

**DATE:** March 16, 2017

**TO:** Watershed Conservation Authority Governing Board

**FROM:** WCA Staff

**THROUGH:** Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

**SUBJECT:** Item 8: Liaison and Activities Report

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### Legislative Update

For full text and history of bills and initiatives, visit these web sites:

**Federal Bills:** <https://www.congress.gov>

**State Bills:** <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/>

### STATE LEGISLATION Current as of 2/27/17

The following is the status of legislative bills that have been introduced in the current session by Senate and Assembly potentially of interest to the WCA. Bills can be tracked on the legislative website: <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/>

### PARKS AND WATER

**AB 18 (Garcia, Eduardo D) California Clean Water, Climate, and Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018. Introduced: 12/5/2016**

**Summary:** An act to add Chapter 14 (commencing with Section 5880) to Division 5 of the Public Resources Code, relating to a clean water, climate, and coastal protection and outdoor access for all program, by providing the funds necessary therefor through an election for the issuance and sale of bonds of the State of California and for the handling and disposition of those funds, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

The bill would enact the California Clean Water, Climate, and Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018, which, if approved by the voters, would authorize the issuance of bonds in an amount of **\$3,005,000,000** pursuant to the State General Obligation Bond Law to finance a clean water, climate, and coastal protection and outdoor access for all program. Note that both **SB 5 (DeLeon)** and **AB 18 (Garcia)** have very specific allocations for the 10 Statewide Conservancies and other river and park funding that will have an impact on the work of the two local State Conservancies.

**SB 5 (DeLeon, Kevin D) California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act 2018. Introduced: 12/5/2016 Last Amended Date: 02/23/17**

**Summary:** An act to add Division 45 (commencing with Section 80000) to the Public Resources Code, relating to a drought, water, parks, climate, coastal protection, and outdoor access for all program, by providing the funds necessary therefor through an election for the issuance and sale of bonds of the State of California and

for the handling and disposition of those funds, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

This bill would enact the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018, which, if approved by the voters, would authorize the issuance of bonds in an amount of **\$3,500,000,000** pursuant to the State General Obligation Bond Law to finance a drought, water, parks, climate, coastal protection, and outdoor access for all program. The bill would provide for the submission of these provisions to the voters at the June 5, 2018, statewide primary direct election. This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

This bill has very specific funds set aside for the 10 State Conservancies. It is anticipated that final allocations will be made once parties agree to the allocations.

### BOND COMPARISON - AB 18 (GARCIA) & SB 5 (DE LEÓN)

	AB 18 (Garcia)	SB 5 (De León)
<b>AB 31 Park Poor Communities Program</b>	\$900 Million	\$600 Million
<b>Per Capita</b>	\$425 Million	\$30 Million
<b>County/Regional Program</b>	\$110 Million	\$0
<b>Rural Program</b>	\$40 Million	\$20 Million
<b>Trails</b>	\$45 Million	\$25 Million
<b>State Parks</b>	\$330 Million	\$100 Million
<b>Conservancies (10 Statewide)</b>	\$145 Million	\$80 Million & \$75 Million for Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
<b>River Parkway Program (Unallocated)</b>	\$70 Million & Funding for Specified Rivers including LA	\$50 Million
<b>Oceans and Coastal Protection</b>	\$180 Million	\$80 Million
<b>Miscellaneous (including Wildlife Conservation Board, Cal Fire, Conservation, Climate Resiliency, CCC, and Natural Resources Agency)</b>	\$600 Million	\$400 Million
<b>Water Quality, Groundwater Protection, Integrated Watershed Funding, and Recycled Water</b>	\$0	\$1.5 Billion

\*Based on 12/5/2016 version of bills

**AB 1483 (Daly D) Local parks. Introduced: 2/17/2017 Status: 2/17/2017-Read first time. To print.**

**Summary:** Under current law, programs have been established pursuant to bond acts for, among other things, the development and enhancement of state and local parks and recreational facilities. This bill would state the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation to establish a new source of funding for the construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance of local parks in high-density, parks-poor communities.

**AB 1558 (Garcia, Cristina D) Urban river restoration program.****Introduced:** 2/17/2017 **Status:** 2/17/2017-Read first time. To print.

**Summary:** Would require the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Water Resources, in collaboration, to establish a program to support urban communities in restoring their rivers for multiple benefits. The bill would, if the County of Los Angeles submits a proposal for a project for urban river restoration in the watershed of the Los Angeles River, require the board and the department to consider the proposal as a pilot project.

