



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

DARCIE ANTLE
CLERK OF THE BOARD

501 Low Gap Rd. Room 1010
Ukiah, CA 95482

Email: bos@mendocinocounty.gov
Website: www.mendocinocounty.gov

Office: (707) 463-4221
Fax: (707) 463-5649

March 11, 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 Mendocino 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.

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

Salmon are not only an ecologically vital keystone species, but they are also an essential resource 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 crucial to commercial ocean fisheries, an industry that generates hundreds of millions of dollars each year in economic impact and supports local recreation and industry. Low levels of Chinook salmon in the Klamath River have resulted in commercial ocean fishery closures—this year, salmon fishing was banned along the California coast for only the second time in the history of the ocean salmon fishery due to a major decline in fish populations following California's most severe three-year drought on record (2020–2022).

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

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MADLINE CLINE
First District

MAUREEN MULHEREN
Second District

JOHN HASCHAK
Third District

BERNIE NORVELL
Fourth District

TED WILLIAMS
Fifth District