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Washington Water Service Company Announces Successor for President Michael P. Ireland, Who Will Retire After 35 Years of Service

GIG HARBOR, WA -- (Marketwired) -- 11/13/15 -- Washington Water Service Company (Washington Water) announced today that Scott A. Bailey will succeed Michael P. Ireland, who will retire on December 31, 2015, after 35 years of service.

Ireland began his career in the industry in 1972, when he joined the Harbor Pump and Drilling Company. In 1980, he assumed the role of Operations Foreman at Harbor Water Company, Inc. (Harbor Water), and eventually became President, the position he held when Harbor Water was acquired by Washington Water's parent company in 1999.

During his tenure at the helm of Washington Water, the utility grew from serving nearly 40,000 people through 183 owned or managed water systems to serving 76,600 people through 267 owned or managed water systems. Under his leadership, the company has earned recognition from the Washington Health Department for its water quality program and high marks from customers for its service, particularly during severe weather.

Ireland is reluctant to take credit, because he says it's the people around him who are responsible for the company's success and will miss the Washington Water team.

"I'm happy to be retiring, but I have mixed feelings, because this has been a very fulfilling career with a great company. And I've never not had a job since I was 13 years old," he said.

He doesn't think he'll have a hard time staying busy, though. Ireland is looking forward to spending more time with his wife Jackie and two grandchildren.

"Mike has done an excellent job, and he certainly leaves big shoes to fill. Of all of the great candidates we interviewed for the position, Scott Bailey stood out as having the utility management experience and the necessary skills to successfully lead our very dedicated Washington Water team as its new General Manager," said Martin A. Kropelnicki, President and Chief Executive Officer of Washington Water's parent company, California Water Service Group (Group).

Bailey joined California Water Service Company in 1987, and through the years has held a variety of positions at the Group's largest subsidiary, including General Foreman, Customer Service Manager, and Treatment Plant Superintendent. He currently serves as Manager of the utility's Visalia and Selma Districts, which provide water utility services to more than 100,000 people through 51,000 service connections. The veteran and Marine holds a Grade 2 Certification in Water Treatment and a Grade 3 Certification in Water Distribution from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

"I am excited and honored to fill this position, and my wife and I are looking forward to being able to spend more time with our family, who live in Washington," Bailey said.

Washington Water serves 23,200 customer connections in nearly 300 water systems throughout the state. One of the largest investor-owned water utilities in the state, Washington Water (as Harbor Water and South Sound Utilities) has provided water service there since 1970. Additional information may be obtained online at www.wawater.com.