



# City of Malibu

Jefferson Wagner, Mayor

23825 Stuart Ranch Road · Malibu, California · 90265-4861  
Phone (310) 456-2489 · Fax (310) 456-3356 · [www.malibucity.org](http://www.malibucity.org)

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Sent via email to [ExecutiveOffice@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:ExecutiveOffice@bos.lacounty.gov)

Chair Janice Hahn and Honorable Members  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors  
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Amendments to County LCP to Allow Camping in ESHA – OPPOSED

Dear Chair Hahn and Honorable Los Angeles County Supervisors:

The people of Malibu have long appreciated the significant and historical work done by many individuals and institutions through the last 50 years to preserve and protect the beautiful Santa Monica Mountains. The decisive actions by many have left a legacy of this beautiful region which is accessible to millions of people in the Los Angeles area alone as well as visitors from far away.

There is an art to the delicate balance between preservation and public access and the City of Malibu is a witness to this balance and, in some locations, imbalance with millions of visitors having the potential to “love an area to destruction” right here in Malibu. As custodians of the natural world, we share the County of Los Angeles’s priority of maintaining the delicate balance of human activity and the preservation of the natural world. This balance becomes more and more challenging with the ever-increasing population of California.

The City of Malibu supports the protection of Environmentally Sensitive Habitat (ESHA) from any disruptions. Malibu recognizes the need for public access and recreation in the Santa Monica Mountains. Camping in the Santa Monica Mountains is already supported in safe areas like Malibu Creek State Park. That type of area is not only properly supported but is essentially already a safe zone. Facilitating low-impact camping in ESHA or “trail camping” along the Backbone trail would be less supervised and potentially more dangerous as well as would degrade the preservation of ESHA.

The City of Malibu agrees with the decision of Judge Chalafant’s determination in the recent “Ramirez Canyon Preservation Fund vs. Coastal Commission Case # BS149044” that **“The Commission’s determination that the LCP’s provisions for low-impact campgrounds will not permit significant disruption of ESHA is incorrect as a matter of law”** (page 16) and that **“This is not consistent with section 30240’s near absolute requirement that there can be no significant ESHA disruption”** (page 16).

*LA County Board of Supervisors  
County LCP – Camping in ESHA  
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The Malibu City Council encourages the County of Los Angeles to ensure that the Coastal Commission corrects the language in the LCP to properly protect ESHA and to remove any “elastic clause” language that would either permit degradation of ESHA from low-impact camping or, even worse, lead to the potential fire danger that this activity might precipitate. We value our long-standing history of cooperatively working together and thank you for considering the input of our Council on this matter. Malibu will always be on the receiving end of any fire danger issues in the Santa Monica Mountains, as we all recently witnessed in the Woolsey Fire.

Sincerely,



Jefferson Wagner  
Mayor

Cc: Honorable Members of the Malibu City Council  
Reva Feldman, City Manager  
Honorable Henry Stern, California State Senate, 27<sup>th</sup> District  
Honorable Richard Bloom, California State Assembly, 50<sup>th</sup> District