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## PCL INSIDER: News from the Capitol

### Join PCL at Three Upcoming Events

#### **Celebrate Healthy Environments and Communities at our Sacramento Eco-Salon!**

Join the Planning and Conservation League and special guest Assemblymember Mariko Yamada on Wednesday, October 23rd at Time Tested Books in Midtown Sacramento as we celebrate nearly 50 years fighting to develop the best body of environmental laws in the nation. PCL will be honoring the critically important work being done by the environmental health and justice communities, including the Community Water Center and Safe Water Alliance for their work on the Human Right to Water package and the SB 535 Coalition for their efforts to direct cap-and-trade proceeds to disadvantaged communities. Visit our website [for more information](#) or to [buy tickets](#). If you have any questions, please contact Beverley Newman at [bnewman@pcl.org](mailto:bnewman@pcl.org) or (916) 822-5636.

#### **PCL Celebrating the Life and Work of Former Attorney General John Van de Kamp in Los Angeles**

Please join the PCL family in Los Angeles on November 14<sup>th</sup> as we celebrate John Van de Kamp's tireless efforts on behalf of California's environment, and thank him for his years of leadership and service on the Planning and Conservation League's Board of Directors. We are also proud to present the [LA Conservation Corps](#) with the first ever John Van de Kamp Youth and the Environment Award for their work on The Compton Creek Natural Park project. The event will benefit the advocacy and outreach work of the Planning and Conservation League and PCL Foundation. Visit the PCL [website](#) for more information or to [sponsor](#) or [register](#) for the event. Contact Beverley Newman at [bnewman@pcl.org](mailto:bnewman@pcl.org) or (916) 822-5636 with any questions.

#### **Save the Date for PCL/F's 2014 Environmental Symposium**

Join us on **February 1st, 2014** at the UC Davis School of Law for PCL/F's annual Environmental Symposium that brings together California's nonprofit, community, business, agency and elected leaders to explore the leading environmental issues of the day. The 2014 event will focus on how we can ensure an equitable and sustainable water future for all Californians. We will be exploring the future of the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP), discussing what the 2014 water bond can and should include, and much more. Visit our website for [more information](#) and to learn how you can [sponsor](#) or [register](#) for the event. If you have any questions, please get in touch with us at [symposium@pcl.org](mailto:symposium@pcl.org) or (916) 822-5636.

## **PCL Joins Colleagues in Opposing Current Draft of BDCP**

PCL and 33 other members of the Environmental Water Caucus [released a letter](#) to federal and state officials earlier this week opposing the current Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) proposal. The BDCP as drafted would include a pair of massive 35-mile-long tunnels to transport water from the Sacramento River, under the Delta, and to existing aqueducts near Tracy. The Environmental Water Caucus letter points out a number of serious economic and environmental concerns with the current tunnel proposal – including misrepresenting benefits to justify the tunnels, failure to include near-certain cost overruns and more than \$20 billion of bond interest costs in the project's cost estimates, 'cherry picking' science to support the tunnels and ignoring fishery agencies' 'red flags', allowing questionable substitution of habitat restoration for increased flows, [and more](#).

The letter states: "[It] is clear...that the current BDCP proposal is unnecessary and will have severe environmental consequences. They will not accomplish the claimed biological and species recovery objectives and would be a costly mistake if implemented. The current BDCP project should be reoriented to reduce exports, increase outflows, and implement the necessary structural changes that will accomplish the goals of Delta recovery, improve water supply reliability, and reduce reliance on the Delta, which is already oversubscribed."

Thus far, the BDCP has failed to meaningfully analyze any of the proposed alternatives to the twin tunnels, including the PCL-supported [Portfolio Alternative](#). In an [interesting op-ed](#) this week, Dr. Jeffrey Michael of the University of the Pacific argued that a BDCP without any tunnels is a financially feasible alternative that would still retain most of the project's benefits.

The draft EIS/EIR for the BDCP project missed its self-imposed October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for release, and is now slated to be available for public review in mid-November – with additional delays due to the federal government shutdown. We hope they will use the extra time to reevaluate their proposed project and make the critical changes needed to get it right.

## **Governor Brown Signs AB 417 (Frazier), the CEQA Bike Plan Exemption**

PCL loves bicycling, and the office is regularly cluttered with our bikes. We were, however, a little disappointed to see a play for a CEQA exemption for bike projects get introduced this session. [AB 417](#) (Frazier) was introduced without the initial support or request of our bike advocate friends, although it later gained the support of the [California Bicycle Coalition](#). The impetus for a bike plan exemption came from the furor over a [CEQA lawsuit that delayed the San Francisco Bike Plan](#). The bike plan delay was unfortunate, but even some bike advocates have privately admitted that ultimately, CEQA made the bike plan a better one.

Governor Brown just signed [AB 417](#) (Frazier). The final bill is fairly modest in its scope, providing that any bike plan exempted from CEQA still has to meet other recently adopted measures that include mitigation for impacts to safety and traffic impacts. The mitigation for traffic impacts has raised some concern among bicycle advocates, however, since many would like to see a reduction in automobile traffic, not measures to continue the current level. PCL is concerned with any piecemeal exceptions to CEQA, however, since this bill continued to provide for public input and mitigation measures we did not take a position on it.

## **PCL Comings & Goings**

PCL/F is happy to welcome Beverley Newman as our new Membership & Events Coordinator. Originally from the Sierra Nevada foothills, Beverley spent the past seven years studying and traveling in Europe and the Middle East before returning to the Sacramento area. Her bio can be found [here](#). She's another great member of the PCL/F Team, and is already doing a wonderful job getting our many events together (as evidenced by the information above!).

PCL also welcomes three new boardmembers to the organization. [Ryan Cabinte](#), Associate Dean of the MPA and Dual Degree Programs at Presidio Graduate School, brings a wealth of experience and expertise promoting sustainable business practices. [Joe DiStefano](#), Principal of Calthorpe Associates, is an urban planner with more than 17 years of experience in land use and transportation planning and policy at the regional, local, and corridor scales. [Caroline Farrell](#), Executive Director of the Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment, is an attorney who has spent more than a decade assisting low income communities and communities of color in the south San Joaquin Valley and throughout the country in their struggle for environmental justice.

Join us in welcoming Beverley, Ryan, Joe and Caroline to the PCL/F family. Of course, with additions often come departures. Michelle Oyewole has moved on from PCL/F to begin a graduate program at UC Santa Barbara, while two of our directors – Zahirah Mann & John McCaull – have recently stepped down from the PCL Board. Thanks for your service to PCL and to California's environment and people!



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