



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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News Release

Community Leaders and Conservation Groups Applaud Senator Boxer's California Coastal National Monument Expansion Act Legislation Would Bring National Conservation Status to Public Lands in Santa Cruz, Humboldt, San Luis Obispo and Orange Counties

Los Altos, Calif. – San Francisco and Monterey Bay Area community leaders and conservation groups praise legislation introduced today by U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer along with Senator Diane Feinstein to bring national monument designation to Cotoni-Coast Dairies in Santa Cruz County and five other federally-owned lands along the California coast.

Boxer's legislation, the California Coastal National Monument Expansion Act, would permanently protect the ecological, cultural and scenic resources at six different sites totaling 6,200 acres throughout the state, while ensuring that current and future generations will be able to access and enjoy these nationally significant conservation lands in ways that are compatible with resource preservation and restoration goals.

"This is a wonderful solution for California communities up and down the coast who are dedicated to preserving and cherishing their public lands," said Sempervirens Fund Executive Director Shelley Ratay. "We're grateful to Senator Boxer for her statewide vision and leadership."

The six properties proposed for inclusion in the California Coastal National Monument are located in Humboldt, Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo and Orange Counties. Boxer's proposal builds on legislation introduced by U.S. Congresswoman Anna Eshoo earlier this year to grant national monument status to the Cotoni-Coast Dairies property, which was transferred to the Bureau of Land Management by the Trust for Public Land last spring after years of effort by conservation groups and the local community to protect the land for conservation and public enjoyment.

"The action that Senator Boxer is leading signals the importance to all of us of protecting unique places and habitat values for fish and wildlife," said Jay Ziegler, Director of Policy and External Affairs, The Nature Conservancy.

"Opportunities to add these special landscapes to our system of national conservation lands are extremely rare," said Walter T. Moore, president of Peninsula Open Space Trust. "Expanding the coastal national monument to include these six sites will be a great gift to the people of California and the nation."

At 5,800 acres, Coast Dairies is the largest of the sites included in Boxer's package legislation. The property encompasses six coastal watersheds and supports diverse vegetation ranging from grasslands to redwood forests. Since February, the Cotoni-Coast Dairies national monument campaign has gained the support of more than 13,000 individuals and a wide variety of local community groups, businesses, nonprofits and government entities.

"The designation of this area as a monument will ensure continued opportunities and access for all San Lorenzo Valley students and teachers to learn about ecosystems, the environment, and native people and cultures," commented George Wylie, President, San Lorenzo Valley School District Board of Trustees.

The Cotoni-Coast Dairies monument proposal also has the support of Governor Jerry Brown, California Resources Secretary John Laird, Assembly Member Mark Stone, State Senate Majority Leader Bill Monning and U.S. Congress Member Sam Farr. The "Cotoni-Coast Dairies" name honors the land's longstanding cultural significance to native Americans as well as its recent history as a dairy operation.

"Since 2006 our tribe has been working to restore our indigenous knowledge regarding land stewardship. We work with private and public land owners to steward their lands, and we have begun talking to the BLM about providing additional traditional Native American stewardship for the Cotoni-Coast Dairies expansion of the California Coastal National Monument. Our people are looking forward to working with the community, and with the BLM," stated Val Lopez, Amah Mutsun Tribal Leader, and Chairman of the Amah Mutsun Land Trust.

Conservation groups that have been leading the effort to seek monument designation for Cotoni-Coast Dairies applauded Senator Boxer's action to expand the California Coastal National Monument more broadly. If added to the California Coastal National Monument, the lands will be elevated into a special class of federal properties known as National Conservation Lands, which are managed by the federal Bureau of Land Management for conservation of natural and cultural

resources above all else, often in partnership with other public agencies, nonprofits and community groups.

“The national monument designation ensures that the redwood forest, wildlife habitat, critical drinking water source and scenic splendor of Coast Dairies would be protected forever and managed with care,” said Sam Hodder, President and CEO of Save the Redwoods League. “Cotoni-Coast Dairies, as part of the California Coastal National Monument, will be a gateway for a global audience to experience and enjoy the majestic redwoods of California’s coast.”

With National Monument designation comes heightened federal protection and increased access to public and philanthropic resources for land management, restoration and amenities to support recreational activities such as hiking and youth programs compatible with the property’s conservation values.

"We're looking forward to additional federal funding to help take care of this magnificent property," said Terry Corwin, President & CEO, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County.

The California Coastal National Monument was established by President Clinton in 2000 to protect thousands of rocks, islands and geological formations off the California coastline. Last year President Obama added Stornetta-Point Arena in Mendocino County to the California Coastal National Monument as its first land-based unit.

Please join us in thanking Senator Boxer for working to protect the unique California coastline and encourage her to continue to fight hard to ensure her California Coastal National Monument legislation becomes law by signing this petition from our Conservation Lands Foundation partners:

<https://www.change.org/p/barbara-boxer-thank-you-senator-boxer-for-protecting-our-coast>

You can also voice support specifically for Cotoni-Coast Dairies by visiting the campaign website: <http://cotonicoastdairies.org>

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ABOUT SEMPERVIRENS FUND

Sempervirens Fund is a nonprofit land conservation organization dedicated to protecting redwood forests and watersheds in California’s Santa Cruz Mountains for people and wildlife by buying and caring for critical lands. Sempervirens Fund is the oldest land trust in California and has permanently protected more than 34,000 acres of redwoods since 1900. Today the organization is finding new ways to protect crucial redwood habitat, increase public access and ensure that local redwood parks stay open for the long term. www.sempervirens.org

ABOUT LAND TRUST OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

The Land Trust of Santa Cruz County has protected more than 13,000 acres of land, including redwood forests, wetlands, farmland and grasslands. The Land Trust owns and farms 250 acres owns and logs a 400-acre forest – demonstrating the compatibility of working lands and natural land protection, and using the working lands revenues for conservation. www.landtrustsantacruz.org

ABOUT SAVE THE REDWOODS LEAGUE

Since 1918, Save the Redwoods League has led the effort to protect coast redwoods and giant sequoias for all to experience and enjoy. To date, the League has protected more than 200,000 acres of redwood forest and associated land from southern Oregon to the Big Sur coastline of central California. As part of that effort, the organization has created and expanded 63 redwood parks and preserves that inspire awe-struck visitors from around the world.

ABOUT PENINSULA OPEN SPACE TRUST

POST is a leading private, nonprofit land trust dedicated to preserving the beauty, character and diversity of the San Francisco Peninsula and Santa Cruz Mountain range. Since its founding in 1977, POST has been responsible for saving more than 75,000 acres as permanent open space, farms and parkland in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties. www.openspacetrust.org

ABOUT THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

The Nature Conservancy is an international, non-profit conservation organization working around the world to protect important lands and waters for people and nature. www.nature.org