



## For Immediate Release

September 28, 2021

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## **CALIFORNIA GROUPS FILE LAWSUIT CHALLENGING SANTA ANA REGIONAL WATER BOARD APPROVAL FOR THE HUNTINGTON BEACH DESALINATION PLANT**

**SAN FRANCISCO** – The California Coastkeeper Alliance and Orange County Coastkeeper filed a lawsuit Monday in the Superior Court of the State of California, Alameda County against the Santa Ana Regional Water Board for failing to adhere to the state’s Ocean Desalination Policy requirements when it authorized the construction of the Huntington Beach Desalination Plant by Brookfield Poseidon Resources LLC in April.

The state’s Desalination Policy sets a strong preference that all seawater desalination facilities use subsurface intakes to prevent the mortality of marine life. The Regional Water Board’s action to authorize Poseidon’s permit, one in a series of necessary steps, undermines the state’s desire to prevent marine mortality from open ocean seawater intakes. The lawsuit petition can be viewed [here](#).

“We will not let this become the standard in addressing California’s water security issues,” said **Sean Bothwell, Executive Director of the California Coastkeeper Alliance**. “The Santa Ana Regional Water Board failed to listen to our environmental concerns, failed to consider the inequities voiced by environmental justice leaders, and failed to take the local communities’ concerns seriously.”

“The Santa Ana Regional Water Board overstepped its legal authority. Rather than follow the requirement to minimize marine life mortality, it instead accommodated Poseidon’s profit-maximizing demands,” said **Garry Brown, President and Founder of Orange County Coastkeeper**. “We’re determined to remedy this situation to protect our region’s communities, marine life and habitats, while ensuring Orange County residents do not get the short end of the stick in a deal that is only going to make profit for Poseidon and its international investors.”

**Case Background:** The Santa Ana Regional Water Board voted in favor of adopting the Huntington Beach Desalination Permit allowing the for-profit corporation Brookfield Infrastructure Partners and its subsidiary, Poseidon Water, to withdraw 107 million gallons of the ocean per day for the next 50 years, killing marine life upon intake. The permit allows Poseidon to use the exact same intake and discharge pipes, which was outlawed for the adjacent power plant due to the destructive impacts those specific pipes have had on marine life over the preceding decades.

The adoption of the Poseidon-Huntington Beach Permit was the first time in California history that a Regional Water Board interpreted California Desalination Policy requirements for permitting a new seawater desalination facility. The Desalination Policy became law in 2016 with the goal of preventing seawater desalination facilities from siting their facilities directly adjacent to coastal power plants and using the now prohibited seawater intakes.

The Petition for Writ of Mandate filed Monday can be viewed [here](#).

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**CALIFORNIA COASTKEEPER ALLIANCE:** California Coastkeeper Alliance represents watershed-focused California Waterkeepers as they fight for drinkable, swimmable, fishable waters for all Californians. It defends and expands California's protective legislation and strengthens the function of our State Water Board. Follow them on Twitter at [@CA Waterkeepers](#).

**ORANGE COUNTY COASTKEEPER:** Founded in 1999, the mission of Coastkeeper is to protect and promote sustainable water resources that are swimmable, drinkable, and fishable for present and future generations. Orange County Coastkeeper is a member of the International Waterkeeper Alliance, which has 236 different independent programs across 29 countries. Follow them on Twitter at [@OCCoastkeeper](#).