

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BILL JONES APPOINTED DIRECTOR AND CHAIRMAN OF PACIFIC ETHANOL, INC.

Former California Secretary of State Brings Decades of Leadership in California and a Commitment to Renewable Fuels

Fresno, California – March 31, 2005 – Pacific Ethanol, Inc. (Nasdaq SmallCap: PEIX), announced today that effective March 30, 2005, Bill Jones was appointed as a director and as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Company. Mr. Jones founded the Company's wholly-owned subsidiary, Pacific Ethanol California, Inc., in January 2003, putting into action his commitment to renewable fuels and the important role he believes they will play in California as well as the rest of the United States. Mr. Jones stepped off the board of Pacific Ethanol California, Inc. in March of 2004 to focus on his candidacy for California's United States Senate seat.

Mr. Jones stated, "I am grateful to be back as Chairman of Pacific Ethanol. I believe that California is headed toward a transportation fuel supply crisis that could make the electricity crisis seem like a picnic. We need more non-petroleum fuels immediately, and I believe that Pacific Ethanol will be a leader in the production of ethanol in California."

“Today, consumers and businesses are being saddled with high and increasingly volatile gas prices resulting from tight fuel supplies. I believe that ethanol is the single best near-term solution to increase fuel supplies and decrease gas prices. Blending ethanol with gasoline at a 10% ratio statewide could add up to 6% of additional fuel supply, equivalent to immediately adding another Bakersfield refinery,” said Jones. “Producing ethanol in California makes sense for business, consumers and our economy, and doing that is a big part of our mission.”

Pacific Ethanol CEO Neil Koehler welcomed Jones back to the Board. “We’re glad to have Bill back serving as the Chairman and leader of a very dynamic team. Bill has the vision and leadership, knows how to execute and deliver, and will keep the Company focused on its mission of becoming the West Coast’s leader in renewable fuels,” said Koehler.

Bill Jones’ Background

Bill Jones is one of California’s most respected leaders, with an impressive balance of experience as a rancher, businessman, legislator and state constitutional officer. He was elected as California’s Secretary of State in 1994, making history by becoming the first resident of California’s Central Valley to serve in a statewide constitutional office in over a century. Mr. Jones was reelected in 1998, with the endorsement of almost every major California newspaper. He has served on the board of directors of both the Fresno City and County Chambers of Commerce and was Chairman of the Fresno County Republican Central Committee.

Mr. Jones instituted numerous reforms as Secretary of State to increase voter participation, streamline office operations, cut costs and reduce paperwork. His fair-minded, even-handed administration drew praise from the news media, reform groups and legislators of both parties, and he ended his 2nd term with approximately the same number of state employees he began with eight years earlier.

Before his election as Secretary of State, Mr. Jones served as a legislator from Fresno in the California State Assembly. In 1990, his fellow Republican legislators elected him to serve as Assembly Republican Leader. During his tenure in the California legislature, Mr. Jones compiled a distinguished record of achievement and an unparalleled reputation for honesty and integrity. Bill Jones is a second generation farmer and rancher.

About Pacific Ethanol, Inc.

Established in 2003, Pacific Ethanol California, Inc., the Company's wholly-owned subsidiary, plans to construct a large-scale ethanol production facility in Madera, California. Kinergy Marketing, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Company, is the largest West Coast-based distributor of renewable fuels. The Company's short-term strategy includes capturing the ethanol production opportunity in California using established grain ethanol production technologies. The Company's intermediate-term strategy includes commercial development of advanced renewable fuels technologies such as cellulose-based ethanol production.

Safe Harbor Statement Under the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995

With the exception of historical information, the matters discussed in this press release are forward-looking statements that involve a number of risks and uncertainties. The actual future results of Pacific Ethanol could differ from those statements. Factors that could cause or contribute to such differences include, but are not limited to, the ability of Pacific Ethanol to obtain all necessary funding to complete construction of the planned ethanol plant at its Madera, California site and assuming all such funding is obtained, the ability of Pacific Ethanol to successfully complete construction of the plant, the ability of Pacific Ethanol to successfully capitalize on its internal growth initiatives, fluctuations in the prices of petroleum and other fuels, market demand for non-petroleum renewable fuels such as ethanol, the emergence and likelihood of emergence of a fuel supply crises in California, the development and implementation of renewable or other fuels as alternatives to ethanol, and those factors contained in the "Risk Factors" section of Pacific Ethanol's Proxy Statement dated December 10, 2004.