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AGENDA

Monday, April 6, 2026
2:30 p.m. -- State Capitol, Room 437

BILLS HEARD IN SIGN-IN ORDER

**** = Bills Proposed for Consent**

- | | | | |
|-----|------------------|-----------------|--|
| 1. | AB 1661 | Bryan | Oil and gas: low-production wells: Baldwin Hills Conservancy: Equitable Community Repair and Reinvestment Account. |
| 2. | AB 1704 | Mark González | Greenhouse gases: embodied carbon building materials. |
| 3. | AB 1757 | Gallagher | Energy: nuclear facilities. |
| 4. | AB 1960 | Bennett | Wildfire Prevention Grants Program: identified cohesive fire communities. |
| 5. | AB 2184 | Wilson | Cap-and-Invest Program: nature-based climate solutions: funding. |
| 6. | **AB 2234 | Papan | California Environmental Quality Act: geothermal exploratory projects. |
| 7. | AB 2253 | Boerner | Solid waste: products: environmental marketing claims. |
| 8. | AB 2254 | Addis | Coastal resources: local coastal program: monarch butterfly habitat. |
| 9. | AB 2349 | Solache | State Air Resources Board: regional air quality incident response program. |
| 10. | AB 2513 | Petrie-Norris | Wildfire: Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program: local assistance grant program: regional landscape grants. |
| 11. | **AB 2517 | Calderon | Fire safety: fire hazard severity zones. |
| 12. | AB 2559 | Ward | Solid waste: construction debris: diversion: deposits. |
| 13. | ACR 149 | Hart | California Coastal Act of 1976. |

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 1661 (Bryan) – As Introduced January 29, 2026

SUBJECT: Oil and gas: low-production wells: Baldwin Hills Conservancy: Equitable Community Repair and Reinvestment Account

SUMMARY: Expands the uses for the Equitable Community Repair and Reinvestment Account (Account) and requires direct cash assistance to be made available to families living near the Inglewood Oil Field (IOF) in Los Angeles (LA) County.

EXISTING LAW, pursuant to Public Resources Code 3206.1.5:

- 1) Prohibits, on and after March 1, 2026, an oil well located in a county of the first class (defined as a county with a population > 4 million, which currently only applies to LA County) in an oil field that is adjacent to a state recreation area or state park and is located, in whole or in part, within the boundary of the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, from being a low-production well, as defined, for more than 12 months.
- 2) Requires the State Oil and Gas Supervisor (supervisor), to charge an administrative penalty of \$10,000 per month to a low-production well owner in violation of the time limit on low-production well status until the low-production well is plugged and abandoned. Requires penalties to be remitted annually on a schedule determined by the supervisor.
- 3) Requires all funds collected to be deposited into the Account.
- 4) Requires funds from the Account to be available, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to the Department of Conservation (DOC) for allocation to a county of the first class for the following:
 - a) Park creation or expansion and maintenance of new outdoor amenities in park-poor neighborhoods;
 - b) Urban greening;
 - c) Affordable housing needed to accommodate community needs;
 - d) Climate mitigation and resilience; or,
 - e) Community benefit projects with environmental cobenefits.
- 5) Caps the Account from accruing more than \$20 million.

THIS BILL:

- 1) Requires DOC, upon appropriation by the Legislature and subject to the terms of the appropriation, to distribute the \$5 million deposited into the Account to LA County to

disburse in direct cash assistance to families living within 2 ½ miles of the identified low-production oil wells who have children with respiratory health conditions.

- 2) Prohibits funds from being distributed for the projects in (a)-(e) listed above from receiving funding until the \$5 million in direct cash assistance has been distributed first.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

1) **Author's statement:**

Communities living next to active oil fields continue to experience disproportionately high rates of respiratory illness. Families in these neighborhoods are routinely exposed to harmful air pollutants, as well as chronic noise and vibration associated with oil drilling operations. AB 1661 ensures that the first \$5 million deposited into the Equitable Community Repair and Reinvestment Account, established under AB 2716, will be given as direct cash assistance to families living within 2.5 miles of the Inglewood Oil Field who have a child with a respiratory health condition. This targeted support recognizes the immense harm these communities have endured and provides environmental reparations for families who continue to experience the health impacts of neighborhood oil drilling.

