

**Statement of Leslie Weldon**  
**Deputy Chief, National Forest System**  
**Forest Service**  
**United States Department of Agriculture**  
**Before the United States Senate**  
**Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**  
**Subcommittee on Public Lands, Forests and Mining**  
**November 20, 2013**  
**Concerning**  
**S. 483**  
**Berryessa Snow Mountain National Conservation Area Act**

S. 483 would establish the 350,000-acre Berryessa Snow Mountain National Conservation Area (NCA), with approximately 180,000 acres of lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, 141,000 acres managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and 28,000 acres managed by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). It also would require the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to establish a 12-member advisory council that would provide recommendations with respect to the preparation and implementation of a management plan for the proposed NCA.

The Berryessa Snow Mountain region of northern California is one of the most biologically diverse, yet lesser known regions of the state. This large, complex area contains a variety of natural and cultural features as well as many outdoor recreational opportunities. The diverse habitats in these regions are home to many native and rare plants, as well as wildlife species such as bald eagles, mountain lions and black bears.

The Department welcomes the opportunity to work with the bill sponsor and the Committee to address coordination of planning, management requirements, and location of boundaries. This bill would provide a good opportunity to use our Service First authority. That is, using the Service First authority, the Forest Service, BLM and BOR can coordinate the planning and

management of this area. The Department appreciates the hard work put into this bill by the sponsor in community outreach and willingness to work with the Forest Service. We defer to the U.S. Department of the Interior regarding the designation of lands within the purview of the BLM and BOR.