

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

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The Honorable "Buck" McKeon
Congressman, 25th District
26650 The Old Road, Suite 203
Santa Clarita, California 91381

Re-introduction and Expansion of the Eastern Sierra Wilderness Bill

Hon. Congressman McKeon:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) fully supports the re-introduction and expansion of the Wilderness Bill for the Eastern Sierra, including the Amargosa River in the Mojave Desert.

We understand that you are close to adding two additional areas that are vital to the continued ecological health of the Santa Monica Mountains Zone. These two areas are Piru Creek and portions of the Magic Mountain core habitat in the western San Gabriel Mountains. The Magic Mountain area is within the Zone and the Piru Creek area both abuts, and flows into, the Zone. The ecological quality of both the Angeles National Forest and Los Padres National Forest that harbor these wilderness areas is tied into the ecology of all the connected mountain ranges. Piru Creek is one of the few year-round cold water trout streams in Southern California, and Magic Mountain is home to the California Condors. These core habitat areas are the reservoir of genetic diversity for the plethora of mammal and avian species in the San Gabriel, Santa Monica, and Santa Susanna Mountains.

As the State of California continues to grow, so do our needs to preserve the last remaining crown jewels of our mountains, rivers, and deserts while the opportunity exists. The Conservancy thanks you for working with Senator Boxer on the re-introduction of this Wilderness Bill. Thank you again for your dedication and leadership on this very important effort.

Sincerely,

RONALD P. SCHAFER
Chairperson