

Pasadena Casting Club

Dear West Fork Advocates:

It's time to renew our push for greater protection for the West Fork, especially the lower stream below Cogswell dam. It is a new year, and especially significant, a new L. A. County Board of Supervisors. Rep. Judy Chu (CA 27) is being asked to again submit a bill to designate streams in the San Gabriel Mountains as Wild and Scenic rivers, including the East Fork, North Fork, and the upper West Fork, but not the lower West Fork, of the San Gabriel River. Once again, the lower West Fork would be excluded out of concern that the dam operator, L. A. County Public Works, will not support the plan if it is included. Unfortunately, the large environmental groups encouraging such a bill seem willing to sacrifice the lower West Fork in order to achieve the goal for the other streams. I recently had a meeting with L. A. County Supervisor Hilda Solis' Environment deputy about this issue, and I am optimistic that the Board of Supervisors would now support a Wild and Scenic bill which included the lower West Fork. Hilda Solis was a prime force behind the efforts to protect the San Gabriel Mountains, beginning 14 years ago when she was in Congress, which culminated in the National Monument declaration. Since taking office in December, along with Sheila Kuehl, she represents a significant change in the L. A. County Board, and is in a position to influence the Public Works Department's response to this issue.

Because we are smaller, grass roots groups who know the West Fork intimately, we are in a good position to influence decisions about it. Supervisor Solis' Environment deputy told me that no other environmental group had yet approached her about this issue of the lower West Fork, and that she was favorably impressed that a local group would take it up.

We must keep the issue alive, and keep the pressure on the politicians. Please write and email Representative Chu about submitting a Wild and Scenic bill which includes the lower West Fork, and Supervisor Solis about supporting such a bill. We must do this before a bill is written. Here are two points to make:

- If the lower West Fork is not designated Wild and Scenic, but the upper West Fork, and the other San Gabriel tributaries are so designated, then the disparity in management and status will lead to further degradation of the lower stream.
- Wild and Scenic designation of the entire West Fork will not impact the L. A. County Public Works department's flood control mission, dam operation, water rights, or road use.

Here are the addresses and contacts:

Rep. Judy Chu (the link to her page includes an email form, and mailing addresses:

<http://chu.house.gov/connect-with-me/email-judy>

Supv. Hilda Solis: FirstDistrict@bos.lacounty.gov

The Honorable Hilda L. Solis
County of Los Angeles
Board of Supervisors
500 West Temple
Los Angeles, CA 90012