

## **Supervisors endorse making Lake Berryessa a national monument**

November 06, 2014 • [BARRY EBERLING beberling@napanews.com](mailto:barryeberling@napanews.com)

Napa County is advising President Barack Obama to create a sprawling, 550-square-mile Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument.

The Napa County Board of Supervisors voted Tuesday to support national monument status for an area that includes 96 square miles of public lands in eastern Napa County. Supervisors did so quickly, with the entire discussion and vote taking 35 seconds.

Supervisors Keith Caldwell, Diane Dillon and Bill Dodd voted “yes.” Supervisors Mark Luce and Brad Wagenknecht were absent to attend an international wine conference in Argentina on behalf of the county.

A Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument would stretch from Snow Mountain Wilderness in Colusa, Glenn and Lake counties south 100 miles to Lake Berryessa in Napa County and the Blue Ridge mountains in Solano County. Only public lands would be included, such as land owned by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain Coalition has tried for several years to have Congress designate the Berryessa-Snow Mountain area as a national conservation area. Reps. Mike Thompson, John Garamendi and Lynn Woolsey introduced legislation in 2012 to create the area. Congress didn’t pass it.

Supporters have little hope Congress will pass the proposed legislation in 2015, a county report said. But Obama could designate the area as a national monument without Congressional approval.

If Obama takes action, federal agencies owning land in the area would create a common management plan looking at such issues as conservation, weed management and recreation. A committee of local interests would give advice as the plan develops.

National monument status would make the area eligible for more federal money, a county report said. It could attract more visitors to the area by raising the area’s profile, the report said.

Obama on Oct. 10 designated the 550-square-mile San Gabriel Mountains National Monument in Southern California.

The idea of creating a Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument has critics. Although none addressed the Napa County Board of Supervisors, the opposing view came up Tuesday at the Yolo County Board of Supervisors meeting.

The Yolo County Board of Supervisors endorsed national monument status by a 3-2 vote. One supervisor noted that some ranchers in the area are against the idea. Some private property owners view the proposal as adding another, unneeded layer of government.

President Theodore Roosevelt designated the first national monument in 1906. That monument is Devils Tower, a pillar-shaped volcanic mountain in Wyoming featured as the landing place for aliens in the 1977 Steven Spielberg film "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." The United States has 110 national monuments.

Whether Berryessa-Snow Mountain becomes the 111th national monument is up to Obama.