



Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation, Inc.

Agoura Hills, California 91301



"The voice and conscience of the Santa Monica Mountains since 1968"

May 9, 2011

Boundary Review Commission
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Attention: Commission Services
E-mail: Commserv@bos.lacounty.gov

Re: PRESERVATION OF THE 3RD SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Dear Honorable Commissioners:

The Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation (LVHF) writes this letter on behalf of its more than 25 homeowner associations and more than 6,000 homeowners within the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA). The Federation is the largest and most venerable non-partisan homeowner coalition in the SMMNRA with members throughout Calabasas, Agoura Hills, unincorporated Los Angeles County, and Westhills. The Federation has a strong and successful 44 year history and track record dedicated to bringing residents, government agencies and stakeholders together to improve the quality of life in the Santa Monica Mountains and to protecting our shared common interests in preserving the natural legacy of our mountains, coast and environment.

We respectfully request that the Commission consider our recommendations and **keep the 3rd Supervisorial District boundaries as they are currently drawn for the reasons stated below.**

The Santa Monica Mountains are the backbone of the 3rd district, along with our other natural boundaries – our watersheds and coastline - uniting and defining our communities of common interest and our district. These **natural environmental factors** define and contribute to our quality of life and economy.

The 3rd district is united by three adjacent, interlocking communities: the Las Virgenes Region (encompassed by the Santa Monica Bay to the south, the Ventura County line to the west and north and the city of LA to the east), the greater Westside and the San Fernando Valley.

Together, they form a cohesive, coherent unit, which should be preserved.

National, State and Local Parks

The communities of Calabasas, Agoura Hills, Hidden Hills, Westlake, Malibu, Topanga and areas of unincorporated LA County reside in a unique wildland/urban interface that includes Federal and State parklands and other publically owned open space under the umbrella of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA). Residents who live here are bound by common interests in acquiring, managing and improving open space and recreational areas in the Santa Monica Mountains. Together, government agencies, landowners and the people who use this land are working to provide places for people to live, work and play while protecting the mountains and seashore for future generations.

This area is also well-recognized as a community of interest by business groups who understand that the parks and public spaces of the Santa Monica Mountains, creeks and beaches are a major economic engine with over 30 million visitors each year.

Geography: The Las Virgenes Valley/Upper Malibu Creek Watershed Area. A Santa Monica Mountains/Santa Monica Bay Watershed.

The Las Virgenes Valley/Upper Malibu Creek Watershed area is a community of interest surrounded by the Santa Monica Mountains, starting in West Hills, then spanning down into the cities of Calabasas, Agoura Hills, Westlake Village, Hidden Hills, and contiguous unincorporated communities in the County of Los Angeles.

These cities are all County "contract cities" and are served as a unit by the same Lost Hills Sheriff's Station in Calabasas, Fire Stations in Westlake Village, Agoura Hills, and Calabasas, and Animal Care & Control located in Agoura Hills. Together, with Malibu, they have formed a Council of Government (COG).

The Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Open Space Preserve was created in 2003 when the SMMC completed the purchase of the 2,983-acre Ahmanson Ranch. This huge parkland is part of a critical ecological linkage and wildlife corridor between the Santa Monica Mountains, the ranges to the north and the canyon networks to the south. Mountain Lions have been monitored leaving the upper reaches of the Preserve, crossing under the I-101, and traversing east along the Santa Monica Mountains as far as Topanga State Park above Encino. The Preserve encompasses the headwaters of Malibu Creek which flows through the Santa Monica Mountains to Santa Monica Bay in

Malibu, and supports one of the few populations of Southern Steelhead Trout. Historical reports indicate the fish may have traveled unimpeded upstream to streams on the former Ahmanson Ranch.

