

Outline of HR 2250 with commentary

Title I—Restoration and Economic Development

Section 101: South Fork Trinity/Mad River Restoration Area

This element of the bill is meant to promote fuel reduction and forest and woodland restoration on 729,000 acres of public lands in southern Trinity and western Humboldt counties. Within this area, the ecological health of previously logged forests will be improved and the danger of unnaturally severe fires will be reduced through a careful program of individual tree-cutting, especially along roads, near private land and in “plantations” (areas that were replanted following clearcut logging or fires). Fuel reduction will be accomplished primarily through the establishment of 300-foot wide “shaded fuel breaks,” areas where the trees have been carefully thinned to reduce the chance of a fire racing from the crown of one tree to another. These shaded fuelbreaks will follow the thousands of miles of road that run through the proposed Restoration Area. Proceeds from the sale of the trees will be returned to fund additional restoration in the Restoration Area, including steps to improve habitat for endangered salmon and steelhead trout.

The approach to management in the proposed Restoration Area reflects the collective vision of many members of the Trinity County Collaborative, a group of conservationists, representatives of the timber industry, local elected officials, local landowners and others who work to find common ground on the management of Trinity County’s public lands. HR 2250 streamlines environmental reviews for collaboratively developed projects. The reason for this is that any project approved by the collaborative will, as a result of their vigorous involvement, be either beneficial or of minimal environmental impact. The provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act remain fully in force.

The proposed Restoration Area presents an exciting opportunity to reduce fire-severity in strategic locations while restoring habitat and creating local jobs.

Section 102: Redwood National and State Parks Restoration

The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to undertake initiatives to restore degraded redwood forest ecosystems in Redwood National and State Parks in partnership with the State of California, local agencies, and nongovernmental organizations. Restoration of these forest ecosystems will hasten the return of healthy old-growth forests, while providing jobs in local communities and enhancing native habitat for numerous plant and animal species.

Section 103: Northwest California Public Lands Remediation Partnership

Marijuana cultivation on federal public lands is a very serious problem. Hundreds of abandoned grow sites exist on our public lands. These sites are littered with garbage, toxic waste and the

corpses of poisoned animals. The Northwest California Public Lands Remediation Partnership is established to help clean up these illegal marijuana growing sites on northwest California's federal public lands. The Partnership will coordinate cleanup, prioritize specific areas for restoration, and secure resources from state, federal or other sources for restoration.

Section 104: Trinity Lake Visitor Center

A visitor center is authorized for construction in Weaverville. The purpose of the visitor center is to help the public discover the public lands of the Shasta-Trinity region.

Section 105: Del Norte County Visitor Center

A visitor center is authorized for construction in Crescent City. The purpose of the visitor center is to help the public discover the public lands of the Del Norte County region.

Section 106: Comprehensive management plans

Requires land managers to create comprehensive fire management plans for the wilderness areas and wilderness additions designated by HR 2250. This will require wilderness areas that are managed by multiple agencies to have a single, unified fire management approach. For example, the Trinity Alps Wilderness is managed by the Klamath National Forest, Redding BLM, Six Rivers National Forest and Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Under HR 2250, these four agencies will have to prepare a single, unified fire management plan for the Trinity Alps.

Section 107: Study, partnerships related to overnight accommodations

The Secretary of the Interior shall conduct a study to evaluate the feasibility and suitability of establishing overnight accommodations on federal land at the southern and northern boundaries or on land within 20 miles of the southern and northern boundaries of Redwood National and State parks in consultation with interested Federal, State, Tribal, and local entities, and private and nonprofit organizations.

The purpose of this provision is to provide for the need for more affordable lodging near Redwood National and State Parks.

