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MEDIA RELEASE ISSUED BY INYO COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & THE BISHOP PAIUTE TRIBE

DATE: April 8, 2016

RE: BISHOP CREEK SEWAGE SPILL – FOLLOW UP

On Friday, March 25, 2016 the Bishop Paiute Tribe and the Inyo County Environmental Health Department issued a media release notifying the public of an unauthorized release of raw sewage into the South Fork of Bishop Creek. Few details were available at the time and further information is now available.

A clog in the Bishop Paiute sewer system resulted in sewage backing up and discharging through an upstream manhole. The release traveled some 1500 feet over Tribal land before entering the South Fork of Bishop Creek. A review of the sewer systems' flow records appear to indicate that the discharge began on March 14, 2016. The discharge was discovered the evening of March 24, 2016, and the clog was removed and the discharge stopped later that evening. Flow records indicate the discharge over the eleven day period averaged 68,000 gallons a day, and a total discharge of approximately 700,000 gallons. A significant portion of this flow percolated into the ground prior to reaching the Bishop Creek. Visual observations estimated the flow into the creek to be approximately 30 gallons per minute on the evening of March 24th. On March 25th, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power requested that the flow to the South Fork of Bishop Creek be increased in order to provide a flushing action that could assist in the remediation. The flows were increased by 7-8 cubic feet per second for a five hour duration.

Latest monitoring results show decreasing E. Coli bacteria levels in the section of stream downstream of where the discharge occurred. These levels still exceed the surface water standards set by the Bishop Tribe and the Lahontan RWQCB, but are lower than levels typically found in Bishop Creek during the summer. People, and their pets, are still advised to refrain from body contact activities in Bishop Creek at this time. This advisory applies to the South Fork of Bishop Creek near See Vee Lane and immediately downstream.