For purposes of integrated watershed resource management planning, the Santa Monica Bay Watersheds are grouped into three major units: the North Santa Monica Bay (NSMB), the South Santa Monica Bay (SSMB), and Marina/Del Rey Watersheds. The NSMB includes the Malibu Creek Watershed, Topanga Creek Watershed, and other surrounding rural Santa Monica Mountains/Bay Watersheds. The NSMB coastal watersheds include all or parts of the Cities of Westlake Village, Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Hidden Hills, Malibu, and unincorporated Los Angeles County areas like Topanga. At 109 square miles, the Malibu Creek Watershed is the second largest coastal watershed of all the Santa Monica Mountains/Bay Watersheds; Ballona is the largest. Malibu Creek and its tributaries wind through the Las Virgenes Valley (five cities and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County), and into the Santa Monica Bay in Malibu --90,000 human residents and countless animal and plants species call it home. Hiking/biking/riding trails and spectacular scenery span the watershed tying this area together from the mountains to the sea.

Over 20 years ago, under the umbrella of the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains (RCDSMM), the Malibu Creek Watershed Advisory Council was formed to protect and preserve the health of the Malibu Creek Watershed and its adjoining watersheds. The Advisory Council is made up of a long list of stakeholders and representatives, including the Cities of Calabasas, Agoura Hills, Westlake Village and Malibu, who helped create the *1995 Natural Resources Plan*, which serves as a planning guide for overall watershed health. This *Natural Resources Plan* outlined 44 Action Items which was later distilled to the *Top Ten Watershed Restoration Priorities in the 2001 Making Progress: Restoration of the Malibu Creek Watershed Report*. The priorities include protecting the beneficial uses of the watershed, developing and setting water quality objectives, protecting recreation, swimming, surfing, and fishing, protecting the ecosystem and endangered species, reducing and eliminating sources of harmful pathogens, toxic chemicals, sediments and nutrients, among their objectives.

Through collaboration, community and stakeholder involvement, stakeholder groups like the Malibu Creek Watershed Council have played a significant role in educating the public and partnering with other groups and agencies to promote best management practices that will improve water quality throughout the Santa Monica Mountains/Bay Watersheds. These strong associations will continue to flourish for the benefit of the whole if they are allowed to continue to work as a united community of interest within the Santa Monica Mountains/Bay Watersheds.

This alignment of common interest in integrated watershed resource management for the protection of the Santa Monica Mountains, its watersheds, and the Santa Monica Bay is cohesive and long-lived.

Fire Protection

The Santa Monica Mountains Fire Safe Alliance is a collaboration of the related public agencies, departments and communities to prevent fires and to fight fires in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Transportation

Our area depends on the 101 Corridor, Malibu Canyon, Kanan Road, Topanga Canyon and PCH from Santa Monica to Malibu to the Ventura County line.

Operation Safe Canyons (OSC) is a community of interest that works to promote public safety. While its primary focus is traffic safety on the 540 miles of Los Angeles County roads in the western Santa Monica Mountains south of the Ventura/Los Angeles County line, OSC also deals with safety issues connected to Pacific Coast Highway from the County line south and on cross-mountain canyon roads (Topanga Canyon Blvd., Malibu Canyon, Kanan) that lead from the I-101 Ventura Freeway to the Pacific Coast Highway and the coast.

Las Virgenes Unified School District (LVUSD)

The Las Virgenes Unified School District serves the Las Virgenes region. The LVUSD is one of the most highly respected school districts in the state. Schools in the district have won both state and national honors. Schools have been named California Distinguished School Awards as well as National Blue Ribbon Awards. The LVUSD has a foundation, which receives enormous public support for fundraising to maintain programs in the school district.

Las Virgenes Municipal Water District

The Las Virgenes Municipal Water District is the regional water and sewer district for our region. The district is recognized for the recycled water and composting programs that are implemented by the district.

The Las Virgenes Homeowners Federation therefore asks the Commission to make the required findings to keep the 3rd Supervisorial District boundaries intact with no changes. The Las Virgenes area, the Westside and the San Fernando Valley are interconnected communities spanning the Santa Monica Mountains and the 3rd district, bound by natural environmental features, common interests, commerce, needs, protections, recreation and resource conservation.

Sincerely,
Kim Lamorie
President
LVHF