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1 2	J. Dino Vasquez California Bar. No #146725		
3	Karr Tuttle Campbell 701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3300		
4	Seattle, WA 98104 Telephone: 206-223-1313 Facsimile: 206-682-7100		
5	Facsimile: 206-682-7100 Email: dvasquez@karrtuttle.com		
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9	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA SOUTHERN DIVISION AT SANTA ANA		
10	SANTA AI	NA	
11	CASCADE DRILLING, L.P.,	CASE NO.	
12	Plaintiff,	COMPLAINT EOD	
13	v.	COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY JUDGMENT OF	
14	REGENESIS BIOREMEDIATION PRODUCTS, INC.,	NONINFRINGEMENT AND INVALIDITY	
15 16	Defendant.	DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL	
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19	NATURE OF THE ACTION		
20	This is an action for a declaratory judgment arising under the patent laws of		
21	the United States, Title 35 of the United States Code. Regenesis Bioremediation		
22	Products, Inc. ("Regenesis") owns or exclusively licenses various patents related to		
23	environmental remediation services and products involving the use of activated		
24	carbon. The patents at issue specifically include U.S. Patents 7,585,132; 9,770,743;		
25	9,776,898; 10,005,684; 10,478,876; 10,512,957; and 11,253,895 (collectively with		
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the others, the "Regenesis Patents"). Plaintiff Cascade Drilling, L.P. ("Cascade")

seeks a declaratory judgment that (1) the Regenesis Patents are invalid; (2) the

COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY JUDGMENT OF NONINFRINGEMENT AND INVALIDITY - 1 CASE NO.

KARR TUTTLE CAMPBELL 701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3300 Seattle, Washington 98104 Main: (206) 223 1313 Fax: (206) 682 7100

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Regenesis Patents are unenforceable; (3) even if valid and enforceable, Cascade does not infringe the Regenesis Patents; and (4) that Regenesis has violated § 2 of the Sherman Antitrust Act and engaged in Walker Process fraud against the United States Patent and Trademark Office ("USPTO") and Cascade. In addition, Cascade contends that Regenesis has engaged in tortious interference with Cascade's contracts and prospective economic advantage, and otherwise engaged in unfair business practices in violation of the laws of the State of California.

#### **PARTIES**

- 1. Plaintiff Cascade is based in Seattle, Washington. Cascade provides a variety of services including environmental remediation. Cascade manufactures, sells, and uses products designed for *in situ* groundwater remediation treatments, including colloidal activated carbon products.
- 2. On information and belief, Defendant Regenesis is a corporation incorporated and registered under the laws of the State of California with an address at 1011 Calle Sombra, San Clemente, California 92673. Regenesis owns or is the exclusive licensee of the Regenesis Patents.

### JURISDICTIONAL STATEMENT

- 3. This action arises under the Declaratory Judgment Act, 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201 and 2202, and the patent laws of the United States, 35 U.S.C. § 1 et seq.
- 4. This court has original jurisdiction over the subject matter of this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1338(a), 2201, and 2202.
- 5. This court has supplemental jurisdiction over the claims originating pursuant to the law of the State of California pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1367 because state law claims arise from the same set of operative facts and are so related to the federal statutory claims as to form part of the same case and controversy.

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6. Personal jurisdiction over Regenesis is proper in this District because: (1) of its presence in this judicial district; (2) it has availed itself of the rights and benefits of the laws of California; (3) it has conducted business relating to the licensing and enforcement of patents in California; and (4) it has systematic and continuous business contacts with California.

**VENUE** 

7. Venue is proper in this district under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) because Regenesis is subject to personal jurisdiction in this judicial district; has directed its business, licensing, and enforcement activities at this judicial district; and a substantial part of the events giving rise to the claim occurred in this judicial district.