Title II--Recreation

Section 201: Horse Mountain Special Management Area

Establishes a 7,399-acre Horse Mountain Special Management Area. The proposed SMA is in Humboldt County in the Six Rivers National Forest roughly 10 miles west of Willow Creek and just south of Highway 299. Horse Mountain is well known in Humboldt County as being one of the few places offering winter snow play. For generations, families have gone to Horse Mountain for rare opportunities to sled, ski, build snowmen, etc. Horse Mountain is also a haven for rare plants because of its unusual serpentine soils. HR 2250 will protect Horse

Mountain for a multitude of uses, including snow play, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, botanizing, birdwatching and scenic driving, among other activities. Horse Mountain has communication towers on its peak that will remain unaffected by the bill. The proposal to protect the area was brought to Congressman Huffman by the Humboldt Chapter of the International Mountain Biking Association.

Section 202: Bigfoot National Recreation Trail:

HR 2250 gives land managers 3 years to study the feasibility of establishing a “Bigfoot National Recreation Trail.” The proposed trail would run for 360 miles from the Mendocino National Forest in the south to Redwood National Park in the north.

While the name is supposed to be funny, the purpose of the trail is serious: to provide for a long-distance hiking and horseback riding opportunity that also highlights the amazing ecological and social values of the Klamath and Siskiyou mountains.

Many of the places that would be accessed by the proposed trail, such as southern Trinity County, have an abundance of public lands but few trails. The Bigfoot Trail will help to meet this need for public access.

Section 203: Elk Camp Ridge Recreation Trail

HR 2250 upgrades the status of an existing trail in the Six Rivers National Forest’s Smith River National Recreation Area and ensures that it remains open to hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikes and motorcycles. The point of giving the trail a special designation is to help get more resources to maintain it. Also, by giving the trail a special status, it will attract more visitors to this little-used part of the Smith River National Recreation Area.

Section 204: Trinity Lake Trail

HR 2250 gives land managers 18 months to study the feasibility and public interest in building a trail for hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking around Trinity Lake in Trinity County’s Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Construction is authorized if it is determined that building the trail is feasible and in the public interest. The trail could be a real draw for tourism in Trinity County. This is just one of over 295 miles of trails authorized by HR 2250.

Section 205: Trails Study

Land managers are given 2 years to study options for improving access to trails in non-wilderness areas in northwestern California for hikers, horseback riders, mountain bikers and off-highway vehicle enthusiasts. The Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service must work together on the study. Advocates hope that the trail study will help to highlight trail needs and serve as something of a blueprint for further action such as seeking appropriations, recruiting volunteers, etc. This study is in addition to the over 295 miles of new trails authorized by HR 2250.

Section 206: Construction of mountain bicycling routes

HR 2250 gives land managers 18 months to study the feasibility and degree of public interest involved in building a multitude of cycling, horseback riding and hiking trails in 5 clusters within the existing Smith River National Recreation Area. If construction of one or more trails is deemed to be in the public interest, land managers are authorized (but not required) to build them. If these trails are constructed, they could become a major tourism draw. This has been the case for high-quality, purpose-built mountain bike trails constructed elsewhere in northwestern California. These trails are among the more than 295 miles of trails authorized by HR 2250.

Section 207: Partnerships

HR 2250 ensures that federal land managers can partner with qualified organizations to help maintain trails and campgrounds, staff visitor centers and to conduct public education and outreach. At a time of scarce funding, such partnerships are essential. Rep. Huffman included this concept in the bill because it was raised by a constituent at a public hearing about the bill in Mendocino County.

Title III—Conservation

Section 301: Designation of wilderness

HR 2250 designates 261,889 acres of land as “wilderness.” Wilderness is the strongest protection available for federal land under federal conservation law. Once an area is designated as wilderness, all development such as logging, road construction, energy extraction, etc are prohibited while hiking, horseback riding, camping, and other non-motorized activities are allowed. Fire-suppression is also allowed in wilderness, including the use of bulldozers and aircraft if necessary. The proposed wilderness areas included in HR 2250 do not currently have any roads in them, so closing the areas to motorized vehicles is simply a recognition of the current reality, not a denial of public access.

