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Assembly California Legislature

**JIM WOOD**

ASSEMBLYMEMBER, SECOND DISTRICT

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September 11, 2023

Rebecca Fris, Interim Executive Director
Wildlife Conservation Board
PO Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244

Amy Hutzel, Executive Officer
State Coastal Conservancy
1515 Clay St., 10th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Letter of Support for Eel River Canyon Acquisition Project

Dear Ms. Fris and Ms. Hutzel,

I am pleased to write this letter of support for The Wildlands Conservancy's conservation acquisition and permanent stewardship of the final phase of the Lone Pine Ranch in Trinity County along the Wild and Scenic Eel River and the future Great Redwood Trail. This land will be added to and managed as part of the Conservancy's 18,575-acre Eel River Canyon Preserve. Wildlands' efforts to protect this beautiful landscape will benefit Californians, local communities, and visitors by protecting natural resources and providing free access for passive recreation and interpretive activities.

The acquisition aligns closely with State of California's 30x30 priorities by protecting forests through active restoration and wildfire resiliency management techniques. Carbon sequestration in trees and the property's many wetlands is estimated to secure thousands of metric tons of carbon. Additionally, the expansion of landscape linkages and wildlife corridors will benefit wildlife like Roosevelt elk. Finally, the acquisition will provide opportunities to hike, paddle, and camp along the Great Redwood Trail and the Eel River, helping to diversify the region's economy.

Ninety percent of the Eel River's main stem, along the 150-mile stretch between Cape Horn Dam and the Pacific Ocean, is in unprotected private ownership. This project will provide a new access at Kekawaka Creek along the Eel River Canyon for members of the general public, local communities, and organized groups, building a new constituency that cherishes this national treasure. Acquisition of the final phase of the Lone Pine Ranch is a once-in-a-generation opportunity and will help renew public interest in conservation along the majestic Eel River Canyon.

Respectfully,

JIM WOODAssemblymember, 2nd District