



## Senate Passes Legislation to Protect California Lands

-- Northern California coasts, Yosemite, Golden Gate, and Redwoods included --  
December 8, 2004

**Washington, DC** – Last night the Senate approved a package of public lands bills sponsored by U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) that would benefit Northern California coastal wilderness, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Redwoods National Park, and Yosemite schools.

**“This is a major step forward in the effort to protect California lands, though I am disappointed the House failed to take up these important bills before adjourning”** Senator Feinstein said. **“I plan to continue the fight to conserve California’s extraordinary natural resources in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.**

**“These bills advance efforts to ensure that our lands, forests and coastline will be preserved for all time. Our wildlands are vanishing. We need to do all we can to protect what’s left.”**

The **Northern California Coastal Wilderness bill**, which was originally introduced by Senator Barbara Boxer and Representative Mike Thompson (both D-Calif.), will permanently protect almost 300,000 acres and preserve over 21 miles of the Black Butte River in Representative Thompson’s district along the Northern California coast. Specifically, the legislation would protect over a dozen areas including:

- The King Range proposed wilderness additions, which feature the longest stretch of undeveloped beach and coastal bluffs in the United States outside of Alaska.
- The Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel proposed wilderness additions, which surround the Middle Fork Eel River. The Middle Fork Eel River hosts between 30 and 50 percent of the state’s summer-run steelhead trout population.
- The Trinity Alps proposed wilderness additions, which shelter the third-largest swath of unprotected old-growth in northern California.

**“I want to commend Senator Boxer and Representative Thompson for their hard work to preserve what is left of our wildlands. Northern California’s coastal lands are some of the most striking and beautiful lands in all of California. This bill takes us another step forward in safeguarding the area for future generations.”**

The measure regarding **Yosemite schools** authorize the National Park Service to provide supplemental funding for three small schools in the Bass Lake Joint Union Elementary and Mariposa Unified School Districts, which are located in Yosemite Park. These schools have faced significant hardship in recent years and have had to cut down on educational services and faculty just to stay open.

**“The Yosemite schools bill is important because it would prevent some Yosemite students from having to be driven more than 45 miles to and from school each day. Children who live in Yosemite National Park should not suffer because they live in remote areas and lack access to larger public schools.”**

The measure to expand **Golden Gate National Recreation Area** (GGNRA) will add 4,500 acres of pristine natural land to GGNRA in San Mateo County including a 4,076 acre parcel known as the Rancho Corral de Tierra. The mountainous property, which surrounds the coastal towns of Moss Beach and Montara, was previously purchased by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST). The Trust has agreed to transfer the land to the Federal Government for about half of the purchase cost.

**“Expanding the Golden Gate National Recreation Area will protect the sweeping views of the San Mateo Coast and ensure the protection of rich farmland, several miles of public trails, and an incredible array of wildlife and vegetation.”**

The **Redwoods National Park** measure will add 25,500 acres of land known as the Mill Creek property to Redwood National Park in Del Norte County. In addition to the Mill Creek property, this bill would include within the park boundary about 900 acres of land acquired and added to the State redwood parks since the 1978 expansion of the Redwood National Park boundary. There would be no Federal costs for land acquisition or development resulting from this legislation.

**“The Mill Creek property was purchased in an historic effort to conserve the redwood forest, provide watershed protection, and protect wildlife habitats. Our redwood trees are treasures that need to be protected and preserved. These efforts will ensure that this forest is protected for future generations.”**

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