

**For Immediate Release:
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**Agriculture & Conservation Groups Applaud the
Leadership of the California Legislature on Climate Change**

SACRAMENTO, CA – The passage of a bill in the California legislature last night marks a sea change in the state’s ability to curb climate change, with its focus on accelerating climate solutions in agriculture, forests, urban greening and natural lands conservation.

AB 1757, co-authored by Asm. Cristina Garcia and Asm. Robert Rivas, requires California to set greenhouse gas reduction and sequestration targets from natural and working lands that can be achieved using strategies such as improving the carbon storage capacity of agricultural soils, protecting and restoring wetlands, forests and open space, and planting trees and building urban parks to keep cities cool.

The bill requires the California Natural Resources Agency to lead the effort with stakeholder agencies, like the California Department of Food & Agriculture. The climate targets must be set by January 2024, following input from state agencies and an expert committee to identify the most effective ways to catalyze the transitions needed to curb climate change and increase resilience to wildfires, drought, flooding and extreme heat.

AB 1757 was supported by a diverse coalition of over 70 urban and rural agriculture and environmental organizations. Some of their statements on its passage are as follows:



“Climate resilience starts with our farms, forests, wetlands, and urban green spaces. AB 1757 will drive much-needed innovation and transformative climate solutions that ensure food security, farm viability and result in cleaner air and water.”

— Jeanne Merrill, Senior Policy Advisor, California Climate and Agriculture Network (916-600-0083, jmerrill@calclimateag.org)



“Restoring our forests and watersheds helps reduce extreme fires, protects our water supplies, supports healthy wildlife, and helps us meet our climate goals. This bill will help align agency efforts, and bring in experts who will bring perspectives on how we can accelerate

these nature-based climate solutions.”

— Paul Mason, V.P., Policy & Incentives, Pacific Forest Trust (916-214-1382, pmason@pacificforest.org)

TreePeople

"We applaud our state leadership, especially Asm. Cristina Garcia and Asm. Robert Rivas, for putting trees at the forefront of climate change solutions. As we speak, the realities of climate change are affecting communities across our state. While the challenges are complex, the solutions are not: trees are a frontline defense against the harshest effects of extreme heat and devastating droughts, which disproportionately impact our underserved communities of color. We thank our leaders for recognizing that nature-based solutions are a key component of building community resilience and addressing climate change."

—Cindy Montañez, CEO, TreePeople (cmontanez@treepeople.org)



“The passage of AB 1757 will push California to transform its natural and working lands from a net source of carbon emissions to a net sink. By utilizing nature-based solutions at the forefront of our fight for a just and climate-safe future, we will both mitigate and adapt to changing weather patterns while simultaneously increasing the health of our soils, resiliency of our forests, and overall protection of vital ecosystems across the state. We applaud Asm. Cristina Garcia and Asm. Robert Rivas for championing this important measure, and look forward to Governor Newsom signing it into law.”

— Baani Behniwal, Natural Sequestration Initiative Manager, The Climate Center (baani@theclimatecenter.org)