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For June 5, 1984 and
July 3, 1984

RE: C-9 1:30 P. M.

(Agenda item discussing some proposed "permanent" OHV access for recreation motor vehicles to Pismo Beach and dunes of The Nipomo Dunes, South San Luis Obispo County, California. Project, California State Department of Parks and Recreation.)

My name is Kathleen Goddard Jones. I have lived overlooking the Nipomo Dunes, including the Pismo Dunes State Vehicle Recreation Area, since 1968...and have lived in San Luis Obispo County since 1956. My address is 2860 Halcyon Road, Arroyo Grande, California. I know the dunes well and have participated in most of the problems of the Pismo SVRA since its establishment in 1974. I speak as an individual, an environmentalist and a concerned citizen.

My presentation has to do with your consideration of a proposed permanent access for recreation motor vehicles into the Pismo Dunes and its beach and its State Vehicular Recreation Area. It is referred to by the California State Department of Parks and Recreation as the Pismo Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area or S.V.R.A. It consists of approximately 3,600 +or minus acres. I understand and have personally observed that about one-third of this area has been fenced - an Off-Highway playground of about 1,500 plus or minus acres.

As supervisors of San Luis Obispo County, you have heard me state at many past meetings here - for twenty-three years - I have studied, played, camped, led many outings, traversed, explored and enjoyed all of the 12,000 to 18,000 square miles of THE NIPOMO DUNES, of which the Pismo Dunes S.V.R.A. is a part -- and I have helped catalogue (along with experts in the Natural Science fields) the rare plants, the animals, the geology and even the wind patterns, which make this area unique in the entire State of California. There is nothing like it. It is one of a kind. And it is ours! And we are its stewards!

Now we have come to a significant crossroads in care and protection and management of The Nipomo Dunes. That crossroads is here before us today.

#1. I receive and read all the agendas and minutes of the State Off Highway Motor Vehicle Commission meetings. With their vast funds (millions from the green sticker money from recreation motor vehicle licenses) the California State Recreation Motor Vehicle Commission is in the process of buying vehicle recreation area land all over California. Right now they hope to acquire about ⁵⁰20,000 acres in ^{FRESNO}Mendocino County. They may not be successful in acquiring all of that, but they may get some of that ⁵⁰20,000 acres. Further, there are presently many off-highway vehicle recreation areas in use now -- and many more are in the process of being established: for motorcycles, for dirt bikes, for 3-wheeled ATC's (the all-terrain cycles - so very dangerous), for jeeps, for buggies and for powerful pickup rigs.

The Pismo Dunes, which was the very first State vehicle recreation area in California in 1974, is NOT ACTUALLY NEEDED ANY LONGER! IT CAN BE ABOLISHED! There are adequate motor vehicle recreation areas in California elsewhere.

#2. MOREOVER, of all the motor vehicle recreation play areas in California, not one has caused the monumental amount of trouble which the Pismo Dunes SVRA HAS brought to our County. The destruction of our land, A great amount of trespass, experience and complaints of our farmers because of theft of their field crops and vandalism of expensive agricultural machinery amounting to thousands and thousands of dollars. We have ^{FF}suffered much civic unpleasantness, discord, heated argument, divisiveness among friends and neighbors, protests and unhappiness; even violence and death has been commonplace from OHV recreation at the Pismo Dunes SVRA. This vehicle recreation area here in our dunes has witnessed more mangled bodies in horrible accidents (as evidenced by letters in your files from doctors in Santa Maria, Arroyo Grande and San Luis Obispo hospitals and has caused more expense to this county for unexpected Sheriff and police assistance, has caused more stress on park ranger crews, has caused tension and dissension in

(#2 continued) many, many of the emergency treatments have never been paid for by our recreation vehicle visitors. The County has to pick up the tab on these!

On a massive scale we have had to deal with the pollution of carelessly discarded human waste from trailers and campers, and with piling of garbage beyond the amount of such problems at any other vehicle recreation area, anywhere ... although our signs have for many years admonished in unmistakable large letters: PACK IT IN - PACK IT OUT.

#3. It is true that the State Department of Parks and Recreation has made significant progress in alleviating some of the above conditions.

