

Congresswoman Grace Napolitano
4401 Santa Anita Ave, STE 201
El Monte, CA 91731

Dear Congresswoman,

As a resident who is directly affected by the recent Ranch2 fire and other fires originating in the San Gabriel Valley riverbed, I write to you for help. We have seen an unprecedented increase in wildfires this year here in California. According to experts in climate science, this is not an unexpected occurrence. Given our dry conditions, we can expect ever longer and more devastating fire seasons. This impacts our homes, the forest around us, and the very air we breathe. In light of this crisis, allowing the presence of encampments in the San Gabriel riverbed is reckless, akin to “playing with matches”.

It is my understanding that you are instrumental in acquiring funding for the Army Corps of Engineers who maintains federal lands, of which the riverbed is a part. **I request that you earmark sufficient funding, specifically for the purpose of**

- 1) **regular, ongoing, and consistent sweeps of the riverbed to clear the area of encampments AND**
- 2) **regular, ongoing, and consistent patrols to clear the area of trespassing occupants in between those sweeps.**

I believe that we face an emergency. It is critical to take pro-active and preventative action. It is not enough to address the issue after the fact. Keeping the San Gabriel riverbed clear of human occupants would potentially save millions of dollars in property, perhaps a thousand or more lives, unnamed acres of natural forest, and millions of dollars spent on fighting fires originating in these encampments. It is my understanding that the Ranch2 fire, which originated at an encampment in August, alone cost over \$10 million. The current Bobcat fire is sure to be twice that if not more. This demonstrates the incredible expense that a lack of fire precaution can cause.

Although I fully support the creation of safe and decent housing as well as effective rehabilitation services for the riverbed occupants, allowing encampments to grow in the riverbed simply keeps them “out of sight and out of mind”. The situation is neither kind nor safe and it should not be considered even a temporary solution.

As a result of the Ranch2 fire, there is an additional emergency situation looming: mudslides and possible landslides, during the rainy season that will endanger not only the life and property of residents along the foothills that burned but also the lives of riverbed occupants.

I am aware that, since the Ranch2 fire, the Army Corps of Engineers and other agencies have done a sweep. What I am asking for is that this be more than just a reaction after the fact. I am asking that this be a regular and ongoing process. **Please earmark specific funding for the Army Corps of Engineers, specifically for the purpose of regular, ongoing, and consistent sweeps of the riverbed to clear the area of encampments AND regular, ongoing, and consistent patrols in between those sweeps to clear the area of trespassing occupants.**

Awaiting your reply,

Signature

Date

Print Name	
Address	
City, State Zip	