



**Councilmember David Alvarez
City of San Diego-- District Eight**

News Release

For Immediate Release
November 28, 2012

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City Council Approves Resolution to Protect San Diego Open Space and Canyon Lands

San Diego, CA-San Diego City Councilmember David Alvarez heralded the City Council's unanimous Tuesday night vote to approve more than 6500 acres of City-owned open space for dedicated status – the highest level of protection.

This land dedication is pursuant to Senate Bill 1169 (Kehoe), recently signed state legislation that allows the City to convert up city-owned “designated” open space to “dedicated” open space. Designated open space can be converted to other uses by a majority vote of the Council. A dedicated parcel cannot be sold or developed for non-park uses except by a two-thirds vote of the people.

“This act will afford stronger protections to open space in the City of San Diego. Many San Diegans have worked for years to ensure that their neighborhood open space is not subject to development,” said Councilmember Alvarez. “We are indebted to San Diego Canyonlands for their year-long outreach program for the dedication of these important urban preserves, meeting with over 40 of the affected community planning groups and citizen advisory committees.”

One month ago, Councilmembers Alvarez and Sherri Lightner led the effort to direct city staff to re-review its initial assessment of city-owned lands. That subsequent review netted an additional 667 acres of land appropriate for this additional protection. At Tuesday's hearing, the motion by Councilmember Lightner and seconded by Councilmember Alvarez also requested the City Attorney to determine a path for dedication of a nearly 500 acre Fairbanks Ranch parcel and lands abutting Rose Creek.

A 1992 report to the City Council listed over 17,000 acres of city-owned land eligible for conversion to dedicated status, but a lack of funding over the last two decades has limited the City's ability to complete the conversion process. The City Charter allows land to be dedicated via City resolution or through statute, such as SB 1169. The estimated savings from using SB 1169 as a dedication vehicle is approximately \$2 million.

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Alvarez is the Councilmember for the Eighth Council District of the City of San Diego, which includes the southern communities of San Ysidro, Otay Mesa, Ocean View Hills, Nestor, Egger Highlands and the Tijuana River Valley. He is currently the chair of the City Council's Natural Resources and Culture Committee.