- 2) **Inglewood Oil Field.** The IOF, located in LA County adjacent to a state recreation area and state park, and is within the Baldwin Hills. Since oil was discovered in 1924, 1,600 oil wells have been drilled in the IOF. Today, the oil field's boundary covers approximately 1,000 acres, making it one of the largest contiguous urban oil fields in the United States. The last well drilled in the IOF was in June of 2014; there currently are no plans for new wells.

According to Sentinel Peak Resources, LLC (Sentinel), owner of the IOF, production at the field has averaged between 2.5 – 3.1 million barrels a year for the past ten years. According to Sentinel data, of the wells in the IOF, 414 oil wells are active; 162 are idle.

Under a settlement agreement with Culver City and Sentinel, Sentinel must plug and abandon a minimum of 15 wells by December 31, 2027, at a rate of a minimum of three wells per calendar year over the five-year period between 2023-2027. Sentinel must plug and abandon all remaining wells and complete the overall closure of the IOF by December 31, 2029. An extension may be conditionally authorized under special circumstances, but not to extend beyond December 31, 2032. Culver City has acknowledged support for the redevelopment of the IOF to transition to certain compatible land uses.

Last December, LA County filed a lawsuit against Sentinel for failing to plug and abandon 227 idle or exhausted wells in the IOF. State law defines a well as "idle" if it has not produced oil or natural gas for 24 consecutive months. The County's lawsuit uses the term "exhausted wells" more conservatively than "low-production," defining "exhausted" as those that yield an average of two barrels of oil or less daily.

The lawsuit is part of LA County's larger effort to phase out oil drilling. A 2022 LA City Council ordinance to phase out all oil drilling in LA over 20 years and ban new wells was successfully challenged and blocked in 2024.

- 3) **Low-production wells.** Low-production oil and gas wells are defined as producing fewer than 15 barrels of oil a day (BOE/D) during any 12-month consecutive time period, or a natural gas well whose maximum daily average gas production does not exceed 60 thousand cubic feet of gas (Mcf), per day, during any 12-month consecutive time period. Low-production wells can be reworked to drill deeper for more oil, or reworked for enhanced oil recovery, like hydraulic fracturing, many active wells may be nearing the end of their productive lifespans and sit on the cusp of needing to be plugged.

DOC data also show that approximately 80% of the state's active wells are low-production. While low-production wells can be reworked or injection wells added to the field or reworked to help boost oil and gas production, the expense of these efforts would be weighed against potential revenue from future production. Many of the state's active oil and gas wells may be nearing the end of their economic productivity, particularly in view of the state's goals to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045 that includes phasing out fossil fuels and requiring all new cars to be zero-emission by 2035.

AB 2716 (Bryan), Chapter 549, Statutes of 2024, prohibits the operation of low-production oil and gas wells located in the IOF and imposes a \$10,000 per month penalty upon these wells if they remain in low-production for more than 12 months until they are plugged and abandoned. All penalty revenue is deposited into the Account to fund projects, such as park creation and affordable housing, to benefit the nearby community.

Based on the timelines in AB 2716, the soonest a penalty could be assessed for a violation would be April 2027; therefore, there are currently no funds in the Account.

- 4) **Direct cash assistance.** The IOF is surrounded by residential areas, schools, and homes and, according to the LA Times, more than one million people live within 5 miles of the IOF. Residents living near oil fields have long reported adverse health effects such as respiratory, reproductive and cardiovascular issues. In the LA area, many of these risks disproportionately affect low-income communities and communities of color.

