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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DROUGHT CHANGES WATER COLOR, STILL SAFE TO DRINK

Oak View, CA – Some people in Ventura and Ojai areas in the county of Ventura that rely on water from Lake Casitas may have noticed a slight change in the color of their tap water. No reason to be alarmed, the water is still safe to drink and continues to surpass primary drinking water health standards. This unusual occurrence is related to low lake levels and warm temperatures associated with the current drought. The change in water color is due to an increase in manganese in the water. This year there has been a greater drop in oxygen levels than is typically associated with seasonal changes. The low oxygen levels cause manganese to be released from sediments from the bottom of the lake.

Lake Casitas is down fifty feet from full and the water is warmer than normal. Low lake levels and warmer temperatures have made it more difficult for treatment plant operators to avoid taste, color, and odor issues. Furthermore, a decrease in oxygen levels in the lake has led to an increase in hydrogen sulfide in last few weeks causing taste and odor issues, also not a health hazard.

If customers or community members have questions or concerns about Casitas' water quality, they should call Susan McMahan, Casitas' water quality supervisor at 649-2251 extension 120.
