

# Council backs scenic area

Supporters hope designation will block land trades

By Cyndy Hardy  
SEDONA RED ROCK NEWS

The Sedona City Council approved a resolution Tuesday that urges the U.S. Congress to formally designate Greater Sedona a National Scenic Area.

Councilman Jerry Frey was opposed.

The city's resolution intends to prevent land trades of about 160,000 acres of national forest land, according to council members.

The resolution also intends to protect the property rights of state, county, municipal, private, fire and school district lands within the national forest.

Some residents are concerned that the measure will add another layer of government that will inhibit issues such as an alternate route.

An Oct. 3, 2003 Keep Sedona Beautiful publicity letter said, "A dramatic increase in forest use by residents and visitors over past decades threatens to degrade this national treasure and destroy the ambiance of ... the area."

KSB President Bill Pumphrey and some council members said the designation would only apply to Coconino National Forest land in the area, not private, state or municipal land.

The Coconino National Forest Plan Amendment 12 states that studies show that some advantages could be achieved through special designation, such as funding for land acquisition; additional durability for new forest management; and could

help address more complex issues such as aircraft overflights.

Amendment 12 allows exchange of forest land in the area only for privately owned land within the area.

Nancy Scagnelli, president of Citizens For an Alternate Route, said she met with some KSB members but still cannot support the scenic designation, although CFAR does support Amendment 12.

"It'll be like opening Pandora's box," she said. "The bill could be amended to change the meaning," she said.

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U.S. Rep. Rick Renzi can't guarantee it will be passed as written, said Scagnelli.

Sometimes, special designations include restrictions on private land and/or the establishment of an advisory board, according to Amendment 12.

The new language may not insure that.

"What iron-clad safeguards are there?" asked Vice Mayor Susan Solomon.

Pumphrey and Red Rock District Ranger Ken Anderson said there are no guarantees.

It's a non-revenue bill that creates no new policies that are

likely to be of political interest, Pumphrey said.

Anderson said the best way to get the legislation through Congress intact is to make sure it leaves Sedona with little for Congress to debate.

"The more locally aligned it

is in specific terms, the more likely it is to get through as written," Anderson said.

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Nancy Scagnelli, president of  
Citizens For an Alternate Route