



P.O. Box 711
Pasadena, California 91102

U. S. Congresswoman Judy Chu
527 S. Lake Ave.
Suite 106,
Pasadena, CA 91101

September 4, 2014

Dear Representative Chu,

The Pasadena Casting Club sent you a letter on August 14 in support of H. R. 4858, the San Gabriel River National Recreation Area Act, and also urged you to sponsor legislation to designate all of the eligible streams in the San Gabriel River watershed as Wild and Scenic Rivers. Our letter was co-signed by six like-minded organizations, including fishing and hiking groups, and a conservation volunteer group which does extensive clean-up and visitor outreach in the San Gabriel Mountains. We seek improved forest protection and enhanced recreational facilities for the entire San Gabriel watershed. In addition, our goal is to gain stronger protection for the entire West Fork of the San Gabriel River, a stream which has been a special focus of our conservation efforts for many, many years. It requires Wild and Scenic River status to preserve and enhance the gains made thus far, since the recovery from the disastrous silt releases from Cogswell Dam in the 1980's.

We have been alarmed by the sudden turn by you, and by a large block of your National Recreation Area Act supporters, to seek a National Monument declaration for the National Forest lands encompassed in the NRA bill. If we had been able to get in to your recent public meeting in Baldwin Park, which seemed to have been stage-managed and packed early by one group which favors the National Monument idea, we would have expressed the following concerns:

- National Monument status will not reduce the pressure of visitor overuse of the mountain recreational resources.
- A National Monument will not involve the staff and expertise of the National Park Service, whose mission is specifically about visitor services.
- Funding for a National Monument would go to the National Forest Service (and at a lower level than that for a National Recreation Area), whose primary mission is the protection of the forest, not visitor services. In recent years, chronically underfunded, the NFS has had to take money away from ancillary programs in order to pay for its fire fighting priority.
- If a National Monument declaration is granted, there will be less support in Congress for the NRA bill.
- The momentum of and funding for the NRA support groups may dwindle once a National Monument is achieved.

We ask you to refocus your efforts on passage of H. R. 4858, the San Gabriel River National Recreation Area Act. We stand ready to support you in this effort, and look forward to your sponsorship of Wild and Scenic River legislation for the eligible streams in the San Gabriel Mountains.

Sincerely,

John Tobin
Conservation Chair,
Pasadena Casting Club
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