



Federal Court Ruling a Total Victory for Tejon Ranch Company and US Fish & Wildlife Service in Frivolous Lawsuit Filed Over Plan to Protect Species on Tejon Ranch

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Court entirely rejects attempt by Center for Biological Diversity and other environmental groups to delay development on Tejon Ranch

LOS ANGELES--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Dec. 7, 2020-- The United States District Court, Central District of California, has granted summary judgment entirely in favor of the US. Fish & Wildlife Service and Tejon Ranch Co. in a lawsuit that challenged the 2013 approval of a Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan covering the upland regions of Tejon Ranch. The Habitat Conservation Plan—a permit issued in compliance with the Federal Endangered Species Act—will protect the California condor and other species found on Tejon Ranch.

In granting summary judgment for Tejon Ranch and the US Fish & Wildlife Service, United States District Court Judge Cormac J. Carney resoundingly rejected each and every argument made by the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), Wishtoyo Foundation, and Delia Dominguez, who were the plaintiffs in the lawsuit. The court went so far as to characterize CBD and the other plaintiffs' arguments as "unsupported by the record" and noted that CBD tried to "misleadingly suggest" its position was based on law.

The plaintiffs' lawsuit was initially filed on April 25, 2019, a full six years after the approval of the Habitat Conservation Plan, and just four days prior to the expiration of the time period in which to file a legal challenge.

This is not the first time CBD and the other plaintiffs have unsuccessfully attempted to use the courts to delay development on Tejon Ranch, in this instance, the community of Mountain Village, which has already received numerous approvals from local, state and multiple federal agencies. The plaintiffs had previously filed an environmental lawsuit against Kern County in 2009 for its approval of the Tejon Mountain Village project and subsequently lost in both the superior and appellate state courts. CBD has also sued to obstruct and delay other Tejon Ranch developments including the expansion of the Tejon Ranch Commerce Center, where both superior and appellate courts ultimately rejected CBD's claims.

The tactics employed by CBD to litigate, delay and obstruct proposed housing developments throughout California, including Tejon Ranch, are a significant contributing factor to the housing crisis in California. As CBD pursues its agenda, which is, as stated by CBD co-founder Kieran Suckling, 'to inflict severe economic pain,' those burdened by that economic pain are the countless numbers of Californians who find adequate housing increasingly unavailable and unaffordable.

Even in the face of this onslaught by CBD and other environmental groups who rush to court to try and derail Tejon Ranch's efforts to responsibly develop its landholdings and create thousands of homes and jobs for Californians, Tejon Ranch Company remains fully committed to the ongoing stewardship of the ranch's 270,000 acres, as it has done for over 175 years.

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