

Name: Rob Adams, Mayor

Representing: The City of Sedona, Arizona

Date of Hearing: June 10, 2010

Hearing: HR4823 – Sedona-Red National Scenic Area Act 2010

This document provides information in support of H.R. 4823, the Sedona-Red Rock National Scenic Act of 2010 establishing the designation of approximately 160,000 acres of land in the Coconino National Forest in the greater Sedona area as the Sedona-Red Rock National Scenic Area.

What will National Scenic Area Designation Accomplish?

H.R. 4823 affects only National Forest lands and allows for potential future infrastructure needs of the City, county, school and fire districts. It does not apply to or impact private, municipal or state lands in the designated area. Under the provisions of H.R. 4823, the management of the designated lands will continue under the present U.S. Forest Service authority, with no additional layers of government, and will remain subject to the current management plans and to future management planning processes of the U.S. Forest Service.

The intent and wording of H.R. 4823 is simple. It permanently restricts land trades in the designated scenic area. While Amendment 12 to the Coconino National Forest Plan included restrictions on land trades, the authority of Amendment 12 is only administrative. H.R. 4823 creates a legislative document that allows lands within the NSA to be exchanged only for equally valued and desirable privately owned property within the scenic area. This protects the 160,000 acres of National Forest land from land trades for private development while protecting the rights of governing entities to seek land for public use.

What are the Benefits of a National Scenic Area Designation?

1/ Preservation of the environmental health, sustainability and ambiance of the red rock country surrounding Sedona is critical to the economic vitality of the City. Sedona's core industry and economic generator is tourism. The city welcomes approximately 3 million visitors per year who generate thousands of jobs, millions in revenue for the city and state and hundreds of millions in local business activity. A National Scenic Area designation will provide a new source of publicity to enhance the City's tourism economy while, at the same time, preserving one of the earth's great treasures for future generations.

Larry Warren in "Wandering in the West" states that business is thriving at Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument in Utah, "With twenty years now since the Grand Staircase declaration, Escalante has a number of new businesses. There are fancy new motels, gas stations, convenience stores, guide services and outfitters, all catering to new visitors attracted by the national monument, not the cows and cut trees. Add the Grand Staircase to the list of places where farsighted leaders stuck their necks out and endured local hatred to do the right thing, protecting our land from those who scan the horizon and see only dollar signs."

Wallace Stegner in his celebrated "Wilderness Letter" describes the ineffable values of wilderness and the "geography of hope" which is the foundation of a sustainable economy for many areas of the American West.

Preserving the wonder of the Sedona area is good for business.

2/ Protection of the scenic beauty of Sedona is essential to the quality of life of Sedona residents and visitors. Thomas Michael Power in “Lost Landscapes and Failed Economies” makes the argument that environmental protection seldom inhibits economic expansion to a significant degree, and that it almost always causes an increase in the perceived standard of living.

3/ NSA designation will preserve open space between Sedona and our local communities of Cottonwood, Camp Verde and Clarkdale. This is a stated goal in the community plans of all surrounding cities, towns and unincorporated areas.

Various Western academics and writers have verified that, in the long run, areas that have preserved their surrounding open spaces have benefited economically, while those that have lost those open spaces have deteriorated economically.

Why Does the Sedona Area Merit National Scenic Area Status?

The Sedona area is a truly unique and incomparably beautiful site. It would likely have become a national park had local settlement not begun early in its history. Designation as a National Scenic Area will ensure the permanent protection and preservation of the natural, cultural and historic values of the surrounding Coconino National Forest lands.

Located just 110 miles north of Phoenix, Sedona is a magnet city for visitors to Northern Arizona who wish to explore the famous “Red Rock Country,” the scenic Verde River, the 1.8 million-acre Coconino National Forest, and the winding road through Oak Creek Canyon. There are an infinite number of things to do in Sedona --relax atop shaded boulders that dot the 16-mile gorge of Oak Creek Canyon, take a rugged Jeep tour or helicopter tour deep into Sedona's ancient Indian ruins or hike a red rock trail beneath the crystal blue sky.

Sedona’s beauty has a way of taking your breath away and reminding us that there are not many places on earth quite as spectacular as Sedona. In fact, Sedona was named "The Most Beautiful Place in America" in USA Weekend's Annual Travel Report and is regularly listed as a special treasure in Arizona and the world.

In the 1998 US Forest Services Management Plan for the area, community members and Forest Service planners worked to identify the area’s special characteristics. They identified the most compelling questions in order to understand and care for this unique area. Among those questions were:

How can the natural elements of the red rock landscape be protected?

How can the interests of visitors and residents be served while maintaining a healthy ecosystem and protecting scenic values?

How can prehistoric and historic sites be protected?

How can we care for our designated Wilderness, one-third of the total planning area, to protect and restore natural, quiet, solitude, self-reliance and natural processes?

