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U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0552

March 2, 2009

General James T. Conway
Commandant of the Marine Corps
3000 Marine Corps
Pentagon, Room 4E734
Washington, DC 20350-3000

Dear General Conway:

I am writing regarding my support for the San Diego Shotgun Sports Association (SDSSA) and their continued ability to operate the shotgun range on the Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar California. I understand that the Association has leased and successfully operated the site at Miramar for the past 31 years under a series of lease contracts.

The previous contract expired on December 31, 2008 and as part of the ongoing negotiations for the next contract, the Marine Corps is now in the process of developing an "environmental response." I am told the Marines feel that this is necessary under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, and Liability Act (CERCLA) which pertains to "established prohibitions and requirements concerning closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites."

I believe this may be an unnecessary and time-consuming process which will only delay negotiations and therefore the use of the range by Marines and local sportsman. I feel there are other more productive ways to address the Marines environmental concerns, such as developing a best management practices for managing lead at outdoor shooting ranges. It is my understanding that under CERCLA, lead is considered a hazardous waste only if the range is closed and abandoned. This is certainly not the case at the gun range at Miramar and that is why I believe invoking CERCLA is not appropriate for this situation.

I would appreciate your reviewing the status of the lease negotiations. Many Marines enjoy the facilities at the shotgun range and they and their families are allowed to use the facility at no charge. I believe it is in the best interests of the Marine Corps and the best interests of the local community that the SDSSA be allowed to continue to operate this facility. I look forward to working with you to maintain the shotgun range at Miramar.

Sincerely,



Duncan Hunter
Member of Congress