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La Canada Flintridge, CA 91011
April 30, 2011

Citizens Redistricting Commission
1130 K Street, Suite 101
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Commission Chair and Members:

The following is a somewhat expanded version of the testimony which I gave to the Commission on April 29, 2011 at the hearing in San Gabriel. I was speaker 112.

For over twenty years my husband and I have been residents of La Canada Flintridge, drawn there by the mountains and the excellent schools. For about 15 years I have been a Board Member of the La Canada Flintridge Trails Council which works to protect and improve our city trail network. I am also a long-time member of the Altadena Crest Trail Restoration Working Group which is working with Los Angeles County to restore an important trail in the foothills of Altadena, the town next door. As a former Board member of the Arroyos and Foothills Conservancy, I worked to save open space in towns along the San Gabriel foothills. The most recent group I have become affiliated with is the newly formed UrbanWild Network, an umbrella organization with a primary focus on the San Gabriel Valley foothills. It works as an early warning network to alert environmental activists to impending threats.

The community of interest I would like to discuss includes the foothill communities from La Canada Flintridge to Claremont which all sit below the San Gabriel Mountains and the Angeles National Forest. These are La Canada Flintridge, Altadena, Arcadia, Monrovia, Bradbury, Duarte, Azusa, Sierra Madre, Irwindale, Glendora, San Dimas, La Verne, Claremont and Pasadena. These are the communities along the I-210 Corridor. They share the geography and the scenic beauty of the San Gabriels and are fortunate to have the outstanding recreational opportunities afforded by the forest in their backyard. They share as well, however, in the dangers such as fire and mudslides posed by the forest to those who live nearby.

They are also, for the most part, similar middle class suburban communities with high rates of home ownership. Most have their own City Councils.

To return to the natural environment, the unspoiled habitats, the wildlife corridors and the scenic beauty of the foothills draw us together. There are two environmental projects along the San Gabriel foothills I would like to mention which involve multiple communities. The first is a regional trail network which connects 26 miles of trails in La Canada Flintridge through Hahamongna Park in Pasadena to the Altadena Crest Trail. These are all in turn connected to the extensive trail network in the Angeles National Forest. There are also projects underway to connect this extensive regional trail network even further.

The other project is the Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor which extends along the San Gabriels as far east as Sierra Madre. The Rim of the Valley Corridor Study sponsored by Congressman

Adam Schiff is considering the feasibility of adding some of these open space lands to the national park system. That this federal study is being done is a testament to the invaluable open space resources so unique to the foothill communities in our densely settled urban region. Our common interest is in preserving and protecting these resources. This is further demonstrated by the non-profit San Gabriel Mountains Regional Conservancy Network, an umbrella organization uniting thirteen foothill conservancies/land trusts from the Arroyo Seco between La Canada Flintridge and Pasadena on the west to the Claremont Wildlands Conservancy on the east. That there are 13 conservancies within such a small geographic area speaks to the value which our communities place upon the natural environment.

My final comments concern the UrbanWild Network which was formed when the Los Angeles County Public Works Department razed an old growth oak and sycamore woodland in Arcadia for a sediment dump. There had been very little notice beforehand so environmental activists were taken by surprise. UrbanWild was formed so that this would not happen again. The natural community of interest was the foothills of the San Gabriels and this was the geographical scope chosen to focus upon to keep the effort manageable.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my comments and thank you for the valuable work you have undertaken for our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary E. Barrie".

Mary E. Barrie