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## **Protect Our Waters Coalition Sees Planned Nestlé Studies, Community Engagement Approach for Revised McCloud Project as Good News**

**McCloud, Calif.** – After years of battling the proposed Nestlé water bottling plant in McCloud, CA, the Protect Our Waters Coalition (POW) announced today that it is optimistic about Nestlé Waters North America's (Nestlé's Waters) recent announcement that the company intends to begin negotiations this year with the McCloud Community Services District (MCSD) on a new contract to replace its 2003 contract with the MCSD, and will undertake additional scientific research on their proposed scaled-back water-bottling project in McCloud, California.

Nestlé's Waters recently announced a decision to scale back the size and water usage of its proposed project by about 60 percent. Under the previous plan, the plant would have been the largest water-bottling plant in the United States.

"Nestlé Waters' announcement is good news for McCloud. It provides a renewed opportunity for the community to evaluate the risks of a proposed plant to the health of the watershed, to understand what a fair price is for McCloud's water and to lay the groundwork for long-term economic growth in McCloud," said Debra Anderson, McCloud Watershed Council Board member. She added, "It also provides the District Board with a second chance to explore the idea of a water bottling plant in a more comprehensive way – with broad public input, good science, and sound economic analysis."

The Protect Our Waters coalition includes California Trout, the McCloud Watershed Council, and Trout Unlimited.

The Coalition was positive about Nestlé's announcement but was quick to point out that while they are pleased with Nestlé's new approach to the project, **no one – not even Nestlé Waters– should support a plant of any size absent comprehensive scientific understanding of how water extraction might affect the river, streams and economy.**

Nonetheless, Nestlé's commitment to begin studying these issues, as well as

how a plant might affect McCloud's economy and quality of life, was cited by POW as a major step forward in answering these important questions.

"For this project to succeed in McCloud it will require a strong working relationship between Nestlé Waters, town residents and conservation advocates," said Brian Stranko, CEO of California Trout.

Additionally, POW was encouraged by Nestlé Waters' plans for upcoming community meetings to solicit the community's opinion on topics including a new contract, water resources and biology, air quality and truck traffic, and other related issues.

The Coalition hopes that all area residents participate in the process.

"We intend to be at the table throughout the process, and we remain committed to protecting local residents and the environment in these discussions," said Brian Johnson, Director of trout Unlimited's California Water Project.

"Now is the time to get involved. Attend community meetings, communicate with the MCSD Board, and engage with your neighbors," said Donna Boyd, Executive Director of the McCloud Watershed Council.

"This water belongs to the people of McCloud. It is the responsibility of McCloud residents and all stakeholders to ensure that we do not just give away our most precious resource without meaningful representation and broad public input," said Debra Anderson.

For more information call Severn Williams at 510-336-9566 or visit <http://www.protectourwaters.org> or <http://mccloudwatershedcouncil.org>.