



July 10, 2026

Gavin Newsom, 40th Governor
State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 35 (Alvarez) Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024: Administrative Procedure Act: exemption: program guidelines and selection criteria - SUPPORT

Dear Governor Newsom,

The Wildfire Solutions Coalition is writing to respectfully urge your signature on AB 35 (Alvarez), which would exempt Proposition 4 funds from the Administrative Procedure Act (APA). The Wildfire Solutions Coalition is a statewide alliance committed to securing long-term funding for wildfire mitigation and resilience. We believe California must invest in proactive solutions that protect lives, homes, ecosystems, and the economy – before the next fire starts. The goal of the Coalition is to secure the resources necessary, from local, state, federal, philanthropic, and private sector investment, to achieve California's wildfire

resilience goals and dramatically reduce the impacts of catastrophic wildfire across the state.

Proposition 4 responds to the urgent need to mitigate the impacts of wildfires and other climate-related issues, and Californians strongly support increasing funding for this work. In 2024, voters overwhelmingly embraced action on wildfire and climate resilience, approving Prop 4's historic investments with nearly 60% of the vote. In 2025, Californians mobilized once again to urge the Legislature to appropriate Prop 4 funding in FY 2025-26. In November, a [public opinion poll commissioned by the Wildfire Solutions Coalition](#) found that 68% of California voters support additional funding to reduce the threat of these catastrophic wildfires.

Exempting Prop 4 funds from the APA is consistent with other natural resource bonds, including Proposition 68 and Proposition 1. A full exemption would enable funds to be deployed more quickly and efficiently, ensuring that protracted administrative processes do not delay urgent wildfire risk reduction, landscape health, and community protection projects. Agencies such as the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), the Natural Resources Agency, the Wildlife Conservation Board, and state conservancies have noted that a standard rulemaking process, including review by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL), could result in delays of 12 to 18 months before communities receive awards. We sincerely appreciate the APA exemption for previously-appropriated Prop 4 funding in this year's early action budget bill, but without a permanent fix, future Prop 4 funding will still face delays, opening the door to climate-driven disasters.

In the world of wildfire, delay often paves the road to disaster. For example, the 2021 Caldor Fire, which burned through Eldorado National Forest and over the crest of the Sierra, destroyed hundreds of homes and structures. Years earlier, the USDA Forest Service started work on the [Trestle Forest Health Project](#) to protect the high-risk community of Grizzly Flats. However, due to a combination of factors, including insufficient funding, the fuel reduction project was never completed, and Grizzly Flats was devastated by the Caldor Fire. In contrast, other communities threatened by the fire did not lose a single home or structure, in no small part because [landscape-level wildfire resilience projects](#) were successfully funded and implemented.

Importantly, an exemption from the APA does not eliminate transparency, consultation, or public engagement. Agencies will continue to follow robust fiscal controls, reporting requirements, and oversight. Many of these programs have already undergone extensive public input and stakeholder engagement. Rather than reducing accountability, the exemption will streamline implementation, maintain consistency across existing programs, and remove barriers to delivering critical funding where it is most urgently needed.

Across the state, funding availability is often the primary barrier to completing critical wildfire resilience projects before it is too late. In addition to inviting catastrophe, delays in funding can also result in reduced capacity, halted work, layoffs, missed weather windows, and the need to redo surveys and other planning work – all of which increase the costs of doing the same project at a later date. Given the extreme threat to communities and landscapes across California from catastrophic wildfires and other climate hazards, it is imperative to get Prop 4 dollars on the ground as soon as possible.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue. We call on you to support AB 35 in committee to ensure this critical climate funding is made available as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Michael Jarred, Associate Director
The Nature Conservancy

Matt Dias, President and CEO, California
Forestry Association

Emily Blackmer, Director of Government
Affairs, Sierra Business Council

Nuin-Tara Key, COO, California Forward

Lucy Blake, President
Northern Sierra Partnership

Lexie Gritfeld, Director, California Outdoor
Recreation Partnership

Julia Bishop Hall, State Legislative Director,
Association of California Water Agencies

Jennifer Capitolo, Executive Director,
California Water Association

Adrian Covert, Senior Vice President of Public
Policy, Bay Area Council

Paul DiMaggio, President, Central Basin Water
Association

Mac Cloyes, Managing Director of
Government Relations, Blue Forest

Rebecca Guo, General Manager, El Dorado
Water Agency

Bernard Molloy II, President, California Fire
Chiefs Association

Cathy Cockrum Dean, President, Elevate
California

Jacy Hyde, Executive Director,
California Fire Safe Councils

Don Butz, President, Fire Districts
Association of California

Bruce Saito, Executive Director, California
Local Conservation Corps

R. Michelle Decker, President & CEO,
Inland Empire Community Foundation

Michael O'Connell, President & CEO,
Irvine Ranch Conservancy

Paul Cook, General Manager, Irvine Ranch
Water District

Seth Schalet, Chief Executive Officer,
Santa Clara County FireSafe Council

Eric Lombardo, Director of External Affairs,
Land Trust of Santa Cruz County

Ted Clement, Executive Director, Save Mount
Diablo

Patti D'Angelo Juachon, Senior Program
Director, Marin Community Foundation

Steve Mietz, President & CEO, Save the
Redwoods League

Eric Horne, California Director,
Megafire Action

Robert Trent, Executive Director, Sierra
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Scott Ratterman, President, Mountain
Counties Water Resources Association

Lilly Bui, Director of Climate and Disaster
Resilience, SoCal Grantmakers

Joanne Webster, President and CEO, North
Bay Leadership Council

Sean Barclay, General Manager, Tahoe City
Public Utility District

Paul Mason, Vice President, Policy &
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Landon Peppel, Chief Operating Officer, The
Wildlands Conservancy

Tony Firenzi, General Manager, Placer County
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Joshua Golka, Head of State Government
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Jason Martin, General Manager, Rancho
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Patrick Koepele, Executive Director, Yosemite
Rivers Alliance

Temra Costa, Director, Regenerative Forest
Solutions

Staci Heaton, Senior Policy Advocate,
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