### **FACTS**

#### PATENTS AT ISSUE

- 8. The Regenesis Patents are comprised of the following patents, all of which are related and claim methods or products used in the *in situ* remediation of contaminated groundwater.
- 9. United States Patent Number 7,585,132 ("132 Patent"), entitled METHOD FOR REMEDIATING A CONTAMINATED SITE, names James Imbrie as the inventor, was filed on November 22, 2006 claimed priority to a provisional application filed June 27, 2006, and states an issue date of September 8, 2009. Attached as **Exhibit A** is a copy of the '132 Patent.
- 10. United States Patent Number 9,770,743 ("'743 Patent"), entitled COLLOIDAL AGENTS FOR AQUIFER REMEDIATION, names Benjamin V. Mork, Joy M. Gravitt, Ryan A. Ferguson, Stephanie R. Rittenhouse, and Kristen A. Thoreson as the inventors, was filed on August 1, 2014, claimed priority to a provisional application filed on August 2, 2013 and states an issue date of September 26, 2017. Attached as **Exhibit B** is a copy of the '743 Patent.

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11. United States Patent Number 9,776,898 ("898 Patent"), entitled TREATMENT OF AQUIFER MATRIX BACK DIFFUSION, names Kristen A. Thoreson, Jeremy Birnstingl, Stephanie R. Rittenhouse, Katherine Djernes Pappano, and Melinda T. Pham as the inventors, was filed on February 12, 2015, claimed priority to a provisional application filed February 14, 2014, and states an issue date of October 3, 2017. Attached as **Exhibit C** is a copy of the '898 Patent.

12. United States Patent Number 10,005,684 ("'684 Patent"), entitled TREATMENT OF AQUIFER MATRIX BACK DIFFUSION, names Scott B. Wilson, Benjamin V. Mork, Jeremy Birnstingl, and Kristen A. Thoreson as the inventors, was filed on August 23, 2017, claimed priority to a provisional application filed February 14, 2014, and states an issue date of June 26, 2018. Attached as **Exhibit D** is a copy of the '684 Patent.

13. United States Patent Number 10,478,876 ("876 Patent"), entitled METHOD OF INCREASING HYDROPHOBICITY OF NATIVE WATER-BEARING ZONES, names Kristen A. Thoreson, Jeremy Birnstingl, and Scott B. Wilson as the inventors, was filed on June 12, 2017, claimed priority to a provisional application filed on June 13, 2016, and states an issue date of November 19, 2019. Attached as **Exhibit E** is a copy of the '876 Patent.

14. United States Patent Number 10,512,957 ("'957 Patent"), entitled COLLOIDAL AGENTS FOR AQUIFER AND METALS REMEDIATION, names Kristen A. Thoreson, Jeremy Birnstingl, Stephanie R. Rittenhouse, Katherine Djernes Pappano, and Melinda T. Pham as the inventors, was filed on March 15, 2017, claimed priority to provisional applications filed on March 16, 2016 and August 2, 2013, and states an issue date of December 24, 2019. Attached as Exhibit **F** is a copy of the '957 Patent.

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15. United States Patent Number 11,253,895 ("895 Patent"), entitled METHODS FOR REMEDIATING CONTAMINATED SOIL AND GROUNDWATER USING SOLID-PHASE ORGANIC MATERIALS, names Kristen A. Thoreson, Scott B. Wilson, and John Freim as the inventors, was filed on December 31, 2018, claimed priority to a provisional application filed on January 3, 2018, and states an issue date of February 22, 2022. Attached as **Exhibit G** is a copy of the '895 Patent.

16. There is an actual controversy between the parties concerning the Regenesis Patents within the jurisdiction of this Court under 28 U.S.C. §§ 2201 and 2202.

#### EXISTENCE OF AN ACTUAL CONTROVERSY

- 17. Cascade and Regenesis are competitors who offer comparable *in situ* groundwater remediation services and compete for the same customers or bid on the same projects.
- 18. Cascade manufactures, sells, and uses ColloidalChem products, which are a group of high mobility and low pressure, injectable colloidal activated carbon products designed to target difficult-to-treat contaminants like chlorinated volatile organic compounds (CVOCs), per and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), benzene/toluene/ethylbenzene/xylenes (BTEX), and other pollutants. These products include:
  - a. ColloidalChem +ISCR, a patent pending injectable colloidal activated carbon with integrated chemical reduction chemistry for destruction of chlorinated solvents;
  - b. ColloidalChem +Anchor, a patented injectable colloidal activated carbon with an integrated enzyme technology to control mobility in PRB applications; and