**SB 693 (Mendoza D) Lower San Gabriel River Recreation and Park District. Introduced:** 2/17/2017  
**Status:** 2/17/2017-Introduced.

**Summary:** Would specifically authorize the establishment of the Lower San Gabriel River Recreation and Park District, by petition or resolution submitted to the Los Angeles County Local Agency Formation Commission before January 1, 2020, subject to specified existing laws governing recreation and park districts, including their formation, except as provided. The bill would authorize specified city councils and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to appoint the initial board of directors of the district.

**AB 466 (Bocanegra D) Los Angeles River Tributaries and Watershed Working Group.****Introduced:** 2/13/2017 **Status:** 2/14/2017

**Summary:** Would require the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency to appoint, in consultation with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to the extent the board wishes to consult, a local working group to develop a revitalization plan for the Los Angeles River tributaries and watershed, called the Los Angeles River Tributaries and Watershed Working Group. The bill would require the secretary to consider requests from local agency representatives to participate in the working group and would authorize the working group to include specified representatives.

**AB 1235 (Daly D) Santa Ana River Conservancy Program. Introduced:** 2/17/2017**Status:** 2/17/2017-Read first time.

**Summary:** Current law establishes the State Coastal Conservancy with prescribed powers and responsibilities for implementing and administering various programs intended to preserve, protect, and restore the state's coastal areas. Current law also establishes the Santa Ana River Conservancy Program, to be administered by the conservancy, for purposes related to the implementation of projects to restore, preserve, and enhance specified lands in the Santa Ana River region, as defined. This bill would declare the intent of the Legislature to enact subsequent legislation that would identify new funding sources to support the program.

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

**SB-263 Leyva (S) Climate Assistance Centers Introduced:** 02/08/17 **Status:** Sen Environmental Quality  
**Committee Hearing Date:** 03/29/17

**Summary:** Existing law creates the Transformative Climate Communities Program, which is administered by the Strategic Growth Council. Existing law requires the council to award competitive grants to specified eligible entities for the development and implementation of neighborhood-level transformative climate community plans that include greenhouse gas emissions reduction projects that provide local economic, environmental, and health benefits to disadvantaged communities, as defined.

The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 designates the State Air Resources Board as the state agency charged with monitoring and regulating sources of emissions of greenhouse gases. The act authorizes the state board to include the use of market-based compliance mechanisms. Existing law requires all moneys, except for fines and penalties, collected by the state board as part of a market-based compliance mechanism to be deposited in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund and to be available upon appropriation.

This bill would require the council to establish no less than 10 regional climate assistance centers, equitably distributed across urban and rural areas of the state, to build the capacity of local community organizations, municipalities, and small businesses from disadvantaged communities to participate in state climate investment programs, as specified. Funds would be allocated through the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to community based and nonprofit organizations to engage with climate assistance centers and conduct outreach in disadvantaged communities, as specified. The bill would require the council and the state board to make a specified report to the Legislature.

**AB 1433 (Wood D) Climate Adaptation and Resilience Based on Nature Act.**

**Introduced:** 2/17/2017 **Status:** 2/17/2017-Read first time.

**Summary:** Would create the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Based on Nature Account in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund and would transfer, beginning in the 2017–18 fiscal year, 20% of the annual proceeds of the fund to the account. The bill would, upon appropriation by the Legislature in the annual Budget Act, make available the moneys in the account to the Wildlife Conservation Board for grants and programs that facilitate actions to protect and improve the resilience of natural systems and to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

**AB 1530 (Gonzalez Fletcher D) Urban forestry.** **Introduced:** 2/17/2017 **Status:** 2/17/2017-Read first time. To print.

**Summary:** The California Urban Forestry Act of 1978 has as a stated purpose the promotion of the use of urban forest resources for purposes of increasing integrated projects with multiple benefits in urban communities. This bill would provide that the purpose of the act is also to promote policies and incentives that advance improved maintenance of urban forest canopy to optimize multiple benefits, among other purposes. This bill contains other related provisions and other current laws.

