

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 2254 (Addis)

As Amended May 18, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires a local government with a monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site located within its jurisdiction in the coastal zone to develop and implement enforceable monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site protection policies based on guidance on model policies developed by the state.

Major Provisions

- 1) Requires, on or before January 1, 2028, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), in coordination with the California Coastal Commission (Commission), to identify both of the following:
 - a) Monarch butterfly overwintering habitat sites in the coastal zone; and,
 - b) Current local government monarch butterfly overwintering habitat management plans or policies.
- 2) Requires, on or before July 1, 2028, CDFW, in coordination with the Commission, to develop and provide guidance on model policies that can be used by a local government for the protection of monarch butterfly overwintering habitat, including habitat restoration and enhancement, to address gaps in habitat protection in the coastal zone.
- 3) Requires, after the guidance on model policies is finalized, a local government with a monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site located within its jurisdiction in the coastal zone to develop and implement enforceable monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site protection policies.
- 4) Encourages a local government to apply for grants administered pursuant to the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program.

COMMENTS

Climate change and habitat loss have significantly altered the monarch butterfly's migration behavior. Rising temperatures and the widespread loss of milkweed, the primary host plant for monarch larvae, have disrupted breeding and migratory patterns across North America, contributing to population declines over the past two decades.

In California, monarchs are not listed under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). They are included on CDFW's Terrestrial and Vernal Pool Invertebrates of Conservation Priority list and identified as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in California's State Wildlife Action Plan.

The western monarch population in California overwinters along the coast, where they cluster in forested groves, which provide essential shelter from the elements. Overwintering sites are critical for the survival of the monarchs as they require specific micro-climate conditions to live.

According to the Author

Monarch butterflies, like many people, travel to California's coast every year to rest and enjoy the mild climate. However, human development has seriously damaged or even removed their fragile overwintering habitats, which they need to survive harsh winter conditions. Loss of these sites, combined with the constant threat of climate change, has led to a 95% decline in the western monarch butterfly population since the 1980s. As a result, this population is at a serious risk of collapse. As stewards of our natural world, we need to ensure that these sites remain safe and available for the monarchs so that they can have a chance at recovering.

Arguments in Support

A coalition of environmental organizations, including the Center for Biological Diversity, writes that California's coast plays an irreplaceable role in the annual cycle of the western monarch butterfly. Each winter, monarchs gather in sheltered groves where the trees and surrounding landscape create the specific conditions they need to survive the colder months. By integrating habitat protection into existing coastal planning processes, the bill provides local governments with tools and guidance to help safeguard these important sites while maintaining flexibility in local implementation.

Arguments in Opposition

None on file for the amended version of the bill.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- 1) CDFW estimates annual General Fund costs of approximately \$1.5 million in fiscal years (FY) 2027-28 and 2028-29 for one permanent environmental scientist and five limited-term senior environmental scientist specialists, and in FY 2029-30 and ongoing, CDFW estimates ongoing annual General Fund costs of about \$250,000 for the one environmental scientist to input ongoing updates of Monarch data into CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database.
- 2) The Commission estimates ongoing annual General Fund costs of approximately \$230,000 for one position to coordinate with CDFW to develop the required guidance on model policies for protecting Monarch habitat and to review and process coastal local governments' Monarch habitat-related local coastal plan (LCP) amendments.
- 3) By imposing additional duties on a local government, this bill imposes a state-mandated local program, potentially resulting in unknown General Fund cost pressure for the state to reimburse local governments, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates. A local government may choose to develop and implement its Monarch overwintering habitat protection policy via an enforceable habitat management plan or an enforceable local ordinance – which may be less resource-intensive than updating an LCP.
- 4) By encouraging local governments to apply for grants through the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program, this bill potentially creates greater cost pressure on the Wildlife Conservation Board to provide funding to local governments that include Monarch site protection policies in their LCP updates pursuant to this bill's requirements.

VOTES

ASM NATURAL RESOURCES: 10-3-1

YES: Bryan, Connolly, Garcia, Haney, Kalra, Boerner, Pellerin, Schultz, Wicks, Zbur

NO: Ellis, Alanis, Macedo

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover

ASM WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE: 10-2-1

YES: Papan, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bennett, Boerner, Caloza, Hart, Muratsuchi, Rogers

NO: Jeff Gonzalez, Alanis

ABS, ABST OR NV: Gallagher

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-3-1

YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

NO: Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover

UPDATED

VERSION: May 18, 2026

CONSULTANT: Paige Brokaw / NAT. RES. / (916) 319-2092

FN: 0002810