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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Marin Conservation League supports historic working dairies and ranches in the Point Reyes National Seashore (PRNS) and endorses Congressman Huffman's Bill, HR 6687.

The bill will clarify and amend the enabling legislation for PRNS by directing the Secretary of the Interior to manage PRNS "consistent with Congress' longstanding intent to maintain working dairies and ranches on agricultural property as part of the Seashore's unique historic, cultural, scenic and natural values." Further, it will fulfill the 2012 directive of Ken Salazar, then Secretary of the Interior, to offer 20-year leases to the Seashore's active ranches and dairies.

The bill does not alter existing legislation that calls for PRNS to be administered "without impairment of its natural values . . ." To minimize conflicts, however, the bill directs the Secretary to manage the tule elk for separation from the working ranches or dairies.

HR 6687 also directs the Secretary to: "complete, without delay, the General Management Plan Amendment (GMPA) for PRNS, including the northern district of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and an Environmental Impact Statement." MCL is satisfied that the GMPA and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, currently underway, will not be compromised by this legislation.

With the assurance of longer leases, ranchers, working with the park staff, will be able to invest in positive programs on ranches and dairies for the benefit of the environment. MCL supports and urges passage of Representative Huffman's well-crafted bill.

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