But MORE FAR-REACHING in importance is evaluation and perspective on the cross-roads decision before you today: out of about eight or nine access locations suggested for developing a permanent vehicle access to beach and dunes, you are being requested by the State to SELECT ONE!

Frankly, why should you select one? Has this occurred to you? I implore you to think about this question seriously! Why should you select one?

You can easily abide by the California Coastal Act and say: "Any access through any wetland is unacceptable, because it would be A VIOLATION OF THE COASTAL ACT OF CALIFORNIA."

That would quickly rule out Oso Flaco Lakes area, Lettuce Lake, Jack Lake, including the proposed Seastrand alternative called "The Devil's Hole, as well as any corridor along either side of Arroyo Grande Creek, or through the marsh of Oceano Campground. All these are violations of wetlands! The proposed access via Callender area would mean a lengthy legal controversy with Union Oil --- and it poses biological threats to the wildlife natural area of private Dune Lakes, Ltd. And what may be the attitude of the Southern Pacific Railroad about some of the proposed grade-crossings, overpasses or underpasses?

For you, our County leaders, the easiest solution is to agree to

#4 continued) Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in 1980. It is titled Important Fish and Wildlife Habitats of California. A team of top experts in the natural sciences made a survey of all of California: of our high mountain ranges, our deep valleys, our colorful deserts and woodlands, streams, meadow and grasslands, and the length of our magnificent coast.

I have reported this federal survey in this room before; but perhaps the full impact of this extraordinary document has not reached you.

This federal study points directly at our county. Out of the entire State of California this survey points not at our whole county, but specifically at our sand dunes of South San Luis Obispo County, our famous NIPOMO DUNES ... because, after the scientific federal team studied and inventoried all of the state of California, they came up with just forty-nine parcels of land which have outstanding and singular natural qualities which should be saved and set aside for scientific study due to their properties of value for mankind.

Then - having the forty-nine most valuable land parcels selected, it was, of course, necessary to arrange the forty-nine into priority order. And which piece of land is Number One on the final federal list? THE NIPOMO DUNES! And I quote:

"The most unique and fragile ecosystem in the state of California is The Nipomo Dunes."

#5. THEREFORE, today at the cross-roads, the decision you make on vehicle access to beach and dunes, is not a local matter, is not just a San Luis Obispo County matter, nor is it only a California State matter. It is of significance nationally!

When we in this county properly publicize the fragile and spectacular beauty of the Nipomo Dunes far and wide, as a vast, white and wind-sculptured wilderness: of silence, of solitude, of white whistling swans, Giant Golden Coreopsis flowers, and walks to infinity through bright flowering sandy meadows, a place for families in quietness

#6.

The time has come in the history of San Luis Obispo County for us to leave off money-grubbing from the bedlam of beer and carousing rowdies, the stink of many exhausts, the revving of motors with raucous noise, the whine of ambulances. . . offerings of vulgar and tawdry recreation in a most beautiful land.

We have here the rarest piece of land in the state of California!

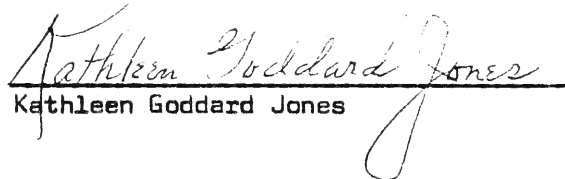
Were it one of California's great art museums, with smooth floors, would we turn it into a skating rink for underprivileged poor children?

The time has come to cancel forever the degrading use here of a State Vehicular Recreation Area, the most destructive and dangerous type of recreation known.

Let's turn back the land to the sun . . . and with some help, the earth, mostly left alone, will heal itself again. This can become very famous, as the greatest State Park on the entire coast of California!
And it is ours! We are its stewards!

SO NOW IN CONCLUSION...with your wisdom, born of knowledge and foresight, let a decision be made to support the INTEGRITY of the land. This is the time in our history to vote NO ACCESS FOR VEHICLES INTO THE NIPOMO DUNES.

Respectfully submitted,


Kathleen Goddard Jones