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**Contact:** Stefanie Lao, [stefanie@fcpcommunications.com](mailto:stefanie@fcpcommunications.com), (818) 261-6871

**Power in Nature Coalition Urges Governor to Sign AB 2494**

*Legislation would add 85,000 acres to the State's 30x30 commitment*

**SACRAMENTO, CA** — The Power In Nature coalition today highlighted statewide support for [AB 2494](#) and urged the Governor to sign the bill. AB 2494 would improve the management of roughly 85,000 acres of state-owned Demonstration Forests. It would remove a mandate that these places be commercially logged and instead direct that forests be managed for biodiversity, carbon storage and sequestration, recreation, research, and tribal co-management.

With these changes, California would also add 85,000 acres to its goal of protecting 30 percent of the state's lands and coastal waters by 2030. In 2020, Governor Newsom committed California to the 30x30 goal, and in 2023, that goal became state law. Scientists worldwide agree that to protect life as we know it, we must conserve at least 30% of the Earth's lands and coastal waters by 2030.

"AB 2494 will protect 85,000 acres of forest in California, helping us to meet the critical goal of protecting 30% of our lands and coastal waters by 2030," said **Sandra Sanchez, Executive Director of Power in Nature**. "With the federal government rolling back so many environmental protections, it's critical that California stand up to protect our forests."

Tribes and tribal organizations, including the Intertribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council, Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Redwood Valley Little River Band of Pomo Indians, Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians, Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, The Noyo Bida Truth Project, Tribal EcoRestoration Alliance, Native Health in Native Hands, the Indigenous Justice Coalition, and the Tribal Chairpersons' Association have all called on Governor Newsom to sign AB 2494 into law.

In a [letter to the Governor](#), the above tribes and tribal organizations highlight that AB 2494 would strengthen tribal sovereignty, honor cultural heritage, and improve ecological outcomes across the state. Critically, the bill provides a clear pathway for co-governance agreements with local

tribes and requires the integration of local indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge into the management practices of Demonstration State Forests. It also directs investment in research on tribal stewardship, treating indigenous knowledge not as an afterthought but as a subject worthy of sustained investment.

“Our hope is Governor Newsom chooses a path forward for Demonstration Forest systems inclusive of Tribal co-management and surveys, meaningful consultation and conservation plans,” said **Nikcole Whipple of the Round Valley Indian Tribes**. “The Pomo and Yuki occupied and stewarded what is now known as the Jackson State Demonstration Forest in Mendocino County since time immemorial. The land yearns for the guidance learned over millennia that we call ‘traditional ecological knowledge’ from the Yuki and Northern Pomo.”

There are 14 Demonstration State Forests in California. The largest of these is Jackson Demonstration State Forest in Mendocino County at 48,652 acres.

“The Governor has an opportunity to show the rest of the nation that while the federal administration refuses to defend our precious landscapes, California will keep moving forward in protecting our forests and advancing tribal co-management of sacred places.” said **Melodie Meyer of EPIC**, the organization sponsoring AB 2494.

In addition to EPIC, there are 57 non-governmental organizations in support of the bill. September 30, 2026 is the deadline for the Governor to sign or veto bills sent him by the legislature, including AB 2494.

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### **About the Power in Nature Coalition**

Power in Nature is a statewide coalition of over 500 community groups, environmental and conservation organizations, land trusts, indigenous organizations, and tribal members dedicated to advancing California’s 30x30 commitment. The Power in Nature coalition has identified nearly 100 potential 30x30 projects across the state and works on a broad range of issues, including biodiversity protection, climate resilience, equity, recreation, outdoor access, and social justice. For more information, visit [PowerInNature.org](https://PowerInNature.org).