

**TOWN OF
APPLE VALLEY, CALIFORNIA
AGENDA MATTER**

Subject Item:

CALIFORNIA DESERT PROTECTION ACT OF 2010

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Chris Carrillo, of U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein’s Southern California staff, came to Town Hall twice in the last three months to brief Council Members Roelle and Nassif in their roles as Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tem, and staff, on her proposed legislation. Mr. Carrillo brought members of the California Wilderness Coalition, the Off-Road Business Association and the Wilderness Society to the second meeting to present their perspective on why they support this bill.

Senator Feinstein introduced the “California Desert Protection Act of 2010” in Congress on December 21, 2009. The legislation would create two national monuments – the Mojave Trails National Monument and the Sand to Snow National Monument – on 1 million acres of the Mojave Desert. The Mojave Trails National Monument would prohibit development on 941,000 acres of federal land along a 105 mile stretch of Route 66, between Ludlow and Needles. The Sand to Snow National Monument would cover about 134,000 acres of federal land between Joshua Tree National Park and the San Bernardino National Forest.

The Senator had delayed introducing the legislation in an effort to incorporate the concerns of all stakeholders. The bill would also designate 250,000 acres of public land near Fort Irwin as wilderness; add 41,000 acres to the southern boundary of Death Valley National Park and add 2,900 acres to northern portions of Joshua Tree National Park. In addition, it would designate as permanent five existing off-highway vehicle (OHV) areas in San Bernardino County covering 314,000 acres.

On December 9, 2009, staff contacted Jim Specht of Congressman Lewis' office to get his position on the legislation. Mr. Specht stated that Congressman Lewis was unwilling to support the bill at this point because it locks up too much land and it is not clear which agencies are going to be supervisors of this territory. He suggested that if the Council transmits a letter of support that it outline the provision of your support.

Staff has drafted a letter that supports the concept of the bill and incorporates suggestions from Congressman Lewis’ office, for your consideration.

Recommended Action:

Provide direction to staff.

Proposed by: Linda Mayfield

Item Number _____

T. M. Approval: _____

Budgeted Item Yes No N/A



Town of Apple Valley

14955 Dale Evans Parkway • Apple Valley, California 92307

A Better Way of Life

December 17, 2009

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

It was a pleasure meeting with Chris Carrillo, of your Southern California staff, to discuss your proposed legislation. His effort in providing us two comprehensive briefings on the many facets of your planned legislation deserves to be recognized. We appreciate your willingness to incorporate the concerns of all stakeholders.

The bill is an important effort to resolve the current massive desert land grab by private interest that would restrict public access to public land. On behalf of the Town Council, we support the concept of your wilderness and monument legislation as recently presented to two Council Members and staff. This support is based on the bill including a specific land use designation of Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHV) areas in order to provide stability and permanence for recreational users. The guarantee of OHV areas is important to the High Desert for both the recreational demand and economic vitality of our region. If recreational areas become unusable or inaccessible, it will have a negative impact on the local economy including the loss of tax revenues. The potential Marine base expansion to the west and reduction of accessible public land now used by OHV enthusiasts (Johnson Valley) is of great concern to us as there are few areas of public land that don't have some previous commitment, designation or resource value that prevents OHV use.

Thank you again for offering this opportunity to contribute to discussions about this bill and your work on behalf of our shared constituents.

Sincerely,

Peter Allan
Mayor, Town of Apple Valley