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NEW LEADERSHIP AT TENNESSEE CLEAN WATER NETWORK

[Knoxville, TN, October 2, 2018] – On Monday, Tennessee Clean Water Network (TCWN) announced the appointment of Kathy Hawes as its new Executive Director. TCWN is a nonprofit with a mission to heal and protect Tennessee waters and to advocate for healthy water and healthy communities throughout the state.

Since its founding in 2000, TCWN has tackled corporate pollution, such as raw sewage in the Tennessee River and explosive chemicals in the Holston, protected over 100 acres of wetlands, and provided hundreds of water bottle refill stations in schools and parks. Behind the scenes, and in cooperation with other state environmental groups, TCWN keeps a close eye on legislation and permit violations that could impact water quality.

“Regardless of their political leaning, everyone can agree on a couple things. First, Tennesseans want their water – from lakes and rivers, from water fountains, from their own kitchen faucets – to be clean. And second, state and federal government agencies need oversight. At the point where these two objectives meet, you will find TCWN hard at work,” said Hawes.

Hawes is a 1996 graduate of the University of Tennessee and holds an MBA in project management. Her professional experience includes 10 years as Vice President of an environmental products manufacturer and another five years as Coordinator of the Mississippi River Collaborative. She has extensive volunteer experience with a variety of nonprofits, serving as Director for Peaceful Kingdom’s SpayKnox program and on nonprofit Boards of Directors such as East Tennessee Technology Access Center.

“I’ve always had a head for business and a heart for service. Leading an amazing organization like TCWN is a dream come true,” she noted.

After living in the Knoxville area for most of her life, Hawes settled in Kingston the same year as the devastating 2008 coal ash spill from the Kingston Fossil Plant (the largest in U.S. history.)

“Looking back, I did not understand the magnitude of what had happened – and is still happening – to the area’s water resources and to the health of the site’s clean-up workers,” she commented.

Currently, TCWN’s flagship program is “Bringing Tap Back” (BTB), which provides school children across the state with filtered water bottle refill stations and fountains, reusable water bottles for every student, and an educational campaign on the value of clean water and the dangers of sugar-sweetened beverages. BTB is a cooperative program funded by Tennessee Department of Health, foundations such as Clarksville-Montgomery County Foundation, and businesses such as DENSO.

“Bringing Tap Back is a triple whammy. Not only do our kids end up with increased access to safe, filtered drinking water, they also have better knowledge about obesity and Type 2 Diabetes. And it reduces plastic bottle waste,” Hawes added.

TCWN's Board of Directors is excited about its future. "We have high expectations for our new ED, but I don't think they're even as high as her own. We love her energy and vision, and we're confident that TCWN has a very bright future," said Tony Dolle, President and Chair of the TCWN Board of Directors.

"Water is a fundamental part of a healthy life and a healthy community. The water we drink, bathe in, boat on, fish in, and paddle on should be clean and safe. And it can be, if the right decisions are made with the future in mind," said Hawes.

Hawes succeeds Renee Hoyos, who was Executive Director for TCWN for over a decade before taking a leave of absence on January 1 to run a 2018 election campaign for Tennessee's 2nd Congressional District.

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For more information, contact Kathy Hawes at 855-208-0792 or at kathy@tcwn.org.