



The River Otter Ecology Project
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Forest Knolls, CA 94933
Riverottterecology.org

April 17, 2018

Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi, Chair
Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Legislative Office Building
1020 N Street, Room 164
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Oppose Assembly Bill 2754

Dear Assembly Member Muratsuchi,

River Otter Ecology Project, based in Marin County, is an organization dedicated to supporting watershed conservation and restoration through research, education, and community science. As apex predators who use a variety of terrestrial and aquatic habitat types, river otters are sentinel indicators of watershed health, and understanding their ecology and status is a critical element of ecosystem management. Northern California's Coastal Zone is an important habitat area for historical and recovering populations of this charismatic species.

We strongly oppose Assembly Bill 2754. In the more than 40 years since the passage of the Coastal Act, the legislature has never unilaterally declared certain activities exempt from Coastal Commission review. Such an action on behalf of a single special-interest group, would set and irreversible precedent for other industries and lobbies seeking their own exemptions. Coastal resources, shared by all Californians, would be threatened, and the authority of the Coastal Commission would be undermined.

The Coastal Act already delegates sufficient authority to local governments to regulate development according to local conditions. The singular role of the Coastal Commission is to uphold the Coastal Act statewide, and to protect our fragile coastal resources, which are constantly under threat from climate change and unwise development.

Furthermore, the bill's list of "routine and ongoing agricultural activities" is taken entirely out of context from an unrelated section of the Fish and Game Code that regulates incidental takes of endangered species. Such shabbily piecemeal and ill-considered lawmaking has no place in a serious consideration of the balance of competing interests that is at the heart of the Coastal Act.

Please put an end to this egregiously misplaced attack on the Coastal Act and our shared coastal resources by rejecting AB 2754.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Megan Isadore".

Megan Isadore, Executive Director
The River Otter Ecology Project
Deputy North American Coordinator,
IUCN/SSC Otter Specialist Group
415/342-7956

Cc: Assembly Member Marc Levine