All the opposition to the proposed wilderness areas has been general and philosophical in nature. There has been no opposition based upon a genuine grievance. The proposed wilderness areas have suffered no site-specific opposition in part because they are already de facto wilderness. That means that they are *currently* both wild and undeveloped and used exclusively for hiking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing and other wilderness-compatible activities. Other activities, such as off-road vehicle use, are either illegal, rare, or both. Opportunities for serious opposition have been further reduced by excluding all the following from the draft wilderness boundaries:

- Roads and trails that are legally open to motorized vehicles;

- Communication sites;
- Campgrounds (at least those used for car-camping);
- Gas, mining and oil leases;
- Authorized rights-of-way, especially for telephone lines, powerlines, gas lines, water diversions, sediment disposal sites or any other utilities or public works projects;
- Dams or water diversions;
- Fire lookouts;
- Trails that are *both* legally open to and popular with mountain bikers;
- Public lands that are adjacent to heavily developed areas of private property;
- Public lands that are within 300' of any legally-open roads in order to allow for aggressive roadside fuel reduction and fire-suppression efforts;
- Public lands that are within 300' of any utility, especially powerlines, in order to allow room for maintenance and vegetation-clearing for fire-safety; and
- Areas that have been heavily disturbed in the past by development, including logging.

The following is a list of the proposed wilderness areas, along with a summary of the reasons for protecting them.

- **Black Butte River Wilderness (11,117 acres):** In Mendocino County in the Mendocino National Forest. The Black Butte Wild and Scenic River offers important habitat for endangered steelhead trout. The area contains outstanding oak woodlands and native grasslands. The Black Butte offers outstanding whitewater boating opportunities. The Forest Service notes that the area is of “exceptional” cultural importance to Native Americans.
- **Chanchelulla Wilderness Additions (6,212 acres):** In Trinity County in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Offers outstanding views as far as Mount Shasta, old-growth forests, limestone caves, rare plants and roaring Hayfork Creek. Hayfork Creek offers a very challenging whitewater boating run that has been rated as class III-V by American Whitewater. Hayfork Creek also hosts endangered salmon and steelhead.
- **Chinquapin Wilderness (26,890 acres):** In Trinity County in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Contains the largest, most intact groves of unprotected ancient forest in California. Part of the largest and densest populations of northern spotted owls and goshawks in the Trinity side of the two million-acre Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Coho and Chinook salmon and steelhead trout also live in the South Fork Trinity Proposed Wild and Scenic River which bisects the area. The popular South Fork National Recreation Trail also passes through Chinquapin, following the river and offering excellent fishing, swimming, hiking, and horseback riding opportunities. The trail is excluded from the proposed wilderness to allow for mountain biking use.
- **English Ridge Wilderness (6,204 acres):** In Mendocino County and managed by the Arcata Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management. Rich ancient forests, meadows

and oak woodlands. The Wild and Scenic Eel River flows through the area. The Eel and its tributaries Fish Creek and Indian Creek offer important salmon and steelhead habitat.

- **Headwaters Forest Wilderness (4,360 acres):** In Humboldt County and managed by the Arcata Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management. Activists waged a long battle to preserve this once privately-owned grove of stately old-growth coast redwoods. The area hosts 12 threatened and endangered species, and it is particularly important for the continued viability of marbled murrelet populations in the region. There are very few redwood forests in the National Wilderness Preservation System.
- **Mad River Buttes Wilderness (6,002 acres):** In Humboldt County in the Six Rivers National Forest. The area is the closest proposed wilderness to the Humboldt Bay Area. Outstanding old-growth forest, wildflower-dappled meadows and other varied habitat. Mad River Buttes is the headwaters of Redwood Creek, a major stream that flows through Redwood National Park.
- **Mount Lassic Wilderness Additions (1,292 acres):** In Trinity County in the Six Rivers National Forest. Unusual soils make this area fascinating to botanists, and six rare plant species have been identified in the region.
- **North Fork Eel Wilderness Additions (17,182 acres):** In Trinity County in the Six Rivers National Forest and the Arcata Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management. The proposed additions shelter important low-elevation old-growth forest as well as wildflower-dappled grasslands, oak woodlands and chaparral. The area is known to be used by peregrine falcons, the world's fastest bird. The North Fork Eel provides habitat for coho salmon and steelhead trout in its rugged and beautiful canyon and challenging whitewater opportunities for experienced kayakers and rafters.
- **Pattison Wilderness (28,595 acres):** In Trinity County in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Hayfork Creek flows through the proposed wilderness and offers a very challenging whitewater boating run that has been rated as class III-V by American Whitewater. Hayfork Creek also hosts endangered salmon and steelhead. The U.S. Forest Service has recommended Hayfork Creek for Wild and Scenic River protection to preserve its outstanding fishery and scenic values. Young wilderness enthusiasts from the Bar 717 Ranch hike, ride horses, and camp in the Pattison area and frequent the many swimming holes in Hayfork Creek.
- **Sanhedrin Wilderness Additions (112 acres):** In Mendocino County in the Mendocino National Forest. Sanhedrin Mountain is noted for its rare plant habitat, old-growth forests and outstanding views in all directions.
- **Siskiyou Wilderness Additions (27,747 acres):** In Del Norte County in the Six Rivers and Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest. Most of the proposed additions are in the Smith River watershed. The Smith is California's only undammed river and it hosts one of the "best salmon and steelhead fisheries on the west coast" according to the Six Rivers National Forest. Ancient forests consist of an amazing fourteen species of conifers, the

