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## **BREAKING: Groups Sue US Forest Service Challenging Nestlé's Illegal Water Bottling from the San Bernardino National Forest**

### **Nestlé Under Fire for Bottling Millions of Gallons of Water from the Bernardino National Forest Despite Expired Permit**

**CALIFORNIA** -- Earlier today, the Story of Stuff Project, the California-based Courage Campaign Institute, and the Center for Biological Diversity filed a lawsuit against the US Forest Service for allowing Nestlé to continue to bottle millions of gallons of water from the San Bernardino National Forest with a permit that expired 27 years ago.

The lawsuit specifically challenges Nestlé's four-mile pipeline that siphons water from San Bernardino National Forest's Strawberry Creek to bottling operations in Ontario, California. The groups are calling on the Court to immediately shutdown the pipeline, and order the US Forest Service to conduct a full permitting process that includes environmental reviews.

#### **[VIEW A COPY OF THE LAWSUIT HERE](#)**

In 2014 alone, an estimated 28 million gallons were piped away from the forest to be bottled and sold under Nestlé's Arrowhead brand of bottled water. The permit expired in 1988 but the piping system remains in active use, siphoning about 68,000 gallons of water a day out of the forest last year.

"We Californians have dramatically reduced our water use over the past year in the face of an historic drought, but Nestlé has refused to step up and do its part," said Michael O'Heaney, Executive Director of the Story of Stuff Project. "Until the impact of Nestlé's operation is properly reviewed, the Forest Service must turn off the spigot."

#### **[WATCH A VIDEO THAT FURTHER EXPLAINS THIS CRISIS](#)**

Recent reports have indicated that water levels at Strawberry Creek are at record lows. In exchange for allowing Nestlé to continue siphoning water from the Creek, the US Forest Service receives just \$524 a year, less than the average Californian's water bill.

"Nestlé's actions aren't just morally bankrupt, they are illegal. In the spring, we asked Nestlé to do the right thing, and they threw it back in our faces, telling Californians they'd take more of our water if they could," explained Eddie Kurtz, executive director of the California-based Courage Campaign Institute. "The US Forest Service has been enabling Nestlé's illegal bottling in the San Bernardino National Forest for 27 years, and it has to stop. Our government won't stand up to them, so we're taking matters into our own hands."

"California is in the middle of its worst drought in centuries and the wildlife that rely on Strawberry Creek, including southwestern willow flycatchers and numerous amphibians, are seeing their precious water siphoned away every day," said Ilene Anderson with the Center for Biological Diversity. "It's inexcusable for the Forest Service to allow this piping system to

continue year after year without a permit or any review of how it's impacting wildlife or local streams. The forest and the wildlife that live there deserve better.”

Earlier this year, more than 500,000 people signed a petition calling on Nestlé to stop bottling water during the drought, and [a poll found that a majority of people in the U.S. believe Nestlé should stop bottling in California](#). Despite the clear public outcry, when asked about the controversy, Nestlé CEO Tim Brown remarked that he wished the multinational corporation could bottle more water from the drought-stricken land.

**For more information, or for interviews with The Story of Stuff Project, Courage Campaign Institute or the Center for Biological Diversity, please contact Brett Abrams at 516-841-1105 or by email at [brett@fitzgibbonmedia.com](mailto:brett@fitzgibbonmedia.com).**

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**CourageCampaign.org** *fights for a more progressive California and country. We are an online community powered by more than 1,000,000 members.*

**The Story of Stuff Project**, *a California-based non-profit organization, facilitates an global online Community of more than 1 million members working to transform the way we make, use and throw away Stuff.*

**The Center for Biological Diversity** *is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 900,000 members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.*