

## **Resolution in support of Berryessa conservation area narrowly passes**

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<http://www.davisenterprise.com/local-news/county-government/resolution-in-support-of-berryessa-conservation-area-narrowly-passes/>

WOODLAND — Yolo County supervisors narrowly passed a resolution Tuesday in support of the proposed Berryessa Snow Mountain National Conservation Area, which would encompass 319,300 acres of federal land within Yolo, Napa, Lake and Mendocino counties.

Supervisors Don Saylor and Jim Provenza of Davis and Mike McGowan of West Sacramento voted in favor of the resolution, while Matt Rexroad of Woodland and Duane Chamberlain of the rural 5th District voted against it.

Currently, the federal land in the proposed national conservation area — which stretches from Putah Creek to Snow Mountain — is overseen by three separate federal agencies. Should Congress formally designate the area as an NCA, a single agency — the Bureau of Land Management — would take over management. Additionally, proponents said, the designation would:

- \* Provide a planning process for managing the land, which would include an advisory council made up of local residents;
- \* Put the Berryessa Snow Mountain region on the national map, potentially raising the national profile of the region and generating marketing and branding opportunities for the Lake Berryessa area;
- \* Create new opportunities for economic development through tourism and recreation; and
- \* Make additional federal funds available for management of the land.

Legislation designating the region a national conservation area was introduced in Congress last year by four area lawmakers: Democratic Sen. Barbara Boxer and Reps. Mike Thompson, D-St. Helena; John Garamendi, D-Walnut Grove; and Lynn Woolsey, D-Petaluma.

The resolution approved by supervisors Tuesday endorses that legislation.

Speaking in favor of the resolution on Tuesday were many members of Tuleyome, the Yolo Audubon Society and local Sierra Club chapters.

In opposition were a number of private landowners concerned about the impact on their land should Congress approve the measure.

They said the legislation's current language does not specifically exclude private lands in the designated area, though Thompson reportedly has assured them it will be amended to do so.

Frank Siefertman, representing the Yolo County Landowners Association, called the board's support for the NCA "premature" because, he said, Thompson has not yet followed through in excluding private lands.

At the request of Provenza, however, the county resolution in support of the act was amended to specifically mention the exclusion of private land.

Others expressed opposition to federal government oversight of local land, a concern shared by Rexroad, who noted that the county would "fight tooth and nail" to keep the state or federal government from dictating land-use issues related to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, "so what's the rule here?"

"We're going to invite them in because they're going to do a better job than we are?" he asked.

Chamberlain, meanwhile, questioned why the county would want to encourage more people coming to the area.

"You want all these people tracking all over this land?" he asked. "That's how you spread invasive species. They throw trash all over. The way it is now, it's being preserved. Well-preserved.

"It's better to keep people out, or not encourage them to go (there)," he added.

But Saylor countered that making public access easier could have the desired effect.

"One of the things I notice is that when people have access ... they tend to want to protect (the land)," he said. "This designation ... would secure public access to public lands."