- c. ColloidalChem +Bio, an injectable activated carbon with additional chemistries to enhance bioremediation destruction of petroleum compounds.
- 19. Regenesis manufactures, sells, and uses its own competing injectable colloidal activated carbon products such as PlumeStop and PetroFix, which it contends are covered by one or more claims of the Regenesis Patents.
- 20. The Regenesis Patents should not have been issued and were clearly anticipated. Consequently, the Regenesis Patents are invalid and unenforceable.
- 21. Even, assuming *arguendo*, the Regenesis Patents are valid and enforceable, Cascade's products and services do not infringe upon the Regenesis Patents.
- 22. Nevertheless, as part of a concerted and unfair business practice to obtain a market advantage, Regenesis has made demands and threats of infringement and litigation to anyone in the industry offering *in situ* remediation products or services utilizing activated carbon. The recipients of Regenesis's threats include remediation contractors, consulting engineering firms, product suppliers, Cascade, its customers, and potential customers. Despite being baseless, the threats have been effective and have caused Cascade to lose business and revenue. Until and unless it is definitively determined that the Regenesis Patents are invalid and unenforceable, or that Cascade's products and services do not infringe, Regenesis's litigation threats will continue to harm Cascade.
- 23. On July 29, 2021, Scott B. Wilson, President & CEO of Regenesis sent a letter to the CEO of Cascade, Ron Thalacker, regarding Cascade's use of micron-sized activated carbon products for groundwater remediation products. While admitting that it was "unfamiliar" with the formulation of Cascade's products, it nevertheless warned Cascade to be "mindful" of the Regenesis Patents. Confident

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that its products and methods using activated carbon were well-known in the industry long before any of the Regenesis Patents were issued, Cascade carried on. Attached as **Exhibit 1** is a true and correct copy of the letter referenced in this paragraph.

- 24. Then on or around September 8, 2021, Regenesis issued an industry-wide letter to its client distribution list advising that it owns "key patents" in the US and Europe regarding the use of colloidal activated carbon. Regenesis threatened that "[u]se of <u>any other</u> colloidal activated carbon product for the *in situ* restoration of groundwater or soil would likely result in the infringement of one or more claims of these patents, and, as a consequence, <u>be subject to legal action by REGENESIS to seek injunctive relief</u>, damages, and attorney's fees." (Emphasis added). Attached as **Exhibit 2** is a true and correct copy of the letter referenced in this paragraph.
- 25. Regenesis further threatened legal action against "those that directly infringe (e.g. remediation contractors), those that induce infringement (e.g. consulting engineering firms), those committing contributory infringement (e.g. product suppliers) or those that benefit from such infringement (e.g. site owners)." Thus, through this letter, Regenesis threatened legal action against all providers of activated carbon products and services for *in situ* groundwater remediation and their customers for infringement of the Regenesis Patents this includes Cascade and its customers.
- 26. The industry responded. First, Remediation Products, Inc. ("RPI") publicly accused Regenesis of engaging in "patent abuse by making overly broad, vague, and unsupported claims and veiled threats against anyone offering in situ remediation products based on activated carbon." RPI also explained why the Regenesis patents were invalid. Attached as **Exhibit 3** is a true and correct copy of the RPI statement referenced in this paragraph.

27. On September 21, 2021, Cascade responded to the threats by demanding that Regenesis provide a "claim chart that identifies the specific products, patents, and claims at issue by October 1, 2021." Cascade also advised, "[f]ailure to do so will be considered an admission by Regenesis that neither Cascade nor its customers are infringing [the Regenesis Patents]." Cascade then provided an analysis of numerous prior art references that anticipated the claims in the Regenesis Patents rendering them invalid. Attached as **Exhibit 4** is a true and correct copy of the letter referenced in this paragraph.

28. On October 1, 2021, Regenesis responded to Cascade. But Regenesis did not identify any specific Cascade product or service alleged to infringe any of the Regenesis Patents. Instead, they wrote,

Regenesis has made no contention that any specific person or company is infringing its patents, nor has Regenesis identified any specific claims of its patents that are infringed. Likewise, Regenesis has not identified any particular product for which the manufacture, sale, offer to sell, use, and/or importation would be infringing.

And without any explanation or analysis, Regenesis dismissed Cascade's invalidity contentions in light of the prior art to the Regenesis Patents. Attached as **Exhibit 5** is a true and correct copy of the letter referenced in this paragraph.

