State of California • Natural Resources Agency
Gavin Newsom, *Governor*
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
Armando Quintero, *Director*
NORTH COAST REDWOODS DISTRICT
PO Box 2006
Eureka, CA 95502

October 16, 2026

California Apprenticeship Council
c/o Division of Apprenticeship Standards

Re: Support for a recognized ecological competency credential for California's construction workforce

Dear California Apprenticeship Council:

As the Deputy District Superintendent for the North Coast Redwoods District (NCRD) of California State Parks, I support restoration and stewardship projects large and small throughout our 22 park units. The NCRD is responsible for the stewardship and protection of natural and cultural resources within some of the last remaining coast redwoods on the planet. We strive to ensure equitable access to these incredible forests, providing high-quality recreational experiences for Californians and visitors from around the world.

We are currently planning and carrying out ecological restoration and maintenance work representing tens of millions of dollars over the next five years alone. Recent and upcoming projects include restoration of previously logged redwood forests under Redwoods Rising – a landscape scale restoration initiative done in partnership with the National Park Service and Save the Redwoods League – across ~1,200 acres in just the coming three years. Fish passage work in Richardson Grove State Park will improve 1.4 stream miles of Durphy Creek, a tributary to the South Fork Eel River and Coho salmon and steelhead trout habitat. In one of our more popular campgrounds at Humboldt Redwoods State Park, where we receive over 650,000 visitors annually, we will be replacing water tanks that provide potable water and a reliable source for fire suppression; this park unit has been voted "America's #1 State Park" for three years in a row, and this project will not only provide more reliable water for visitors and fire safety, but will also help make the park more sustainable through drought conditions.

The construction and maintenance crews who implement these projects are responsible for the results on the ground, leveraging their expertise and hard work to achieve the intended results. Crews work in and near waterways, in sensitive habitats, around protected species, and near cultural resources. Whether a project meets its restoration goals and permit conditions depends on whether those crews understand why each protection matters, not only what it requires.

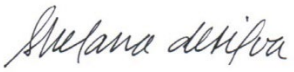
These jobs require specialized skills, and yet there is no standard recognized way to identify the workers who have them. As a hiring entity with this much restoration and stewardship work ahead of us, finding and confirming qualified workers is one of the most important needs we must meet to ensure our responsibilities to the lands, waters, and communities of California are met.

For this reason, the NCRD hopes that you will consider the concept of standardized ecological training represented by a portable, recognized credential. The Ecological Workforce Initiative is presenting to the Council on October 29, 2026 to describe what this credential would entail. We are currently partnering with the Ecological Workforce Initiative to quantify the socioeconomic impacts of stewardship and restoration work on the North Coast, looking at the many projects the NCRD and regional partners are undertaking in the coming five years.

With the planned projects we have analyzed together, there is a potential to create many new, good-paying jobs for local workers. This work can bring prosperity and a sense of purpose to local community members, while also helping California State Parks fulfill its mission. Enabling a credential for trained workforce would be beneficial for workers, parks, and communities.

Thank you for your consideration of this timely and much-needed support for the restoration and stewardship workforce.

Sincerely,



Shelana deSilva
Deputy District Superintendent
North Coast Redwoods District
California State Parks