

Dear Senator Dianne Feinstein,

We applaud your efforts to protect the California Desert in your announced intention to introduce legislation to protect hundreds of thousands of acres of the Mojave Desert by establishing a new national monument and by ensuring all lands suitable for protection at this time are included.

We urge you to include the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, an area of critical environmental concern (ACEC), in your protective legislation. This preserve lies between Joshua Tree National Park and the San Bernardino Mountains and provides a wildlife corridor that is crucial to preserving the desert's biodiversity. The preserve serves as a refuge for more than 240 species of migrating and breeding birds and is visited by over 50,000 national and international tourists each year. We owe it to future generations to protect this most environmentally sensitive and recreationally important ACEC.

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