This bill requires DOC, upon appropriation by the Legislature and subject to the terms of the appropriation, to distribute the first \$5 million deposited into the Account to LA County for direct cash assistance to families living within 2¹/₂ miles of the identified low-production wells whose children have respiratory health conditions and can verify their residence to LA County.

The state does have a precedent for direct cash assistance to residents. For example, under the state's climate policy framework, most residential utility customers automatically receive a California Climate Credit – a direct rebate applied to their electricity and natural gas bills. Every resident with a qualifying utility account receives it without application, income test, or special eligibility requirements. Also, in 2021-22, the state issued stimulus payments (~\$600-\$1,200) to millions of residents as part of COVID relief efforts. These cash payments, however, required tax filing or income criteria, so they were not purely universal unconditional payments.

The cash assistance under this bill would be provided without discrimination or substantiation of a claim (i.e. no proof is required to demonstrate health concerns). The advantages of this approach include low application burden, low fraud risk due to limited qualification criteria (geography only), and provision of direct support to the most impacted communities without discriminating against competing claims (no proof of harm required). Because the funds will be dispensed on a first-come, first-served basis, a drawback of this approach is potentially providing cash assistance to those who may not need it over those who do.

The author may wish to consider working with LA County to amend the bill to require LA County to distribute direct cash assistance in an equal amount to each verified family to the extent funds are available, and consider requiring applicants requesting direct cash assistance to verify their residence through utility bills or other relevant records.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

None on file

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Paige Brokaw / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 1704 (Mark González) – As Amended March 2, 2026

SUBJECT: Greenhouse gases: embodied carbon building materials

SUMMARY: Requires the Air Resources Board (ARB) to determine whether the cost of building materials with lower embedded carbon have reached cost parity with conventional building materials and to delay implementation of specified requirements to reduce the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of building materials and implementation of an embodied carbon trading system for building materials until cost parity is achieved.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires ARB, pursuant to California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 [AB 32 (Núñez), Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006], to adopt a statewide GHG emissions limit equivalent to 1990 levels by 2020 and adopt regulations to achieve maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG emission reductions. AB 32 authorizes ARB to permit the use of market-based compliance mechanisms to comply with GHG reduction regulations once specified conditions are met. Requires ARB to approve a statewide GHG emissions limit equivalent to 85% below the 1990 level by 2045. (Health and Safety Code (HSC) 38500-38599.11)
- 2) Requires, under the Buy Clean California Act (BCCA) the Department of General Services (DGS), in consultation with ARB, to establish and publish the maximum acceptable Global Warming Potential (GWP) limit for eligible materials: carbon steel rebar, flat glass, insulation, and structural steel. Further states that when used in public works projects, these eligible materials must have a GWP that does not exceed the limit set by DGS. (Public Contract Code 3500-3505)
- 3) Pursuant to HSC 38561.3:
 - a) Requires ARB to develop a framework for measuring the average carbon intensity of the materials used in the construction of new buildings by December 31, 2026.
 - b) Requires ARB to develop a comprehensive strategy, by December 31, 2028, to achieve a 40% net reduction in the carbon intensity of construction and materials used in new construction as soon as possible, but no later than December 31, 2035. Specifies that the targets begin to apply no sooner than January 1, 2027, and two years after the baseline is established.
 - c) Authorizes ARB to include a tracking and reporting mechanism in the framework and charge a fee that may only cover ARB's costs to administer the reporting mechanism.
 - d) Requires ARB to evaluate the cost impact and feasibility of implementation of the strategy for the purpose of developing recommendations to address known cost impacts and feasibility issues. Specifies that the incorporation of lower carbon materials is

limited or excluded to the extent that it as a cost impact or is infeasible, as specified.

