

ATTACHMENT C

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California State Senate

SENATOR
ROSS JOHNSON
THIRTY-FIFTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT



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November 3, 2003

Mr. Paul Morabito, Chair
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1100
Oakland, California 94612

RE: Laguna Coast Wilderness Park

Dear Mr. Morabito:

As you know, Proposition 12 allocated \$12.5 million to acquire land for the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. It's my understanding that Conservancy staff may be interpreting this language in a way that defeats the purpose of acquiring land to expand the park. Because it was at my request that this provision was included in the bond legislation, I am writing to support a broader interpretation of the language.

It may be enlightening to know that the *original* version of the allocation, contained in AB 18 (Chapter 461 of 1999), read as follows: "Twelve million five hundred thousand dollars (\$12,500,000) shall be allocated *to acquire land needed to connect important coastal watershed and scenic areas in Orange County.*" At the time, I was concerned that AB 18 did not expressly designate the funding to expand the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park, so when a "clean up" bill was being developed (SB 1147, Chapter 638 of 1999), a change specifying the Park by name was added at my request. The final version, as approved by the voters, states "Twelve million five hundred thousand dollars (\$12,500,000) shall be allocated to acquire land needed to connect important coastal watershed and scenic areas in the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park."

I am informed that your staff may be interpreting this final version to limit use of the funds to lands currently adjacent to the Laguna Coast Wilderness Park. However, purchases of

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land for the park need not be contiguous. In fact, community leaders and local parks officials have long planned expansion of Laguna Coast Wilderness Park and the nearby Aliso and Woods Canyon Wilderness Park to enhance habitat, scenic and recreational values. Both parks are managed as one regional resource. To this end, land acquired for open space adjacent to either park will meet the provisions in the bond text to connect important coastal watershed and scenic areas in Laguna Coast Wilderness Park.

I hope this information clarifies my intent in securing this provision in the park bond. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can offer any additional information.

Sincerely,



ROSS JOHNSON
Senator, 35th District

RJ:lco

cc: Mr. Sam Schuchat
Ms. Deborah Ruddock

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