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SENATE

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### RIM OF THE VALLEY CORRIDOR PRESERVATION

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JULY 25, 2023.—Ordered to be printed

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Mr. MANCHIN, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, submitted the following

### R E P O R T

[To accompany S. 1466]

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, to which was referred the bill (S. 1466), to adjust the boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area to include the Rim of the Valley Corridor, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of S. 1466, as ordered reported, is to adjust the boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in Southern California to include approximately 119,669 acres of land within the Rim of the Valley Corridor.

#### BACKGROUND AND NEED

Located in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties in southern California, the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (National Recreation Area) was established by Congress in 1978 (Public Law 95-625) to preserve and enhance its scenic, natural, and historical setting and its public health value as an airshed for the Los Angeles metropolitan area, while also providing for recreational and educational needs of the visiting public. The National Recreation Area provides visitors with convenient access to a range of outdoor adventures despite its close proximity to one of the largest urban areas in the nation, and includes the Malibu beaches, open space, over 500 miles of trails, and numerous historical and cultural sites.

Section 327 of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 (Public Law 110–229) directed the National Park Service to evaluate the suitability and feasibility of expanding the National Recreation Area to include the area known as the “Rim of the Valley Corridor,” the area generally including the mountains encircling the San Fernando, La Crescenta, Santa Clarita, Simi, and Conejo Valleys in southern California.

The National Park Service’s completed study covered approximately 650,000 acres and determined that expanding the National Recreation Area to include a portion of the Rim of the Valley Corridor would expand opportunities for public enjoyment and augment the protection of significant resources. The study also found that inclusion of the recommended area would provide the most effective range of tools to maintain habitat connectivity and preserve significant resources, both of which are key to maintaining the National Recreation Area’s habitat value and high biodiversity.

S. 1466 modifies the boundary of the National Recreation Area to include a portion of the Rim of the Valley Corridor.

#### LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

S. 1466 was introduced by Senators Feinstein and Padilla on May 4, 2023. Similar legislation, S. 1769, was introduced in the 117th Congress by Senators Feinstein and Padilla on May 20, 2021. The Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on the bill on June 23, 2021. The Committee ordered S. 1769 reported favorably with an amendment in the nature of a substitute on July 21, 2022 (S. Rept. 117–181). A companion bill, H.R. 1075, was introduced by Representative Schiff and others on March 15, 2021.

The text of H.R. 1075 in the 117th Congress was included in title VI of H.R. 803, the “Protecting America’s Wilderness and Public Lands Act,” which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 227–200 on February 26, 2021. Similar text was also included in subtitle F of title LV of H.R. 4350, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2022, which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 316–113 on September 23, 2021. Similar text was also included in title V of Division I of H.R. 7900, the National Defense Authorization Act of 2022 (NDAA), which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 329–101 on July 14, 2022. The provisions relating to the Rim of the Valley addition were not included in the enacted version of the NDAA.

In the 116th Congress, similar legislation, S. 774, was introduced by Senators Feinstein and Harris on March 13, 2019. The Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on S. 774 on June 19, 2019 (S. Hrg. 116–308), and the bill was reported favorably by the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on December 18, 2019. A companion House bill, H.R. 1708 was introduced by Representative Schiff and others on March 13, 2019. The House Natural Resource Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands held a hearing on April 2, 2019. H.R. 1708 was reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on February 4, 2020 (H. Rept. 116–386). The text of H.R. 1708 was included in title V of H.R. 2546, the “Protecting America’s Wilderness and Public Lands Act,” which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 231–183 on February 12, 2020. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, but no further action was

taken. Similar text was also included in title V of Division O of H.R. 6395, the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021, which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 295–125 on July 20, 2021, but was dropped in the House-Senate conference.

In the 115th Congress, similar legislation, S. 1993, was introduced by Senator Feinstein on September 19, 2017. The Subcommittee on National Parks held a hearing on S. 1993 on August 15, 2018 (S. Hrg. 115–526). Similar legislation, H.R. 4086, was introduced by Representative Schiff and others in the House of Representatives on September 24, 2017. No further action was taken on either bill.

In the 114th Congress, Senator Boxer introduced similar legislation, S. 3514, on December 7, 2016. Companion legislation, HR. 5467, was introduced in the House of Representatives on June 14, 2016 by Representative Schiff and others. No further action was taken on either bill.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION AND TABULATION OF VOTES

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, in open business session on May 17, 2023, by a majority vote of a quorum present, recommends that the Senate pass S. 1466.

