

APPENDIX C

HARRY JAMES' LETTER TO PRESIDENT FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT REQUESTING NATIONAL MONUMENT STATUS FOR MT. SAN JACINTO AND MT. SAN GORGONIO

*(Harry C. James papers (MS 111). Special Collections &
University Archives, University of California, Riverside)*

June 7, 1943

The Honorable Franklin Delano Roosevelt
President of The United States,
The White House,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

As President of The Trailfinders, an outdoor organization for boys, I would like to urge the setting aside of Mt. San Jacinto and Mt. San Gorgonio as national Monuments.

These two mountains and the surrounding territory are just about the only true wilderness areas left in the mountains of southern California, and only by such action can they be preserved for posterity in their pristine beauty. Both areas have many unique features which, in our estimation, make them worthy for consecration as National Monuments.

First: They are unique in exhibiting a climatic cross-section of North America from Alaska to Canada.

Second: Mt. San Jacinto and Mt. San Gorgonio provide biologists with a unique field for the study of animal and plant distribution through the various life zones from the Lower Sonoran of the Colorado Desert to the Arctic-Alpine Zone of the mountain summits.

Third: The preservation of such areas as National Monuments will preserve for all time two rather spectacular wilderness areas against the nosy constant threat of development. Hardly a year passes without some attempt being made to break into the present Forest Service restrictions as Primitive Areas.

Fourth: With the status of National Monuments the public would have access to them for such recreation as would not jeopardize the true wilderness character of the areas.

Fifth: San Jacinto and San Gorgonio, 10,805 feet and 11,485 feet respectively in altitude, have stood like sentinels over the two great passes into southern California. They have witnessed every exploring expedition from De Anza and Jedediah Smith to the early Mormon scouts. They have historical significance.

Sixth: In the lower altitudes surrounding both mountains are innumerable children's camps. The wilderness areas afford priceless opportunities for nature study, mountain climbing, horseback trips, and all the other recreations. These values should be preserved for children for all time.

We, therefore, urge the transference of their present status as Primitive Areas to that of National Monuments.

Sincerely yours,
Harry C. James