**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 12, 2025**

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**PRESS STATEMENT: MONTEREY WATERKEEPER WELCOMES NATALIE HERENDEEN AS THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PROTECT AND RESTORE DRINKABLE, FISHABLE, AND SWIMMABLE WATERS IN THE NORTHERN CENTRAL COAST REGION**

Monterey, Calif. — The Board of Directors of Monterey Waterkeeper is proud to announce Natalie Herendeen as its new Executive Director. Natalie will continue leading Monterey Waterkeeper’s vision for ensuring safe and affordable drinking water for all communities; clean and abundant freshwater flows that support swimmable and healthy habitats; and a climate-resilient ocean that sustains a thriving economy, healthy marine ecosystems, and recreation for all.

“The Monterey Bay and Salinas Valley Region is a vibrant and thriving community, filled with so much life and opportunity—yet we have not safeguarded our water and waterways. Our drinking water sources, streams, rivers, and bay are heavily contaminated, and we can make a huge difference with a few changes in the law,” said Herendeen. “Monterey Waterkeeper’s priority is to make sure that all families, including low-income families of color, are able to drink safe, affordable water and enjoy the clean freshwater and marine resources that they deserve.”

“I am extremely happy and proud to welcome Natalie to the Monterey Waterkeeper family.” “As Monterey Waterkeeper grows, Natalie’s passion for the environment and experience working with diverse communities will ensure that we continue to protect clean water for all,” said Chelsea Tu, Monterey Waterkeeper’s former Executive Director and the newest member of the Board of Directors.

**Natalie Herendeen’s Biography**

Natalie Herendeen is the Executive Director of Monterey Waterkeeper. She previously worked as the Executive Director and attorney for the Center for Community Advocacy (CCA), where she advocated for improved housing, health, and economic conditions for farmworkers and low-income communities in the Salinas and Pajaro Valley. Prior to CCA, Natalie worked as the litigation director for Legal Services for Seniors where she brought financial abuse, evictions, housing and consumer fraud cases for seniors in Monterey County. Natalie also ran a solo practice, Herendeen Legal, where she litigated contractual disputes and consumer cases. Natalie received her law degree from the Santa Clara University School of Law and completed her undergraduate work in Global Studies with an emphasis on culture and ideology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She currently lives in Salinas, California, and enjoys spending time with her four dogs, hiking the local trails, and gardening.

**About Monterey Waterkeeper**

Monterey Waterkeeper protects and restores drinkable, fishable, and swimmable waters within the Monterey Region and along California’s Central Coast for all to enjoy. We believe that a strategic combination of science, legal and policy advocacy, education, and community engagement is the most effective way to address existing and emerging water quality issues. Monterey Waterkeeper acts as the public’s investigator, scientist, advocate, champion, and lawyer for the Northern Central Coast Region stretching from Santa Cruz to Big Sur. Monterey Waterkeeper is part of the Waterkeeper Alliance, an international network of water advocates with more than 300 organizations on 6 continents, in addition to being a member of the California Coastkeeper Alliance, which represents California Waterkeepers in Sacramento on statewide policy issues. From 1999 to 2020, the Monterey Coastkeeper was a program of the Otter Project and has since been fully incorporated as its own organization doing business as Monterey Waterkeeper.



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