

INTER-CANYON LEAGUE



April 02, 2011

Hon. Gary Miller, Congressman
42nd United States Congressional District
1800 East Lambert Rd. Ste. 550
Brea, CA 92821

Hon. Mimi K. Walters, Senator
33rd California Senate District
24031 El Toro Road, Ste. 210
Laguna Hills, CA 92653

Hon. Jeff Miller, Assemblyman
71st California Assembly District
20532 El Toro Road, Ste. 203
Mission Viejo, CA 92692

Bill Campbell, Supervisor
3rd Supervisorial District, County of Orange
10 Civic Center Plaza
Santa Ana, CA 92701

Sheriff Sandra Hutchens
County of Orange, CA
320 North Flower Street, Ste. 108
Santa Ana, CA 92703

Captain E. J. Barkley, OC Operations
Border Division, California Highway Patrol
2031 Santa Clara Ave.
Santa Ana, CA 92705

William Metz, Forest Supervisor
Cleveland National Forest, USFS
19845 Rancho Bernardo Rd., Ste. 200
San Diego, CA 92127

Keith Fletcher, District Ranger
Trabuco Ranger District, CNF, USFS
1147 East Sixth Street
Corona, CA 92879

Re: ENHANCED FUTURE ACCESS, SAFETY AND SECURITY PLANNING;
TRABUCO DISTRICT (ORANGE COUNTY AREA), CLEVELAND NF, USFS

The Cleveland National Forest is one of the more highly accessed “urban” National Forests in California, and the access points to the Forest, particularly in the Trabuco Ranger District in California’s Orange County, are very limited. Traffic, parking and safety complaints are issues of increasing importance, for both Forest recreation visitors and residents of the adjacent canyon areas of this urban County; which has a population exceeding three million people, and is one of the more densely populated of California counties. The rural residential communities of Silverado, Modjeska, Trabuco, Ladd, and the smaller neighboring canyons of East Orange County, are “Gateway Communities” to the Forest.

Our *Gateway Issues Committee* was created in March of 2010 by the *Inter-canyon League*, (ICL) a long-established community organization in the Eastern canyons of Orange County; for the purpose of investigation and recommendations to the *League* for addressing these growing complaints and the, often conflicting, issues related to those complaints. In August of last year the *Gateway Issues Committee* filed its Preliminary Report, a copy of which is included with this letter, and which may also be found on the *ICL* website at www.intercanyon.org.

In continuing our work, the *Gateway Issues Committee* is acting on our earlier recommendations to the *ICL*; attempting to initiate solutions to the complaints of Forest recreational users and canyon residents. The issues and proposed actions are discussed in our August, 2010 Report; and some of the problems have also been subject of columns in our local newspaper (*David Whiting, Orange County Register, August 17, August 23, 2010; "Hundreds of parkland acres, but no parking"; "„solutions to forest parking crisis"*), etc. Our immediate task is to initiate planning for the current and future needs of enhanced Forest access, and safety for an increasing Forest visitor population and for the resident community.

Our planned Committee efforts have multiple projects for potential improvement; and may include: (1) advance notices and improved posting for Forest closures and use restrictions, including nighttime access; (2) expansion of secure visitor parking within Forest boundaries; (3) improved County and USFS signage on access roads; (4) studies of traffic and speeding, and consideration of "traffic calming" measures; (5) increased law enforcement patrols for speeding, parking, littering and vandalism enforcement; (6) improved incident reporting to the community and the *ICL*; and also (7) improved communications; including emergency communications in these canyons, which are currently plagued by a lack of sufficient cellular phone services, where cable and land lines are particularly vulnerable to weather, and where communication is very limited, even in emergencies such as the 2007 Santiago Fire.

The purpose of this letter is to initiate a multi-agency effort to plan for improved Forest access and local resident safety and security, both for current conditions and for the longer term, as urban Orange County continues to grow, and as the need for Forest recreational access continues to expand. More specifically, our purpose is to request your assistance in our efforts. The USFS, particularly, has considerable existing information and expertise in problems and solutions in the management of urban National Forests, including those here in California, and that expertise should particularly be of great value.

What we ask, at this initial stage of our planning, is that you appoint an administrative or senior staff member to work with us in these matters of our mutual community interest, and that you advise us of your designations, and of any particular concerns or suggestions that you may have for us. We will be pleased to communicate directly with your representatives, and to attempt arrangements for any meetings and other activities for mutual convenience. Contact may be directed to: *Arthur A. Cummins*, arthurcummins@gmail.com, (714) 710-9188.

With Our Respect and Appreciation,

Arthur Cummins and Mike Colgan
Co-Chairs, Gateway Issues Committee,
Inter-Canyon League