

# California Central Coast Caucus

## Assemblymembers

Dawn Addis (Co-Chair)  
Gregg Hart (Co-Chair)  
Robert Rivas (Speaker)  
Steve Bennett  
Jacqui Irwin  
Gail Pellerin



## Senators

Monique Limón (Vice Chair)  
Anna M. Caballero  
John Laird  
Henry I. Stern

September 18, 2025

Brooke Rollins  
Secretary of Agriculture  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

## **SUBJECT: California Legislative Central Coast Caucus Opposition to the Rollback of the Roadless Rule**

Dear Secretary Rollins:

The California Legislative Central Coast Caucus (CLCCC) writes in opposition to the proposal to rescind the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule ("Roadless Rule") that prohibits new road construction and timber harvesting in inventoried roadless areas.

The CLCCC consists of ten California state legislators representing Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. We are committed to protecting the Central Coast's natural landscape, communities, and economy, and understand that preserving our wild spaces, coastlines, and working lands is crucial to maintaining our region's identity.

For over two decades, the Roadless Rule has protected over 60 million acres across the United States from road construction and timber harvesting in some of our nation's most pristine and environmentally significant areas. In California, the U.S. Forest Service manages 20 million acres of national forests, including over 3.9 million acres of inventoried roadless areas ("roadless areas"). One of these forests, the Los Padres National Forest, is located on the Central Coast and contains approximately 635,000 acres of roadless areas.

In the Los Padres National Forest, the roadless areas are essential to maintaining and supporting the outdoor recreation economy that draws people from around the world to the Central Coast. Close to a million people visit the forest annually, creating over \$75 million in revenue every year. The forest also generates more than 1,500 jobs and \$103.4 million in yearly income for wage earners and local businesses. Removing these protections for the Los Padres National Forest would be detrimental to our communities' economic and environmental health.

Roadless areas are important for mitigating the effects of extreme weather. Our national forests serve as important carbon sinks, helping remove millions of tons of carbon emissions that would otherwise contribute to extreme heat, atmospheric rivers, and

ocean acidification. Opening these ecologically and environmentally important areas up for road development, mining, and logging will not only release the carbon stored, it will also leave our communities vulnerable to the devastating impacts of extreme weather, polluted waterways, fragmented ecosystems, and increased wildfire risks.

At a time when the Central Coast is already grappling with extreme heat, floods, and rising sea levels, defending the Roadless Rule is not just a matter of environmental stewardship, it is also one of public health and fiscal responsibility. Our region, like many others across the nation, cannot afford to expose our forests to the serious consequences that will come with the loss of the Roadless Rule.

For these reasons, the California Legislative Central Coast Caucus strongly opposes the rollback or weakening of any kind of the Roadless Rule. We urge you to uphold the Roadless Rule and preserve these irreplaceable public lands for the health, safety, and prosperity of our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dawn Addis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dawn" being more prominent than the last name "Addis".

DAWN ADDIS

Co-Chair, Central Coast Caucus  
Assemblymember, 30<sup>th</sup> District

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gregg Hart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gregg" being more prominent than the last name "Hart".

GREGG HART

Co-Chair, Central Coast Caucus  
Assemblymember, 37<sup>th</sup> District