The roll call vote on reporting the measure was 11 yeas, 8 nays, as follows:

YEAS	NAYS
Mr. Manchin	Mr. Barrasso
Mr. Wyden	Mr. Risch *
Ms. Cantwell	Mr. Lee *
Mr. Sanders *	Ms. Murkowski
Mr. Heinrich	Mr. Hoeven
Ms. Hirono	Mr. Cassidy *
Mr. King	Mrs. Hyde-Smith
Ms. Cortez Masto	Mr. Hawley
Mr. Kelly	
Mr. Hickenlooper	
Mr. Daines	

\* Indicates vote by proxy.

#### SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

##### *Section 1. Short title*

Section 1 provides the short title of the bill, the “Rim of the Valley Corridor Preservation Act”.

##### *Sec. 2. Boundary adjustment*

Section 2 amends section 507(c) of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 460kk(c)) to adjust the boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area to include approximately 119,000 acres of the area depicted as the Rim of the Valley Corridor on the referenced map, and to make other conforming changes. The lands to be added to the National Recreation Area are identical to the version in S. 1769 reported by the Committee in the 117th Congress, although the map has been revised to better identify the proposed addition.

*Sec. 3. Administration*

Section 3 provides that any land or interest in land acquired by the Secretary of the Interior within the Rim of the Valley Unit shall be administered as part of the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable to the National Recreation Area.

*Sec. 4. Utilities and water resource facilities*

Section 4 clarifies that the addition of the Rim of the Valley Unit to the National Recreation Area shall not affect the operation, maintenance, or modification of water resource facilities or public utilities, except that any utility or water resource facility activities within the Rim of the Valley Unit shall be done in a manner that reasonably avoids or reduces any impact on park resources of the Rim of the Valley Unit.

COST AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS

The Committee has requested, but has not yet received, the Congressional Budget Office's estimate of the cost of S. 1466, as ordered reported. When the Congressional Budget Office completes its cost estimate, it will be posted on the Internet at [www.cbo.gov](http://www.cbo.gov).

REGULATORY IMPACT EVALUATION

In compliance with paragraph 11(b) of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the Committee makes the following evaluation of the regulatory impact which would be incurred in carrying out S. 1466. The bill is not a regulatory measure in the sense of imposing Government-established standards or significant economic responsibilities on private individuals and businesses. No personal information would be collected in administering the program. Therefore, there would be no impact on personal privacy. Little, if any, additional paperwork would result from the enactment of S. 1466, as ordered reported.

CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING

S. 1466, as ordered reported, does not contain any congressionally directed spending items, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

The testimony provided by the Department of the Interior at the June 23, 2021, hearing on S. 1769 follows:

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL A. CALDWELL, ACTING ASSOCIATE  
DIRECTOR, PARK PLANNING, FACILITIES, AND LANDS, NA-  
TIONAL PARK SERVICE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTE-  
RIOR

Chairman King, Ranking Member Daines, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 1769, a bill to adjust the boundary of the Santa Monica Moun-

tains National Recreation Area (NRA) to include the Rim of the Valley Corridor, and for other purposes.

The Department supports enactment of S. 1769 with technical amendments. This legislation largely reflects a special resource study that found that a proposed expansion of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA to include Rim of the Valley lands meets the National Park Service's criteria for addition to the National Park System.

S. 1769 would expand the boundary of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA by approximately 191,000 acres of land within the area known as the Rim of the Valley Corridor, the mountainous areas that surround the San Fernando, Simi, and Conejo Valleys northwest of Los Angeles. The proposed Rim of the Valley Unit would be administered as part of the Santa Monica Mountains NRA, and an updated management plan for the park would be required within three years of enactment. Provisions in the bill ensure that the inclusion of the Rim of the Valley lands in the Santa Monica Mountains NRA would not interfere with specified existing uses.

The Santa Monica Mountains NRA was established by Congress in 1978 to help preserve and protect the natural resources of the Santa Monica Mountains and the adjacent coastline and provide outdoor recreational opportunities within the vicinity of the densely populated Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. Within a boundary encompassing approximately 154,000 acres, the National Park Service (NPS) owns a relatively small proportion of the land—approximately 23,600 acres, or 15 percent. Altogether, 58 percent of the land within the boundary is in public ownership, including the NPS lands. The NPS coordinates actions with State and other public agencies that manage park lands through a cooperative management agreement, which allows all partners to realize cost savings and efficiencies. The NPS also partners with nongovernmental organizations to further the purposes of the NRA.

