

# YOUR THREE MONUMENTS

## Frequently Asked Questions

From painted mountains to hidden springs, from world-famous wildflowers to majestic herds of bighorn sheep, Americans have long been drawn to the stark beauty of California's desert. Tourism and recreation are an essential part of the desert region's economy. The desert is also a bridge to our Native American, pioneering, and homesteading roots. Thanks to action by the community, sensitive water resources, fragile wildlife habitat, popular recreation, and historic trails have been given national monument status. Thanks to you, some of the most spectacular and diverse stretches of intact desert in California—Mojave Trails, Sand to Snow, and Castle Mountains—are permanently protected for future generations as national monuments.

### **Q: What is a national monument?**

**A:** A national monument is a designation given to an area of federal public land that contains unique scientific, cultural, natural and historical features, to protect it for future generations. National monuments contain important features and resources, and each is designed to protect the unique values of the area while allowing other compatible uses, such as outdoor recreation and ranching, to continue.

### **Q: How is a national monument created?**

**A:** A national monument can be established by either the president or Congress and can be managed by one of the following agencies: the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S Forest Service, National Park Service, or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This designation only applies to lands managed by the federal government and does not apply to private, state, county, city, or other local lands inside its boundary. It also does not affect rights held by water agencies, tribes, sanitation districts and other land management agencies.

Since 1906, both Republican and Democratic presidents have used their authority to designate more than 100 national monuments including many of our most beloved public lands in California.

### **Q: How will the new national monuments benefit the land and people?**

**A:** The designation of the Mojave Trails, Sand to Snow, and Castle Mountains as national monuments will:

- Safeguard the natural, historic, recreational and scenic features in some of the most spectacular landscapes in the California desert from industrial development;
- Ensure that these public lands remain open to traditional uses, outdoor recreation, hunting, and grazing;
- Provide opportunities for ongoing community involvement in the management planning process;
- Bring more prominent awareness and visitation, promoting tourism and economic opportunity in the surrounding communities.

Protecting public lands in the California desert has already brought noteworthy economic benefits to the region. Visitors to Death Valley and Joshua National Parks and the Mojave National Preserve contributed \$165 million to the region's economy in 2013, supporting nearly 2,000 jobs. Home values are demonstrably higher near National Monuments than similar homes without nearby protected public lands. Work is beginning now with local Chambers of Commerce and cities to help promote the new national monuments to benefit the tourism economy in those areas.

### **Q: Was there local input in the effort to establish these national monuments?**

**A: Yes.** The national monument proposals came in response to nearly a decade of work by local leaders on legislative efforts to protect the California desert. The permanent protection of these special places is supported by elected officials, business owners, veterans, local faith leaders, anglers, historians, conservationists and others.

### **Q: Will community members have a say in how the national monuments are managed?**

**A: Yes.** The public scoping and planning process is beginning in summer 2016. The community will be invited to participate in "pre-planning" before the formal process under federal guidelines has begun to help the agencies

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better understand the communities interests as early as possible. When the formal planning process begins, public input is required as the agencies like BLM create a draft of the management plans.

National monuments in the California desert will continue to be managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) as part of the National Conservation Lands. As part of this system of protected lands, monuments are managed for multiple uses, including outdoor recreation and conservation of natural, cultural, historical, and archeological resources. In addition, traditional rights, current and valid grazing and mining interests, and rights-of-way will be honored.

**Q: Do the national monument designations impact private property?**

**A: No.** A national monument designation does NOT impact state, local, or private property rights or boundaries. Landowners can continue to access and enjoy the use of their property the same as before the designation. Additionally, this designation does not apply extra regulatory or land use authority over existing state agencies or local governments.

**Q: Will the national monument designations impact law enforcement, fire fighting, utilities, water rights, or grazing?**

**A: No.** Law enforcement authority, jurisdiction, and responsibility will not change. Fire fighting authority, jurisdiction, and responsibility will not change. Existing utility rights-of-way will be maintained. Existing water rights will be maintained. Existing grazing rights and permits will be maintained.

**Q: What will happen to existing uses of the lands in the national monuments?**

**A:** Existing recreational uses such as hunting, camping and other activities will typically continue if the areas are designated as national monuments. A comprehensive management plan will be drafted in which the public will have significant input beginning in summer of 2016. The point of the designation is to protect access and the special features of these areas as well as keep them free of industrial development and open to the public.

**Q: Do the national monument designations create a user fee?**

**A: No.** Simply designating a national monument does not automatically create user fees, regardless of how it is designated. Land managers make this determination while developing the resource management plan for a national monument.

**Q: Will this limit the number of visitors allowed in the monuments on a daily basis?**

**A: No.** the national monument designations will not create a cap on the number of visitors allowed in the area.

**Q: Does the monument designation have any impact on additional development near the proposed national monuments?**

**A: No.** The national monument designations will not affect development rights or local zoning on nonfederal lands. Additionally, the designations will not impact management of federal lands outside of the monuments themselves.