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Esther L. Valadez, Chair
Regional Planning Commission
300 West Temple st. 13th floor
Los Angeles CA 90012

RE: Item 6d, August 6 2014: Significant Ecological Areas Program -- SUPPORT

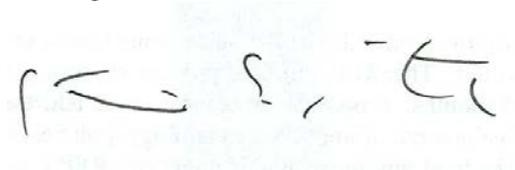
Dear Chair Valadez,

I write to ask that the Regional Planning Commission vote to protect the irreplaceable natural heritage of Los Angeles County through expanded Significant Ecological Area (SEA) boundaries. The SEAs are the only places left for the region's remaining wildlife and provide beauty and enjoyment for people. The expanded SEAs have been developed through a sound scientific process, and are needed to balance the major growth called for in the new General Plan. As we know, having protected open spaces provides much better quality of life and environmental quality, and if the County counts on approving more development, the time to preserve the remaining wild lands is now. In addition, to make SEAs stronger, connectivity should be added as a defining factor, and this too will provide important open space.

At the same time, we also need a revised SEA Ordinance that is both efficient for applicants and effective for resource protection. SEAs are too important to succumb to ineffective process. Finally, please look to innovative implementation mechanisms such as density transfers and comprehensive agreements with landowners.

Los Angeles County is proactive in so many areas; this is one that is critically important to the region's future. Please take the long view and make sure that the natural environment is sufficiently protected such that it provides the habitat and buffer necessary under the conditions of climate change going forward. These are areas for water infiltration, carbon sequestration and biodiversity. Expanded SEAs indispensable. THANK YOU.

Best regards



Stephanie Pincetl, PhD
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