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CONTACT:

Jonathan Abramson at (619) 807-6349 jonathan@bluetonemarketing.com

Steve Creech at (949) 643-7070 or stevec@wyland.com

Columbus Named Most Water Wise

Midwestern City Residents Make 15,771 Pledges to Cut Water Use By 65.4 Million Gallons As Part of 8th Annual Wyland National Mayor’s Challenge for Water Conservation, Presented by Toyota

The city of Columbus, Ohio, was named one of five national winners in the 8th Annual Wyland National Mayor’s Challenge for Water Conservation by pledging to reduce their water use by 65.4 million gallons of water over the next year. The annual month-long public awareness campaign to promote drought resiliency and water quality ended on April 30 with mayors from 35 states vying to see whose city could be the nation’s most “water wise.”

In addition to Columbus, the cities with the highest percentage of residents making pledges during the campaign included Rexburg, Idaho, Palm Coast, Fla., Athens, Ga., and Tucson, Ariz. Overall, residents around the nation, from Fairbanks, Alaska, to Winterport, Maine, made 740,143 pledges to change behaviors ranging from fixing home leaks to reducing harmful runoff into local rivers and streams.

The challenge, presented by the Wyland Foundation and Toyota, with support from the [U.S. EPA](#), National League of Cities, The Toro Company, Earth Friendly Products – maker of ECOS, Ecosystems, LLC, and Conserva Irrigation, addresses the growing importance of educating consumers about the many ways they use water.

“The challenge is about reminding people across the country that we all need to work together to manage our water resources,” said marine life artist Wyland, who founded the Wyland Foundation in 1993. “The campaign shows that there are many ways to do that, but it all starts with simple actions that most of us can do every day that make a big difference over time.”

Residents from winning cities will now be entered into a drawing for thousands of dollars in water-saving or eco-friendly prizes, including \$3,000 toward their annual home utility bill, "Greening Your Home" cleaning kits from Earth Friendly Products (ECOS), home irrigation equipment from The Toro Company, and a water fixture makeover for a local school from Ecosystems LLC. A \$500 home improvement store shopping spree will also be chosen from among the entire pool of U.S. participants. Additionally, participating residents were asked to nominate a deserving charity in their community to receive a 2019 Toyota Highlander Hybrid.

In addition to reducing water, residents from Columbus pledged to reduce their use of 176,806 single-use plastic water bottles and eliminate 3,836 pounds of hazardous waste from entering watersheds. By altering daily lifestyle choices, residents pledges to send 1.7 million fewer pounds of waste to area landfills. Potential savings of 483,000 gallons of oil, 281 million pounds of carbon dioxide, 4.2 million kilowatt hours of electricity, and \$819,436 in consumer cost savings rounded out the final pledge results.

About the Wyland Foundation

Founded in 1993 by environmental artist Wyland (best known for his series of 100 monumental marine life murals), the Wyland Foundation, a 501c3 non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, protecting, and preserving the world's ocean, waterways, and marine life. The foundation encourages environmental awareness through community events, education programs, and public art projects.

www.wylandfoundation.org

About Toyota

Toyota (NYSE:TM), the world's top automaker and creator of the Prius, is committed to building vehicles for the way people live through our Toyota, Lexus and Scion brands. Over the past 50 years, we've built more than 25 million cars and trucks in North America, where we operate 14 manufacturing plants and directly employ more than 40,000 people. Our 1,800 North American dealerships sold more than 2.5 million cars and trucks in 2013 – and about 80 percent of all Toyota vehicles sold over the past 20 years are still on the road today.

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