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April 21, 2026

Honorable Assemblymember Chris Rogers
1021 O Street, Suite 5130
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED - AB 2494: State Forests: Forest Management

Dear Honorable Assemblymember Rogers,

On behalf of the County of Lake, I write to respectfully express our opposition to AB 2494, unless amended. AB 2494 proposes significant changes to the management and funding structure of California's Demonstration State Forests. The County of Lake is open to engagement with you and your team to make appropriate changes to the bill, in consideration of concerns such as those raised here, and factors surrounding Boggs State Demonstration Forest, specifically.

Lake County is concerned, unless amended, that AB 2494 could unintentionally undermine critical, ongoing research and active forest management needed to improve wildfire resilience. Since 2015, nearly 70 percent of Lake County's landmass has burned, underscoring the urgent need for effective, science-based forest management.

The 2015 Valley Fire burned 99 percent of Boggs State Demonstration Forest, killing approximately 80 percent of mature trees and 95 percent of understory vegetation, and devastating surrounding communities by destroying nearly 2,000 structures. In the years since, recovery has required extensive intervention, including salvage logging, the planting of more than 700,000 seedlings, and the implementation of major research initiatives examining watershed impacts, carbon dynamics, and forest regeneration.

These projects are essential to understanding how post-fire management strategies influence recovery and long-term forest health. As a working forest, Boggs provides a unique, real-world setting to test and demonstrate practices that support sustainable timber harvest, biodiversity, and resilient forest structures. Limiting active management

risks setting back this progress and reducing the State's ability to apply lessons learned statewide.

The bill also raises concerns regarding financial sustainability. Revenues generated from Demonstration State Forests are reinvested into on-the-ground management, research, and wildfire mitigation. Restrictions on management activities or changes to revenue allocation could limit the State's ability to carry out essential forest health and resilience projects.

At the same time, Boggs State Demonstration Forest provides important public benefits beyond forest management. Its trail system and recreational opportunities, serving more than 20,000 visitors annually, have been supported in large part through private funding, demonstrating that recreation and responsible forest management can successfully coexist.

Lake County supports a balanced, science-driven approach to forest stewardship that includes active management, ecological restoration, and long-term sustainability, consistent with the strategies advanced by the Governor's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force.

We also support continued collaboration with Tribal partners and responsible stewardship practices. However, these important goals should complement, not replace, the State's ability to actively manage forests and respond to changing conditions.

For these reasons, the County of Lake respectfully Opposes AB 2494, unless amended.

The CAL FIRE video linked here documents a tour of Boggs Mountain Demonstration State Forest with the State Lands Working Group of the CA Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force, and lends further valuable context:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1637450590717981&ref=sharing>

Respectfully,

Chair
Lake County Board of Supervisors
COUNTY OF LAKE

Cc: Honorable Assembly Majority Leader Cecilia Aguiar-Curry; Honorable Senator Mike McGuire