

COMMITTEES
CHAIR, LABOR & EMPLOYMENT
BUDGET
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 5 ON
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/
TRANSPORTATION
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY & TOXIC
MATERIALS
JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT
COMMITTEE
JUDICIARY

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April 6, 2010

To: Whom It May Concern

I want to take this opportunity to let you know that I have decided not to proceed further this year with Assembly Bill (AB) 2074, relating to the designation of portions of Andrew Molera State Park as a wilderness area. This does not mean, however, that I have decided to drop the issue altogether.

At the March 26, 2010 Big Sur Multi-Agency Advisory Council (BSMAAC) meeting, I heard concerns from residents of Big Sur that I had not presented the wilderness bill at BSMAAC for vetting prior to introduction of the legislation and concerns that the wilderness designation might be in conflict with fire response and protection. I want to ensure that concerns expressed are adequately addressed before I take further action on this legislation. By not proceeding with AB 2074 this session, there will be an opportunity for more dialogue regarding the benefits of a wilderness designation of a portion of the Andrew Molera State Park.

A wilderness designation only affects state lands, not private lands, and the portion of the State Park that would be designated as wilderness does not adjoin any private land. Additionally, the designation of wilderness does not preclude motorized equipment from coming into the area for fire fighting purposes, and measures can be taken, as necessary, to control fire, insects, and diseases, subject to the conditions established by the state agency having jurisdiction. The acreage to be designated is also adjacent to the federal Ventana Wilderness Area and would complement federal protection in the immediate vicinity.

I also want to acknowledge the work that members of the Ventana Wilderness Alliance (VWA) have invested to enhance and protect California's state wilderness areas. I fully expect and encourage members of the VWA to continue to work with all community members to address concerns and to promote the vision and objective of keeping existing wilderness areas free from encroachment and protected for future generations.

It is my belief that the wilderness area of Andrew Molera State Park is worth protecting. After further discussions this year, I will remain open to the prospect of reintroduction of legislation that will advance the dual objectives of protecting wilderness while addressing fire prevention and protection priorities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Monning", written over a horizontal line.

WILLIAM W. MONNING
Assemblymember, 27th District