second greatest conifer diversity in the world. The popular South Kelsey National Recreation Trail passes through the proposed additions.

- **South Fork Eel River Wilderness Addition (313 acres):** In Mendocino County and managed by the Arcata Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management. The area is a haven for rare plants, including 4 species that grow nowhere else on Earth.
- **South Fork Trinity River Wilderness (26,446 acres):** In Trinity County in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The Wild and Scenic South Fork Trinity River is the centerpiece of the area. The stream hosts endangered populations of salmon and steelhead. The area also includes important old-growth forest habitat and oak woodlands. Plummer Creek, a major tributary of the South Fork, hosts a native steelhead run and provides the Trinity with a valuable source of cool water. The river provides whitewater rafters and kayakers with challenging spring runs and the swimmer refreshing pools for swimming. One of the world's largest ponderosa pines is in the area: the tree is 240 feet tall and 8 feet wide.
- **Trinity Alps Wilderness Additions (62,695 acres):** In Trinity County in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The higher portions of the Trinity Alps are already protected as wilderness, but many of the lower slopes, including much of the region's old-growth and oak woodlands, remain outside of the wilderness. The proposed additions are therefore composed of the rugged, heavily forested low-elevation country that would complement the adjacent highlands of the Trinity Alps Wilderness if protected. The Wild and Scenic New River, Canyon Creek Proposed Wild and Scenic River and other streams that flow out of the proposed additions provide cold, clear water essential for the survival of endangered steelhead trout and coho and Chinook salmon populations in the Trinity River. The proposed additions are an extremely important refuge for unique and endangered species, including nine rare plants. The New River offers challenging whitewater for boaters who are brave enough to negotiate its narrow gorge filled with deep troughs and house-sized boulders.
- **Underwood Wilderness (15,127 acres):** In Humboldt and Trinity counties in the Six Rivers National Forest and the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Located along the canyon of the South Fork Trinity Wild and Scenic River, the proposed wilderness hosts fall-run Chinook salmon, coho salmon and steelhead trout. The South Fork Trail follows the river for some 5 miles through the proposed wilderness. The hike offers great wildflower views in spring and access to swimming holes in the summer. South Fork Mountain, which forms the western boundary of the proposed wilderness, is notable for being the longest ridge in the western hemisphere.
- **Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness Additions (10,729 acres):** In Mendocino and Trinity counties and managed by the Arcata Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management, Mendocino National Forest, Six Rivers National Forest and Shasta-Trinity National Forest. The western portion has extensive grasslands and oak woodlands providing important deer wintering habitat. Abundant old-growth forest exists in the Black Rock

Mountain area. Black Rock serves as the headwaters of the South Fork Trinity River. Several popular trails pass through the proposed wilderness additions.

