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City Attorney Blocks Gating of Wilderness

The Los Angeles city attorney has halted construction on a gate that would have blocked access to public parkland in the Santa Monica Mountains from Canyonback Road in Brentwood.

"The city attorney felt because this was a fully improved street that the applicants should not be able to move forward until [the street is privatized]," Julie Pietroski, senior legislative deputy for Councilwoman Cindy Miskowski, said.

Spokesman Frank Matelgian said City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo will issue a formal legal opinion on the gate early next week.

The Crown Homeowners Association has been trying to gate off the group's 71 homes since 1995. But the Canyon Back Alliance, made up of 16 organizations, opposes the gate because it cuts off access to the "Big Wild," a 21,000-acre urban wilderness.

Tom Freeman, of Los Angeles' Bird Marella, Boxer & Wolpert, who represents the alliance pro bono, called the decision to halt the construction "a sensible response."

— Stefanle Knapp