

Subject: Public Comment: 9 - Del Norte

From: Dianna Opiat <[REDACTED]>

Date: Sun, 14 Aug 2011 23:22:26 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Dianna Opiat <[REDACTED]>

Subject: redistricting

Message Body:

Many thanks to you for placing Del Norte County back into the coastal district where we belong.

Job well done!

Dianna Opiat

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Subject: Public Comment: 9 - Del Norte

From: Friends of Del Norte <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 15 Aug 2011 05:19:34 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Friends of Del Norte <[REDACTED]>

Subject: thank you for restoring our coastal designation

Message Body:

Friends of Del Norte, Committed to our environment since 1973

A nonprofit, membership based conservation group
advocating sound environmental policies for our region.

[REDACTED], Gasquet, CA 95543 [REDACTED]

ATT: Redistricting Committee- Wedrawthelines, [REDACTED]

Once again we send a thank you for restoring Del Norte to a Coastal District. Thank you for correcting political gerrymandering. Del Norte County has appropriately been restored to a coastal district, reflecting the many issues that unite the north coast: our geography, our rivers, fisheries, harbors, hwy 101 transportation route and Caltrans district1; and our culture, joint Yurok Native American territories, College of the Redwoods, Coastal Commission district, and many other networks that join the north coast together, as we previously expressed in our first letter.

Thank you,

Eileen Cooper, vice president on behalf of the FDN board

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Subject: Public Comment: 9 - Del Norte

From: Grant Werschkull <[REDACTED]>

Date: Sun, 14 Aug 2011 23:33:51 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Grant Werschkull <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Appreciation

Message Body:

Dear Redistricting Commission:

Thank you for your time and service on this important matter. The concept of a "Citizens Redistricting Commission" is logical, but of course --- there are always many challenges and issues to overcome.

We appreciate your commitment to doing the best job possible and therefore serving the people of California.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely, Grant Werschkull

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Subject: Public Comment: 9 - Del Norte

From: Sandra Jerabek <[REDACTED]>

Date: Sun, 14 Aug 2011 22:46:18 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Sandra Jerabek <[REDACTED]>

Subject: coastal community of interest

Message Body:

August 14, 2011

California Citizens Redistricting Commission

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you so much for returning Del Norte county to the north-south coastal district, aligning us once again with the other coastal counties, across all districts. I have been so impressed with your devotion to your task and your evident spirit of public service.

The Republican State Senator who currently represents Del Norte county is talking in the media about a broad republican lawsuit against your Commission, so I wish to state the historical facts in our case for the record. Del Norte county has always shared representation with other coastal counties, including its representation in the State Senate, until we fell victim to purely partisan gerrymandering in 2001. And that is how we ended up with our current State Senator.

A decade ago, State Senator John Burton, who was then the Democrat leading the California Senate, made a deal with the top legislative Republicans to rip Del Norte county out of the coastal State Senate district and put us with the Siskiyou and other counties to the east. Suddenly our closest Senator's office was in Redding on the I-5, and we would either have to travel up into Oregon on 199 and then drop back down the I-5 into California, or drive down and over through Humboldt and Trinity counties to reach it - in either case a journey of about 5 hours. In the winter either route may be impassable due to high mountains and snow storms. Before Burton's gerrymandering, we traveled along the coast less than 2 hours to Eureka in Humboldt County, to speak with the staff of all our various representatives.

Why did John Burton do this? The Dan Walters column below describes Burton's many even more blatant instances of gerrymandering. Burton told our then coastal State Senator Wesley Chesbro, who told me, that he took this opportunity to make Chesbro's district even more solidly and dependably Democratic, in the partisan sense. Thus Del Norte was traded to the Republicans to the east in exchange for a new, more reliably "blue" territory in the Bay Area. It was purely about partisan politics and making both parties even more secure in their respective districts.

It certainly wasn't about geographic communities of interest. It is impossible to drive from Del Norte county directly into Siskiyou county. Del Norte is connected directly by Highway 101 with coastal communities to the north (in Oregon) and to the south in California. The snow-capped mountains of the coastal range lie between us and Siskiyou county.

The importance of this connection is borne out if you do something as simple as go on the internet and "google" Humboldt-Del Norte organizations, and then Siskiyou-Del Norte organizations. You get almost 30 Humboldt-Del Norte associations, institutions and businesses, and for Siskiyou-Del Norte you get ZERO. There are some larger regional associations which include Del Norte and Siskiyou, but they also include Humboldt and

many other northern California counties.