Then Red Rock District Ranger, Ken Anderson, included this comment in his Decision Notice on the plan:

“...I believe it is now the appropriate time to consider special designation. Early in the planning process, we considered seeking a special status; however, I felt it was important to complete this planning process first. The Forest Plan Amendment 12 now establishes a vision for the future and describes detailed new management direction for National Forest lands in the Sedona/Oak Creek ecosystem. With this direction in hand, I feel that a special designation may now be considered.”

Does the Community Support This Designation?

Since 1998, National Scenic Area designation has been sought and supported in writing by:

Three Sedona City Councils in the past decade, including the current newly elected Council that voted on May 25, 2010 to unanimously support H.R. 4823.

The Coconino County and Yavapai County Boards of Supervisors have unanimously signed resolutions supporting Congressional special designation.

Former Arizona State Senator Tom O'Halleran,

Other local organizations with documentation supporting the NSA include:

- Big Park Regional Coordinating Council
- Red Rock Rural Community Association
- Verde Valley Land Preservation Institute
- Sierra Club- Grand Canyon Chapter
- Keep Sedona Beautiful
- The Arizona Wilderness Coalition

And, over 5,000 support statements have been signed by individuals supporting an NSA.

This land is our legacy

The Sedona area is unique in all of America. May it forever inspire our commitment to preserve and protect irreplaceable beauty wherever it may occur. A National Scenic Area designation, declared by Congress, would be a major step towards its protection and assure that the ambiance and inspirational quality of the Red Rock Country be passed on for future generations to enjoy.

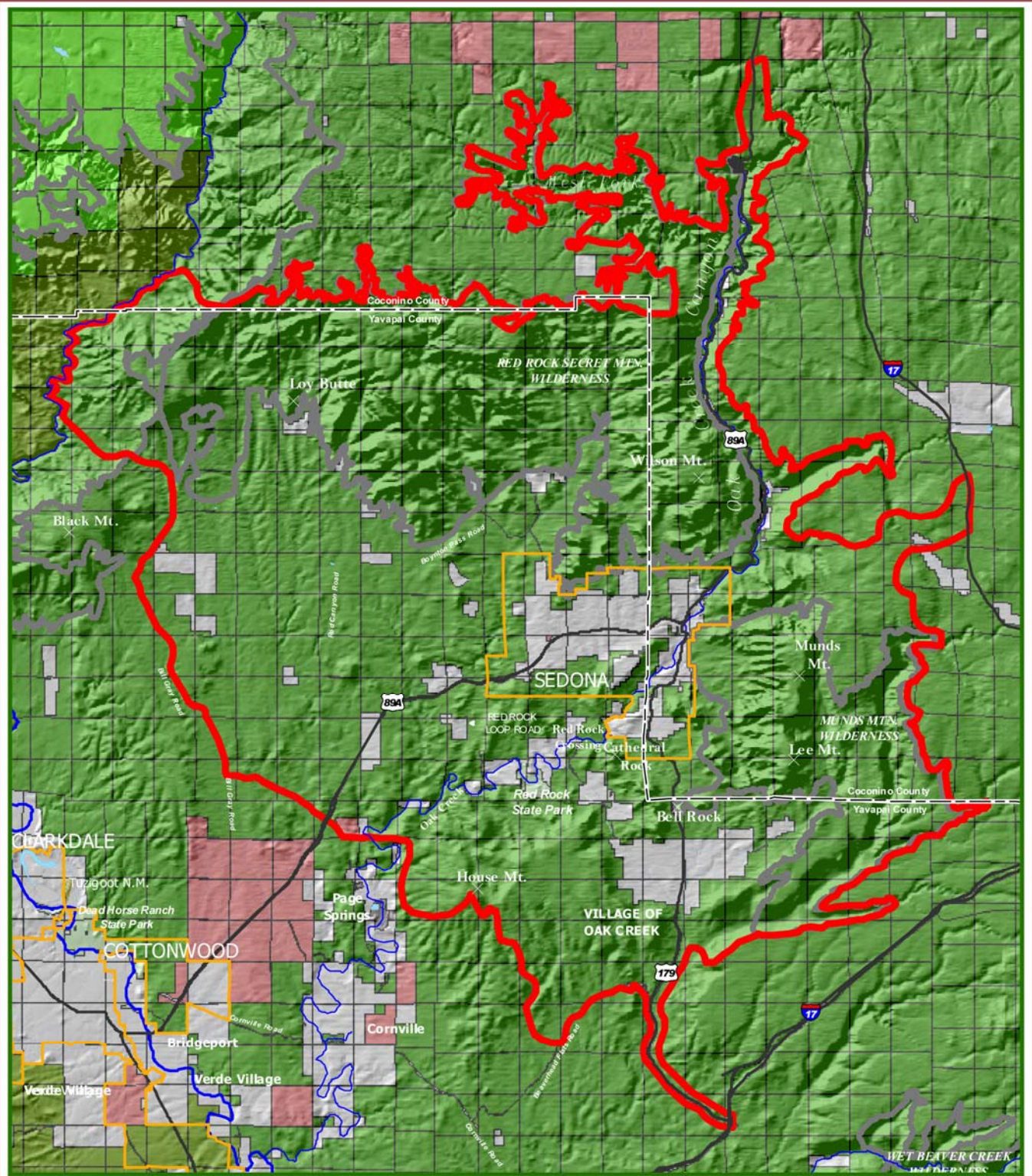
We ask the Committee to support H.R. 4823. Thank you.

