

Once in a Lifetime

This public lands act is a must pass



Advance planning In 2013, the Southern California Wilderness Coalition came to the Sierra Club’s Santa Lucia Chapter leaders (right) for help in identifying the best potential candidate areas in SLO County (including the Mt. Portero Wilderness, left) for inclusion or expansion in what became the [Central Coast Heritage Protection Act](#).

On February 26, the Protecting America’s Wilderness and Public Lands Act was passed in the House of Representatives.

This news – in addition to being enormously important to everyone who cares about the protection of public lands, threatened species, and their habitat nationwide – is of particular interest to citizens of the Central Coast. That’s because the Act consists of multiple bills protecting the Grand Canyon and public lands and rivers across California, Colorado, and Washington, and one of those bills is Rep. Salud Carbajal’s [Central Coast Heritage Protection Act](#), which focuses on Los Padres National Forest and the Carrizo Plain.

“One of the best things about living on the Central Coast is our access to beautiful public lands, like the Carrizo Plain National Monument and Los Padres National Forest,” said Rep. Carbajal. “The Central Coast Heritage Protection Act will help preserve these public lands for future generations to enjoy and continue to bolster our local economy.”

If passed by the Senate and signed into law by President Biden, the CCHPA will protect 290,000 acres as new Wilderness or Potential Wilderness, two new National Scenic Areas covering 35,000 acres, establish the 400-mile Condor Trail, and secure Wild and Scenic River status for 159 miles of streams – all levels of protection from industrial and extractive activities far greater than what these areas have now. [This interactive map](#) by Los Padres Forest Watch should give you some idea of the scope of the bill.

Needless to say, the Feb. 26 vote by the House was the result of years of effort [and coalition work](#) across Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties, involving business leaders, conservationists, elected officials, ranchers, mountain bikers, and other stakeholders. Rep. Carbajal introduced the current bill and [tenaciously kept it alive](#) during a hostile political era, when the proposed legislation passed the house twice but failed in the Senate.

Those who killed it then were the usual Republican lawmakers who wish to secure an endless future for rampant logging and resource extraction despite all the evidence that this is not sustainable and is amplifying the impacts of the climate crisis. They are now a bare minority. The package is strongly supported by the Biden Administration and would help meet state and federal goals to conserve 30% of public lands and waters by 2030 – aka [“30x30.”](#)

Rep. Salud Carbajal spoke for the CCHPA on the House Floor, Feb. 26, 2021. (Download the video [here.](#))



TAKE ACTION

Thank our Senate champions and urge them to do all they can to persuade their colleagues to vote for the Senate version of this historic public lands act!

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
Phone: (202) 224-3841

Senator Alex Padilla
B03 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510
Phone: (202) 224-3553

On Twitter:
Sen. Dianne Feinstein: @SenFeinstein
Sen. Alex Padilla: @SenAlexPadilla

Hashtags:
[#ProtectCAPublicLands](#)
[#CentralCoastWild](#)
[#Protect30x30](#)