



Tijuana River Valley Equestrian Association  
c/o Wigginton Ranch, 2191 Hollister St, San Diego, CA 92154

April 8, 2008

Congressional District 50, Brian Bilbray  
462 Stevens Ave, Ste 107  
Soloana Beach CA 92075

Re: Marine Corp Air Station (MCAS) Miramar – Equestrian Facility Closure

Dear Congressman Bilbray;

On behalf of those we serve, the Tijuana River Valley Equestrian Association (TRVEA) Board of Directors strongly expresses our concern over the closing of the MCAS Miramar, San Diego, California Equestrian Facility.

As horse owners and equestrian business owners, we understand the costs and other concerns of operating an equestrian facility. However, the numbers and issues cited (in the San Diego Union Tribune, April 2, 2008) by the MCAS Miramar base commander as reasons for the closure are not credible! Nevertheless, we will leave operational topics alone. We must emphasize the overall importance of this facility to our region in several very important ways. This equestrian facility supports the proud heritage of the horse in military history and in our community. It is a critical financial benefit to military personnel and their families. It is a valuable adjunct to physical and psychological fitness and a morale booster for military members.

First and foremost, San Diego supports a military culture. Many of us started in the military at San Diego and many of us stayed here after our tours, now calling San Diego “home.” Many of us still work in support of the military and have family and friends who are active military. This equestrian facility is a treasured landmark to San Diegans. For nearly fifty years, San Diegans have driven the corridor along MCAS, Miramar (formerly NAS), and observed these horses interacting with military personnel. Many of us were fortunate to ride horses “stationed for duty” at Miramar.

Security and service are central to the military life; horses help patrol our national parks, city streets, and international borders, to this day. Beyond this present day usefulness of horses, the military has a proud equestrian heritage as does the general American public. Horses are in the American psyche as deep as the land we live on; far deeper than yet another parking lot!

Secondly, we know the financial sacrifice made by people serving their country, made all the more difficult for those stationed in a highly priced region such San Diego. Most military equestrians will not find stables off base within budget or reasonable commuting distance. Having horse facilities available to the military at MCAS Miramar requires only a small amount of government help plus cooperation between military administrators and the military personnel who board horses.



For a very modest investment by the military, this equestrian facility is a huge benefit to the service personnel, their families, and the San Diego community.

Thirdly, horse activities strengthen people physically. Horses teach people patience and responsibility. Horses heal people psychologically and reduce stress. Strong families boost the morale of our military; horse activities are activities that are shared with the whole family. Sharing a stable with other military personnel creates community morale.

We believe the Marine Corp thoroughly understands heritage and the importance of morale, but that Marine leaders are not aware of what is happening at MCAS Miramar.

The military equestrians using this facility after 50-years of operation deserve better than a facility closure! The San Diego region (with its long love affair with our military) deserves better, too! This base facility is an important regional disaster safety area. *Once this facility is closed, it cannot be undone.* It would remove FOREVER an important benefit for military families--a tremendous loss to those who serve now and to coming generations of military families who will serve here.

We ask you to support the continued operation of the MCAS Miramar's equestrian facility for all these reasons--the military's proud heritage with the horse; the camaraderie of the troops; the Marine commitment to financial, physical, and psychological well being of personnel and their families; the importance to the San Diego community.

Sincerely,

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Letters going to

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