29. Despite Regenesis's concessions that it had not identified any Cascade product or service that infringed any claim of any Regenesis Patent, Regenesis began targeting Cascade's customers with both implicit and explicit threats of litigation if they elected to use or continued to use Cascade's competing products or services involving activated carbon for *in situ* groundwater remediation. The purpose of the contacts with and threats to Cascade's customers was to dissuade or coerce the Cascade's customers from doing business with Cascade or otherwise interfere with Cascade's business relationships. As a direct result of Regenesis's contacts and

interference, Cascade lost customers and contracts for its *in situ* groundwater remediation services.

- 30. For other customers and potential customers fearful of Regenesis' litigation threats, to keep or retain the customer, Cascade was forced to agree to hold harmless, defend, and indemnify them for any litigation concerning the Regenesis Patents. These indemnification agreements require Cascade to assume the defense of its customers against enforcement of the Regenesis Patents against Cascade's products or services and pay for the customer any award of damages.
- 31. On at least one occasion in 2022, Cascade learned that as a result of Regenesis's litigation scare tactics, a potential customer had decided to forgo its plan to work with Cascade and instead switched to Regenesis. This wasn't the only customer Cascade lost to Regenesis's threats of litigation to enforce the Regenesis Patents against Cascade's products and services.
- 32. Regenesis continues to target customers and prospective customers to improperly interfere with Cascade's contracts and business expectancies. For example, on August 29, 2023, Cascade learned that Regenesis had called Dynamic Earth LLC, the coordinator for a remediation project in New Jersey with a threat of legal action over the use of Cascade's products and services for the project. Two days later, outside counsel for Regenesis sent a letter asserting infringement of the Regenesis Patents. The letter did not identify any specific Cascade product or service that allegedly infringed the Regenesis Patents. Nor did the letter include any analysis explaining how the use of Cascade's products and services infringed any specific claim from the Regenesis Patents. Attached as **Exhibit 6** is a true and correct copy of the letter referenced in this paragraph.
- 33. Nevertheless, Regenesis demanded that Dynamic Earth immediately cease and desist from implementing Cascade's remediation products and services.

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Regenesis further threatened that if Dynamic Earth did not cooperate, Regenesis would sue them, and others associated with the project, for injunctive relief, damages, and attorney's fees.

- 34. To date, Regenesis has yet to follow through on this or any threat of litigation to enforce the Regenesis Patents against Cascade, its customers, or anyone else in the industry. Regenesis's failure to take any formal legal action to enforce the Regenesis Patents evidences that Regenesis either (1) has no good faith basis for asserting any known product or service infringes any claim of any Regenesis Patent; or (2) knows that the Regenesis Patents are invalid and unenforceable and thus will not withstand judicial scrutiny.
- 35. Despite the fact that Regenesis has no good faith basis for asserting any Cascade product or service infringes on any claim of the Regenesis Patents, Regenesis continues to harass and threaten Cascade's customers with litigation to the detriment of Cascade and its relationships with its customers.
- 36. Based on the foregoing, a justiciable controversy exists between Cascade and Regenesis as to whether the Regenesis Patents are valid and enforceable or whether Cascade's products and services infringe any valid or enforceable claim of the Regenesis Patents.
- 37. Absent a declaration of invalidity, unenforceability, or non-infringement, Regenesis will continue to wrongfully allege that Cascade's products and services infringe the Regenesis Patents and continue with its anti-competitive practices involving the Regenesis Patents (explained further below), thereby causing Cascade irreparable harm and damages.

### FIRST CLAIM: DECLARATORY JUDGMENT OF INVALIDITY

38. Cascade repeats and realleges paragraphs 1 through 37 hereof, as if fully set forth herein.

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- 39. As a result of the acts described in the preceding paragraphs, there exists a controversy of sufficient immediacy and reality to warrant the issuance of a declaratory judgment of invalidity.
- 40. A judicial declaration is necessary and appropriate so that Cascade may ascertain its rights regarding the validity of the Regenesis Patents.
- 41. Cascade is entitled to a declaratory judgment that the claims of the Regenesis Patents are invalid under one or more provisions of 35 U.S.C. §§ 101, 102, 103, and/or 112.
- 42. Cascade's initial invalidity contentions addressing specific prior art references that anticipate or render obvious each independent claim of the Regenesis Patents are included as **Exhibit X**. Cascade reserves the right to supplement or amend its initial invalidity contentions as it learns of or discovers additional relevant prior art.

