

S138 The California Desert Protection Act of 2011



Issue:

If enacted the California Desert Protection Act of 2011 (S138) will:

- Create the Mojave Trails National Monument containing ~941,000 acres.
- Create the Sand to Snow National Monument containing ~134,000 acres.
- Set aside a minimum of 200,000 acres as “mitigation lands” to provide for alternative energy projects. This will likely exclude recreation in these areas.
- Add ~90,000 acres to Death Valley National Park
- Create new wilderness areas totaling ~300,000 acres in BLM, USFS, and NPS managed Lands
- NOT protect Johnson Valley from the Marine Corps expansion.

This bill WILL have an adverse effect on recreation opportunities and public access in California. Access for mining, recreation, and other uses will be curtailed. While not yet fully understood, it is believed that at least 400 miles of roads in the new wilderness areas and monuments will be closed.

Supporters of the bill state that Razor OHV Area, Stoddard Wells OHV Area, El Mirage OHV Area, Spangler Hills OHV Area, and a portion of the Johnson Valley OHV Area are all slated to receive a congressional designation as OHV areas. It can be argued as to what this means as these areas are already OHV areas, and there is no guarantee that they will remain open and unaffected. There is also no compensation for the areas that will be closed.

CA4WDC Position:

The California Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs is **OPPOSED** to S138 in its present form. We oppose legislation that restricts the public’s access to public lands. We oppose the creation of new wilderness areas and National Monuments that withdraw lands from public access and close existing routes. We oppose the creation of new wilderness areas that do not meet the standards of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which established the National Wilderness Preservation System. We also oppose legislation that attempts to indiscriminately close any area or route of travel without verification of the economic impact to the area.

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The California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs, Inc. is the largest 4WD organization in the state of California representing over 8,000 family members. CA4WDC works to maintain access to public lands and promotes responsible use of those lands. CA4WDC is based in Sacramento and has three districts to serve the state. CA4WDC was founded in 1959 and has over 50 years of service to the OHV community.

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