

**USDA STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD  
BEFORE THE  
UNITED STATES SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS  
CONCERNING  
S. 1926 – SAINT FRANCIS DAM DISASTER NATIONAL MEMORIAL ACT**

**AUGUST 15, 2018**

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present the views of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regarding S. 1926, the Saint Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Act.

S. 1926 authorizes the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Saint Francis Dam Disaster Memorial at the Saint Francis Dam site in Los Angeles County, California, for the purpose of honoring the victims of the Saint Francis Dam disaster of March 12, 1928. The Act would establish a National Monument on 353 acres of the Angeles National Forest, as depicted on the map titled “Saint Francis Dam Disaster National Monument - Proposed”, dated August 2, 2017. The Memorial would be created for the purposes of conserving and enhancing the cultural, archaeological, historical, watershed, educational and recreational resources of the dam disaster site.

The legislation authorizes the Secretary to accept, hold, administer, invest, and spend any gift, and devise or bequest of real or personal property made to the Secretary for purposes of developing, designing, constructing, and managing the Memorial.

The legislation directs the Secretary to develop recommendations to Congress within three years of enactment regarding the planning, boundaries, design, construction and long-term management of the Memorial, including recommendations regarding a visitor center and educational facilities. The Secretary would develop the recommendations after consulting with appropriate Federal agencies; State, tribal and local governments and the public.

USDA would like to work with the bill sponsor and Subcommittee to reduce administrative costs and burdens to the Forest and Region. These costs would include planning, creating and maintaining a new Memorial, including a visitor center and educational facilities. USDA is supportive of the authority to accept donations for the Memorial under section 3(c) but is concerned that it will not be able to rely solely on donations to plan, design, implement, construct and maintain a new Memorial if supported by external donations.

USDA recommends to the bill sponsor and the subcommittee that the legislative map “Saint Francis Dam Disaster National Monument - Proposed” be revised so that the Monument boundary lines take into consideration existing land uses, management needs, and Forest Plan designations. USDA would suggest limiting activity to meet incoming donations.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our position on S. 1926, the Saint Francis Dam Disaster National Memorial Act.