## SECOND CLAIM: DECLARATORY JUDGMENT OF UNENFORCEABILITY

- 43. Cascade repeats and realleges paragraphs 1 through 42 hereof, as if fully set forth herein.
- 44. As a result of the acts described in the preceding paragraphs, there exists a controversy of sufficient immediacy and reality to warrant the issuance of a declaratory judgment of unenforceability.
- 45. A judicial declaration is necessary and appropriate so that Cascade may ascertain its rights regarding the enforceability of the Regenesis Patents.
- 46. Cascade is entitled to a declaratory judgment that the Regenesis Patents are unenforceable due to inequitable conduct before the USPTO.
- 47. For example, during the prosecution of the Regenesis Patents, material prior art, then well-known throughout the industry, was willfully and intentionally

withheld from the patent examiners, including, without limitation, EP1462187A2 filed by Prof. Frank-Dieter Kopinke, et al. titled "Process for the in-situ decontamination of polluted aquifers" ("Kopinke"). Kopinke specifically discloses the use of colloidal activated carbon to treat a polluted aquifer and claimed priority to an application filed on March 27, 2003.

48. Regenesis claims that "[w]hen it comes to finding the right solution for groundwater and soil treatment, no company has more professional and practical experience than Regenesis," with its remediation products applied "on over 20,000 groundwater and soil remediation projects throughout the world." Given this level of experience and sophistication in the industry, Regenesis indubitably would have known, and in fact did know, the Kopinke prior art and other material prior art anticipated or rendered obvious claims of the Regensis Patents. Despite this knowledge, Regenesis and/or its licensors willfully and intentionally did not include material prior art references in Information Disclosure Statements filed during the prosecution of the Regenesis Patents. The willful omissions of the material prior art references were intended to mislead, and in fact did mislead, the USPTO into believing that the colloidal carbon remediation techniques claimed in the Regenesis Patents were novel and patentable.

- 49. But for the material omissions and inequitable conduct, the claims of the Regenesis Patents would not have issued.
- 50. As a result of its inequitable conduct, Regenesis and/or its licensors obtained the Regenesis Patents by fraud. Consequently, the Regenesis Patents should be invalidated.

THIRD CLAIM: DECLARATORY JUDGMENT OF NON-INFRINGEMENT

- 51. Cascade repeats and realleges paragraphs 1 through 50 hereof, as if fully set forth herein.
- 52. As a result of the acts described in the preceding paragraphs, there exists a controversy of sufficient immediacy and reality to warrant the issuance of a declaratory judgment of non-infringement.
- 53. A judicial declaration is necessary and appropriate so that Cascade may ascertain its rights regarding its products and services, and the Regenesis Patents.
- 54. Cascade is entitled to a declaratory judgment that Cascade does not make, use, sell, offer for sale, or import into the United States, and has not made, used, sold, offered for sale, or imported into the United States any products or methods that infringe, either directly or indirectly, any valid and enforceable claim of the Regenesis Patents under 35 U.S.C. § 271.

# FOURTH CLAIM: VIOLATION OF § 2 OF THE SHERMAN ANTITRUST ACT (WALKER PROCESS)

- 55. Cascade repeats and realleges paragraphs 1 through 54 hereof, as if fully set forth herein.
- 56. At all times relevant to the prosecution of the Regenesis Patents, Regenesis and its licensors had a duty to disclose to the USPTO all information known to them that was material to the question of patentability. Pursuant to the USPTO Rules of Professional Conduct § 11.303, they owed the USPTO a duty of good faith and candor, which included a duty to disclose relevant prior art. For each of the Regenesis Patents, this duty was continuing from the date of filing for each patent application through the time the USPTO issued each patent. Regenesis and its licensors willfully and intentionally violated this duty.

