

**Testimony of
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Department of the Interior
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests
S. 1328 and H.R. 689, Shasta-Trinity National Forest Administrative Jurisdiction Transfer
October 29, 2009**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on S. 1328 and H.R. 689, companion bills to transfer the administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal lands in California between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service (FS). The BLM supports H.R. 689 as passed by the House of Representatives.

Background

The Chappie-Shasta Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Area consists of approximately 56,000 acres located within Shasta County, California. The area has a complex pattern of land ownership with approximately 25,000 acres administered by the BLM, 11,760 acres managed by the FS, and the rest in other Federal or private ownership. Each year, numerous special recreation events occur within this popular OHV area that require special recreation permits from both the BLM and the FS. In an effort to more consistently handle the recreational use, the BLM has taken the lead in managing the area and special events on both BLM and FS managed lands. Nonetheless, the mixed ownership and separate management and regulatory frameworks between the two agencies have, at times, caused frustrations for the public.

S. 1328 and H.R. 689

The House of Representatives passed H.R. 689 on June 2, 2009; our testimony addresses the House-passed bill.

H.R. 689 transfers to the BLM administrative jurisdiction of 11,760 acres of Federal land located within the Chappie-Shasta OHV Area that are currently managed by the FS. Consolidation of land ownership within the Chappie-Shasta OHV Area will allow for a more streamlined administration of recreation use and an improved recreation experience for the area's users.

In addition, the bill transfers to the FS administrative jurisdiction over three parcels totaling approximately 5,000 acres of public land currently managed by the BLM in Trinity, Shasta, Humboldt, and Siskiyou Counties. These lands are either adjacent to or within areas managed by the FS, and include the 4,830 acre-Tunnel Ridge portion of the Trinity Alps Wilderness (currently managed by the FS through a Memorandum of Understanding with the BLM) which is within the FS managed 517,000 acre Trinity Alps Wilderness. The other two parcels are a 217-acre parcel adjacent to Shasta Lake and a 44-acre parcel along California Highway 89. Both parcels are surrounded by FS lands and were identified for transfer to the FS in the 1993 BLM California Redding Resource Management Plan.

This interchange of administrative jurisdiction between the two agencies will lead to efficiencies in agency management, consistent management of Federal resources involved and better service

to the public. H.R. 689 is the result of years of local efforts by the agencies, the public, and the sponsor. The BLM believes enactment of the bill would make land management adjustments where they are appropriate and beneficial to the public.

A number of technical amendments were made to H.R. 689 to address concerns raised by the BLM in testimony before the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public lands on March 24, 2009. Since that time, additional minor mapping corrections have come to the BLM's attention. The Bureau would like to work with the Sponsor and Committee to prepare a new map.