

21 April 2026

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Over 120 Groups Slam “Save Our Sequoias Act” as a Destructive Logging Bill

#### New Scientific Studies Debunk False Claims Upon Which the Logging Bill is Based

**Contact:** Chad Hanson, Ph.D., Wildfire Scientist, John Muir Project  
[cthanson1@gmail.com](mailto:cthanson1@gmail.com), 530-273-9290

Adam Bronstein, Host/Producer, Our Public Lands Podcast  
[contact@ourpubliclandspodcast.com](mailto:contact@ourpubliclandspodcast.com), 458-336-3583

Mason Parker, Wilderness Defense Director, Wilderness Watch  
[masonp@wildernesswatch.org](mailto:masonp@wildernesswatch.org), 406-542-2048, ext. 9

*Kennedy Meadows, CA* – In a [letter](#) sent to the U.S. Senate today, over 120 conservation groups denounced the so-called “Save Our Sequoias Act”, S. 4103, a deceptive and destructive logging bill masquerading as a measure to protect iconic giant sequoia groves on federal public lands in the Sierra Nevada mountains of California. The letter notes that S. 4103 would override our bedrock environmental law, the National Environmental Policy Act, by creating two new “categorical exclusions” to exempt huge logging projects (2,000 to 3,000 acres in size) in and adjacent to giant sequoia groves from environmental analysis of adverse impacts or public comment. There are no limits on the percentage of trees that would be logged, or the size, age, or species of trees that would be sold to logging companies. Even mature giant sequoias could be logged under the provisions of S. 4103, the letter points out. What’s more, signatories slammed S. 4103 for applying these destructive and deceitful logging provisions to giant sequoia groves in Yosemite National Park, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, the Giant Sequoia National Monument, and Roadless Areas—and even to Wilderness areas!

Just days after House passage and Senate introduction of S. 4103, new peer-reviewed scientific studies discredited the assumptions upon which the entire bill is based. Contrary to the false claims in S. 4103, this new research finds that giant sequoias are naturally regenerating by far the [most abundantly and vigorously in recent high-intensity fire patches](#). The new research also [debunks](#) the much-referenced anecdotal claim that 20% of all large giant sequoias in existence were killed in the 2020-2021 wildfires, finding that, in fact, less than 15% of large sequoias have been killed by fire *over the entire past century*, which is far lower than natural levels that occurred prior to fire suppression policies. Other recent research finds that [logging machinery kills 83% of any giant sequoia regeneration](#) that exists. Further, a large and growing body of science finds that mechanical “thinning” and post-fire logging do not effectively or reliably curb severity in wildfires, as the bill misleadingly claims, and actually tend to exacerbate wildfire behavior while increasing overall tree mortality. Decades of research show that fire--and not tree removal--is what restores forests, especially sequoia groves.

“Most people hear 'fire' and think 'disaster' — and this bill is counting on that,” said Jennifer Mamola, Policy and Advocacy Director of the John Muir Project. “The science tells a different story, and it's only getting stronger: these forests depend on mixed-intensity fire, and logging destroys the habitat that makes regeneration possible. The Senate should follow that science, not the politics behind a deliberately misleading title.”

“The last century of destructive forest management practices and compromised industry-backed science has brought us to this point,” said Adam Bronstein of Our Public Lands Podcast. “The fact that we are logging our sacred giant sequoia groves is depraved, reckless, and a slap in the face to present and future generations.”

“The ‘SOS’ Act is based on layer upon layer of false beliefs – that giant sequoia groves are destroyed by wildfire, that they fail to regenerate post-fire, and that they need to be cut down to ‘save’ them,” said ecologist, Maya Khosla, co-author of the recent landmark research regarding giant sequoias and wildfire. “These false beliefs would push for limitless logging projects, some of which are now in place, destroying the groves.”

“The point of Wilderness is to exercise restraint from human meddling and to allow nature the time and opportunity to respond,” added Mason Parker, Wilderness Defense Director of Wilderness Watch. “Wilderness is the control group against which we compare management attempts. Here, areas left alone have already amazed us with giant sequoias seedlings regenerating abundantly, vigorously, and naturally. They are doing far better than the many dead seedlings planted by the government, which makes the Save Our Sequoias Act an Orwellian-titled, destructive bill.”

“Our research has allowed us to be the first in recent history to witness structural landscape changes in three different Giant Sequoia groves resulting from recent large fire events,” said biologist Tonja Chi. “This work has given us opportunity to record and observe the resilience and inherent survival mechanisms of Giant Sequoias following large fire events resulting in expansive natural seedling and sapling regrowth, especially in large high severity burn patches. These groves are complex ecological systems with naturally functioning processes that will be adversely affected by proposed management in the ‘Save Our Sequoias Act.’”