

WASHINGTON, DC – The United States Senate passed Congressman Sam Farr’s (D-Carmel) bill to establish Pinnacles National Park in California. The bill, H.R. 3641, the Pinnacles National Park Act, brought forward by Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) in the Senate, previously passed the House of Representatives in July. It now heads to the President’s desk for his expected signature.

The bill elevates the 26,000 acre Pinnacles National Monument into a National Park. Pinnacles National Park will be the 59th National Park created by Congress and the first since 2004.

“The Pinnacles is a special place and I am proud to have worked with Senator Boxer to elevate it to a National Park,” said Congressman Farr. “Often referred to as the missing novel in our National Park’s library, this treasure will finally take its rightful place on the shelf next to Yosemite, Yellowstone and all of our other wonderful parks. Today is a great day not just for California but for all Americans, who will want to now come visit this geological and ecological wonder.”

Established in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt, Pinnacles National Monument is the 11th oldest National Monument in the United States. The area draws its name from the volcanic spires that were formed by the eruption of the Neenach Volcano over 23 million years ago.

The Pinnacles system is home to 149 species of birds, 49 mammals, 22 reptiles, six amphibians, 68 butterflies, 36 dragonflies and damselflies, nearly 400 bees and many thousands of other invertebrates.

The monument is also home to 30 endangered California condors. Since 2003, the Park Service has been a part of the California Condor Recovery Program to re-establish California condors at Pinnacles.

The legislation moved quickly through Congress because of its broad, grassroots support due to the positive impact it would have on the surrounding communities. It is supported by Monterey and San Benito counties, including their respective Chambers of Commerce and

Visitor's Bureaus. Ken Burns, director of "The National Parks: America's Best Idea" also supports the legislation.

"The Central Coast is ready to welcome visitors to this national treasure," said Congressman Farr. "From exploring caves, to viewing springtime wildflowers, to hiking through spire-like rock formations, visitors and families can participate in activities that leave lasting memories. It is truly worthy of National Park status."

The legislation also renames the Pinnacles Wilderness within the National Monument as the Hain Wilderness. Schuler Hain was a conservationist who lead the effort to establish Pinnacles National Monument in 1908.

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