An active testimony to community of interest, including economic, is a partial list of these Humboldt-Del Norte associations, which include, in no particular order:

The Yurok Tribe is in Humboldt & Del Norte counties (it has the largest tribal enrollment in CA)
Humboldt Creamery which buys from Del Norte dairies
Green Diamond timber company
Hambro's Group company
Central Labor Council of Humboldt-Del Norte
Humboldt-Del Norte Counties Painters & Decorators Apprentice Program
Coastal Central Credit Union
Northcoast Small Business Development Center
Open Door community Health Center Humboldt-Del Norte
Humboldt -Del Norte Medical Society
Humboldt-Del Norte Dental Society
Humboldt-Del Norte Foundation for Medical Care
Humboldt-del Norte Veterinary Medicine Association
Redwood Coast Tsunami Workgroup
Redwood National & State Parks is located in Humboldt and Del Norte counties
Six Rivers National Forest (which is 43% Del Norte, 35% Humboldt, 21% Trinity, and 1% Siskiyou up on the mountain ridge tops)
Humboldt- Del Norte High School Sports League
Volunteer Center of the Redwoods
Area 1 Agency on Aging covers Humboldt-Del Norte
Humboldt-Del Norte Weed Management Agency
Humboldt-Del Norte Fire Safe Council
Humboldt Area Foundation
Humboldt Wildlife Care Center

We share so much with the counties to the south: significant networks of national and state parks and forest service lands; a dependence on coastal and public land-related tourism (Del Norte county is ~80% public land); harbors; ocean and river sports and commercial fishing industries; dairy farming, and more.

Thank you so much for your public service,

Sandra Jerabek

Attachment: A historic excerpt from the internet:

Rocky Mountain News

New Maps Preserve Partisan Status Quo, but Also Boost Insiders

By Dan Walters

October 18, 2001

The macro view of California's newly redrawn legislative and congressional districts - 173 of them, all told - is that they reflect the determination of the political establishment to freeze the partisan status quo.

The micro view is that the boundaries of the districts were changed dramatically, creating lines that swoop and dip in ways that would make little sense to the layman. They resurrect the now-famous comment that the late Congressman Phil Burton made about the congressional lines he drew two decades ago: "my contribution to modern art." While honoring a bipartisan deal to preserve the current partisan makeup of both houses of the Legislature and the congressional delegation, the new districts were finely tuned to make it easier for certain favored candidates to run and discourage those out of favor. How finely? When the San Mateo County-centered Assembly district now represented by veteran lawmaker Lou Papan was reconfigured, legislators very carefully excluded the home of county Supervisor Mike Nevin, discouraging him from challenging Papan's daughter, Gina, for the seat. Nevin opted out.

Nevin's experience was replicated throughout the state as lines included or excluded areas to create a specific political outcome, either partisan or personal, in advance of any election - not exactly an exercise in textbook democracy. It's no secret, for example, that Democratic leaders changed Rep. Gary Condit's Central Valley district to both discourage the scandal-tinged congressman from running for re-election and make it more difficult for any Republican candidate.

One of the subtler refinements is found in Contra Costa County Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher's district. Democrat Tauscher had refused to support San Francisco Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's bid for Democratic whip and Pelosi's pals punished Tauscher by dropping conservative suburbs from her district and expanding it into liberal, labor-oriented communities, forcing her to walk the party line more closely. What happened to Assemblyman Fred Keeley, D-Boulder Creek, is a classic example of how personal politics affected redistricting. Although Keeley is regarded as one of the Assembly's brightest and hardest working members, his ambition to succeed Republican Bruce McPherson in the state Senate ran afoul of leadership priorities in both houses. McPherson's coastal district was carved up in ways that helped another Democratic assemblyman, Dennis Cardoza of Merced, seek a Senate seat if he wishes (although it now looks as if Cardoza will run for Condit's congressional seat). And Keeley didn't get any sympathy from the Democratic leader of the state Senate, John Burton, because Keeley had refused Burton's offer of support to challenge McPherson last year. Burton (brother of Phil) also played a key role in changing the lines of his own San Francisco-based district to help his old pal, San Francisco Mayor Willie Brown, return to the Legislature after his reign as mayor ends. The new Senate lines split the heart of San Francisco's gay community, the Castro district, and thus erode the base that Assemblywoman Carole Migden or some other gay or lesbian candidate would need to run for the Senate.

In preserving the partisan status quo and drawing lines to favor political insiders, the establishment, almost by necessity, ran roughshod over political hopes of California's non-white communities. Many Latinos are bitter about not achieving big gains in either the Legislature or Congress under the plans and San Jose's Asian-American community was fragmented among several districts, for example.

The new maps are now in effect and throughout the state, candidates are lining up to run. But those who believe they were short-changed are complaining, and taking those complaints to court. Keeley, for instance, has joined a plea by Latino groups to U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft to intercede under the Voting Rights Act. And more direct lawsuits have been filed to challenge the new maps.

Whether those challenges succeed or not, it's clear that the 2001 redistricting embodies the worst self-serving aspects of the process.

Contact Dan Walters of the Sacramento Bee in California at [REDACTED]

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