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Governor Gavin Newsom
1303 10th Street Ste 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

February 6, 2021

Dear Governor Newsom,

We have noticed that the Sierra Club is urging you do the “right thing” and declare a nonexistent park, to exclude off highway motorized vehicle use. To say this is disingenuous is downplaying the consequences to any actions you might take in making such a declaration.

The acreage the Sierra Club is arbitrarily calling “Tesla Park”, is a 3000+ acre parcel owned by California State Parks, acquired with the expressed intention of expanding Carnegie State Vehicle Recreation Area, with funding from the Off Highway Motorized Vehicle Recreation trust fund. This property was not acquired through force but through a voluntary sale from property owners to the State. Willing sellers and a willing buyer, performed a transaction that was not a secret to the local stakeholders.

Secondly, let’s talk a bit about our State Parks investment in this project. Over the 20 plus years since acquisition, State Parks, again with OHVMR Funds, mitigated (1.2 million dollar price tag) a SF Water District mess created with the Hetch Hetchy development. State Parks has rehabilitated the tailings left behind by a turn of the 19th century mining operation. Wildlife and indigenous sites have been cataloged and are protected today just as they are in the currently operating portion of the park. The water sources on the property now must meet the stringent State Parks protections. In the past they have been labeled “agricultural”. We are certain the Sierra Club is clear on the difference in those designations.

There remains work to be done to ensure the safety of future public access. Much of this work is outlined in the Carnegie SVRA General Plan, which went through a robust, lawful public comment period before approval in 2016. Ensuring sustainable public access, motorized or other means, requires a significant ongoing maintenance budget. This kind of funding is allocated in the General Plan.

We encourage you to consult with State Parks and perhaps, those of us who are very invested in the expansion of this SVRA, before acting on public pressuring from a respected, albeit uninformed, organization. Quite honestly, this has turned into a “not in my backyard” tantrum, disguised as an environmentally concerned effort.

California State Parks and the OHMVR Division in particular, is required by statute, to meet higher standards than any other established park entity in California. It defies logic to declare State Parks somehow “unfit” and shift ownership of this property to an unknown entity all to “protect” it from a single activity enjoyed sustainably at nine State Parks this very moment.

Thank you, Governor, for taking a moment to read this correspondence. We too, hope you will do the “right thing”. Support our State Parks and the Californians who visit them.

Diana Mead
A concerned off road enthusiast, resident of Concord, CA

CC: California State Parks and Recreation, Director Quintero
California Department of Natural Resources, Secretary Crowfoot
OHMVR Division of State Parks, Deputy Director, Sarah Miggins

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Not *FROM* the People"**