

TO: _____

FROM: _____
Mineralogical Society of Southern California Member

SUBJECT: OPPOSITION to 118th Congress' SB-4132 and CA's SJR-17, proposals for *two additional National Monuments in Southern California: Chuckwalla National Monument and Kw'tsan (Sattitla) National Monument.*

Honorable Legislator,

Please accept this PUBLIC COMMENT and my urgent request for your opposition to the above stated proposals. Lands for these proposed monuments amount to 660,000 acres (Chuckwalla) and 390,000 acres (Kw'tsan). Also included with this proposal, is another chunk of land to be taken from southeastern Joshua Tree. These latest proposals comprise a **huge swath of land** that cuts into three Southern California counties: Riverside, San Bernardino and Imperial. The intended area lies east of the Chocolate Mountains, the Salton Sea and west of the Colorado River. It is **over a million acres**, much more than was ever intended by the **Antiquities Act of 1906**, under which these bills are proposed.

Professors of the Earth Sciences, such as geology and mineralogy, and many other teachers use the desert lands as out-door classrooms for the essential hands-on learning for their students. For many students, it is an integral part of their learning experience! Think how this effects the overall field study of Earth Sciences; this desert-education aspect is at risk of nonexistence should you pass these bills.

By the same token, many *recreational* mineral collectors and rockhounds visit these public lands that are rich in native, natural occurring minerals and rocks that we enjoy and learn from by holding, inspecting, scrutinizing under loupe, magnifier and/or microscope, and, yes, even smelling them! As you are probably aware, within these lands are well-known collecting sites such as the Hauser Geode Beds and other collecting sites where, among many other minerals, dumortierite, kyanite, petrified wood and petrified palm occur. A portion of the Kw'tsan proposal lies near to the Colorado River, which offers abundant collection specimens and wonderful minerals to explore!

Collectors and rockhounds are responsible folk, mindful not to leave a footprint. We, too, wish to preserve the land, the flora and fauna, and to further our personal education, unlike those students who may never get the opportunity to perform field study due to an ever increasing number of National Monument proposals.

Depriving that experience from teachers, students, mineral collectors and rockhounds rebounds across the state, country and internationally. Please consider the impact of too many National Monument proposals that outlaw field education and recreational collecting by mineral collectors and rockhounds.

You can make it happen NOW. I URGE YOU TO **OPPOSE the Chuckwalla National Monument and the Kw'tsan National Monument (Sattitla) proposals: **SB-4132 and CA's SJR-17.** Thank you for your attention to this important and urgent matter.**