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American Coalition for Ethanol Statement on EPA Delay of E15 Decision

Sioux Falls, SD (June 18, 2010) – The American Coalition for Ethanol (ACE) today issued the following statement responding to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) announcement they would wait until September to make a decision on the pending E15 waiver, and then just on vehicles made after 2007.

Brian Jennings, Executive Vice President of ACE, stated:

“EPA is required by law to make a decision on the request to allow the use of cleaner burning blends of up to 15 percent ethanol, and by the time they actually make a decision, it will be a full year later than the law requires. Every addict needs enablers, but frankly we could not have imagined the Environmental Protection Agency would be one of the major defenders of the status quo that is now fouling beaches from Louisiana to Florida.

“We also have to wonder who is influencing EPA when they agree it will be impossible to meet the Renewable Fuels Standard but refuse to remove the requirement that fuel contain a minimum of 90 percent petroleum. That decision can only be good news for the likes of BP and ExxonMobil, and anyone else who chooses to ignore the dangers of relying on unstable and hostile foreign regimes for our fuel, or the dangers of drilling two miles below the ocean.

“EPA could be accused of slow-walking this E15 decision, but that would imply that progress is being made. This decision has been pushed back an entire year, and has gone from making cleaner burning E15 available to all cars, to only 2001 and newer cars, and now possibly to only those made after 2007. Those vehicles were practically fresh off the assembly line when the data was submitted proving blends beyond E10 are safe for all vehicles, and now two years and millions of dollars have been wasted as EPA defends the status quo. Meanwhile, oil has been spilling from the Gulf of Mexico for 60 days and counting. What do government bureaucrats need to see to be convinced that our nation desperately needs take action to reduce our use of oil?

“When ACE met with EPA in March of this year, we were told that by mid-year EPA was planning to approve E15 for 2001 and newer vehicles, a commitment the Agency put in writing in a December 1 letter. While there are many practical challenges to implementing E15 for only 2001 and newer vehicles, it may have been better than the status quo of being limited to only E10. But to add insult to injury, EPA is now indicating that they will consider E15 for only vehicles made after the 2007 model year – only 20 percent of the U.S. fleet. Even if every single vehicle made after 2007 used E15 every time it filled up, it would barely allow the U.S. to meet the 2012 Renewable Fuels Standard requirement.

“As oil is ruining livelihoods and closing businesses, the economic and job-creation benefit of ethanol is being told it must wait in the wings. With the price of ethanol being almost a dollar less per gallon than gasoline today, EPA’s approval of a 5 percent increase in the ethanol content could save the U.S. more than \$19 billion in fuel expenditures every year – almost as much as BP has committed so far to clean up the damage that oil has done in the Gulf.

“ACE is encouraging all ethanol supporters to contact their Members of Congress to urge their support of legislation for more flexible fuel vehicles and blender pumps, such as S. 1627, the Harkin-Lugar ‘Consumer Fuels and Vehicles Choice Act.’ More FFVs and blender pumps would bring flexibility into the U.S. fuel system and give consumers greater fuel choice, while bypassing the bureaucracy that is preventing the cleaner alternative fuels from reaching the marketplace.”

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The American Coalition for Ethanol (ACE) is the grassroots voice of the U.S. ethanol industry, a national trade association for the ethanol industry with nearly 1,500 members nationwide, including farmers, ethanol producers, commodity organizations, businesses supplying goods and services to the ethanol industry, rural electric cooperatives, and individuals supportive of increased production and use of ethanol. For more information about ethanol or ACE, visit www.ethanol.org or call (605) 334-3381.