



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
**COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT**

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April 28, 2026

The Honorable Isaac Bryan, Chair  
Assembly Natural Resources Committee  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Support for AB 2494 (State Demonstration Forests) - As amended March 25**

Dear Chair Bryan and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the County of Humboldt, I write to express our support for AB 2494.

Healthy forests and rivers are fundamentally connected. Decisions about how forests are managed have direct impacts on water temperature, sediment levels, and streamflow which are conditions that California's native salmon and steelhead rely on to survive. AB 2494 updates the management of state demonstration forests by emphasizing ecological restoration, biodiversity, and climate resilience, all of which are essential for sustaining healthy watersheds.

The bill enables demonstration forests to fulfill their intended role as living laboratories for research, restoration, and sustainable land management. Efforts to improve forest structure, lower wildfire risk, and safeguard headwater systems will provide clear benefits to cold-water fisheries as well as downstream communities.

California's demonstration forests contain headwaters and tributaries that are vital to some of the state's most important salmon and steelhead populations. For instance, the South Fork Noyo River within Jackson Demonstration State Forest supports one of the strongest remaining runs of endangered Central California Coast coho salmon. Similarly, tributaries of Soquel Creek within Soquel Demonstration State Forest offer critical habitat for both steelhead and coho along the Central Coast.

AB 2494 also supports California's broader conservation goals, including the 30x30 initiative and Executive Order N-82-20, by positioning these lands as key contributors to long-term ecosystem protection. The bill's emphasis on Tribal co-governance and the incorporation of Traditional Ecological Knowledge will further strengthen forest and watershed management outcomes.

Lastly, the legislation helps advance a restoration-based rural economy. Investing in forest and watershed restoration not only improves ecological conditions but also creates stable, long-term jobs that benefit local communities, fisheries, and water users alike.

For these reasons, we ask that you support AB2494.

Sincerely,

Supervisor Mike Wilson, Chair  
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors