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Padilla, Feinstein Bill to Improve Air, Water, Wildlife Quality at Salton Sea Advances in Senate^[OBJ]

Committee also advanced two of their bills to preserve public lands, natural resources, and historic sites

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Senators Alex Padilla and Dianne Feinstein (both D-Calif.) applauded the Energy and Natural Resources committee for advancing their *Salton Sea Projects Improvements Act* (<https://www.padilla.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/padilla-feinstein-ruiz-introduce-bill-to-expand-federal-authority-at-the-salton-sea/>), which would increase federal investment in ecological improvement projects at the Salton Sea and significantly expand federal partnerships with state, local, and Tribal governments to address the public health and environmental crises at the Salton Sea.

“The environmental and public health crises at the Salton Sea have been neglected for too long, and it’s wreaking havoc on the environment and surrounding communities,” **said Senator Padilla.** “As the climate crisis continues to exacerbate the worst megadrought in over 1,200 years, and as the Bureau of Reclamation is asking states to conserve more Colorado River water supplies, now is the time to ensure that the federal government has the strongest tools to mitigate devastating impacts from the increasingly exposed Salton Sea lakebed. Importantly, my bill with Senator Feinstein and Representative Ruiz will better enable the federal government to advance environmental justice and

protect the public health of the disadvantaged communities surrounding the lake. I'm glad to see this bill advance out of committee and I look forward to continuing to build momentum to pass this in the Senate."

"For years the Salton Sea has been receding, threatening the local ecosystem and creating toxic dust clouds that are harming the surrounding communities," **said Senator Feinstein.** "The Energy and Natural Resources Committee advanced our bill that will make it easier for every level of government to work together to address the problem and provide the resources necessary to protect public health and restore vital habitat."

"We need more action to address the pressing environmental and public health crisis at the Salton Sea," **said Dr. Ruiz.** "My bill with Senators Padilla and Feinstein, the Salton Sea Projects Improvements Act, urgently opens up more resources and adds more flexibility to add more shovels to the ground on projects that protect the public's health. I am impatient with our progress and will never stop working to strengthen our all-hands-on-deck approach to the environmental hazard at the Salton Sea."

"We are excited to see this bill move forward to enable critical federal investment in improving conditions at the Salton Sea," **said California Secretary for Natural Resources Wade Crowfoot.** "This adds to a growing sense of momentum as the state's Salton Sea Management Program works with local, Tribal and federal partners to break ground on projects around the sea to deliver on our commitments and advance environmental justice and equity for the region in the face of climate change."

"I applaud Senators Padilla and Feinstein for moving this key legislation forward in the Senate to increase Bureau of Reclamation funding for the Salton Sea," **commented Salton Sea Authority Executive Director G. Patrick O'Dowd.** "Last month, the Commissioner testified that she seeks major cuts to California's Colorado River water supplies which would significantly impact the disadvantaged and tribal communities surrounding the Salton Sea," **O'Dowd continued.** The

Senators' legislation is an important tool in the toolbox to help Reclamation meet its obligation to assess, fund and implement its own Salton Sea mitigation projects to address those federally-imposed impacts."

"The Salton Sea Improvements Act is a huge step forward for the Sea and we thank Senator Padilla and Senator Feinstein for their efforts to move this legislation forward," **said Frank Ruiz, Audubon's Salton Sea Program Director.** "For decades, Audubon has dedicated time and resources to drive conservation efforts at the Sea and protect the birds and people who rely on this fragile ecosystem. We support this additional federal attention to bring solutions to the Sea and we urge swift passage of this bill."

The committee also advanced the *Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument Expansion Act* (<https://www.padilla.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/padilla-bill-to-protect-molok-luyuk-and-expand-berryessa-snow-mountain-national-monument-advances-in-congress-with-a-senate-hearing%ef%bf%bc/>), the *Rosie the Riveter National Historic Site Expansion Act* (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/1718/actions?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%22rosie+the+riveter%22%7D&r=1&s=1>), and the *Rim of the Valley Corridor Protection Act* (<https://www.padilla.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/padilla-feinstein-introduce-senate-bill-to-protect-rim-of-the-valley-corridor/>). The *Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument Expansion Act* would add an adjacent 3,925 acres to the current Monument, support tribal co-management, and change the name of the additional wildlands from "Walker Ridge" to Molok Luyuk—Patwin for "Condor Ridge"—a name the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation provided. The *Rosie the Riveter National Historic Site Expansion Act* would add Nystrom Elementary School to the existing Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park in Richmond, CA and authorize the National Park Service to add other historically relevant sites to the park's boundaries. The *Rim of the Valley Corridor Protection Act* would add more than 191,000 acres of the Rim of the Valley Corridor to the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area.

"I am so proud to represent the Richmond community and to work in

Congress to ensure its contributions during WWII are recognized,” **Congressman DeSaulnier said.** “By preserving Nystrom Elementary School as part of the historic park, we honor the sacrifices made by the Rosies in Contra Costa County who worked on the home front and we help preserve their legacy for future generations.”

“Conserving California’s special places has been a lifelong passion throughout my tenure in the state legislature, as Deputy Secretary of the Interior to President Clinton, and now as a member of Congress representing Lake County. I introduced the ‘Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument Expansion Act’ in the U.S. House of Representatives to protect and expand the national monument, and I applaud Senators Alex Padilla and Dianne Feinstein for championing this legislation in the United States Senate,” **said Congressman John Garamendi D-Calif.-03).**

“Back in 2016, I worked to designate the Berryessa Snow Mountain region as a National Monument,” **said Congressman Mike Thompson (D-Calif.-05).** “Earlier this year, I was proud to join Rep. Garamendi to expand this designation and protect more of our pristine public lands. The Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument is crucial for protecting the biodiversity of the land and boosting our economy through recreational opportunities. I am glad the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument Expansion Act is being taken up in the Senate, led by Senators Feinstein and Padilla, and I look forward to seeing it signed into law by President Biden.”

“Molok Luyuk – or Condor Ridge – is a special part of Northern California and deserves special protections. We appreciate Senator Padilla and Feinstein’s leadership on this and their insistence that Native American voices be part of the conversation,” **said Chairman Anthony Roberts of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation.** “Our ancestors traveled and traded there for centuries. With these protections, the unique resources on Molok Luyuk will endure, and Californians will be able to enjoy its natural beauty for generations to come.”

“We are thrilled to see this legislation pass through the senate and grateful to the leadership of Senators Padilla and Feinstein in the work to expand Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument,” **said Sandra**

Schubert, Executive Director of Tuleyome. “Molok Luyuk is a treasure. As neighbors we have long appreciated its natural beauty, diverse wildlife, rare plants, and indigenous cultural value. This is exciting progress in the effort to protect Molok Luyuk from current and future threats while respecting Tribal stewardship over the lands.”

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