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May 25, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary of the Interior Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20240

Subject: We support the continuation of the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument

Dear Mr. Secretary;

The Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association is an all-volunteer membership-based 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to the maintenance, preservation, and improvement of trail-based recreational opportunities for bicyclists, and the public lands on which we recreate. We advocate for and promote improved opportunities for recreational mountain biking and multi-use trails. Our scope of operation includes greater Los Angeles County and eastern Ventura County.

Our volunteers put in thousands of hours of work per year restoring and maintaining trails, teaching mountain biking skills clinics, trail etiquette and best trail management practices.

The Angeles National Forest and the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, declared by President Obama on October 10, 2014 are of special importance to us and to our members and constituents.

The San Gabriel Mountains National Monument (SGMNM) has brought much-needed attention and reform to our Forest Service. Their biggest challenge faced by the Forest Service has been, and continues to be fulfilling their mandate as stewards of these public lands with limited and shrinking budgets, and increasing challenges from climatic events, fires, and increasing visitorship.

While those financial challenges still exist, the Monument designation has resulted in some positive benefits to our public lands, and the communities that depend on them for recreation, clean air and drinking water. There have been some notable one-time funding opportunities that may not have been available without the designation. A group of supporters and opponents of the monument designation have come together as the San Gabriel Mountains Community Collaborative to actively engage with

the Forest Service in the management of the Forest and Monument. CORBA is a founding participant of that Collaborative, representing cyclists and trail-based recreationalists.

The Collaborative have separately submitted an objective overview of why we believe the SGMNM meets or exceeds Antiquities Act requirements and considerations established by Executive Order (EO 13792). CORBA helped in the development of this letter and is in full agreement with it. Specifically CORBA agrees that:

- i. There is no doubt that the SGMNM meets criteria set forth by the Act that the land reservation not exceed “the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected”.
- ii. It is an indisputable fact that the resources protected by the SGMNM reservation of land are appropriately classified under the Act as "historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, [or] other objects of historic or scientific interest"
- iii. The Monument designation on the San Gabriel Mountains is both harmonious with, and furthers the purpose of, the “multiple use” objectives underlying the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA).
- iv. Collaborative members report that the Monument designation on the San Gabriel Mountains has actually enhanced the use and enjoyment of adjacent non-federal lands, and is expected to result in increased recreation opportunities and improved water quality within the protected watersheds.
- vi. The Monument status conferred on the San Gabriel Mountains has not resulted in a drain on federal resources. To the contrary, the Monument designation has resulted in an influx of large corporate and private donations to supplement the finite federal resources devoted to the SGMNM.

The monument designation also protects recreational opportunities such as mountain biking, to continue on the same trails open to bicycles before the monument designation.

Furthermore, CORBA wishes to express our full support for the keeping the current SGMNM as it is. The funding opportunities, even if one-time, have lead to more staff on the ground, more restoration and maintenance projects, and much-needed improvements to the Forest Service’s working relationship with the surrounding community, for the mutual benefit of our communities and our Forest. It has brought increased local and national attention to our mountains and the recreational opportunities afforded therein. It has increased local awareness of the recreational opportunities our mountains provide. It has brought momentum to movements for social and environmental justice, and efforts to improve access to our mountains from underserved communities.

We urge Secretary Zinke to allow the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument to remain intact, and where possible, advocate for increased funding for the cash-strapped Forest Service charged with managing it for our public benefit and enjoyment.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Messer', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Steve Messer
President
Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association

About CORBA: The Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association (CORBA) is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and a chapter of the International Mountain Bicyclists Association (IMBA). Formed in 1987, CORBA works with land managers and the off-road cycling community at large to foster off-road cycling as a healthy, sustainable outdoor recreation option in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. CORBA is dedicated to preserving open space, maintaining public access to public lands, and creating more trail opportunities for all to enjoy. CORBA works with California State Parks, National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority, Conejo Rec and Parks District, as well as other local City and County government agencies. Our Volunteer Trail Crew, Youth Adventures, Free Skills Clinics, Advocacy and other programs promote off-road cycling recreation, and the responsible use and stewardship of our trails and open spaces.