



Senate Passes Northern California Wilderness Legislation To Protect Over 270,000 Acres Of Wild Lands

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Area set to become California's largest wilderness designation in 10 years

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senators Barbara Boxer, Dianne Feinstein and Congressman Mike Thompson (all D-CA) today cheered Senate passage of the Northern California Coastal Wild Heritage Wilderness Act, legislation they championed that would designate over 273,000 acres in Northern California as wilderness.

Boxer said, **“Northern California’s natural beauty is an essential part of our state identity. From the Lost Coast to the majestic redwoods to the stunning wild rivers, people from around the world come to enjoy our scenic treasures. I am thrilled that Congress has acted to protect some of California’s great wild places for our children and grandchildren. We are almost over the finish line-- Californians should get ready to celebrate this wonderful news.”**

Feinstein said, **“Congress has placed its support behind the preservation of our nation's wildlife to prevent beautiful environmental jewels, like California's King Range, from disappearing. By protecting the wilderness along California's northern coast and providing public lands for recreational activity, this bill ensures that generations to come will enjoy the beautiful outdoors of California.”**

Congressman Mike Thompson (D-CA) said, **“This landmark vote to secure Northern California wilderness will reverberate for generations as millions of Americans have the opportunity to enjoy its unique beauty. Its passage marks a tremendous victory for conservationists, outdoor enthusiasts and all Americans who care for the outdoors. In addition, it will help protect the headwater streams essential to our salmon and steelhead populations, which are such critical components of our local economy.”**

The legislation would preserve 273,130 acres of existing public lands in Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino and Napa counties as wilderness. It would also designate twenty-one miles of Mendocino County’s Black Butte River as wild and scenic.

The bill will protect several significant wilderness areas, including:

- **King Range:** The King Range is the wildest portion of California’s coast and the longest stretch of undeveloped coastline in the continental United States.

- **Cache Creek:** The Cache Creek area is home to the second largest wintering bald eagle population in California, as well as a herd of rare Tule elk. It is popular with white water rafters for its rapids and scenery.
- **Middle Fork of the Eel River:** The Eel River hosts 30-50% of the state's endangered summer-run steelhead trout, which are critical to California's fishermen and tribes.

Boxer said, **“I would like to express my gratitude to Representative Thompson and to Senator Feinstein for their hard work, as well as the House Resources Committee and Senate Energy Committee for moving this legislation forward.”**

The House passed the legislation in July. It will now go to the President's desk for his signature.

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