P.L. 110–229, enacted in 2008, directed the Secretary of the Interior to evaluate the suitability and feasibility of designating all or a portion of the Rim of the Valley Corridor as a unit of Santa Monica Mountains NRA. The study area consisted of approximately 650,000 acres of land within the mountains encircling the San Fernando, La Crescenta, Santa Clarita, Simi, and Conejo Valleys. The study's preferred alternative, among four alternatives evaluated, recommended an expansion of approximately 173,000 acres of lands judged to have the highest concentration of resource values and recreational opportunities. The preferred alternative also recognized a limited role for NPS land ownership, as is the case within the existing national recreation area, and a continuation of the existing collaborative partnership-based management model. The study team conducted extensive public outreach throughout the study process and throughout the region, receiving approximately 7,200 comment letters during the study period; more than 90 percent of comment let-

ters preferred a much larger alternative than the recommendation transmitted to Congress in 2016.

S. 1769 differs in a few ways from the study's preferred alternative. S. 1769 would include 18,000 more acres of land within the boundary than the preferred alternative proposed. The additional acreage largely consists of lands to the east of the City of Santa Clarita and in the western Santa Susana mountains added for the purpose of regional trail connections. Additionally, the bill would remove all properties contained in the 2016 recommendation that are identified by the State of California as containing oil and gas operations, as well as the Santa Susana Field Laboratory. Removing these properties would eliminate any unintentional regulatory burden to oil and gas development and prevent the transfer of Federal lands at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory and their associated facilities, including their clean-up costs, to the NPS.

The Department would like the opportunity to revisit the proposed boundary for the expansion with the bill's sponsor and the Committee to account for additional development changes that have occurred since the study was conducted and the legislation was first proposed. We also recommend a technical amendment to show the Rim of the Valley Unit as an addition to the NRA, not as a substitution of the original NRA boundary.

Chairman King, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or other members of the Subcommittee may have.

#### CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW

In compliance with paragraph 12 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, changes in existing law made by the bill S. 1466, as ordered reported, are shown below (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italic, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman).

#### Public Law 95-625

AN ACT To authorize additional appropriations for the acquisition of lands and interests in lands within the Sawtooth National Recreation Area in Idaho.

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#### SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as the "National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978".

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#### TITLE V—ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW AREAS AND ADDITIONS TO NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM

##### Subtitle A—Parks, Seashores, Etc.

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**SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS NATIONAL  
RECREATION AREA**

SEC. 507(a). The Congress finds that—

(1) there are significant scenic, recreational, educational, scientific, natural, archeological, and public health benefits provided by the Santa Monica Mountains and adjacent coastline area;

(2) there is a national interest in protecting and preserving these benefits for the residents of and visitors to the area; and

(3) the State of California and its local units of government have authority to prevent or minimize adverse uses of the Santa Monica Mountains and adjacent coastline area and can, to a great extent, protect the health, safety, and general welfare by the use of such authority.

(b) There is hereby established the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (hereinafter referred to as the “recreation area”). The Secretary shall manage the recreation area in a manner which will preserve and enhance its scenic, natural, and historical setting and its public health value as an airshed for the Southern California metropolitan area while providing for the recreational and educational need of the visiting public.

(c) (1) The recreation area shall consist of the lands and waters and interests generally depicted as the recreation area on the map entitled “Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and Santa Monica Mountains Zone, California, Boundary Map”, numbered 80,047—C and dated August 2001, which shall be on file and available for inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, District of Columbia, and in the offices of the General Services Administration in the Federal Office Building in West Los Angeles, California, and in the main public library in Ventura, California. After advising the Committee on Resources of the United States House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate, in writing, the Secretary may make minor revisions of the boundaries of the recreation area when necessary by publication of a revised drawing or other boundary description in the Federal Register. (1) BOUNDARY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—*The recreation area shall consist of—*

(i) *the land, water, and interests in land and water generally depicted as the recreation area on the map entitled “Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area and Santa Monica Mountains Zone, California, Boundary Map”, numbered 80,047—C, and dated August 2001; and*

(ii) *the land, water, and interests in land and water, as generally depicted as “Proposed Addition” on the map entitled “Rim of the Valley Unit—Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area”, numbered 638/147,723, and dated April 2023.*

(B) AVAILABILITY OF MAPS.—*The maps described in subparagraph (A) shall be on file and available for public inspection in the appropriate offices of the National Park Service.*

(C) REVISIONS.—*After advising the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives, in writing, of the*

*proposed revision, the Secretary may make minor revisions to the boundaries of the recreation area by publication of a revised drawing or other boundary description in the Federal Register.*

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