



DANIEL C. PREECE
District Manager

RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
OF THE
SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS

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Date: September 1, 2005

RESOLUTION 2005-08-01

WHEREAS, the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains (RCDSMM) believes that the Endangered Species Act (ESA) is powerful force for conservation and is, in general, good public policy, and that public support for the Act's full provisions remains strong, and;

WHEREAS, the RCDSMM has a long track record of bringing diverse groups together to discuss complex and controversial public policy issues, and is supportive of consideration of changes and improvements to the Endangered Species Act, as long as they are just that – improvements, and;

WHEREAS, aside from support for the policy of “safe harbor,” the RCDSMM views the changes proposed by the NACD to be detrimental to the ESA and effective species protection, and;

WHEREAS, current changes proposed by the NACD would make the legitimate addition of species to the list more difficult, narrow the definitions for invasive species, and hamper agencies with new paperwork, and;

WHEREAS, it is the position of the RCDSMM that the provision for requiring “recovery goals” would free the government from the requirement to restore protected species to self-sustaining populations, implying that simply heading off extinction would suffice. Therefore, species might be considered protected if they exist only in zoos. Less intervention by government will mean more “baby-sitting” of species outside of their natural habitat. Few plant or animal populations would grow enough to be de-listed – the point at which the government no longer needs to intervene on their behalf, and;

WHEREAS, the ESA could be made less onerous, without making it less effective, by cutting red tape and providing reasonable incentives for agricultural producers and stewards of working lands to protect species. For example, the federal government already subsidizes farmers who plant fallow fields with grasses as a guard against soil erosion. Planted with native vegetation, those fields could become restored wildlife habitat;

THEREFORE, be it RESOLVED that the RCDSMM strongly urges the NACD to either permanently withdraw its current proposed changes to the ESA; and/or withdraw the proposed changes pending outreach and inclusion of all Conservation Districts including those comprised of multiple sectors in the discussion.

PASSED AND ADOPTED, by the Board of Directors of the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains in the County of Los Angeles in the State of California on May 23, 2005.

SIGNED _____

Nancy Helsley, President, RCDSMM Board of Directors