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FILM RELEASE: On World Water Day, new Story of Stuff Project film takes a provocative, humorous look at bottled water

The Story of Bottled Water:

How Manufactured Demand pushes what we don't need and destroys what we need most

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – On March 22nd – World Water Day – The Story of Stuff Project will release *The Story of Bottled Water*, a 7-minute animated film, at www.storyofbottledwater.org. Hosted by Annie Leonard, the creator of the internet hit *The Story of Stuff*, the film was co-produced with five leading sustainability advocacy organizations: Corporate Accountability International, Environmental Working Group, Food & Water Watch, Polaris Institute and Pacific Institute.

The Story of Bottled Water employs the *Story of Stuff* style to tell the story of manufactured demand, specifically **how you get Americans to buy more than half a billion bottles of water every week when they can get it almost free from a tap.**

Over seven minutes, the film explores the bottled water industry's attacks on tap water safety and its use of seductive, environmental-themed marketing to cover up the mountains of plastic waste it produces. The film concludes with a call for viewers to make a personal commitment to avoid bottled water and support public investment in clean, available tap water for all.

The Story of Bottled Water is being released on **World Water Day**, an annual UN-sponsored day of action to support access to clean, safe water for the world's people. Globally, more than 1 billion have little choice but to use potentially harmful sources of water, leading to what the World Health Organization calls "a silent humanitarian crisis." Meanwhile, many Americans, who generally have access to safe and abundant water from the kitchen tap, drink bottled water despite the enormous waste of money, energy



and resources it represents.

The film's release comes as the **practice of bottling water is coming under increasing fire**, with major companies like Google and cities from coast to coast starting to 'think outside the bottle.' A Harris Poll on environmental behavior conducted this past fall found 29% of those surveyed reported switching from bottled water to tap in the past year.

"Cities and states are spending hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars on bottled water, and that's not to mention what's spent to deal with all the plastic bottles that are thrown out," said Leslie Samuelrich of Corporate Accountability International. "It sends the wrong message about the quality of the tap. What if we instead spent that money supporting public water systems or preventing water pollution in the first place?" **The organization is releasing its second report on state spending on bottled water on March 23, calling on public officials to buck the bottle as was done last May in New York at their urging.** (www.StopCorporateAbuse.org/Getting-States-Off-The-Bottle)

The Story of Bottled Water **companion website** (www.storyofstuff.org/bottledwater) will serve as an interactive launch pad for information and activism. The site offers viewers a series of ways to get involved, including links to the partners' campaigns, as well as downloadable resources and information, including an annotated script.

"Bottled water usage is in decline in the United States for the first time in three decades, thanks in part to the hard work of our partners on this film. We hope this film helps to drive the final nail in this huge rip off," said Annie Leonard, Director of the Story of Stuff Project.

The Story of Bottled Water is the second in a series of five new short films that The Story of Stuff Project is releasing this year with Free Range Studios (www.freerangestudios.com) and more than a dozen of the world's leading environmental organizations. The first film in the series, The Story of Cap & Trade, was released on-line in December 2009 and has garnered over 600,000 views. **The original Story of Stuff has been viewed over 10 million times since its release in December 2007.**

The following spokespeople are available for comment:

Annie Leonard is the Director of The Story of Stuff Project and author of The Story of Stuff, released on March 9th by the Free Press imprint of Simon & Schuster (March 2010).

Leslie Samuelrich is Corporate Accountability International's Chief of Staff and a leader in the organization's Think Outside the Bottle campaign.

Peter Gleick is the Director of the Pacific Institute and author of the forthcoming book, *Bottled and Sold: The Story Behind Our Obsession with Bottled Water* (May 2010, Island Press).

Renee Sharp is the California Director and a Senior Scientist for Environmental Working Group.

Wenonah Hauter is the Executive Director of Food & Water Watch

Tony Clarke is the Executive Director of the Polaris Institute (Canada) and author of *Inside the Bottle: An Expose of the Bottled Water Industry*.

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