**WCA CONTRACTED PROJECTS**

San Gabriel Discovery Center Authority: The SGRDCA and LA County Parks and Recreation have executed a license agreement dated February 2017 for SGRDCA site access and payment of pre-construction activities. The release of Prop A funding is anticipated for April 2017. SGRDCA continues to submit monthly project progress reports to LA Sanitation Districts since August 2016, while receiving funding for Supplemental Environmental Project design fees and administrative costs. Project team is targeting the end of May 2017 to obtain all necessary plan check approvals. This timing is dependent on Army Corps of Engineers completing their reviews within the next 8 weeks.

*The San Gabriel River Discovery Center Project is 5.9 redevelopment that will replace the existing Whittier Narrows Nature Center (WNNC) with the following enhancements: constructed wetland, naturalized bioswale, Walnut Woodland restoration, habitat buffer, two outdoor classrooms, interpretive center with*

*exhibits, vehicular access and parking, pedestrian pathways and other interpretive elements. The Center's mission is to inspire environmental stewardship by providing accessible and engaging watershed and environmental education to the public.*

## **WCA PROJECTS & PROPERTIES**

Duck Farm Project: Received additional comments from Caltrans ROW Division, requested documents were updated and returned for final review and approval for permit and execution of Maintenance and Operations Agreement. AECOM updates for LA County Building and Safety Architecture, Plumbing and Electrical departments are ready for resubmittal pending receipt of updated sheets from restroom design team Romtec anticipated to be received by the end of the week. Grading plan check approval secured, pending EPD referral concurrence and signature sign-off. SCE approved a permit extension. A labor compliance plan (item on board agenda) has been prepared. The project is moving towards construction in Fall 2017.

*The Phase 1A Duck Farm project involves the development of a 30+ acre river adjacent park project that includes a neighborhood park entry, public access trails, riparian landscape, a native plant demonstration garden, native and low water meadows, a river overlook and interpretation features.*

Emerald Necklace: A report will be provided under a separate Item.

*The Emerald Necklace is a 17-mile interconnected network of existing and envisioned bikeways, multi-use trails, parks, and greenways along the Rio Hondo and the San Gabriel River. Along the Rio Hondo the Emerald Necklace stretches from Peck Road Water Conservation Park in the north to the Whittier Narrows Recreation Areas in the south. Along the San Gabriel River it stretches from Hanson Quarry in the north to Whittier Narrows Recreational Area in the south.*

*The Emerald Necklace Implementation Plan – Phase 1 (Proposed Project) includes 15 related projects that would close gaps in a regional recreational trails network and increase access to the trails to hundreds of thousands of people in the project area.*

Gateway Cities and Rivers Urban Greening Master Plan: The first major outreach survey will be launched over the next two weeks, and staff will be asking partners and stakeholders to help widely distribute links in both English and Spanish, in addition to planning to attend key local community meetings for hands-on walkthroughs of the survey.

Staff is also currently actively engaged in developing the scope of work for web development.

Advisory meetings are held quarterly on the third Tuesday of every third month, with the next meeting planned for Tuesday April 18.

*With a grant from the Strategic Growth Council and partner collaboration the WCA is developing a green infrastructure plan for the Gateway Cities Region. The WCA is advancing collaborative integration of regional efforts as staff continues to engage in compatible regional planning initiatives—including the AB530 Lower LA River Working Group. Together with the RMC-funded GREEN Project the plan is organized as an interactive web platform positioned to facilitate coordination, planning efforts, and funding for greening projects across the Gateway Cities and beyond.*

Mt. Baldy Wilderness Preserve: During the spring and early summer of 2016, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) rangers contracted by the WCA began responding to an increased number of public complaints concerning users parking in unauthorized areas and blocking access for neighboring residents, attributed to an upsurge in recreational use of the site. As part of the response by WCA and MRCA, authorized deputies from the Los Angeles and San Bernardino County Sheriff Departments to issue citations against the MRCA Park Ordinance. Enforcement of park rules on the property has since increased with deputies' assistance on their regular patrols and a noticeable decreasing trend in ranger service calls were observed, suggesting that this cooperative effort is proving to be successful.

Through Winter, WCA has continued to coordinate parking enforcement with residents, rangers, and local law enforcement. WCA is also exploring additional solutions to support parking enforcement, such as adding "tow" signage to existing no parking/no stopping signs, in anticipation for the summer. Concerning graffiti removal and trash collection, WCA is coordinating with rangers and the community to collect trash for weekly removal and painting over graffiti. WCA is exploring opportunities to partner with volunteer organizations, such as Sierra Club, to assist with the maintenance efforts.

