



PCL INSIDER: News from the Capitol

Spring at the Capitol: Water, CEQA, and Other Legislative Updates

It's a big week for the environment, as we celebrate Earth Day today, National Arbor Day on Friday, and Save the Frogs Day on Saturday!

Life in the Capitol is hectic. The legislature is back in session after a week off for Spring Recess, and policy committees are buckling down to meet early-May deadlines for passing bills to fiscal committees and to the Senate and Assembly Floors. Dozens of environmental bills are scheduled for hearings before the end of April, and others farther ahead in the process will be heard over the next few months. Here is a sampling of what's active:

Water supply remains a top environmental issue this year, heightened by the continuing drought. Many legislators are looking for ways to encourage conservation and reuse of water, which we appreciate! PCL-supported [SB 985](#) (Pavley) helps promote stormwater as a resource, rather than a waste product, and is an excellent step towards increasing stormwater capture and reuse throughout California. PCL is also supporting [AB 2104](#) (Gonzalez), which closes a loophole allowing Homeowners Associations to penalize homeowners for having drought-tolerant plants in place of lawns. [SB 750](#), Senator Wolk's bill requiring water submetering in new multi-unit dwellings, is still under discussion from last session, and is supported by PCL. We have joined several other environmental groups in opposing an alternate submetering bill, [AB 1983](#) (Gray), which undermines water conservation and lacks critical protections for tenants.

Also in water, the discussion continues on a revised **water bond** to replace the \$11.14 billion bond currently scheduled for the November ballot. [SB 848](#) (Wolk), supported by many environmental groups, has passed through three policy committees and awaits a hearing in Senate Appropriations. [AB 1331](#) (Rendon) passed out of Senate Natural Resources with significant committee amendments, moving the bill's language much closer to that of SB 848. Assemblymember Rendon has also introduced another vehicle, [AB 2554](#), a less environmentally-friendly version of the original AB 1331. Seven other water bond bills have also been introduced, and there is always the possibility of additional gut-and-amend legislation. Needless to say, this discussion is far from over. We hope leadership steps up to help pass a revised water bond that provides needed investments in safe drinking water, sustainable local water supplies, and ecosystem restoration – while ensuring accountability of public funds.

Fortunately, the legislature is still quiet on major **CEQA** reform this year, but we are starting to see a handful of troubling smaller bills – CEQA exemptions are particularly popular right

now. [AB 1849](#) (Logue) exempts levee maintenance, repair, and replacement; [AB 2353](#) (Waldron) exempts the expansion or replacement of existing surface storage facilities; and [AB 2417](#) (Nazarian) exempts all new recycled water pipelines under 8 miles in length. PCL is opposing all three of these bills, and could use your help spotting others if they pop up.

In the world of **cap and trade revenues**, President Pro Tem Steinberg recently [announced a new spending plan](#) to fund affordable housing, transit expansion and upgrades, and high-speed rail, which differs from the Governor's budget proposal earlier this year.

Other active environmental bills of note include (but are certainly not limited to!): **plastic bag ban** [SB 270](#) (Padilla, de León, & Lara), **fracking moratorium** bill [SB 1132](#) (Mitchell & Leno), and [SB 1275](#) (de León), which aims to put **one million electric cars, trucks, and buses** on California's streets.

Questions, comments, or interested in joining forces on legislation? Contact Rebecca Crebbin-Coates at Rebecca@pcl.org.

Apply Now for Summer Internships

Looking for a worthwhile and fun internship this summer? PCL still has two positions open! We are recruiting a **Development Intern** to assist with prospective donor research, event planning, grant research, and more. We are also looking for an intern to assist with the development of our **50/50 Project** as we approach the 50th anniversary of PCL and PCL Foundation. The project will explore the past 50 years of environmental policy and outline a vision for California's environment 50 years in the future. Applications are due May 2nd, but we will be considering them on a rolling basis, so apply **now!** For a full description and application information, please click [here](#).

Save the Date: San Diego CEQA Community Workshop

The next CEQA Community Workshop will take place on **Saturday, July 19, 2014**, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Normal Heights Community Center in San Diego. Registration is \$25.00, including lunch. Join us to learn how to use CEQA more effectively and to mobilize around this essential law. For more information or to register, please click [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact Beverley Newman at bnewman@pcl.org.



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