- **Yuki Wilderness Additions (10,866 acres):** In Mendocino County in lands managed by the Arcata Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management and the Mendocino National Forest. The area contains the world's largest grove of the rare Sargent cypress. Seven rare plant species grow in the area, and at least one botanist who has explored the area believes that it may have previously undescribed plant species. Endangered runs of summer steelhead, winter steelhead, and chinook salmon migrate up the Wild and Scenic Middle Fork Eel River. It is estimated that the Middle Fork Eel hosts over one-third of California's entire remaining summer-run steelhead trout population.

Section 302: Administration of wilderness

States that:

- Land managers can suppress fire in wilderness using all the tools available to them outside of wilderness areas.
- Authority to use bulldozers and other heavy equipment can be delegated to local land managers.
- Livestock grazing can continue where it was being allowed at the time the wilderness areas were designated
- Wilderness areas do not have buffer zones—the protections afforded by the Wilderness Act end at the boundary of a designated wilderness. The presence of wilderness next door should not impact the management of adjacent private, local, state or federal lands.
- Native Americans have the right to use the wilderness areas for cultural purposes, including working with land managers to temporarily close the areas for ceremonies.
- Horses are allowed in wilderness. They already are allowed in wilderness, but this language reassures equestrians.
- Competitive horseback riding events can still be held in the Chinquapin Wilderness. This language is simply meant to reassure the organizers of an annual riding event that they can still use the trails in the area.
- Rock climbing, including the use of fixed anchors, is allowed in wilderness.

Section 303: Designation of potential wilderness

HR 2250 designates two kinds of wilderness areas: conventional wilderness (the areas listed in Section 301) and “potential wilderness.” Both kinds of wilderness are managed the same way for the most part. The difference is that conventional wilderness areas are completely unlogged, unroaded and undeveloped—as close to “undisturbed” as is possible—while “potential wilderness areas” have experienced some limited degree of disturbance and thus require a period of recovery (or even active restoration) before they can become conventional wilderness. It may be helpful to think of potential wilderness as a “two-step wilderness”: Step

one is restoration, Step two is graduation to conventional wilderness. The dividing line is old roads: If an area has old roads that are now closed to the public, it is proposed as potential wilderness. If an area has never had a road in it, then it is proposed as conventional wilderness in HR 2250.

Except for Redwood National Park which is a special case (see below), the potential wilderness areas in HR 2250 have only experienced some *small degree* of past logging and road construction. They usually still contain substantial old-growth forest or other highly valuable habitat and features. Typically, only about 20-30% of the potential wilderness acreage has been disturbed by logging and road construction. These disturbances usually occurred decades ago. The areas also do not contain any roads that are legally open to the public. However, they often contain old, abandoned roads that may need to be stabilized. For example, if the old roads have culverts, it may be wise to remove the culverts in a potential wilderness area before allowing the road to “go back to nature.” The reason for this is that a culvert could become clogged, cause the old road to fail, and then a landslide could occur that could harm important fish habitat. Except for Redwood National Park, land managers are given 10 years from the date of HR 2250 becoming law to conduct restoration activities. It is possible, after an assessment, that no active restoration will be necessary.

The National Park Service is *not* given a time-limit to restore Redwood National Park Potential Wilderness. The NPS can take as long as it needs to “graduate” RNP to a conventional wilderness. The reason for this is that about 80% of RNP was logged and roaded, while in most potential wilderness areas the land is at most 30% disturbed. The National Park Service has a very active program of removing old roads, thinning young trees, burning and other efforts to restore a more “wilderness” condition at RNP. This work will take decades, so no time limit is given to accomplish the work in HR 2250.

HR 2250 includes 51,288 acres of proposed potential wilderness. The following is a list of the potential wilderness areas designated by HR 2250 and the reasons they are being proposed.

- **Chinquapin Potential Wilderness (4,238 acres):** See Section 301 for more information on Chinquapin. The “pristine” portion of the Chinquapin Proposed Wilderness becomes quite narrow at some points. The potential wilderness areas in this case are proposed to give the Chinquapin Wilderness wider, more defensible and more manageable boundaries. The potential wilderness will also provide more protection for the South Fork Trinity River and protect meadows and the old-growth. A few of the “closed” roads in the proposed potential wilderness are still being used for wildlife surveys and other needs and are not gated and are thus being used by the public. The boundaries drawn in HR 2250 assume that the Forest Service will indeed effectively close these roads at some point, as they are closed on paper.

