

**STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD OF
THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

ON S. 2977

BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS AND PUBLIC LANDS

COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES

SEPTEMBER 13, 2000

This Statement for the Record sets forth the views of the Department of the Interior regarding S. 2977, a bill to assist in the establishment of an interpretive center and museum in the vicinity of the Diamond Valley Lake in southern California to ensure the protection and interpretation of the paleontology discoveries made at the lake and to develop a trail system for the lake for use by pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles.

The Department of the Interior does not support S. 2977.

S. 2977 requires the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement with an appropriate entity for the purpose of sharing costs incurred in the design, construction, furnishing and operation of an interpretive center and a museum on lands under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. The intent of the center and museum is to preserve, display, and interpret the paleontology discoveries made at and in the vicinity of the Diamond Valley Lake, near Hemet, California. In addition, the Secretary is required under the bill to enter into an agreement with the State of California, or a combination of State and local entities, to design, construct, and maintain a system of trails around the perimeter of the Diamond Valley Lake for use by pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles. Finally, while authorizing appropriations not to exceed \$14 million, the bill states that the Secretary shall require other parties to these agreements to secure funds from non-Federal sources that is at least equal to the amount provided by the Secretary.

The Department has no Federal lands at Diamond Valley Lake. There is no Federal connection, nor any compelling Federal interest or mission to be served or advanced by requiring the Department to participate in the design, construction, furnishing or operation of the proposed interpretive center and museum.

The Department does not support the addition of funds for any program or project that would result in the reduction in funding for other programs or projects in the President's budget. In addition, the Department does not support the addition of funds for any program or project that is non-Federal.