- e) Defines “cost impact” as a significant overall material or operation cost increase, which is specified as any cost increase of 5% or more, or a schedule delay resulting from incorporating the lower carbon material, as specified. States that the incorporation of lower carbon materials shall be limited or excluded only to the extent that it has a cost impact or is infeasible.
- 4) Pursuant to HSC 38561.6:
- a) Authorizes ARB to establish an embodied carbon trading system in compliance with the requirements of HSC 38561.3.
 - b) Integrate the embodied carbon trading system with the framework established pursuant to HSC 38561.3 on or before December 31, 2026, and implement the system on and after January 1, 2029.
 - c) Authorizes ARB to adopt further GHG emissions reduction targets within the scope of HSC 38561.3 prior to December 31, 2035, or provide early reduction credit considering market adoption, if appropriate.
 - d) Specifies that compliance mechanisms, reporting requirements, and penalties for noncompliance with any compliance standards or an embodied carbon trading system will be determined by the administrative process. Specifies that the carbon trading system shall not cause a project to have a cost impact or be unfeasible, as specified.

THIS BILL:

- 1) Requires ARB to delay or suspend the implementation of the targets established by ARB pursuant to HSC 38561.3 and HSC 38561.6 until ARB makes a determination that building materials with lower embodied carbon have reached cost parity with conventional building materials.
- 2) If ARB determines that building materials with lower embodied carbon have not reached cost parity with conventional building materials, authorizes ARB to delay or suspend, as applicable, implementation of HSC 38561.3 and 38561.6 for not less than five years. At the end of a period of delay or suspension, authorizes ARB to determine whether building materials with lower embedded carbon have reached cost parity with conventional building materials. If it again finds that the materials have not reached cost parity, requires ARB to again delay or suspend those requirements for not less than five years. Repeats this process until ARB determines that cost parity has been achieved.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Embodied carbon.** The term “embodied carbon” refers to the GHG emissions arising from the manufacturing, transportation, installation, maintenance, and disposal of building materials. The majority of a building’s total embodied carbon is released upfront at the

beginning of a building's life. Unlike with operational carbon, there is no opportunity to decrease embodied carbon with updates in efficiency after the building is constructed.

In California, according to ARB's GHG Emission Inventory, residential and commercial buildings account for more than 10% of the state's total GHG emissions. However, residential and commercial buildings are responsible for roughly 25% of California's GHG emissions when accounting for fossil fuels consumed onsite and electricity demand. Refrigerants used in heating and cooling systems also contribute to building-related GHG emissions. It is unclear what the exact breakdown is between embodied and operating emissions, but due to California's mild climate, increasing renewable electricity supply, and relatively efficient building stock, our state's operational emissions may be a smaller percentage of total building energy use, compared to the embodied carbon in new construction.

- 2) **Reducing building emissions.** Achieving net zero GHG emissions – when GHG emissions are either zero or are offset by equivalent atmospheric GHG removal – is an important part of reducing GHG emissions and minimizing the effects of climate change. Net zero GHG emissions is also often used interchangeably with carbon neutrality; however, net zero GHG emissions includes GHGs other than those that contain carbon, such as nitrous oxide. Constructing buildings to be net zero will substantially reduce the state's GHG emissions.

Building materials, depending on how they are manufactured, can be considered to sequester carbon. For example, the carbon that comprises wood (roughly 50% by weight) is from the carbon dioxide (CO₂) the tree absorbed from the air. California policies typically consider a 100-year time horizon for the sequestration to be considered permanent. Thus, if CO₂ could be reliably and accountably stored in building as wood for at least a century, those could potentially be counted as sequestered. Given California's stated goal of net zero GHG emissions by 2045, there is a need for GHG emissions to be balanced by GHG sequestration.