- Redwood National Park (31,000 acres):** In Humboldt County and managed by the National Park Service. Despite their iconic nature and worldwide fame, there are very few coast redwoods in the National Wilderness Preservation System. Establishing wilderness areas in RNP and Headwaters Forest Reserve would address this deficiency. Unfortunately, much of the proposed wilderness in RNP was logged—as much as 90%. That is why the area is a potential wilderness that requires restoration before it can become conventional wilderness. However, there are some amazing pockets of remaining giant trees. For example, the proposed potential wilderness includes Hyperion, the world’s tallest tree at 379.1 feet. The old roads used for restoration (but closed to public vehicles) have been excluded from the proposed potential wilderness. While this gives the proposed potential wilderness an unconventional appearance with numerous tentacles of roads running through the area, it is expected that as restoration is completed, the roads will slowly be converted to trails and included in the wilderness. It is important to note that many wilderness areas, particularly those on the East Coast, were also heavily logged, roaded and even settled by farmers at one time. Given decades to recover, they are now among the jewels of the National Wilderness Preservation System. We expect the same from RNP potential wilderness.
- Siskiyou Wilderness Additions (8,961 acres):** See Section 301 for more information on Siskiyou. The potential wilderness is composed of 2 pieces: Dunn Creek and Buck Creek.

 - 1)** The Dunn Creek piece encompasses the Dunn Creek watershed. Dunn Creek flows north into the East Fork Illinois River. The Illinois River is one of Oregon’s most important fisheries. According to the BLM, the “Illinois River watershed is believed to be *the* stronghold for wild anadromous fish populations in the Rogue Basin.” The agency further concludes that, “The most important tributary to the East Fork Illinois River is the seven-mile long Dunn Creek which lies entirely in California.” Fish species present in the watershed include fall-run chinook salmon, coho salmon, winter steelhead, rainbow trout, cutthroat trout, Pacific lamprey and sculpin. In addition to offering outstanding fish habitat, the proposed potential wilderness contains abundant ancient forest that is not covered by any significant protections such as the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. The Dunn Creek watershed is known to host the unusual Alaska yellow cedar, Brewer’s spruce and Port Orford cedar, all “Ice Age relics” in a time of climate change. These diverse forests host a long list of rare and uncommon plants, including the endangered McDonald’s rockcress. Roughly 20% of the proposed potential wilderness has been clearcut and roaded. Most of these impacts are in the southeast portion of the area, where it connects to the existing Siskiyou Wilderness. The logging most likely occurred in the mid-1980s. It struck conservationists as unfortunate that such an otherwise wild landscape—and a watershed of such importance—should be severed from the Siskiyou Wilderness by a few recovering clearcuts and roads that have been closed to vehicle use. The area is still overwhelmingly wild in appearance, and this will be even more true as time passes.
 - 2)** The Buck Creek Wild and Scenic River provides a heavy flow of cold water year-around to the South Fork Smith Wild and Scenic River. Salmon and steelhead, sensitive to warm water, can often be seen schooling at the mouth of Buck Creek where it creates a temperature

refuge. Buck Creek is crossed by the South Kelsey National Recreation Trail. The stream offers ice-cold water and outstanding swimming holes for visitors. The Buck Creek Shelter is a well-known camp nearby. Most of the Buck Creek watershed is roadless and has never been logged. None of the Buck Creek watershed is included in the Siskiyou Wilderness, though it is adjacent to the wilderness, most of it is roadless and it is accessed by a popular wilderness trail. This proposal and our conventional wilderness proposal in the watershed would remedy this deficiency. The proposed potential wilderness is roughly 80% old-growth forest. All the roads in the area have been closed.

