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Katherine Douglas

Public Comment

From: Executive Director <execdirector@montecitoassociation.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 9:47 AM
To: sbcob
Subject: Letter of Support
Attachments: BOS Letter of Support for Hot Springs Red Flag Enforcement.pdf

Caution: This email originated from a source outside of the County of Santa Barbara. Do not click links or open attachments unless you verify the sender and know the content is safe.

Please see the attached letter of support for the Hot Springs Reg Flag Enforcement.

All the best,

Houghton

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Houghton Hyatt
Executive Director

Montecito Association

P.O. Box 5278 | Santa Barbara, CA 93150

Tel: 805.969.2026 | Office Hours: Mon-Thur, 9a-2p

Website: montecitoassociation.org | Email: info@montecitoassociation.org



THE VOICE OF OUR COMMUNITY



March 4, 2025

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Office:

1469 E. Valley Road
Santa Barbara, CA 93108

P.O. Box 5278
Santa Barbara, CA 93150
Tel: (805) 969-2026
info@montecitoassociation.org
www.montecitoassociation.org

Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Barbara
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Subject: Support for Enforcement at the Hot Springs Trailhead on Red Flag Warning Days

Dear Chair and Honorable Members of the Board of Supervisors,

On behalf of the Montecito Association, we write in strong support of the proposed enforcement measures at the Hot Springs Trailhead on Red Flag Warning Days. As stewards of the Montecito community, we recognize the increasing risks posed by high visitor traffic to the Hot Springs Trail, particularly during periods of extreme fire danger. The proposed enforcement actions outlined in the pilot program are essential to safeguarding our residents, natural environment, and emergency responders.

Montecito has endured catastrophic disasters in recent years, including the Tea Fire (2008), Thomas Fire (2017), and the devastating 2018 Debris Flow. Given the area's steep terrain, dense vegetation, and the prevalence of sundowner winds, the threat of human-caused ignition—particularly from illegal campfires and improper trail usage—poses an unacceptable risk to the community. Increased enforcement of parking restrictions and trail closures on Red Flag Warning Days is a necessary and proactive step toward mitigating these dangers.

We commend the Board for recognizing the urgency of this issue and for proposing a collaborative approach that involves local, state, and federal agencies, including the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office, the Montecito Fire Protection District, and the U.S. Forest Service. The allocation of \$25,000 in funding for enforcement is a prudent investment in public safety, ensuring that visitors adhere to necessary regulations while allowing first responders to focus on critical emergency preparedness and response.

The Montecito Association strongly urges the Board of Supervisors to approve this pilot program and to continue supporting measures that enhance public safety, fire prevention, and environmental stewardship in our community. We stand ready to assist in public outreach and education efforts to ensure residents and visitors understand the importance of these safety regulations.

Thank you for your leadership in addressing this urgent matter. We appreciate your continued commitment to the well-being of Montecito and all of Santa Barbara County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Doug Black', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Doug Black
President, Montecito Association