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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mike McNutt SGMCC Communication Committee Chair 661-456-1041 (w)
614-390-7930 (c), or email: mmcnutt@palmdalewater.org

Monument Collaborative Delivers Consensus Built Management Plan Comments to Forest Service

Los Angeles, CA – In 2015, President Barack Obama declared the San Gabriel Mountains a national monument. This designation allowed for special protection of this historic mountain range where activities such as camping, boating, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, biking, and the use of off-road vehicles in designated areas have created opportunities to enjoy nature and seek seclusion away from city life.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is currently working to develop a Monument Management Plan, per the National Monument Proclamation, to ensure that the natural, spiritual, historical, and recreational integrity of the newly protected San Gabriel Mountains National Monument is properly managed to allow for the balance of nature and human activity.

After gathering input from a wide range of diverse stakeholders and deliberating extensively, the Collaborative took a final vote last Thursday, October 27, 2016, with representatives reaching an “all in” mantra as they agreed to consensus comments to submit to the USFS for the development of the Monument Management Plan.

San Gabriel Mountains Forever (SGMF) worked for over ten years to secure additional protections and improved visitor services for the San Gabriel Mountains and we are encouraged by what has been accomplished by the NFS and many partners to date. We are proud to be working with the Collaborative to achieve mutual objectives by requesting that the Management Plan include specific objectives with a timeline and a monitoring plan in order to meet the intent of President Obama's proclamation for the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, particularly as it relates to access for all and visitor services said Omar Gomez, Program Director for COFEM and Chair of San Gabriel Mountains Forever.”

The San Gabriel Mountains Community Collaborative is a diverse group made up of approximately 44 community interests (including academic, business, civil rights, community, conservancies, cultural, environmental, environmental justice, ethnic diversity, education, youth, state and local government, Native American, public safety, recreation, special use permit holders, land lease holders, transportation, utilities, and water rights holders). The Collaborative’s purpose is to *“Represent the general public by integrating diverse perspectives to identify, analyze, prioritize and advocate for values, resources, investments, management objectives and implementation practices that sustainably benefit all communities throughout the region, the Angeles National Forest and the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument.”*

"Working in such a large group where opinions and diversity regarding passion for the mountain range exist, has been both a wonderful learning experience and a magnificent accomplishment, said Joe Lyons, Councilperson, City of Claremont. "Our goal to provide plausible, reasonable, protective, and actionable comments to the USFS has been rewarding.

"The Council for Watershed Health is pleased to be part of a community-driven, consensus-based approach for informing a management plan for the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument. The Monument provides numerous regional benefits from a watershed health perspective. The Collaborative is doing some important work to ensure multiple perspectives are considered and the resources equitably shared by all," said Chris Solek, Council for Watershed Health.

Dianne Erskine Hellrigel, Community Hiking Club, stated "The Community Collaborative has been working since the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument was proclaimed by President Obama. This collaborative has been exploring all points of view from a very diverse group of people. We are working towards the best possible management plan for the Monument to ensure sustainable recreation, higher protections for all the species that live there as well as the protection for things of historical importance and heritage sites."

"The San Gabriel Mountains have always been available to explore and take adventures to unique experiences that you will not find in the city," said Edward Belden, Southern California Associate for the National Forest Foundation. "It is our goal to ensure that the Monument is well-managed for the clean water, scenic vistas, abundant habitat, and recreational resources it provides."

The National Forest Foundation is the convener and facilitator of the Collaborative group.

The consensus comments sent to the USFS will be instrumental in the development of the Monument Plan. As the process continues to develop, the SGMCC will continue to collaborate with the NFS to ensure that the best possible Plan is approved and adopted for implementation.

For more information about the Monument or the SGMCC, please visit: www.nationalforests.org/who-we-are/regional-offices/california-program/sangabrielmountains

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