- 3) **California Green Building Standards Code.** The California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen) (Part 11, Title 24, California Code of Regulations) is the first mandatory green building standards code in the country. Developed in 2007 by the California Building Standards Commission (BSC), the code is an effort to meet the goals of California's ambitious GHG emission reduction goals. CalGreen is updated every three years, with the most recent update going into effect on January 1, 2026, and establishes regulatory requirements for energy efficiency, water efficiency and conservation, material conservation and resource efficiency, and environmental quality. Mandatory requirements apply to commercial, residential, and public school buildings, while additional voluntary standards are included for these building types and hospitals.
- 4) **Buy Clean California Act.** The BCCA establishes limits on embodied carbon emissions and construction materials procured by the state for public construction projects. By January 1, 2022, the law requires DGS to publish acceptable maximum GWP limits for structural steel, concrete reinforcing steel (rebar), flat glass, and mineral wool board insulation. In order to determine and compare the GWPs of different products and materials, DGS relies on environmental product declarations (EPDs).
- 5) **Environmental product declarations and life cycle assessments.** An EPD is a widely-accepted, verified report of the ways in which a product affects the environment throughout

its life cycle. It provides information such as GWP, air emissions, ozone depletion, and water pollution. EPDs allow purchasers to have comparable, objective, and third-party verified data to better understand a product's environmental impacts so they can make more informed product selections.

Life cycle analyses attempt to quantify the environmental impacts associated with a given product. The analyses can vary depending on the assumptions made and the extent of the life cycle considered. For life cycle analyses of building materials, assessments are usually either cradle-to-gate or cradle-to-grave. Cradle-to-gate analyses consider the emissions associated from extraction up until arrival at the project site, while cradle-to-grave continue further to consider any emissions associated with the product's use within the project and building and, ultimately, its end of life.

- 6) **Building decarbonization framework.** AB 2446 (Holden), Chapter 352, Statutes of 2022, requires ARB to develop a framework for measuring and reducing GHG emissions associated with new building construction. This bill requires the framework to include a comprehensive strategy to achieve a 40% net reduction in the carbon intensity of construction and materials used in new construction as soon as possible, but no later than December 31, 2035, and an interim target to achieve a 20% net reduction in carbon intensity by the end of 2030. AB 2446 requires ARB to evaluate the cost impact and feasibility of implementation of the strategy for the purpose of developing recommendations to address known cost impacts and feasibility issues and limits or excludes the incorporation of lower carbon materials to the extent that their use has a cost impact or is infeasible. The bill established parameters for feasibility, including consideration of material performance and availability, and cost impacts, which is defined as any cost increase of 5% or more.
- 7) **Embodied carbon trading system.** AB 43 (Holden), Chapter 316, Statutes of 2023, requires ARB to develop a market-based embodied carbon trading system to facilitate compliance with the state's strategy to reduce the carbon intensity of building materials by 40% by 2035.
- 8) **Implementation.** ARB held its first workshop to begin implementing AB 2446 and AB 43 in September of 2024, and held additional workshops in March, September, and October of 2025. The meetings have covered information on building material reporting, project reporting, establishing methodologies to estimate a baseline, and provided an opportunity for stakeholder input and public comments.

As part of its implementation work, ARB has contracted with the UC Berkeley College of Environmental Design and the Center for the Built Environment to assess the GHG emission reduction potential and associated costs of material efficiency, reuse, and substitution strategies that can be incorporated into future decarbonization policy for the built environment. The project began in June of 2025, and is scheduled to be completed mid-2027.

- 9) **Housing affordability.** California's home prices are generally higher than the rest of the country. According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, mid-tier homes in the state "are about \$755,000—more than twice as expensive as the typical mid-tier US home." Income levels have not kept pace with the rising costs of housing, making it more difficult for Californians to afford a home. As noted above, the state's embodied carbon framework and

trading system include standards for cost impacts and feasibility; however, a 5% cost increase is significant given the state's already high housing costs.

- 10) **This bill.** This bill is intended to improve housing affordability by pausing the implementation of AB 2446 and AB 43 until ARB makes a determination that lower carbon intensity construction materials achieve cost parity with conventional building materials.

11) **Author's statement:**

AB 1704 balances housing affordability while maintaining the sustainability standards of California. With the ongoing housing crisis, California must act strategically when implementing policies that could increase housing costs. My district has a 23% poverty rate, and nearly 90% of the residents are renters. Most are already rent burdened, paying more than 30% of their income for rent. AB 1704 will help us avoid any unintended consequences of enforcing embodied carbon standards on our most vulnerable communities. California can't just say 'affordability,' we have to execute it on every front.

