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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ojai Valley Defense Fund Supports Casitas Plan to Buy Golden State Water Operations in Ojai

(Ojai, Calif. - March 22, 2013) At its March 19, 2013, meeting, the Board of Directors of the Ojai Valley Defense Fund unanimously adopted the following resolution: “In the best environmental interests of the entire Ojai Valley, the Ojai Valley Defense Fund strongly supports the Casitas Municipal Water District plan to buy the Golden State Water Company operations in Ojai.”

According to Peter Cantele, Defense Fund Board President, “This is not just a case of working to bring Ojai’s water rates in line with those of other local water companies, though that is clearly important. The Defense Fund sees this as a unique opportunity to act in the best sustaining interests of the entire Ojai Valley watershed. Our valley isn’t tied in to the state water system, and that makes us totally dependent on what exists in the ground and what falls from the sky. Replacing the for-profit company with a public agency whose board members must run for office and answer to the voters will allow everyone in the valley to have a say in the management of our watershed. With this fundamentally democratic approach, our vital water resources will be managed for the benefit of the valley’s citizens for decades to come.”

The all-volunteer Ojai Valley Defense Fund has garnered nearly seven hundred fifty thousand dollars toward its goal of a million-dollar community chest to protect and sustain the greater Ojai Valley’s environmental quality for the public benefit. The community is encouraged to help by making tax-deductible contributions to the Ojai Valley Defense Fund at www.ovdf.org.

Ojai FLOW (Friends of Locally Owned Water) consists of a large and growing number of Golden State Water Company ratepayers, more than 1,900 of whom signed a 2011 petition to the Casitas Municipal Water District, requesting the Golden State buyout.

Said FLOW spokesperson Pat McPherson, “Ojai FLOW has invested thousands of volunteer hours educating the community about the need to buy Golden State and have it managed by Casitas. This is an opportunity to solve an environmental problem of many years, and we’re grateful to have the support of the Ojai Valley Defense Fund. Golden State water rates are so high that the ratepayers can purchase Golden State and upgrade the system just in the savings gained by going to Casitas. It’s now up to the voters to make this a reality by voting “Yes” on August 27. For more information about Ojai FLOW, go to www.OjaiFlow.com.”

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