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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Plains Pipeline to Begin Oil Line Purge in Early December

(Santa Barbara County, CA) – In the first week of December, Plains Pipeline, L.P. will begin the steps to purge the 30-inch Line 903, which runs from the Gaviota Coast to Kern County. Line 903 was shut down at the direction of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration (PHMSA) shortly after oil was spilled from Line 901 onto Refugio State Beach in May.

PHMSA is requiring the pipeline purge, which will remove all of the crude oil in the pipeline and replace it with nitrogen, an inert gas. According to PHMSA, pipeline purging is a standard industry technique that reduces the chance of internal corrosion while the pipeline sits idle.

The purge will be conducted by Plains Pipeline, L.P. with close oversight from PHMSA. Santa Barbara County Executive Officer Mona Miyasato said, “County representatives have met with PHMSA to ensure they are working closely with Plains to monitor the project.” Santa Barbara County Fire and the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Management have been and continue to be in communications with Plains Pipeline, L.P. regarding the oil purge. Both Plains Pipeline, L.P. and PHMSA staff will be stationed at several key locations during purging activities to monitor the operation, and County personnel will be ready to respond but will not have an on-site presence during the process. Plains’ personnel will be regularly traversing the pipeline route with trucks and appropriate spill mitigation equipment along with aircraft flyovers.

The initial phase of the purge will move existing crude oil inventory to the Sisquoc area via Line 903, approximately 40 miles. Oil will then be purged from Line 903 between Gaviota and Sisquoc. Plains Pipeline, L.P. estimates this will be complete by the end of December. Plains Pipeline, L.P. will resume the purge from Siquoc to Pentland (Kern County) in early 2016 for the remaining 75 miles of pipeline.

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