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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROP O SUCCEEDS IN REDUCING LITTER IN LOS ANGELES

More than 20,000 new catch basin screens and inserts are already diverting 1,537 tons of trash from reaching the ocean and polluting L.A. waterways and beaches

LOS ANGELES (December 13, 2007)—Los Angeles City Council Members Eric Garcetti and Jan Perry were joined by leaders from the Department of Public Works, the City of Los Angeles Stormwater Program, Heal the Bay, and the California Regional Water Quality Control Board today to announce the overwhelming success of the first two phases of Proposition O's *Catch Basin Screen Cover and Insert Project*, which prevents litter from polluting the Los Angeles River, Ballona Creek and local beaches. Proposition O facilitated the installation of 14,300 catch basin screen covers and 7,400 catch basin inserts throughout the high and medium trash generation areas of the City to prevent litter from being released into L.A.'s surrounding water bodies.

"Thanks to L.A. voters who passed the Prop O water quality bond, we have installed screen covers and inserts at more than 20,000 street gutters to prevent trash from getting into our waterways," said Eric Garcetti, President of Los Angeles City Council. "We started the program in the areas that generate the most trash so that we could make the biggest impact. As we head into the rainy season, we want to make sure that we are doing everything we can to protect our drinking water, oceans, and rivers."

The impact of the project is far-reaching from non-coastal neighborhoods to those along the coast. Catch basin inserts and screen covers have already been installed in the high trash generation areas of the City in communities such as the Civic Center, portions of Pico Union,

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South Los Angeles, and Boyle Heights. Catch basin screen covers have also been installed in portions of the medium trash generation areas in neighborhoods such as Hollywood, Silver Lake, Mid-Wilshire, and portions of West Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.

Catch basins collect rainwater and urban runoff from the streets. They serve as an entry point to the storm drain system, where untreated water enters and flows directly to the Los Angeles River and Ballona Creek. The main litter sources contributing to beach and marine pollution in our City are plastic and paper. The event today marked the completion of the first two phases of a three-phase City-wide plan to prevent such litter from polluting our creeks, rivers and beaches.

“The City continues to work diligently towards our goal of litter prevention and environmental protection,” said Councilmember Jan Perry, who represents the location in the Ninth District. “With the help of Prop O, we can educate communities to make the connection that when litter is thrown on the ground or into the street, it goes directly into the ocean. Through public support and the prevention of litter from entering the storm drain system, we will gradually put an end to polluting our waterways, and endangering public health and marine life.”

“This Prop O funded project is just one vital effort towards the City’s overall goal to prevent pollutants from entering our water bodies,” said Enrique C. Zaldivar, newly confirmed director of the Bureau of Sanitation. “Litter in the L.A. communities is still a major pollution issue. The most significant solution occurs when residents take personal responsibility for their actions, set an example for the rest of the community and properly dispose of their trash.”

On November 2, 2004, Los Angeles voters passed Proposition O with an overwhelming majority of 76%. The \$500 million bond authorizes the City of Los Angeles to fund projects that protect public health, capture stormwater for reuse and meet the Federal Clean Water Act through removal and prevention of pollutants entering regional waterways.

Catch basin inserts and screen cover installations began in 2005 and were completed on September 30, 2007, with a total cost of \$27 million for Phases I and II. The City was successful in completing these installations on schedule and under budget by \$700,000. Phase III begins installation in the Spring of 2008 and will retrofit approximately 34,000 remaining catch basins with opening screen covers.

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EVERYONE CAN HELP!

The installation of the covers and the inserts help to prevent litter from entering the ocean but do not necessarily keep litter off of City streets. Simple actions can reduce stormwater pollution:

- Always throw trash in a garbage bin (cigarette butts too!);
- Use a broom instead of a hose when cleaning the sidewalk;
- Don't over water your lawn;
- Use fertilizers and pesticides in moderation to prevent toxic runoff from reaching the storm drains and never apply before a rain; and
- Pick up after your pet every single time.

About Board of Public Works

The five-commissioner Board of Public Works manages the Department of Public Works, the City's third largest municipal division with a \$559 million operating budget. The department awards more than \$500 million in construction and personal service contracts annually, and oversees the construction, renovation, and operation of public projects such as municipal buildings, streets, bridges, street lights, water treatment plants, sewers and sidewalks, and provides essential public services like recycling and solid waste management. For more information, visit www.lacity.org/bpw.

About the City of Los Angeles Stormwater Program

The Watershed Protection Division, founded in 1990, is part of the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works. The Division is responsible for the development and implementation of stormwater pollution abatement projects within the City. The Stormwater Program has two major elements — pollution abatement and flood control and its mission is to protect the beneficial uses of receiving waters while complying with all flood control and pollution abatement regulations. To report abandoned waste, accidental spills, clogged catch basins and illegal discharges into the streets or storm drain system, residents can call the program's toll-free hotline (1-800-974-9794) or get more information at www.lastormwater.org.

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