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Senator Dianne Feinstein

of California

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Senator Feinstein Urges Action to Protect Mojave National Preserve

*– Feinstein also says Cadiz project must receive highest level
of scrutiny from Interior Department –*

San Francisco, CA – U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today urged the U.S. Department of Interior to take action to protect the Mojave National Preserve following its listing as one of the top 10 most threatened parks in the nation by the National Parks Conservation Association.

In a letter to Interior Secretary Gail Norton, Senator Feinstein wrote: “**Protection of the California desert areas remains one of my highest environmental priorities as a U.S. Senator. As such, I was surprised to read that the National Parks and Conservation Association has characterized the Mojave as one of the 10 most endangered Parks and Preserves in the country. The problems in this report need to be investigated.**

“**The report publicizes one project that I have continued to follow closely and have written to you on several previous occasions – the Cadiz Groundwater Project. This project involves storing groundwater in the underground aquifer and withdrawing that water as needed for Southern California water districts. The project relies on some questionable assumptions made by private geologists that do not agree with the assumptions of the U.S. Geological Survey.**

“**As a result, I believe that this project must receive the highest level of deliberation and scrutiny. I am counting on your support for the quality control measures to the Cadiz groundwater project I suggested to you in my letter on January 29, 2002.**”

Copies of the March 26, 2002 and January 29, 2002 letters from Senator Feinstein to Secretary Norton are attached.