

Voter <

To:

Wed, Jul 6, 2011 at 4:55 PM

Region 2 - Riverside
July 2

----- Original Message -----

Subject:Riverside County Proposed Redistricting Maps – Coachella Valley and City of Menifee**Date:**Sat, 2 Jul 2011 14:41:44 -0700 (GMT-07:00)**From:**Cindy Nance <**Reply-To:**Cindy Nance <**To:****CC:**Noel Loughrin Benoit assistant < > Ellie Dullea < >

To We Draw the Lines:

I am an Associate Professor of Geography, doctorate in Geography and masters in Anthropology specializing in cultural-historic geography. I teach geography and Geographic Information Systems at Mt. San Jacinto College, Menifee Valley Campus. For the past ten years, I have commuted from the unincorporated area of Desert Hot Springs, north of Interstate 10 in the Coachella Valley, to the City of Menifee on Interstate 215 (through Beaumont-Banning-San Jacinto and Hemet) to teach at Mt. San Jacinto College's Menifee Campus. I am qualified to attest to the significant differences in cultural, historic, agricultural, urban/rural and economic differences between the Coachella Valley-Joshua Tree-Salton Sea area, Moreno Valley-Banning-Beaumont-San Jacinto-Hemet areas and Menifee-Murrietta-Temecula-Wildomar-Lake Elsinore areas.

On several occasions, Mt. San Jacinto Community College district has considered dividing into two districts based on differing community, economic and other interests that drive the distinctly different Moreno Valley-Banning-Beaumont-San Jacinto-Hemet and Menifee-Murrietta-Temecula-Wildomar-Lake Elsinore areas. However, the proposed draft maps do not represent these communities of common interest as united in the proposed draft maps. Furthermore, the proposed maps divide school districts, such as Mt. San Jacinto College and unified school districts, that may complicate voter ballot issues and funding.

Most notably, the City of Menifee is geopolitically separated from its neighboring communities of like interest in the district maps - this is also the case in the proposed Board of Supervisor's maps for the County of Riverside. The establishment of City of Menifee's boundaries were hotly contested over several years, followed by its eventual incorporation. The proposed separation of Menifee from its neighboring communities may result in discord in decisions related to neighboring interstate commerce communities. As a city built on interstate commerce, Menifee has more in common with Murrietta-Temecula-Wildomar-Lake Elsinore areas than it does with others, and should be represented by Assembly, Senate and Congress members as part of those interstate-dependent commerce and commuter communities. Furthermore, the cities of Menifee, Murrietta, Temecula, Wildomar and Lake Elsinore have very little in common with the desert area of the Coachella Valley.

The topography of geographic barriers in Southern California does not appear to be considered in the draft maps for Assembly, Senate or Congress. More specifically, the mountain range that includes Mt. San Jacinto should be considered as a dividing line between communities to the northeast and southwest, as these communities are different in interests, values and demographics (refer to census maps at www.rivcoredistricting.org/AllDistricts.aspx). Many persons who live year round in the seasonal and tourist area of the Coachella Valley have never ventured to the neighboring mountain or beach communities of southern California. Driving distances over or around the mountain range, through the Cabazon pass or Imperial Valley are barriers that isolate desert communities of the Coachella Valley. Desert communities need local representation that understand the unique hardships and concerns of their constituents, and these representatives need to be locally accessible. The needs of desert residents are quite different from that of Temecula, Murrietta, Menifee, Wildomar and Lake Elsinore or Moreno Valley, Banning, Beaumont, San Jacinto, and Hemet.

I request that you consider the historic, cultural, and economic interests that bind various communities of Riverside County together - or set them apart as unique - when assigning districts for government representation. Geographically, these communities are distinctly defined by Desert, Mountains and Beaches. Their inhabitants identify with differences in climate, elevation, ecosystems, agriculture, amenities and, conversely, limited access and economic challenges, such as seasonal work in the hospitality industry in the desert. The needs of these communities cannot be properly represented if they continue to be disenfranchised and forced to compete for different geographic or demographic needs through the Assembly, Senate and Congress. The desert communities of the Coachella Valley have an opportunity to thrive if they are not contending with the demands of the more densely populated and urbanized Inland Empire of Western Riverside County.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my opinion,
Cindy Nance, Ph.D.

Cindy Nance, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Geography and GIS
Desert Edge Council Member

 **Nance WeDrawTheLines Opinion RiversideCountyDistricts.pdf**
185K

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