

NCTCA

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA TRIBAL CHAIRPERSON'S ASSOCIATION

March 18, 2025



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



Blue Lake Rancheria



Elk Valley Rancheria



Hoopa Valley Tribe



Karuk Tribe



Redding Rancheria



Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation

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

Dear Assemblymember Rogers,

The Northern California Tribal Chairman's Association (NCTCA) writes in strong support of 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.

The Northern California Tribal Chairperson's Association is a growing intertribal consortium that coordinates the activities of several tribes in the Northern California area on issues of mutual interest. The area of jurisdiction is bound and defined by the Bureau of Indian Affairs Northern California Agency. The current NCTCA Member Tribes are: Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, Big Lagoon Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria, Elk Valley Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Pitt River Tribe, Pulikla Tribe of Yurok People, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation, Redding Rancheria, Susanville Rancheria, Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, Trinidad Rancheria, Wiyot Tribe, and Yurok Tribe.

NCTCA is an association of Tribal Leaders collaborating, promoting, improving, and advocating for tribal sovereignty issues concerning Federally Recognized Tribe throughout Northern California. We have stood strong in our mission to protect natural and cultural resource, health and wellness of Native people, education, and economic development for Tribal Nations. NCTCA also works on other priorities identified by individual Member Tribes and Regional Associations that have been approved by the NCTCA as a common objective. The NCTCA is organized as a tribal resource and recognized as a central point for the issues in Northern California.

As Tribal Leaders, we recognize that California's water rights system, based on the "first in time, first in right" principle, has historically disregarded the true first inhabitants of this land and original water users, California Native Americans. This purposeful oversight, coupled with state-sponsored actions that removed Native Americans from their lands and their waters has systematically excluded Tribal Nations from crucial decision-making processes concerning our state's waterways.



Wiyot Tribe



Quartz Valley



Pulikla Tribe of Yurok People



Susanville Rancheria



Big Lagoon Rancheria



Pitt River Tribe

Salmon are an essential resource of cultural significance to all Tribes in Northern California including those in the Klamath River watershed, particularly to our member tribes such as the Pulikla Tribe of Yurok People, the Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria, the Yurok Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation, Big Lagoon Rancheria 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.

The Scott and Shasta Rivers are important tributaries to the Klamath River, the second largest river in California, and are critical spawning grounds for salmon. Without immediate efforts to address low water flows, salmon populations that rely on the Scott and Shasta Rivers are at risk of extinction. Our Traditional Ecological Knowledge teaches us that we as native people are directly connected to the world around and salmon are the keystone species to our survival as humans being here on Earth. It is with great urgency that we ask our partners at the state of California to do what is necessary to ensure minimum instream flows remain on the Scott and Shasta Rivers and therefore we strongly support AB 263. Thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,



Garth Sundberg

NCTCA Chairman