Submission ID 06112021781 Three Rivers-Visalia COI

From Rachel Katz

To Citizens Redistricting Commission

Tell us about your community, shared interests important to our community.

Three Rivers is a small community nestled in the foothills at the base of Sequoia National Park. More and more it is becoming a home to many retirees and transplanted senior members, of which I am one. The myriad opportunities for boating, trekking, fishing, hiking help us maintain a healthy lifestyle as we continue our aging process. A concern to many of us lies in the area of public transportation. We have available to us public transport that connects us to our immediate hub of towns that encompass Woodlake, Exeter, Farmersville and Visalia. The majority of us seniors make our weekly expenditures and treks for groceries, entertainment, religious worship, banking and medical services in these neighboring towns. Conversely, one witnesses the daily caravan of vehicles coming up to Three Rivers to access recreation at our lake, entrance to Sequoia National Park, shopping and eating in our establishments, and partaking in monthly Artist’s gatherings. It is a natural reciprocity of goods and services among communities that share a close proximity. There does not currently exist a public transportation mode linking us to Bakersfield, the center of our Congressional District 23.

Areas we don’t want to be in a district with.

Congressional District 23, of which we are a part, is not conducive for us seniors to make the lengthy drive that would afford us access to aforementioned services necessary to our independent lifestyle. In a decade this will be of monumental concern as many of us lose our driving privileges and/or deem it unsafe to travel via a busy highway corridor to reach Bakersfield. A second detriment to the lengthy trip to this town is the difficulty in accessing the offices of our representative in Congress and his staff.

Is there anything else you can tell us about your community?

I have resided in the Visalia/Three Rivers area for 51 years where I have been actively engaged in professional and social interactions. Upon retirement, as an educational administrator in Tulare County, I volunteered in many capacities in Woodlake and Three Rivers. I was an active Woodlake High School Foundation member and still serve in an advisory capacity focusing on securing and allocating scholarships to graduating seniors. Our grandchildren transition to Woodlake High School upon graduation from Three Rivers Elementary. There has always been a close relationship between the two districts. Transportation is provided for our students from Woodlake to Three Rivers before and after school. We also support school functions at Three Rivers Elementary. This is of utmost importance since the ADA has diminished greatly based on many factors leading to a dearth of young families with school age children. I also volunteered as a docent at our local Historical Museum giving me additional insights as to ecological needs and concerns that are unique to Three Rivers and our surrounding communities. These encompass the realities of being water dependent on the three forks of the Kaweah River and of the impact of large-scale fires such as the SQF Complex fire that forced many evacuations. My husband serves on the Community Water Board and also on the Three Rivers Fire Safety Council. This council works closely with other local, state and federal agencies.
It should be considered most prudent to address these issues relevant to our community's safety and well-being in the next congressional district session for the Three Rivers-Visalia COI.

Most sincerely,

Rachel Katz