- 12) **Suggested amendments.** In order to ensure that the Legislature has an opportunity to review these programs to ensure that they aren't paused indefinitely, the *committee may wish to amend the bill* to limit the length of the delay to a maximum of 10 years.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

American Chemistry Council
 American Wood Council
 Asphalt Roofing Manufacturers Association
 Associated General Contractors, California Chapters
 California Building Industry Association
 California Construction & Industrial Materials Association
 California Legislative Conference of Plumbing, Heating & Piping Industry
 California Manufacturers and Technology Association
 California YIMBY
 Gypsum Association
 Housing Action Coalition
 National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA)
 North American Insulation Manufacturers Association (UNREG)
 Northern California Allied Trades
 Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association, the (PIMA)
 Resilient Floor Covering Institute (RFCI)
 Southern California Glass Management Association (SCGMA)
 Spray Foam Coalition
 United Contractors (UCON)
 Wall and Ceiling Alliance
 Western Painting and Coating Contractors Association

Opposition

American Council for an Energy-efficient Economy
Building Transparency
Ecological Building Network
Industrious Labs
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
Project 2030
Public Citizen
Sierra Club California
U.S. Green Building Council, California

Analysis Prepared by: Elizabeth MacMillan / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 1757 (Gallagher) – As Amended March 16, 2026

SUBJECT: Energy: nuclear facilities

SUMMARY: Exempts nuclear “microreactors” (nuclear fission powerplants comprised of units 20 megawatts or less) from the conditional moratorium on permitting new nuclear fission powerplants.

EXISTING LAW prohibits any new nuclear fission power plant until the California Energy Commission (CEC) has determined that technologies exist for the reprocessing of nuclear fuel rods and the disposal of high-level nuclear waste. (Public Resources Code 25524.1 and 25524.2)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Provides that both existing moratoria do not apply to nuclear microreactors, as defined, making nuclear microreactors a permissible land use.
- 2) Defines “nuclear microreactor” as a nuclear fission reactor that meets all of the following criteria:
 - a) The nuclear fission reactor has a rated electrical output of not more than 20 megawatts per unit.
 - b) The nuclear fission reactor is designed for modular construction and deployment.
 - c) All components of the nuclear fission reactor are fully assembled in a factory and shipped to a location, and the nuclear fission reactor is highly portable and requires little or no construction onsite.
 - d) The nuclear fission reactor is licensed, or eligible for licensing, by the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) or is authorized by the United States Department of Energy (DOE) or the United States Department of Defense (DOD).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Background.** Since 2012, only one of the four nuclear power plants developed in California by electric utilities has continued to operate: PG&E’s Diablo Canyon powerplant. Two other nuclear powerplants, PG&E’s Humboldt Bay plant and SMUD’s Rancho Seco plant, have been decommissioned. Developed in the early 1960’s, Humboldt Bay was shut down in 1976 for refueling and never restarted due to seismic and cost issues. Developed in the early 1970’s, Rancho Seco was shut down in 1989 in response to voter referendum. The fourth, the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station (SONGS) jointly owned by Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas and Electric, was closed in 2012 for repairs, permanently retired in 2013, and is in the process of decommissioning, at a forecasted cost of more than \$4.5 billion. High-level radioactive waste from these plants’ operation remains stored on site.

Diablo Canyon operates at nine-figure annual deficits, borne by PG&E customers, despite massive public subsidies.

In 1976, the Legislature passed AB 2820 (Goggin) and AB 2822 (Nestande) to establish a moratorium on permitting new nuclear powerplants. Since that time, the CEC has not found that a high-level waste disposal technology has been demonstrated or approved. Likewise, the NRC, which regulates commercial nuclear power plants and other uses of nuclear materials, has never made a finding that a demonstrated technology exists for either nuclear fuel rod preprocessing plants or the disposal of high-level nuclear waste.

