



KATRINA FOLEY

ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SUPERVISOR, SECOND DISTRICT

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July 28, 2022

Submitted by email to: yeramian@smmc.ca.gov

George Lange, Chair
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
c/o James Yeramian
570 West Avenue Twenty-Six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, CA 90065

RE: Support for Banning Ranch

Dear Chair Lange:

As Orange County Supervisor, I'm writing to express my strong support for the preservation of Banning Ranch through the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA). I've testified at other meetings to relay my support for funding and this is my chance to support MRCA in this endeavor.

Because of the commitment of so many state and federal funders coupled with a historic local philanthropic gift, the permanent preservation of the property is within reach. As a local school board and city council member and Mayor of Costa Mesa adjacent to the property, and now County Supervisor who represents the District where the site is located, I know the importance of preserving Banning Ranch as a public coastal open space park to the local community.

I urge the Conservancy's support of this funding.

Additionally, I offer several reasons to justify support, including but not limited to:

- This acquisition preserves a portion of the ancestral homelands of the Tongva and Acjachemen.
- The property has endured multiple failed development proposals due to community opposition and litigation. This exclusive option to buy the land for preservation is a once in a generation opportunity.

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- Many sensitive, threatened, and endangered plant and animal communities exist on the property that will be permanently protected once acquired.
- The site is located within proximity to several disadvantaged and socially vulnerable communities in Costa Mesa, Huntington Beach, and Santa Ana that will enjoy direct access to this coastal park from the existing Santa Ana River Trail which connects the beach to the mountains of San Bernardino.
- Preserving the property as open space helps increase parkland and access in an area of the County that is park poor.
- Property preservation offers nature-based solutions and opportunities for climate resilience along the Orange County coast.
- The property is the last, largest private natural area along the Southern California coast available for conservation.
- This acquisition helps achieve the state's 30x30 conservation and equity/access goals.

Affirmative action by MRCA on August 3rd will be the culmination of decades of work by local groups like the Banning Ranch Conservancy. Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Katrina Foley
Orange County Supervisor

cc: Joe Edmiston, Executive Officer (edmiston@smmc.ca.gov)