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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INYO COUNTY CONSIDERING APPEALLING TRIAL COURT DECISION IN LADWP LAWSUIT

Inyo County was recently dealt a trial court setback in its attempt to acquire ownership of the local landfills. As the public is aware, Inyo County intends to use eminent domain (condemnation) to acquire three properties that the County currently leases from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and has used for decades as the sites of the Bishop, Independence, and Lone Pine landfills. The County took this action due to the costly and unreasonable difficulties imposed by LADWP on the County's efforts to provide essential solid waste services to its constituents.

One way LADWP challenged the County's course of action was by filing this California Environmental Quality Act lawsuit, in which LADWP argued that Inyo County was required to study the environmental impacts from Inyo County simply taking ownership of the three landfills. This is in spite of the State already regulating all landfills in a manner designed to protect the environment. LADWP convinced the trial court that the County was required to study the potential environmental impacts from any possible use of those landfills, instead of recognizing what the County actually intends to do: continue to use the landfills as they are currently being used. LADWP also convinced the judge to order the County to engage in the costly and unnecessary CEQA review process before determining if the County is legally permitted to take ownership of the three landfill sites via eminent domain.

The County firmly believes that the judge was misled by LADWP, and is considering all options including appealing the decision. While this matter is ongoing, Inyo County is committed to continuing to provide efficient and essential solid waste services to our constituents while protecting the environment, and will continue to work toward resolving the unreasonable and costly demands imposed by LADWP on these (and other) County operations.

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