



Senate Approves Feinstein-Boxer Resolution to Ensure Continued Public Access to Santa Rosa Island

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Washington, DC – The U.S. Senate last night unanimously approved a measure sponsored by U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer (both D-Calif.) to ensure continued public access to Santa Rosa Island. The island is part of the Channel Islands National Park, located off the coast of Santa Barbara, California.

“Santa Rosa Island belongs to the American public,” Senator Feinstein said. **“It should not be set aside as an exclusive private hunting reserve. By acting today, the Senate sends a clear message it believes that all Americans should continue to have access to Santa Rosa Island -- one of California’s treasured recreation spots.”**

“Santa Rosa Island is a jewel in our National Park system, and access to its unique beauty should not be restricted. I am pleased the Senate passed the Feinstein-Boxer resolution to ensure public access to Santa Rosa Island,” Senator Boxer said.

“I want to thank Senators Feinstein and Boxer for their tireless efforts to protect Santa Rosa Island,” said Congresswoman Lois Capps. **“The unanimous passage of their resolution, S. Res. 468, puts the Senate on record in opposition to the proposal to kick the public off of its National Park so a lucrative trophy hunting operation can continue indefinitely. Hunting keeps the public off the island for up to 5 months a year and needs to stop. The Feinstein-Boxer resolution takes us one step closer to achieving that goal and is another strong endorsement for common sense management of Santa Rosa Island.”**

The Feinstein-Boxer resolution approved by the Senate today would ensure that the National Park Service is allowed to properly manage and administer Santa Rosa Island in accordance with its policies and regulations.

Senators Feinstein and Boxer introduced the resolution in response to a provision included in the House approved 2007 Defense Authorization bill, which would effectively limit public access to the island.

The provision, sponsored by House Armed Services Committee Chairman Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.), would extend the current practice of allowing privately organized deer and elk hunting expeditions. These hunts require the closure of about 90% of the island to the general public for about 4-5 months each year. The measure would also prevent the National Park Service from carrying out a court-approved settlement to remove non-native deer and elk from Santa Rosa Island by 2011. The deer and elk herds pose a threat to the island's 11 endangered species, including the bald eagle, rare plants, and native fox.

Last week, the Paralyzed Veterans of American wrote to Congressman Vic Snyder (D-Arkansas) indicating their belief that Santa Rosa Island is "not viable" as a location for their hunting and recreation because of "numerous obstacles inherent to the island, including ingress and egress, logistics, personal safety and cost."

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