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# SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER

Senator Josh Becker, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

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<b>Bill No:</b>	AB 2791	<b>Hearing Date:</b>	June 9, 2026
<b>Author:</b>	Committee on Natural Resources		
<b>Version:</b>	March 17, 2026 Introduced		
<b>Urgency:</b>	No	<b>Fiscal:</b>	Yes
<b>Consultant:</b>	Edith Hannigan		

**Subject:** Public resources

## SUMMARY

This is the committee omnibus bill of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee.

## BACKGROUND AND EXISTING LAW

***Forest Practice Act and Rules.*** The Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act (Act) of 1973 establishes the intent of the Legislature to promote sound public policy encouraging prudent and responsible forest management that serves the public's need for timber and other forest products while giving consideration to watershed protection, fisheries and wildlife, sequestration of carbon dioxide, and recreational opportunities for this and future generations (Public Resources Code (PRC) § 4512). The Act establishes minimum rules for resource conservation, equipment operations, and licensing related to the commercial harvesting of timber, known as timber operations.

The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) adopts regulations, known as the Forest Practice Rules (Rules), under the Administrative Procedures Act process to implement, interpret, and make specific the Act. Together, the Act and Rules provide a regulatory framework for timber operations in the state, which are enforced by foresters at the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Department).

### ***The California Coastal Commission (Commission)***

The commission was established by voter initiative, Proposition 20, in 1972. The Legislature later made the Commission permanent through the adoption of the California Coastal Act of 1976 (Coastal Act) (PRC §§ 30000 *et seq.*). The Commission plans for and regulates the use of land and water in the coastal zone (which excludes the San Francisco Bay).

The Commission is an independent, quasi-judicial state agency, and its mission statement states that it "is committed to protecting and enhancing California's coast and ocean for present and future generations." The Commission does so "through careful planning and regulation of environmentally sustainable development, rigorous use of science, strong public participation, education, and effective intergovernmental coordination."

Development activities in the coastal zone generally require a coastal development permit (CDP) issued by the Commission or by a local government with a local coastal program (LCP) certified by the Commission. Coastal Act policies are the standards the Commission uses to determine the permissibility of proposed developments subject to its jurisdiction.

**Existing law:**

- 1) Establishes the Coastal Act and within it establishes the Commission, and prescribes the membership and duties of the Commission. (PRC §§ 30000 *et seq.*)
- 2) Defines “nonprofit organization” under the Coastal Act as a private, nonprofit organization that qualifies under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code of 1986. (PRC § 30109.5)
- 3) Defines “state university” as the University of California and the California State University. (PRC § 30119)
- 4) Regulates the persons who practice the profession of forestry. (PRC § 751)
- 5) Requires all trees that are harvested or all trees that are retained be marked or sample marked by, or under the supervision of, a registered professional forester (RPF) before felling operations begin. (PRC § 4584 (j)(i)(D)(v))
- 6) Requires all trees harvested to be marked by, or under the supervision of, a RPF before felling operations begin. (PRC § 4584 (j)(i)(D)(vii))

**PROPOSED LAW**

This bill would:

- 1) Fix a cross-reference to a regulation relating to timber operations conducted under a notice of conversion, regarding the completion timeline of the conversion.
- 2) Repeals a duplicative requirement relating to the marking of trees to be harvested under the Forest Resilience Exemption.
- 3) Defines “nonprofit organization” for the purposes of the Coastal Act.
- 4) Makes conforming changes to the Coastal Act regarding the term “nonprofit organization.”
- 5) Deletes references to state colleges throughout the Coastal Act.

**ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT**

According to the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, “[the committee] often introduces technical code cleanup bills to update statutes by correcting cross references, deleting obsolete provisions, or correcting updated terminology. This bill is an omnibus Public Resources Code cleanup up measure.”

**ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION**

None received.

**COMMENTS**

***Coastal Act references to colleges and universities.*** When the Coastal Act was enacted in 1976, the California State University system was named the California State

University and Colleges, so all references throughout the Coastal Act refer to “state university or college.” In 1982, the system dropped the “and Colleges” and became the California State University. To reflect this change, in 1983 the Legislature passed AB 1949 (Hughes), Chapter 143, Statutes of 1983, an omnibus bill dedicated to updating references to the “California State University and Colleges” throughout various state codes to “California State University.” This bill shortened the term “state university and college” as defined in PRC § 30119 to “state university.” However, the bill unintentionally neglected to remove the words “or college” from the other sections of the Coastal Act that include the term “state university or college.” This has created the impression that, in addition to state universities, the Commission also retains permitting jurisdiction over all community college lands in the coastal zone, which has never been the case and the Commission has never asserted such authority. While local governments have been processing coastal development permits for community college projects in the coastal zone for years without issue, given the growing emphasis on constructing student housing on community college campuses, this lack of statutory clarity can cause confusion.

***Coastal Act references to nonprofits.*** The Coastal Act contains multiple references to nonprofit associations/entities/organizations, which are all intended to apply to nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under United States Internal Revenue Code § 501(c)(3). This bill would standardize these references by defining “nonprofit organization” for purposes of the Coastal Act—using the same definition codified for PRC § 31013—and by cleaning up references throughout the Coastal Act to conform to this defined term.

***Duplicative marking requirements.*** In order to harvest timber under the Forest Resilience Exemption (PRC § 4584(j)), someone, under the supervision of a Registered Professional Forester (RPF), must mark either the trees to be retained or the trees to be harvested, or a sample thereof (PRC § 4584(j)(1)(D)(v)). A second clause in that subparagraph requires that all trees be harvested under the exemption shall be marked by a RPF, or someone supervised by an RPF (PRC § 4584(j)(1)(D)(vii)).

To address this inconsistency and reduce confusion, this bill deletes the second provision (vii) related to marking.

**SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS: none**

**SUPPORT**

None Received

**OPPOSITION**

None Received

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