

PRESS RELEASE

Lawsuit Challenges Luxury Development in Big Bear Valley Moon Camp Threatens Rare Pebble Plain, Bald Eagle Habitat

FAWNSKIN, Calif.— Conservation groups sued the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors today for approving the controversial Moon Camp development on the north shore of Big Bear Lake. The planned development would bring 50 high-end custom homes to the lakefront property, which has rare and world-renowned pebble plains as well as habitat for wildlife, including a pair of bald eagles with a worldwide following that lives year-round in Big Bear Valley.

“Paving over this iconic landscape for high-end second homes will destroy the very essence of what makes the area desirable,” said Ileene Anderson, a senior scientist at the Center for Biological Diversity. “This stunning place ought to be left alone to benefit the plants, eagles and flying squirrels, not to mention the human visitors who come in search of beauty and peaceful quiet.”

The currently undeveloped project site provides habitat for San Bernardino flying squirrels, ashy gray Indian paintbrush and pebble plains, which is a rare clay soil that’s home to alpine plants found only in Big Bear Valley. The project would also bring increased wildfire risk, greenhouse gases and traffic impacts to the nearby community.

Bald eagles, which are a fully protected species under state law, use the lakefront on the project site for foraging and hunting. One bald eagle pair has raised its chicks in Big Bear Valley the past three nesting seasons. Named Jackie and Shadow by Big Bear Valley third-grade classes, the bald eagle pair have more than 100,000 followers on their nest livestream.

“This quiet, dark-skies community has amazing biodiversity that makes it unique in the world,” said Sandy Steers, a spokesperson for Friends of Big Bear Valley. “These species, including our popular bald eagle pair, deserve to have their habitat preserved for the long-term benefit of everyone.”

As more second homes are built and visitors stream into Big Bear Valley from Southern California, increased traffic, air pollution and risk of wildfire threaten this environmentally sensitive area. The number of bald eagles that migrate to

the valley to roost and hunt in the winter has decreased by 66% over the past three decades.

Today's lawsuit, filed in San Bernardino County Superior Court, asserts that the county's environmental impact report for the project repeatedly violated the California Environmental Quality Act. The conservation groups are represented by the law office of Babak Naficy in association with The Center for Biological Diversity, a national, nonprofit, conservation organization with more than 1.7 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places.

END OF PRESS RELEASE