

ALPINE, AMADOR, BUTTE, CALAVERAS, COLUSA, DEL NORTE, EL DORADO  
GLENN, IMPERIAL, INYO, LAKE, LASSEN, MADERA, MARIPOSA, MENDOCINO, MERCED



MODOC, MONO, NAPA, NEVADA, PLACER, PLUMAS, SAN BENITO, SAN LUIS OBISPO  
SHASTA, SIERRA, SISKIYOU, SUTTER, TEHAMA, TRINITY, TUOLUMNE

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October 22, 2007

Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2351 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman McKeon:

The Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC) represents thirty small and rural counties throughout California. Our rural communities are near or in some cases surrounded by public lands. Our residents and visitors to our communities enjoy off highway vehicle touring, backpacking, hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain biking and other outdoor pursuits.

Over the years, these uses have successfully co-existed on public lands along with other uses such as mining, timber production and harvesting, livestock grazing and resource conservation activities. Many of these public lands contain cultural resource sites, pre-historic and historic sites, which are protected by current federal and state laws.

However, the historic, economic and recreational value and uses of existing roads and trails are not fully addressed and protected in the current federal designations such as Wilderness, Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Parks, or National Monuments. In fact, these important uses are subject to elimination under more restrictive land use designations. It is vital that these uses be permanently protected for present and future generations.

In order to protect these existing historic, economic and recreational uses, our organization urges you to pursue a new federal legislative designation of "Semi-Primitive Roaded and Roadless Backcountry Recreation" that would ensure existing roaded and roadless recreation areas would have the same permanent designation as other legislatively designated federal lands.

This Semi-Primitive Designation would maintain current recreational and economic uses and access on public lands while protecting cultural, historic and environmental values. This Semi-Primitive Designation would provide a much needed tool to reach local consensus regarding the uses on these public lands that surround and are such a vital part of our rural counties natural environment, local economy and rich heritage.

RCRC appreciates your interest and involvement in attempting to establish this new Semi-Primitive Designation. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues on this worthwhile endeavor. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

*Patricia Megason*  
PATRICIA MEGASON  
Executive Vice President