

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

January 28, 1980

Dear Colleague,

When the Senate takes up H.R. 3757, the Omnibus Parks Bill, I intend to offer an amendment to help protect the incredibly beautiful Big Sur coast of California.

Currently there is a 3000 acre limitation on the total amount of land which the Forest Service can add to the Los Padres National Forest. Although the Forest Service is still within the statutory limit on expansion of the Los Padres, the Forest Service is not able to acquire -- or even accept as a gift -- some very desirable parcels along the coast because they are very large and would immediately put the forest over the acreage limitation. My amendment would remove the 3000 acre limit. It does not require the expenditure of federal funds, and it does not authorize any new monies.

I am only proposing that the cap on Los Padres National Forest additions be lifted so that the Forest Service can accept donations of Big Sur lands. This is a stop gap measure to allow for Forest Service acquisition during a period when other proposals to protect Big Sur may be considered.

The pressures for the breakup of the large landholdings along the Big Sur coast are growing. I anticipate that in the very near future there will be properties on the market which it would be in the public interest to acquire. Property owners at Big Sur may wish to make gifts or bargain sales to the federal government. It makes no sense to put an arbitrary limit on the amount of Big Sur land the Forest Service can acquire in this fashion.

The argument has been made that there should be hearings on Big Sur, and I agree. Hearings should be held on possible national park or seashore designation. But the amendment I will offer merely waives an arbitrary rule, and I see no great need for a hearing on whether to permit donations of Big Sur lands to the government and expansion of the Los Padres Forest in the interim.

I hope that I will have your support on this amendment. It is important to me and to all who know Big Sur and want to preserve it as it is today.

Sincerely,



Alan Cranston