



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

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March 18, 2025

Assemblymember Chris Rogers
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0002

Re: AB 263 (Scott River, Shasta River, Watersheds) SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Rogers,

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors strongly supports AB 263 (Rogers), which would allow the emergency regulations adopted by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) that are currently in place on the Scott and Shasta River Watersheds to remain in effect until permanent rules establishing and implementing long-term instream flow requirements are adopted.

Humboldt County has long relied on the fishing industry to support its local economy and we also acknowledge the historic inequitable management of our state's water system has discounted and ignored important tribal cultural and economic uses of water and dependence on healthy aquatic ecosystems. This bill is critical to protecting salmon populations in the Scott and Shasta Rivers and, in turn, protecting keystone environmental species and critical resources for tribes and the fishing industry.

Salmon are not only an ecologically vital keystone species, but they are also an essential resource and of cultural significance to Tribes in the Klamath River watershed, including the Yurok Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation, and Hoopa Valley Tribe. Salmon populations support tribal subsistence, as well as traditional and ceremonial practices. However, in recent years, weak salmon populations have forced Tribes to severely restrict or close subsistence, commercial, and ceremonial fisheries. Salmon are also important to commercial ocean fisheries, an industry that generates hundreds of million dollars each year in economic impact and provide for our local recreation and industry. Low levels of Chinook salmon in the Klamath River have resulted in commercial ocean fisheries closures—this year, salmon fishing was banned on the California coast, for only the second time in the history of the ocean salmon fishery, because of a major decline in fish populations after California's most dire three-year period on record (2020-22).

For the sake of our neighboring tribes, our local fishing community and the ecosystems of our north coast rivers, it is critical we ensure minimum instream flows remain on the Scott and Shasta Rivers and we therefore strongly support AB 263.

Sincerely,

Supervisor Michelle Bushnell, Chair
Humboldt County Board of Supervisors