in the ground.”

“We urge federal, state, local officials to protect Ventura County communities from the dangerous threats of oil. The government is falling short of protecting the natural cultural resources the Chumash Native American Peoples and everyone depend upon,”

said Mati Waiya. “This could of had worse consequences than the 143,000 gallon Plains All American Refugio State Beach spill last year in Santa Barbara, that killed and severely impacted marine life, and our ancestors, the dolphins.”

Ventura County is an area highly impacted by the oil and gas industry, and is vulnerable to oil spills that threaten marine, coastal and freshwater natural resources. It is also home to hundreds of thousands of county residents that depend on accessible and unimpaired natural resources to support their livelihoods, health and overall wellbeing.

In addition to millions of gallons of oil being transported to Ventura County shores daily, in the county, several local and national oil companies are proposing to expand oil extraction and fracking; to increase oil transport through pipelines; and to open new oil waste disposal and groundwater injection facilities. Furthermore, throughout the county, abandoned oil wells have not been properly cleaned up, exposing humans and wildlife to the toxins left behind and that have been spread on county landscapes.

“It is greatly concerning that these new oil production, transport, and disposal activities are being considered and approved by the Ventura County Board of Supervisors and state officials in some of the county’s most pristine wildlife areas, such as along our coast, in the Los Padres Forest, and in the Sespe Creek Wilderness area,” said Jason Weiner, Wishtoyo Foundation’s and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program’s Water Initiative Director. “Fossil fuel infrastructure is dangerous, especially in the hands of corporations concerned about their bottom line as first priority.”

“We are working to raise awareness about these major environmental concerns related to oil production and spills in Ventura and throughout the state,” said Mati Waiya. “The oil industry continues to put our waters, humans, and wildlife at risk, and our elected officials are not doing enough.”

“We are especially concerned about the Obama administration allowing oil companies to resume offshore fracking and dumping of fracking chemicals mixed with wastewater in California’s wildlife-rich Santa Barbara Channel, which is filled with the Chumash Maritime Peoples’ cherished natural cultural resources that sustain our lifeways,” added Mati Waiya.

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About Wishtoyo Foundation and its Ventura Coastkeeper Program

*Founded in 1997, **Wishtoyo Foundation (“Wishtoyo”)** is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit 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. In 2000, Wishtoyo founded its **Ventura Coastkeeper Program (“VCK”)**, as a member of the international Waterkeeper Alliance. 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, advocacy, litigation, and community organizing and empowerment. www.wishtoyo.org*