Attachments:

Map of National Scenic Area

Photos of Sedona

Sedona City Council Resolution May 25, 2010



Planning Area Overview

Coconino National Forest
Plan for the Sedona Area
Amendment 12

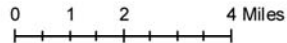
Legend

- Amendment 12
- County Boundary
- Interstate
- State highways
- Wilderness
- Section Lines
- Cities
- Private
- State Trust
- BLM
- Prescott N.F.
- State Parks
- Kaibab N.F.
- Coconino N.F.
- Indian Reservation
- National Monuments
- County Land



NOTE: Original Land ownership data, Streams and Wilderness Areas are from Arizona State Land Information System (ALRIS). Street information is from Yavapai County and Sedona Fire District. Every attempt was made to verify this information.

This map has been provided for informational purposes only and is not necessarily engineering accuracy. Every effort has been made to ensure this map is as accurate as possible. The City of Sedona shall assume no liability for the information.



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/data/arcview/citizen/ksb/mxds/
planning_area_overview.mxd
02/24/2005 Updated 08/28/2009





Bell Rock



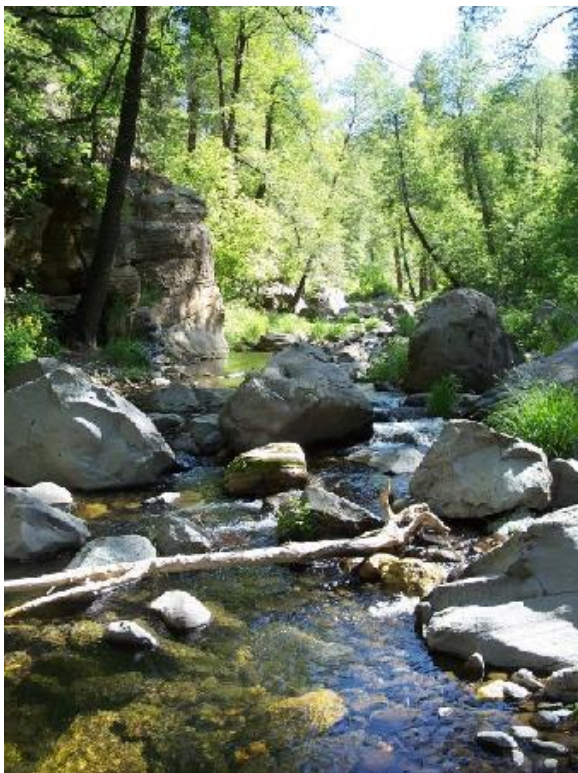
City of Sedona at the base of Red Rocks



Cathedral Rock & Red Rock Crossing



Panorama of Red Rocks



Oak Creek Canyon



View of Sedona from the Airport Mesa

Scenic Sedona

RESOLUTION NO. 2010- 12

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEDONA, ARIZONA, ENDORSING DESIGNATION OF THE “*SEDONA-RED ROCK NATIONAL SCENIC AREA*” (NSA)

WHEREAS, the Sedona area is truly unique and deserves special attention to ensure the permanent protection and preservation of the natural, cultural and historic values of the adjoining Coconino National Forest lands, and

WHEREAS, the protection of this scenic beauty is essential to the quality of life of Sedona residents, and

WHEREAS, the preservation of environmental elements surrounding Sedona is critical to the economic vitality of the City, and

WHEREAS, a National Scenic Area designation will provide a new source of publicity to enhance the City’s tourism-based economy, and

WHEREAS, Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick has introduced federal legislation in Congress in the form of H.R.4823, the *Sedona Red-Rock National Scenic Area Act of 2010*, to create the Sedona-Red Rock National Scenic Area, and

WHEREAS, H.R.4823 allows for potential future infrastructure needs of the City, county, school districts and fire districts, and does not impact private lands in the area, and

WHEREAS, under the provisions of H.R.4823, the management of the designated lands will continue under present U.S. Forest Service authority, with no additional layers of government, and will remain subject to current management plans and to future management planning processes, and

WHEREAS, H.R.4823 permanently eliminates trading of National Forest land in and around Sedona for private lands outside this area,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEDONA, ARIZONA, THAT:

The City of Sedona, through its Mayor and Council, strongly endorses the designation of approximately 160,000 acres of lands in the Coconino National Forest in the greater Sedona area as the *Sedona-Red Rock National Scenic Area*, and urges Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick to aggressively pursue passage of this legislation. The City Council further requests that Senators John McCain and Jon Kyle introduce companion legislation in the U.S. Senate and aggressively pursue its passage.

...

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Sedona, Arizona, this 25th day of May, 2010.

Rob Adams, Mayor

ATTEST:

Randy Reed, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Mike Goimarac, City Attorney