- **South Fork Trinity River Wilderness (405 acres):** See Section 301 for more information on South Fork Trinity. Important old-growth forests and meadows are added to the eventual wilderness by the inclusion of this modest acreage.
- **Trinity Alps Wilderness Additions (1,237 acres):** See Section 301 for more information on the Trinity Alps. This proposed potential wilderness eliminates an awkward boundary intrusion into the existing Trinity Alps Wilderness. The inclusion of the area will help to make for a more manageable boundary. The area was disturbed primarily by 19th Century mining exploration and does not contain any legally open roads.
- **Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness Additions (4,282 acres):** See Section 301 for more information on the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness Additions. The proposed potential wilderness is primarily composed of an area known as the “Rabbit Ears” because of its shape on maps. It is a partially logged and roaded area that thrusts two “ears” north into the existing Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness. The area is a potential wilderness, and not a conventional wilderness, because about 30% of it was affected by scattered logging in the 1970s and 1980s. It has one closed road and several small patches of trees that were planted after logging. Some of these planted areas have since burned and been converted to shrubland. The area is still primarily natural in appearance as seen from adjacent roads. By adding the “Rabbit Ears” to the Yolla Bolly-Middle Eel Wilderness, it will create a more manageable and robust boundary.
- **Yuki Wilderness Additions (1,165 acres):** See Section 301 for more information on the Yuki Wilderness Additions. The proposed potential wilderness is composed of several small pieces. The intent of all of them is to include important habitat and features in the Yuki Wilderness despite the presence of an old, abandoned road. One of the areas is a large meadow and wetland known as Barley Lake. Another addition would protect more of Elk Creek, an important tributary of the Middle Fork Eel River that offers critical habitat for steelhead trout.

Section 304: Designation of wild and scenic rivers

HR 2250 designates X miles of streams as wild and scenic rivers under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is the nation’s primary river conservation tool. Congress passed the Act in 1968 to specifically balance our existing policy of developing rivers for the water, power, and flood control resources by building large dams, with a new

policy of protecting some free-flowing rivers with outstanding natural and cultural values for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Federal public lands within a river corridor averaging 320 acres per mile (about 1/4 mile on each side of the river) are managed to protect the river's free flowing character and outstanding values. Federal agencies that administer public lands are responsible for the management of designated rivers and are required to develop a plan within three years of designation to guide future management of the protected stream. HR 2250 classifies each stream as wild, scenic, or recreational.

Wild: These segments are wild, unroaded and undeveloped. Logging, road building, new mining claims, developed campgrounds, and motorized access are generally prohibited on wild segments. All other activities associated with public lands such as grazing, mining of valid existing claims, hunting and other forms of non-motorized recreation are permitted provided that the river's free flowing character and outstanding values are protected.

Scenic: These segments are generally undeveloped but may have occasional road crossings and riverside structures that are visually screened from the river. Motorized use on trails may or may not be permitted based on existing use and resource protection needs. All other activities normally associated with public lands are permitted, if the river's visual quality, free flowing character, and outstanding values are protected.

Recreational: These segments are generally developed, with parallel roads, bridges and structures. All activities normally associated with public lands may occur provided that the river's free flowing character and outstanding values are protected.

The National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act confers no federal authority over private land use or local zoning of private lands. There is no practical impact on private property, except that federal protection typically increases private property values and contributes to the local economy by attracting tourists and recreational visitors. When logging private property along a wild and scenic river, under the California Forest Practices Act a registered professional forester is required to give some limited degree of consideration to protecting a stream's values. This has not prevented landowners in the past from logging along the banks of wild and scenic rivers on private land.

The state's authority to regulate water rights remains unaffected by designation. There is a federal water right conferred by designation, but it begins at the date of designation and is junior to all other existing rights.

Section 305: Sanhedrin Conservation Management Area

Consists of public lands in the Mendocino National Forest and private lands that are in the process of becoming public. The private lands were heavily logged and roaded while under previous ownership, but the current owner wants assurances that when his lands are transferred to public hands that it will be properly conserved. The legislation would require the Mendocino National Forest to manage the area, once it becomes public, to restore old-growth forests, oak woodlands, meadows and other important habitats and to return the land as much as possible to a natural condition. The bill would also allow the public to use the area for hiking, horseback riding, camping and other activities for the first time since, up to now, it has been private.