

Dear California Citizens Redistricting Commission:

I am very concerned about how the Angeles National Forest will be incorporated into congressional districts. Current districts 27 and 28 do a great job of empowering the highly populated areas to the south of the forest, who use the first the most, by placing them in the same Congressional Districts as the San Gabriel Mountains. We urge the same approach be used in 2021 with the mountains in the north of congressional districts, with foothill communities next, and other communities immediately south included.

An example of how not to draw congressional districts including national forest land in the south corner of the 8th district which exclude major population centers who have a strong interest in how forests are managed from the Congressional district and members of Congress who represent the mountains. Another example of how not to do it is the 32nd which excludes forest gateways cities like Azusa from the congressional district that includes the public land.

The foothill cities from Pacoima to Rancho Cucamonga form a powerful community of interest based on their shared traits and their relationship with the San Gabriel Mountains. They should anchor districts that include national forest land. The districts should include all the forest to their north and continue south to allow the maximum number of people to have a say in forest management. Many of these communities are park poor and use the national forest for recreation

This community of interest of foothill communities needs to be in the same congressional districts as the object of this interest: the San Gabriel Mountains. The foothill communities share many common concerns about the management of their federal public lands: Fire and fuels management and wildfire suppression; sections of high severity fire zones; zoning and fire safe structures; tourism; watershed management and flood control; recreational quality and availability; parking near trailheads, high forest visitation, forest access. They are united by common traits, including historic ties, homes adjacent or near the forests, ecology (chaparral ecosystems), steepening slope, wildlife management, a major visual feature/ scenic backdrop, and more.

I ask the commission to recognize the importance of placing as many of the people who live south of the Angeles National Forest in the same congressional districts as the forests themselves to enhance community power to influence the future of their federal public lands and to anchor the foothill community of interest.

Thanks,  
Oscar Cisco