

Sacramento River National Recreation Area Act of 2010
Summary of Draft Legislation Proposed by Senator Barbara Boxer

Boundaries: The Sacramento River National Recreation Area Act of 2010 would establish a National Recreation Area (NRA) consisting of approximately 17,869 acres of public land adjacent to the Sacramento River, lower Battle Creek, and lower Paynes Creek in Tehama and Shasta Counties, California. Only those lands currently managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) would be included in the NRA. If willing sellers or donors wish to provide their land to the BLM at a later date, those lands may be incorporated as well.

Purpose: The purpose of the NRA would be “to conserve, protect, and enhance the Sacramento River landscape in order to promote its outstanding recreational, ecological, geological, scenic, cultural, and historic resources, its fish and wildlife values, and other resources.”

Management: Within three years of enactment, the BLM would create a management plan for the NRA in consultation with the Sacramento River National Recreation Area Advisory Council, adjacent landowners, the public, and all relevant federal, state, and local agencies. The Sacramento River NRA would continue to be managed for multiple uses. The bill specifically discusses the following activities:

- Designation of the NRA would not affect:
 - any existing easements, rights-of-way, or other valid rights,
 - hunting or fishing,
 - water rights, or
 - the use of motorized boats.
- Grazing would be allowed to continue in areas where it currently exists, and continue to be managed as it is on all other BLM lands.
- The use of motorized vehicles would be allowed to continue on appropriate routes designated by the management plan.
- The BLM would be required to provide private landowners with adequate access to inholdings within the NRA or to adjacent properties that have no other practicable access.
- The only activity specifically precluded in the NRA would be mining, except any valid existing mining rights would be allowed to continue. (Regardless, there are no known mining claims or proposals in this area.)

Advisory Council: The Sacramento River National Recreation Area Advisory Council would serve as a formal link between the public and the BLM. Its role would be to ensure public involvement in management of the NRA, provide feedback to BLM on the development of the management plan, and improve collaboration among all interests. The Council would hold regular meetings that would be announced and open to the public. It would consist of 11 members, each serving 2-4 years, representing the following interests:

- Tehama County (3 members),
- Shasta County (1 member),
- the recreation community (4 members),
- the conservation community (1 member),
- the livestock grazing community (1 member), and
- Indian tribes (1 member).

NLCS Inclusion: Inclusion in the Bureau of Land Management’s National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) would emphasize the outstanding qualities of the Sacramento River National Recreation Area and possibly draw greater management attention to this area. Inclusion in the NLCS would impose no additional management requirements on this area. As testified by the Bureau of Land Management on the legislation that authorized the NLCS, “The bill would not alter the management of its individual units. It recognizes the diverse nature of the component parts of the BLM’s NLCS by directing that the units be managed in accordance with the laws related to each individual unit.” Senator Boxer has proposed two options for the legislation – one that would include the area in the NLCS and one that would not.