

# NORTHWEST CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS, RECREATION, AND WORKING FORESTS ACT

## Northwest California Wilderness, Recreation, and Working Forests Act of 2025 Ranking Member Jared Huffman (D-CA) Summary

This legislation will protect communities by increasing fire resilience, restoring forests and fish habitat, strengthening local economies, enhancing recreational opportunities, and protecting important wild places on federal lands. It will not expand federal land, limit hunting or fishing, close any legally open roads or trails to vehicles, or affect access to or the use of private property.

### TITLE I: FOREST RESTORATION

This title reduces wildfire risks and restores damaged forests and watersheds on public lands.

- **Designates 871,000-acre Restoration Area** in the South Fork Trinity River, Mad River, and North Fork Eel watersheds in Trinity and Humboldt counties to restore and maintain fire-resilient forests and aquatic habitat.
- **Authorizes old growth redwoods restoration** and collaborative partnerships to carry out the work.
- **Restores public lands affected by illegal trespass marijuana grows** by establishing a partnership of federal, state, and local entities to facilitate the recovery of land and waters damaged by illegal marijuana growing sites.
- **Requires federal agencies to cooperate and coordinate fire management** in northwestern California's wilderness areas. This pre-fire planning is especially important in large wilderness areas managed by multiple agencies.

### TITLE II: RECREATION

This title improves recreation opportunities and trails on public lands for residents and visitors.

- **Authorizes a study for the Bigfoot National Recreation Trail**, which would expand public access and highlight the immense ecological diversity of this region's ancient forests and other unique landscapes.
- **Designates the Elk Camp Ridge Recreation Trail** for motorized and non-motorized recreation.
- **Explores the possibility of establishing a recreational Trinity Lake Trail.**
- **Directs a trails study** that would explore ways to improve motorized and non-motorized recreation trail opportunities, including mountain biking, in Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, and Trinity Counties.
- **Directs a feasibility study of mountain biking trails in Del Norte County**, and authorizes construction, if feasible.
- **Authorizes construction of interagency visitor centers in Trinity County and Del Norte County.** These centers would interpret the natural, historical, and cultural resources of nearby federal lands.

### TITLE III: CONSERVATION

By designating federal lands as Wilderness and rivers as Wild and Scenic, this title provides the strongest levels of federal protection to old-growth forests and endangered salmon and steelhead river habitat in this region.

- **Expands nine existing wilderness areas and establishes eight new ones.** It would protect important and unique biodiversity and would not substantially impact timber harvest. The proposed wilderness and potential wilderness represent just 2.5% of land currently open and tentatively suitable for logging in Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, and Trinity Counties. Wilderness designation only applies to federal lands.
- **Designates 379 miles of new Wild & Scenic rivers**, and mandates federal agencies to create management plans for 101 miles of existing wild and scenic rivers only on public lands. The Wild & Scenic designation prohibits the federal government from licensing, permitting, or funding new hydroelectric dams or major diversions on protected stream segments. Existing water rights are not impacted by designation.
- **Establishes Special Management Areas for the Horse Mountain and Sanhedrin areas**, and directs the development of a comprehensive long-term plan focused on conserving, protecting, and enhancing late-successional forest structure, oak woodlands, grasslands, and other ecological values while allowing compatible uses.