



**Board of Supervisors
COUNTY OF TULARE
AGENDA ITEM**

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

KUYLER CROCKER
District One
PETE VANDER POEL
District Two
AMY SHUKLIAN
District Three
J. STEVEN WORTHLEY
District Four
MIKE ENNIS
District Five

AGENDA DATE: June 27, 2017

Public Hearing Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scheduled Public Hearing w/Clerk	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Published Notice Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advertised Published Notice	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meet & Confer Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Electronic file(s) has been sent	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Transfer (Aud 308) attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personnel Resolution attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agreements are attached and signature line for Chairman is marked with tab(s)/flag(s)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CONTACT PERSON: Julieta Martinez PHONE: 636-5000				

SUBJECT: Giant Sequoia National Monument Letter

REQUEST(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:
Approve sending a letter to Secretary Ryan Zinke, Department of Interior, regarding the review of the Giant Sequoia National Monument pursuant to Executive Order 13792.

SUMMARY:

President Bill Clinton created the Giant Sequoia National Monument (GSNM) in 2000 through Presidential Proclamation 7295. The area was carved out of the Sequoia National Forest. The designation expanded the previous 90,000 acres to nearly 328,000 acres. The monument designation was intended to protect the unique Giant Sequoia groves. At the time, local elected officials were not invited for public comment, feedback was not received from the community, and the Board of Supervisors had no say in a designation that would affect land and business operations in their County.

Although the County joins in the longstanding support for protecting the Giant Sequoia groves, President Clinton's designation has restricted the ability of the U.S. Forest Service to use science-based, active forest management to thin the adjacent forest to protect the groves and buffer areas from the risks posed by catastrophic fire, disease, and bark beetle infestations. The designation has led to significant overstock in the area which, combined with the recent drought suffered in the County and state as a whole, has resulted in significant tree mortality epidemic in the National Monument and other parts of the Sequoia National Forest.

SUBJECT: Giant Sequoia National Monument Letter

DATE: June 20, 2017

Thousands of acres have burned across the Sequoia National Forest due to catastrophic wildfires, including Redwood Groves. Over the past two years 20 percent of the GSNM burned including 62,000 acres in the 2015 Rough Fire. While the Giant Sequoia Groves have not yet been impacted, wildfires pose a serious risk to these Groves unless we take action to reduce fuel loading and restore forest resiliency to adjoining forests.

Department of Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke has been charged with the task of reviewing 22 national monument created under the Antiquities Act pursuant to Executive Order 13792. One of the monuments on the list is the Giant Sequoia National Monument, which encompasses a portion of Tulare County land. It is recommended that the Tulare County Board of Supervisors approve sending a letter urging the Department to consider amended or altering language in the original Presidential Proclamation 7295 to allow the removal of hazard trees that threaten public safety and access. The goal is to allow the U.S. Forest Service to better protect the Giant Sequoia Groves by proactively managing acreage within the monument to prevent a potential disaster due to wildfires and other risks associated with the drought and bark beetle infestations.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

There is no Net County Cost associated with this request.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:

Approve sending a letter supports Tulare County's Strategic Initiatives of Quality of Life as well as Safety and Security.

ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:

Julieta Martinez
Chief of Staff

Cc: Auditor-Controller
County Counsel
County Administrative Office (2)

Attachment(s) Giant Sequoia National Monument Letter

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF TULARE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE MATTER OF GIANT SEQUOIA)
NATIONAL MONUMENT LETTER) Resolution No. _____
)
)

UPON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR _____, SECONDED BY
SUPERVISOR _____, THE FOLLOWING WAS ADOPTED BY THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, AT AN OFFICIAL MEETING HELD _____
_____, BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

ATTEST: MICHAEL C. SPATA
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/
CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BY: _____
Deputy Clerk

* * * * *

Approved sending a letter to Secretary Ryan Zinke, Department of Interior, regarding the review of the Giant Sequoia National Monument pursuant to Executive Order 13792.

June 27, 2017

The Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

On behalf of the County of Tulare, California, we write this letter to offer comment in regards to the review you are conducting of National Monument designations in the State of California, specifically the Giant Sequoia National Monument, a portion of which is located in Tulare County.

President Bill Clinton established the Giant Sequoia National Monument ("GSNM") under Presidential Proclamation 7295 in 2000, carving the area out of the Sequoia National Forest for additional protections. The monument designation, now slightly over 328,000 acres, was intended to protect the unique Giant Sequoia groves.

At the time, local elected officials, including the Board of Supervisors, were not given the opportunity to comment on the proposed designation and felt the process was not allocated enough time to gather public opinion in support or against the designation.

Tulare County is and has been suffering for a number of years from a tree mortality epidemic that stems from years of passive forest management, exacerbated by prolonged drought, bark beetle infestations, and devastating wildfires. There are at least 8.1 million dead or dying trees in Tulare County attributable to the tree mortality epidemic, and 102 million dead or dying trees throughout the state of California, including millions of dead and dying trees in the GSNM.

We believe the current National Monument designation has constrained the ability of the U.S. Forest Service to use science-based, active forest management to thin the adjacent forests to protect the groves and buffer the areas from the risks posed by fire, disease, and insect infestations. Over the past two years, 20 percent of the GSNM burned, including 62,000 acres in the 2015 Rough Fire. The continued failure to use science-based, active forest management in the GSNM to remove hazard trees threatens the Giant Sequoia Groves, as well as the rest of the forest in the National Monument.

Our Board recommends Presidential Proclamation 7295, and/or any related regulations or administrative guidance, be amended or revised to clearly permit the removal of dead or dying hazard trees, and to allow the U.S. Forest Service to actively manage the groves and associated zones of influence to protect the forest and the majestic Giant Sequoias for future generations.

Our Board continues to join in the efforts of the county, community, state and federal government to protect cultural, historic, and natural resources on public land.

Please feel free to contact us should you have any further questions at 559-636-5000. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Pete Vander Poel, Chairman
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

J. Steven Worthley, Vice-Chairman
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

Kuyler Crocker, District One
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

Amy Shuklian, District Three
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

Michael Ennis, District Five
Tulare County Board of Supervisors

