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our coastal watersheds*

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Coastal Watershed Council Announces New Executive Director

SANTA CRUZ, CA, March 21, 2022 – The Coastal Watershed Council is pleased to announce the appointment of Laurie Egan as Executive Director, effective today, March 21, 2022.

Since 2013, Egan has been an integral part of the Coastal Watershed Council’s work to revitalize the lower San Lorenzo River, serving most recently as the organization’s Programs Director.

During her tenure, she led the organization’s program staff and grant writing efforts – including the Watershed Rangers youth education program, which has recently expanded into Santa Cruz City Schools, the River Health Day program which engages hundreds of youth and adult volunteers annually in increasing biodiversity along the urban river, and community events including the Ebb & Flow River Arts Festival and the painting of the City’s first storm drain murals in the Beach Flats and Ocean’s 11 riverside neighborhoods.

Ms. Egan currently serves on the City of Santa Cruz Climate Action Task Force and the Board of Directors at United Way of Santa Cruz County. Before joining the Coastal Watershed Council, she worked on a statewide campaign to reduce toxic chemicals with Physicians for Social Responsibility Los Angeles and the Center for Environmental Health. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Analysis from Harvey Mudd College in Claremont, CA.

“I am honored to have been selected as CWC’s Executive Director,” said Egan. “Santa Cruz and the San Lorenzo River are inextricably linked. CWC’s work benefits our entire community as we engage those who live along the river – young and old, and from all walks of life – for a healthier river and more vibrant Santa Cruz Riverwalk Park.”

As the only organization solely dedicated to the San Lorenzo River, the Board of Directors sought, and found in Ms. Egan, a new leader who could build upon the organization’s stellar track record, with demonstrated ability to leverage local, state and federal resources for urban river revitalization, and who can increase the involvement of the diverse communities who rely on and impact the river in their daily lives.

“Laurie has the vision and the proven track record needed to bring positive change to the river. The time is now to seize new opportunities, and Laurie is the right person to lead this change for a thriving urban

riverfront where all people can connect to nature in their daily lives” said Jonathan Hicken, Coastal Watershed Council Board Chair.

The Coastal Watershed Council was founded by Santa Cruz City Councilmember Donna Meyers in 1995, and most recently led by Greg Pepping who leaves CWC after more than 12 years in the post, as announced earlier this year. Egan and Pepping will work together over the next weeks for a smooth, successful transition for the Coastal Watershed Council, with Pepping’s last day being April 30.

About the Coastal Watershed Council

The Coastal Watershed Council, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, was formed in 1995 in response to the declining health of watersheds connected to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. CWC’s mission is to preserve and protect coastal watersheds through community stewardship, education and monitoring. All work the organization does takes place on unceded territory of the Awaswas-speaking Uypi tribe.

CWC’s work is guided by its values of equity, learning, inclusion and resilience, and by a theory of change with an accompanying logic model and measurable objectives. Over the past 26 years, CWC has trained thousands of volunteers and educated thousands of students to monitor water quality, enhance habitat and preserve and protect the natural resources along California’s Central Coast. Today, CWC uses this expertise to help to empower youth and adults to revitalize the San Lorenzo River. CWC invites the community to get involved today by calling (831) 464-9200 or visiting the CWC website at www.coastal-watershed.org.