

MEDIA RELEASE

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OUR CHILDREN'S EARTH'S CONSENT DECREE WITH THE CITY OF PACIFICA ENSURES CLEANER WATER

Pacifica, California - Our Children's Earth ("OCE") announced today that it has entered into a federal court consent decree resolving its Clean Water Act citizen suit against the City of Pacifica ("Pacifica") for continuing sewage spill violations. The consent decree requires Pacifica to implement a comprehensive program for upgrading its sewage collection system in a manner that will greatly reduce sewage spills. In addition, the consent decree requires Pacifica to fund several important environmental improvement projects that Pacifica would otherwise not have to implement.

The consent decree sets limits on sewage spills for the next nine years, reducing both the number and volume of spills. Also, the decree limits repeat sanitary sewer overflow ("SSOs") from the same location. The decree requires much-needed comprehensive sewage system repairs and improvements in operation and maintenance practices to achieve these spill reductions.

Prior to OCE's lawsuit, Pacifica repeatedly had raw sewage spills from its sewage collection system over the past several years, including very large volumes spills that closed Pacifica's heavily used recreational beaches. These spills have resulted from a variety of poor or inadequate system maintenance, operation, repair, replacement and rehabilitation practices, including failure to repair or replace defective sewer lines and remove tree roots that grow into aging, defective sewer lines.

As a result of the consent decree, Pacifica will spend \$650,000 on a multiyear program for assisting local residents to fix their private sewer lines that connect homes to Pacifica's sewage collection system, as private sewer line defects are a leading cause of sewage spills from Pacifica's system-- and also risk sewage backups into people's homes.

Pacifica will now provide \$5000 to a local environmental group, the Pacifica Beach Coalition, for a classroom education program that will teach students about becoming stewards of their local ocean environment. OCE also successfully urged Pacifica to continue to fund the Pacifica Beach Coalition's annual local beach cleanup days for the next three years.

Pacifica will fund a \$170,000 creek restoration project that will remove harmful exotic plants and replant a creek bed with native plants-- thus restoring important habitat to a local creek. Christopher Sproul, one of OCE's lawyers noted: "In addition to requiring repairs to the treatment plant and sources of pollution, the consent decree requires Pacifica to fund several important environmental improvement projects that the city would not otherwise have to implement." Tiffany Schauer, OCE's Executive Director, also noted that "the consent decree will bring lasting change by educating local residents about their unique and sensitive ocean environment and by securing continued funding for annual local beach clean ups."