*Acquired in 2014, the Mt. Baldy Wilderness Preserve is a 237+/- acre property located on the eastern extent of the Authority's territory, directly south of Mt. Baldy Village. This open space being preserved is in its undeveloped state. The site is publicly accessible for passive recreational use.*

River Wilderness Park: The design for RWP Entry Improvements Project is nearing completion based on the 2012 adopted RWP Master Plan for the Canyon Inn Property. The design work is commencing toward a 90% Construction Package Incorporating recommendations made through the geotechnical investigation that was conducted from early September through December 2016.

The WCA continues to seek grant opportunities to fund the RWP Entry Improvements. In early June staff submitted an approx. \$1.9 million grant proposal to Cycle 3 of the State Active Transpiration Program (ATP). The funding request, if funded, will match the anticipated California River Parkways Grant to complete a 1,750 foot bike path extension and roundabout protected highway crossing into the River Wilderness Park. Award announcements for ATP are scheduled for April 2017.

*The RWP is an approx. 75.7 acre property slated to provide unique wilderness experiences in the lower San Gabriel River Canyon comprised of engaging landscapes, gathering spaces, thriving habitats, and a regional hub and welcome center for the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument.*

San Gabriel River Confluence with Cattle Canyon Project: Since the last meeting, the WCA, in partnership with the Angeles National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains National Monument, has summarized the scoping comments from the Notice of Intent/Notice of Preparation (NOI/NOP) 45-day public comments period. An Environmental technical assessment and report has also begun to be prepared with the release of a DEIS/DEIR for public review scheduled for early summer 2017.

The proposed action has been completed for the design and implementation components of the project. This proposal is defined within a 30-page project description available online at [www.wca.ca.gov/cattle\\_canyon](http://www.wca.ca.gov/cattle_canyon).

*Along a 2.5-mile segment of the East Fork San Gabriel River recreational use is highly concentrated. This heavy use combined with the lack of facilities has resulted in degraded conditions. In response, the Cattle Canyon Project seeks to better manage the recreational use, and balance the needs for resource project within this area of the San Gabriel Mountains.*

South Gate Habitat Restoration Project/Parque dos Rios: Plan check approvals have been obtained from the City of South Gate and the project is ready to pull permit for construction. Caltrans has completed plan check review and has issued both an executed Maintenance and Operations Agreement and permit for Construction. The Army Corps of Engineers has completed their review and has issued an amended 408 permit. Due to the amended 408, LA County Flood Control District is in the process of amending its permit to reflect added water line addition. Staff anticipates this amendment will be issued within the Month. Construction bids from local Conservation Corps will be requested for evaluation and potential consideration for award.

*Parque Dos Rios is a 7.8 acre site situated along the Lower Los Angeles River(LLAR) at the confluence with the Rio Hondo in the City of South Gate. The project will create a bike stop amenity for the LLAR trail, with overlook, shade structure, seating and interpretive graphics. The land will be planted with natives and a raptor perch installed.*

Walnut Creek Habitat & Open Space: The WCA is coordinating with City staff to secure agreements for public access to the site through the County Michael D. Antonovich Trail, and to identify and coordinate critical tasks for project-level planning, permitting, and implementation. Staff also continues to engage with the Tzu Chi Foundation to finalize terms for trail right-of-way necessary for the project.

*Acquired in 2008, the Walnut Creek Habitat and Open Space Property is a total of approx. 60.8 acres. It is located directly east of Bonelli Regional Park and along the Walnut Creek riparian corridor. Approximately 6.7 acres are owned by the City of San Dimas and 54 acres are owned by the WCA.*

*After completing a conceptual development plan in coordination with the City of San Dimas, the City secured County Proposition A funding in the amount of \$850,000 to begin initial West Phase development. The City and WCA cooperatively completed CEQA review, and independently approved proceeding with development of the West Phase. The initial phase includes site clean-up, passive recreational elements, habitat enhancements, and the planting of a vegetated screening buffer. This phase will accomplish the necessary improvements to provide public access over a portion of the Project Site. Recreational elements include trail development and trail-side amenities (interpretive signage, benches, etc.) that will create a looped spur trail connection to the existing LA County Antonovich Trail. Public access will only be made from the Antonovich Trail, accessible from four nearby County-operated trail staging areas. Site clean-up includes removal of buildings from a portion of the Project Site under City ownership.*