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Democrats Oppose Plans for Paramilitary Camp in Potrero

Party Votes to Protect East County Preserve from Blackwater Development

SAN DIEGO – The Central Committee of the San Diego County Democratic Party has voted unanimously to oppose Blackwater USA's plans to build a mercenary training compound on an 824-acre parcel near Potrero.

Jess Durfee, Chair of the San Diego County Democratic Party, said the proposed site is both an important watershed and an environmentally sensitive habitat for eagles and other wildlife.

"Our precious environmental treasures must be preserved for future generations in San Diego County," Durfee said. "The quiet community of Potrero should be protected from those who would convert the acreage into a miniature war zone."

Before taking the vote on April 10, the committee noted that Blackwater project would include numerous weapons firing ranges, an 18,000-square-foot armory for storing weapons and ammunition, a helicopter pad, a gasoline storage tank and a two-mile tactical driving track for high-speed driving classes.

Potrero, which is 45 miles east of San Diego, has been polarized by the proposal, according to news reports. The land is currently designated as an agricultural preserve.

Blackwater USA is a North Carolina-based private security firm with hundreds of millions of dollars in government work in Iraq, according to news reports. The proposed project has polarized the 850 residents of Potrero.

With more than 450,000 members, the San Diego County Democratic Party is home to the second-largest population of Democrats in California. For more information about the Party's year-round activities, visit www.sddemocrats.org.

Chair Jess Durfee is available for interviews: (619) 750-5377.

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