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**CONTACT:**

Stephen Koenigsberg, [303-915-7301](tel:303-915-7301), [skpublicrelations@gmail.com](mailto:skpublicrelations@gmail.com)

Todd Reeve, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, [541-760-6658](tel:541-760-6658), [treeve@b-e-f.org](mailto:treeve@b-e-f.org)

**Change the Course/Protect the Flows Applaud Presidential Memorandum on Drought  
Announced Today at White House Water Summit**

Washington, DC -- Protect the Flows, the business voice for the Colorado River, and Change the Course, a national freshwater restoration campaign, applaud the Obama Administration for its latest move to combat persistent drought conditions strangling the U.S. West. At the White House Water Summit, held today in conjunction with the UN's World Water Day, the Administration announced a new Presidential Memorandum on drought that specifically responds to the Western Governors' Association call for help on drought by directing federal agencies to coordinate their conservation programs on the ground in watersheds; enhance data collection; monitor, share and further communication among state officials, federal agencies, water providers and the public.

"There is nothing more important in the West than water," said **Xanterra Parks & Resorts Vice President of Sustainability Catherine Greener**, who is a Protect the Flows member and a Change the Course sponsor. "From our operations at the Colorado River's headwaters at Rocky Mountain National Park through our concessions at the Grand Canyon South Rim, we understand the importance of conserving what has shaped our land and our experiences. It will take much more than our conservation and efficiency efforts. Today's executive action is an important step toward addressing the drought in the West and protecting limited water resources."

"As a network of businesses ranging from main street retailers to multinational corporations, we are fully aware that collaboration on targeted objectives creates efficiencies and cost savings," said **Craig Mackey, Co-Director of Protect the Flows**. "We encourage the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture to coordinate programs specifically in the Colorado River basin, a region experiencing a record-setting 16th year of drought. On-the-ground coordination in the basin is critical in these dry times to protect the river and the economic interests of the American Southwest."

The huge economic impact of the Colorado River and its tributaries to the seven basin states was revealed in a first-ever study by economists at Arizona State University, showing that hanging in the balance of the health of the Colorado River system are more than \$1.4 trillion in economic activity, \$800 billion in wages, and 16 million jobs. Put into perspective, an estimated 64.4 percent of the combined value of each basin state's output of goods and services could be lost if Colorado River water is no longer available to residents, businesses, industry, and agriculture.

"We are extremely pleased to see the level of commitment taken here by the Administration," said **Todd Reeve, CEO of Bonneville Environmental Foundation**. "At Bonneville Environmental Foundation,

we're taking drought seriously too, and today we are announcing that our business water stewardship networks Change the Course (CTC) and Protect the Flows (PTF) are merging."

At today's White House Water Summit, the newly merged organization announced its goals for the next 18 months; to engage 500,000 Americans in water conservation practices, highlight corporate sustainable water management through public engagement campaigns, and provide an award to a network business member for innovation and water conservation in the West.

The White House Water Summit is aimed at raising awareness of U.S. water issues and solutions, and formulating ideas and actions to build a secure water future via innovative science and technology. The Summit is intended to coincide with United Nations World Water Day, observed and celebrated each year since 1993 on March 22. This year's World Water Day theme is water and jobs -- how water reliability can alter the lives and livelihoods of workers around the world, and even transform societies and economies.

LINK to MEMORANDUM:

[https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/documents/White\\_House\\_Water\\_Summit\\_commitments\\_report\\_032216.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/documents/White_House_Water_Summit_commitments_report_032216.pdf)

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