

Supporters of the “PUBLIC Lands Act”

Kenneth Kahn, Chairman, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians: “Our tribe supports Senator Padilla's PUBLIC Lands Act because it would protect the last of our ancestral lands and waters on the Central Coast that have remained untouched by modern development. We appreciate Senator Padilla's efforts to protect these unique and important areas of California.”

Chair Hilda L. Solis, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, District 1: “The communities I represent in the San Gabriel Valley are closely connected to the San Gabriel Mountains. These landscapes and rivers are vital sources of open space, clean water, and recreation for people who live nearby. During my tenure in State Legislature, I established the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy with a steadfast commitment to ensure environmental justice for our communities and generations to come. I’m proud to support the San Gabriel Mountains Foothills and Rivers Protection Act, which would protect remaining wilderness areas and safeguard rivers that are essential to the ecological, cultural, and recreational health of our urban communities.”

Chair John Haschak, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, District 3: “I support the bill because it will improve fire resilience, protect pristine salmon streams, expand four existing wilderness areas and establish two new ones here in Mendocino County, and lead to the development of new trails closer to communities. I’m grateful that Senator Padilla is continuing the effort to pass this important bill.”

Chair Laura Capps, Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors, District 2: “As we face intensifying climate challenges from drought to wildfire, the PUBLIC Lands Act helps strengthen our environmental resilience. My gratitude to Sen. Padilla and other climate leaders, including Congressman Carbajal for putting the health of our communities first. At a time when too many in Washington are actively working to dismantle decades of environmental protections, the PUBLIC Lands Act stands as a powerful countermeasure – rooted in science, community values, and long-term vision.”

Supervisor Matt LaVere, Ventura County Board of Supervisors, District 1: “The PUBLIC Lands Act will help permanently safeguard cherished public lands and rivers in our region, including in the Los Padres National Forest and Carrizo Plain National Monument. Thank you, Senator Padilla, for your ongoing leadership to preserve these beloved treasures for our community.”

Linda Castro, Assistant Policy Director, CalWild: “CalWild applauds Senator Padilla’s reintroduction of the PUBLIC Lands Act. Now, more than ever, it’s important that we have enduring protections in place for California’s natural landscapes and streams, ensuring clean drinking water and safe air quality for millions of Californians. We are extremely grateful for Senator Padilla’s leadership in his unceasing work to safeguard California’s wild places, so that we and future generations can enjoy the solitude, rejuvenation, and inspiration that these places provide.”

Helen O'Shea, California State Director, The Wilderness Society: “Senator Padilla’s PUBLIC Lands Act protects some of California’s most beautiful and diverse landscapes, from the north coast’s iconic redwoods to the Central Coast’s ocean vistas to Los Angeles’ beloved San Gabriel Mountains. The bill strengthens conservation protections, supports restoration that keeps forests and communities healthy, and expands the freedom for more Californians to access and enjoy public lands—ensuring these places remain thriving and inclusive for future generations.”

Carla Mena, Director of Policy & Legislative Affairs, Los Padres Forest Watch: “The reintroduction of the PUBLIC Lands Act is a powerful, essential step to strengthen protections for our irreplaceable wild lands. We deeply appreciate Senator Padilla’s continued leadership on this comprehensive legislation, which includes the vital Central Coast Heritage Protection Act, securing lasting protections for wilderness and critical water sources in our region.”

Katie Hawkins, California Program Director, Outdoor Alliance: “Access to outdoor recreation on California’s public lands and waters is what makes our state such a remarkable place to live, work, and play. Outdoor Alliance and our member organizations are thrilled to see Senator Padilla reintroducing the PUBLIC Lands Act this week. The protections it includes for our coasts, forests, and foothills will ensure that generations of Californians can continue to surf, ski, hike, bike, paddle, and climb in the places they love. We are deeply grateful for Senator Padilla’s leadership and look forward to seeing this important legislation advance in the Senate.”

Curtis Knight, Executive Director, California Trout: “The bill will help restore degraded public lands, and permanently protect wild and scenic rivers and headwater streams, which are critical for the recovery of native salmon and trout in California.”

Pedro Hernández, California State Director, GreenLatinos: “The Public Lands Act will lead to meaningful protection and tangible benefits for people, wildlife, and ecosystems for over 900,000 acres. At a time when many communities face inequitable access to nature and its health, cultural, and economic benefits—and as our state and nation experience alarming biodiversity loss—this legislation represents a necessary and timely investment in conservation. We commend Senator Padilla for leading the way towards a more equitable, resilient future for California by safeguarding public lands for current and future generations.”

Sam Davidson, California Policy Director, Trout Unlimited: “For anglers, there is no substitute for good habitat. Some of the best steelhead and salmon waters in California, including sections of the Eel and Trinity Rivers, would be better protected under the PUBLIC Lands Act. Trout Unlimited has worked for years to reconnect and restore habitat in many of these waters. We are grateful for Sen. Padilla’s commitment to conserving our native steelhead and salmon runs, and to supporting the fishing economies, cultures and communities dependent on them.”

Devin O’Dea, Western Policy & Conservation Manager, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers: “The PUBLIC Lands Act delivers the kind of durable, stakeholder-driven conservation solutions that hunters and anglers strongly support. By conserving more than 900,000 acres across California, this legislation safeguards wildlife habitat, clean water, and public access while promoting forest restoration, wildfire resilience, and responsible recreation. BHA has long supported the PUBLIC Lands Act as a balanced, locally driven investment in our public lands and outdoor heritage.”

Janessa Goldbeck, CEO, Vet Voice Foundation and Marine Corps veteran: “Throughout California, veterans share a strong connection to our public lands. Today we celebrate Senator Padilla for introducing legislation to protect treasured landscapes across our state. This legislation affirms the importance of outdoor access for the nearly two million veterans living in California.”

Jazzari “Jazz” Taylor, Policy Advocate, Latino Outdoors: “The PUBLIC Lands Act strengthens the protection of California’s public lands and supports meaningful opportunities for all people to experience the outdoors. These landscapes serve as places of cultural connection, healing, and opportunity for communities to experience nature. Protecting public lands reaffirms our role as leaders and stewards of the places that shape our collective future. We thank Senator Padilla for his continued leadership in advancing conservation and standing by local communities.”

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Belén Bernal, Executive Director, Nature for All Coalition: “We value and commend Senator Padilla's leadership as he commits to safeguard over 900,000 acres of California public lands and over 500 miles of rivers. This action provides a myriad of community benefits, including respite and tranquility for many people who live in dense urban areas and have limited access to enjoy nature in parks or other public outdoor spaces. Protecting and increasing equitable access to public lands allows us to inspire the next generation of diverse environmental stewards. ¡Gracias Senator Padilla!”

Roberto Morales, Campaign Manager, Sierra Club's Outdoors for All Campaign:

“This legislation is a huge step towards ensuring that public lands in California are protected so that everyone, especially underserved communities that have been denied equal access to nearby nature can enjoy the outdoors. Increasing access to the outdoors and protecting our remaining natural ecosystems provides immense benefits to our health, our economy and our environment. We applaud Senator Padilla for being our champion in the Senate.”

Kent Collard, Director of Camp Trinity near Hyampom, CA, praised the bill for “proposing to protect the Pattison Wilderness and lower Hayfork Creek, places that are critical to the continued success of our business.”