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- 57. Regenesis and its licensors fraudulently obtained the Regenesis Patents from the USPTO. As alleged above, material information, including material prior art well known throughout the industry at the time (*i.e.* Kopinke), was willfully and intentionally not disclosed to the patent examiners. The prior art was intentionally withheld because Regenesis and/or its licensors knew that the patents would not issue absent fraud on the USPTO. The material false representations and omissions were intended to induce, and did induce, reliance by the USPTO patent examiners in their decision to allow the otherwise invalid claims in the Regenesis Patents.
- 58. Since issuance of the fraudulently obtained Regenesis Patents, Regenesis has engaged in conduct prohibited by the Supreme Court in *Walker Process* and in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act.
- 59. Regenesis's goal is to monopolize, through any means necessary, the market for *in situ* remediation products and services that use activated carbon. In furtherance of that goal, Regenesis has engaged in a calculated campaign of patent abuse, asserting patents it knows to be invalid against competitors, including Cascade, and their customers. Regenesis's misuse of the fraudulently obtained Regenesis Patents is anticompetitive, calculated to exclude Cascade and others from participating and competing in the market for *in situ* groundwater remediation involving services and products using activated carbon.
- 60. Regenesis's explicit and implicit threats to enforce the Regenesis Patents, which it knows to be invalid, through litigation for damages and injunctive relief violates the Sherman Antitrust Act. Cascade has been damaged in an amount to be proven at trial.

## FIFTH CLAIM: TORTIOUS INTERFERENCE WITH CONTRACT

61. Cascade repeats and realleges paragraphs 1 through 60 hereof, as if fully set forth herein.

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- 62. Regenesis, by threatening Cascade's clients with the fraudulently obtained Regenesis Patents, has engaged in tortious interference with contracts between Cascade and its customers. Cascade validly entered into contracts with its customers to provide products and services that Cascade believes to be legal and non-infringing upon the rights of Regenesis. Nevertheless, Regenesis has repeatedly targeted Cascade's customers and communicated with them directly in an effort to induce them to terminate their contractual relationship with Cascade.
- 63. Regenesis has knowledge of the contractual relationship between Cascade and its customers, and specifically targets Cascade's customers because of that contractual relationship, when it contacts them to induce the termination of that relationship.
- 64. Through its express and implied threats of litigation to enforce the invalid Regenesis Patents, Regenesis has taken intentional acts designed to induce the termination or disruption of the contractual relationship between Cascade and its customers.
- 65. As a result of this misconduct, several of Cascade's customers have terminated contracts with Cascade and, in some cases, opted to use Regenesis's products and/or services instead.
- 66. Cascade has been directly damaged by Regenesis's tortious acts in an amount to be proven at trial.

## SIXTH CLAIM: TORTIOUS INTERFERENCE WITH PROSPECTIVE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE

- 67. Cascade repeats and realleges paragraphs 1 through 66 hereof, as if fully set forth herein.
- 68. Regenesis has engaged in tortious interference with prospective economic advantage between Cascade and its customers. Specifically, Regenesis has

KARR TUTTLE CAMPBELL

1	77. Cascade has suffered distinct injuries in fact through the loss of customers	
2	and economic opportunity as a result of Regenesis's misconduct.	
3	78. As a result of Regenesis's unfair business practices, Cascade has been	
4	damaged in amount to be proven at trial.	
5	PRAYER FOR RELIEF	
6	WHEREFORE, Cascade requests the following relief:	
7	A. A judgment declaring that the Regenesis Patents are invalid;	
8	B. A judgment declaring that the Regenesis Patents are unenforceable;	
9	C. A judgment declaring that Cascade's products and services do not infringe	
10	upon Regenesis Patents;	
11	D. An award of damages;	
12	E. An award of punitive damages;	
13	F. An award of attorneys' fees, costs, and expenses incurred in this action;	
14	and	
15	G. Any other relief as the Court may deem just, equitable, and proper.	
16	Dated this 8th day of November, 2023.	
17	s/ J. Dino Vasquez	
18	J. Dino Vasquez, CSB #146725 Karr Tuttle Campbell	
19	701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3300 Seattle, WA 98104	
20	Telephone: 206-223-1313 Facsimile: 206-682-7100	
21	Email: dvasquez@karrtuttle.com	
22	Attorneys for Plaintiff, Cascade Drilling, L.P.	
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COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY
JUDGMENT OF NONINFRINGEMENT
AND INVALIDITY - 17
CASE NO.

KARR TUTTLE CAMPBELL 701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3300 Seattle, Washington 98104 Main: (206) 223 1313 Fax: (206) 682 7100