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MEDIA RELEASE

CEO Notes Chuck Clarke, Chief Executive Officer

It's a pleasure and an honor to serve as the new CEO of Cascade. I'm not exactly a newcomer to the water businesses, but with Cascade I am seeing a new side that of the business that is exciting -- building a system for future generations.

I was fortunate to have been a steward for the Seattle water system – a supply put in place well over one hundred years ago that has served our region well. It is time now again for us to step up and create a new vision – one based on the most current demand projections, regional partnerships and collaboration, and a commitment to work together to ensure that no matter what any of us face in the future, we will all have water.

Cascade's Board of Directors and our water partners, Seattle and Tacoma, are working together to develop a new water supply system in a way I've never seen before in this region. While regional water demands have slowed, our population continues to grow. Conservation has helped reduce demand, as have stringent plumbing codes and energy efficient appliances. Public forums have made our residents more aware of the need to conserve and protect this vital resource.

We use our existing water wisely through a variety of conservation programs. These include rebates for high efficiency toilets and clothes washers, faucet aerator and showerhead installations, irrigation system audits and upgrades and outreach to educate consumers. Last year, Cascade achieved a savings of over 426,000 gallons of water per day, representing 42 percent of our 2013 savings goal.

Looking ahead, Cascade is finalizing the purchase of Lake Tapps to secure a much needed new regional water supply source to provide future generations with water.

As water stewards, we demand the highest standards of water quality. And we are committing to you that clean, safe water will always be there when you turn on the tap – today, tomorrow and 100 years from now.

In the 1980s, Seattle Public Utilities was concerned there might not be enough water for its customers and the rest of the growing region it supplied. So communities began an important dialogue about the future of the region's water supply. Several Eastside jurisdictions came together to share the responsibility and decision making to bring water to the urban areas of east and south King County.

As a result, Cascade Water Alliance was formed 10 years ago. We are a non-profit corporation whose mission is to provide a safe, clean, reliable water supply for the next 50 years and beyond. Collectively, the five cities and three water and sewer districts serve almost 400,000 residents and more than 22,000 businesses.

Cascade is in the process of doing what Seattle visionaries did a century ago, but this time with more data, more cooperation, more expectations and more responsibilities. Working together, Cascade members created a vision for the future of water supply in the region.

On a rainy day in this area, who would think that this discussion was even necessary? But it is a vital one – one that means clean water for people, businesses, the environment, recreation and cultural issue. How do we best use that precious resource? We must make sure our environment is protected, and that our partnerships all flourish. Our planning process will take all of this into account.

We are not planning for the future in a vacuum. Cascade is working not just with our members and our customers, but with our regional partners – like Seattle and Tacoma, the Muckleshoot and Puyallup tribes and Lake Tapps neighbors – who understand planning today is essential in developing a water supply for tomorrow.

Water resources take a very long time to plan and develop which is why we are planning now for water that only our children and their children will see. Planning together means we will have clean, safe, reliable water for us – and for our partners should they need it – so our region can continue to grow and thrive

Over the summer we will host regional public forums, throughout the Cascade service area to share information with our neighbors and to hear their views. Our efforts will be transparent. We want your help, support and input during the planning process. The direction and decisions made today must carry us forward into the next century.

In June, we kick off as part of our outreach and education process the Cascade working group for future water issues, a collaborative dialogue designed to complement our transmission and supply planning process. This will be yet another way to ensure we incorporate public values and issues into our regional planning efforts.

Our overall objective? A comprehensive, flexible water resources and infrastructure plan that makes good environment and fiscal sense.

We look forward to having you be an integral part of our planning for the next 10, 50 and even 100 years, so that those who follow us will also call us visionaries.

Let us hear from you at contact!@cascadewater.org
