

PROTECT MOLOK LUYUK

# EXPAND BERRYESSA SNOW MOUNTAIN NATIONAL MONUMENT

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### INTERIOR SECRETARY, BLM DIRECTOR VISIT PROPOSED BERRYESSA SNOW MOUNTAIN NATIONAL MONUMENT EXPANSION

**Sacramento, CA** — Today, tribal, congressional and community leaders thanked Interior Secretary Deb Haaland and Bureau of Land Management Director Tracy Stone-Manning for visiting Molok Luyuk, the proposed Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument expansion area. On Sunday, September 24, the Interior Secretary and BLM Director visited the lands and held a roundtable discussion to hear from local community leaders on the need for President Biden to use the Antiquities Act to protect the landscape.

“We are humbled and excited to have our Nation’s leaders visit our ancestral lands, particularly Molok Luyuk, an area of sacred and historic importance to Patwin tribes,” said **Chairman Anthony Roberts, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation**. “Tribes have stewarded this area for millennia and welcome deeper collaboration with the Department of Interior and local stakeholders to protect Patwin culture and heritage.”

The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, which is requesting the expansion, has a long and significant connection to Molok Luyuk, stretching back thousands of years. The ridge includes areas where religious ceremonies are practiced and sites that were central to vital trading routes. A key goal of this effort is also to establish co-management with federally recognized Tribes and to return to an Indigenous name for these lands. Molok Luyuk is Patwin for “Condor Ridge” and is a name provided by the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation. Currently the area is referred to as “Walker Ridge.”

“Molok Luyuk is a special and sacred place for area Tribes and for many local residents who enjoy recreation activities like hiking and mountain biking,” added **Lake County Supervisor E.J. Crandell, a member of the Robinson Rancheria Tribe**. “The natural beauty of our home also

drives tourism, which is key to the economic vitality of the region. Protecting these beautiful lands would be a gift to future generations.”

Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument stretches from Napa County in the south to Mendocino County in the north, encompassing 330,780 acres of public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). President Obama designated the national monument in 2015, responding to a call from Representatives Mike Thompson and John Garamendi, then-Senator Barbara Boxer, other members of California’s Congressional delegation, and community leaders to permanently protect these lands.

“Molok Luyuk is a rare treasure of rich cultural heritage and history, diverse wildlife and rare plants, stunning natural beauty and accessible recreational activities,” said **Sandra Schubert, Executive Director of Tuleyome**, leader of a local conservation organization and a participant in the roundtable. “We are deeply grateful to Secretary Haaland and Director Stone-Manning for visiting the lands and listening to why we want this special place protected. We encourage President Biden to expand the existing monument and permanently protect Molok Luyuk.”

The proposed expansion area is located on the eastern edge of the existing monument and includes 13,753 acres of public lands in Lake and Colusa County. These BLM managed lands include oak woodlands, rocky outcroppings, wildflower meadows, the largest known stand of McNab cypress, and dozens of rare plant species. Protecting the landscape would help the state of California under Governor Gavin Newsom and the Biden Administration meet their [shared goals to protect 30% of lands and waters by 2030](#).

“Molok Luyuk is a ‘must protect’ area in the midst of a changing climate,” said **Mary Creasman, Chief Executive Officer, California Environmental Voters**. “These public lands serve as a critical wildlife corridor for species such as tule elk, mountain lions and bears. It’s also home to imperiled wildlife such as bald and golden eagles and many rare plants. Protecting this habitat would help preserve critically important biodiversity.”

Senators Alex Padilla and Dianne Feinstein and Representatives Garamendi and Thompson have [called on President Biden](#) to use the Antiquities Act to expand Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument and permanently protect Molok Luyuk (Condor Ridge). The Antiquities Act is a 1906 law that grants presidents the ability to designate federal public lands, waters, and cultural and historical sites as national monuments to permanently conserve them.

“The meeting with Secretary Haaland and BLM Director Stone-Manning was a fruitful discussion on the many reasons why Molok Luyuk should be permanently protected,” said **Elyane Stefanick, California Program Director for the Conservation Lands Foundation**, who attended the event. “The addition of Molok Luyuk will protect the area’s rich biodiversity and play an important role in helping the State of California and the Biden Administration meet its goal of protecting 30% of U.S. lands and waters by the year 2030. We are grateful to the Interior

Secretary and the BLM Director for personally visiting the area and listening to local community leaders.”

Popular recreation activities on these lands include hiking, mountain biking, photography, camping, horseback riding, and off highway vehicle (OHV) use on designated routes. Incorporating the adjacent federally owned land into the existing national monument would improve land management and public access, and protect sensitive wildlife, prime habitat areas, and cultural resources.

“As an avid OHV recreationist, I strongly support expanding Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument to include Molok Luyuk,” said **Don Amador, former chair of the CA State Park Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission**. “The permanent protection of Molok Luyuk will improve the management of these lands and increase public access to recreation opportunities. This is a win-win for our community and I add my voice in support of President Biden using the Antiquities Act to expand the monument.”

To learn more about this effort and to sign a petition in support of the expansion of the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument, visit [www.expandberryessa.org](http://www.expandberryessa.org).

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*Photos of the lands to be protected are available for use [here](#).*

*Please credit Bob Wick for these images.*

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*For interviews with the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, please contact R. Omar Carrillo, Director of Government Affairs at [ocarrillo@yochadehe-nsn.gov](mailto:ocarrillo@yochadehe-nsn.gov) (some interviews granted upon request).*