



P.O. Box 24 Joshua Tree, California 92252
www.mbconservation.org

January 9, 2017

Senator Feinstein and Congressman Paul Cook
331 Hart Senate Office Building
1222 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Feinstein and Congressman Cook:

The Morongo Basin Conservation Association, a 501(c)3, urges you to support necessary and overdue investments in national park infrastructures like roads and trails. The National Park Service (NPS) faces a \$12 billion repair backlog, which is endangering the Service's ability to fulfill its mission to preserve resources for future generations.

MBCA is a community-based, California Nonprofit Corporation, incorporated in 1969 and dedicated to preserving the economic and environmental welfare of the Morongo Basin. We advocate for the healthy desert environment that nurtures the region's rural character, cultural wealth and economic well-being, a vision that many Basin residents share. MBCA educates and disseminates information about key environmental issues; collaborates with citizens, officials and other organizations and supports community-based organizing and solutions.

MBCA knows that the economy of the Morongo Basin is driven by several important economic sectors, including cultural tourism and recreational tourism to Joshua Tree National Park. As such, we are keenly aware of the maintenance needs within Joshua Tree and also other parks across the nation. It's critical that national parks like Joshua Tree have safe roads; comfortable visitors' centers and ranger housing; clean campgrounds and bathrooms; and the best protection available for our invaluable desert historic sites.

In 2016, visitation to Joshua Tree exceeded 2.5 million and across the nation exceeded 300 million, underscoring the importance of addressing the daunting challenge of a \$12 billion maintenance repair backlog comprised of roads, bridges, tunnels, trails park visitor centers, ranger housing, water systems, historic sites and more.

MBCA strongly believes that there is a connection between providing adequate funds to address maintenance needs, providing a quality visitor experience and the overall protection of resources within Joshua Tree National Park. Moreover, an investment in National Park Service infrastructure is a good investment for our local economy. In fact in 2016, there were more than 2.5 million visitors to Joshua Tree National Park and the prior year, visitors spent more than \$96 million in communities surrounding the park. Protecting resources and providing adequate maintenance funds are critical in attracting tourists and ensuring a quality visitor experience.

MBCA urges you to work with other members of Congress to provide major investments through annual funding and dedicated funding that specifically addresses national park infrastructure so Joshua Tree National Park and our nation's treasures continue to offer visitors safe and enjoyable experiences.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah J. Kennington". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Kennington, President

Morongo Basin Conservation Association

Cc:

Congressman Calvert
Congressman Knight
Congressman Takano
Congressman Ruiz
Congressman McClintock
Congressman McCarthy
Congressman Carbajal
Congressman Ruiz
Congressman Aguilar
Congressman Chu