



February 11, 2020

Members of the U.S. House of Representatives

Re: Please vote YES on H.R. 2546, Protecting America's Wilderness Act

Dear Members of the U.S. House of Representatives:

On behalf of Trout Unlimited and our 300,000 members and supporters across the country, including 10,000 members in California, we write in support of H.R.2546, the Protecting America's Wilderness Act, and urge you to VOTE YES in support of this legislation when it comes to the floor for a vote.

In particular, Trout Unlimited supports the following components of this bill:

- Title II, the Northwest California Wilderness, Recreation and Working Forests Act (H.R. 2250) would address some of the primary current threats to the world-class fishing and hunting opportunities in northwest California, including the increase in uncharacteristically severe wildfire, threats to water quality and habitat from illegal marijuana cultivation, and the need for new and improved recreational infrastructure. This legislation will help protect and restore some of the most famous steelhead and salmon fisheries in the world, including the Trinity, Eel, Mad and Mattole Rivers, as well as some of the best blacktail deer hunting grounds in California, through a combination of new land and water designations and landscape restoration and wildfire threat reduction activities.
- Title III, the Central Coast Heritage Protection Act (H.R.2199) would confer federal Wild and Scenic River designation on 159 miles of central coast streams and encourage the development of new and repair of existing recreation infrastructure. Wild and Scenic River designation will help conserve coldwater habitats and fishing opportunities in a semi-arid region where the lower portions of coastal watersheds often dry back in the summer and where there are few coldwater fishing opportunities. Sespe and Piru Creeks in the Los Padres National Forest, in particular, would benefit from Wild and Scenic River designation—these creeks are two of only three state-designated Wild Trout streams in southern California and Sespe Creek supports a population of southern steelhead – one of the few remaining between Santa Maria and San Diego.
- Title IV, the San Gabriel Mountains Foothills and Rivers Protection Act (H.R.2215) would designate as Wild and Scenic River nearly 26 miles of the north, west, and east forks of the San Gabriel River. The upper reaches of the San Gabriel River harbor wild trout with remnant southern steelhead genetics—the southern steelhead is one of the rarest native fishes in California and is presently listed as Endangered under the ESA. Moreover, WSR designation ensures that fishing will remain a recognized use of these resources and will better conserve the habitat values that are the basis for the coldwater angling opportunities found here (in a region with few such opportunities).

TU has worked for many years with local sportsmen and women and sporting businesses to help shape these bills so they provide meaningful benefits for fish and wildlife and for hunters and anglers.

Among the dozens of other sportsmen's organizations and businesses that also support one or all of these bills are the California Council of Trout Unlimited, all of TU's twelve local chapters in California, the Southwest and Northern California Councils of Fly Fishers International, California Trout, the Fly Shop, Lost Coast Outfitters, Clearwater Lodge on the Pit River, and the Fisherman's Spot.

We encourage members to vote YES in support of H.R. 2546, the Protecting America's Wilderness Act.

Thank you for considering our views on this legislation. For questions, please contact:

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