The California moratorium was challenged by PG&E and ultimately reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court. In *PG&E v. Energy Commission*, 461 U.S. 190 (1983), the Supreme Court upheld California's moratorium law. A key basis of the Court's decision was a division of authority to make safety determinations (federal) and economic determinations (state). The Court found that the absence of a permanent waste disposal site could lead to unknown negative economic consequences. So the moratorium has remained in effect and no new nuclear plant has been proposed in California since the Diablo Canyon and SONGS units that were in the permitting pipeline at the time the moratorium was enacted.

The federal government is responsible for providing for the permanent disposal of high-level radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel and was required to begin accepting spent nuclear fuel from nuclear power plants by 1998. However, although Congress selected the Yucca Mountain site in Nevada for a permanent deep geologic repository for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel, the federal waste disposal program has been plagued with technical and legal challenges, managerial problems, licensing delays, persistent weaknesses in quality assurance for the program, and increasing costs.

No repository or reprocessing facility for spent nuclear fuel has been licensed in the U.S. The federal waste disposal program is paid for by the nuclear electricity generators and waste owners. Under the provisions of the federal Nuclear Waste Policy Act, utilities pay regular fees to the Nuclear Waste Fund to pay for siting, construction and operating a federal waste repository. California ratepayers have paid billions to fund a repository that has never been built. Reprocessing (the separation of spent fuel into high-level wastes and reusable fuel) remains substantially more expensive than waste storage and disposal and has adverse implications for the U.S. effort to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

While CEC does not have a recent independent evaluation, NRC, DOE, and Congressional reports confirm that the U.S. does not have a permanent repository or reprocessing facility for commercial spent nuclear fuel. While the U.S. has a disposal facility for defense-generated nuclear waste from DOE sites, it does not accept commercial spent nuclear fuel. Commercial spent nuclear fuel is stored at reactor sites.

As far as the committee can ascertain, no "microreactor" or associated spent fuel storage facility has been licensed by the NRC. Transporting active microreactors and nuclear fuel on public roads or railways, where they would be more susceptible to accidents or sabotage, would seem to magnify the inherent safety and security risks.

It should also be noted that a mobile or modular "microreactor" may not be subject to either CEC or local government land use authority. Combine this possibility with the potential for the microreactor to be used to power the same data centers, chip fabricators, or other power-

hungry facilities seeking to claim exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act as “advanced manufacturing” under the botched exemption enacted by last year’s SB 131.

2) **Author’s statement:**

California’s nuclear moratorium was enacted in 1976 under very different technological and energy-market conditions, at a time when advanced reactor designs did not exist and when policymakers anticipated a near-term federal solution for permanent waste disposal. Nearly 50 years later, that statutory framework has remained unchanged despite major advancements in nuclear engineering, passive safety systems, fuel efficiency, and modular construction techniques. Meanwhile, California faces persistent grid reliability warnings during extreme weather events, some of the highest retail electricity rates in the nation, and a statutory mandate under SB 100 to achieve 100 percent clean electricity by 2045. Achieving deep decarbonization while maintaining affordability and reliability requires firm, dispatchable, zero-emission resources to complement intermittent renewables and storage.

AB 1757 does not repeal California’s longstanding moratorium; instead, it creates a narrow and carefully structured carveout to allow the deployment of nuclear microreactors—small-scale advanced reactors designed with enhanced passive safety features, reduced fuel volumes, and compact footprints. These systems are federally licensed by the NRC, DOE, or DOD and are intended for applications such as industrial facilities, research campuses, remote communities, military installations, or critical infrastructure, rather than broad commercial baseload deployment. By establishing clear guardrails—continued federal oversight, compliance with waste management requirements, and appropriate state regulatory coordination, this bill enables innovation without compromising safety or environmental protections. AB 1757 ensures California has the option to responsibly assess next-generation nuclear technology as part of a diversified, resilient, and affordable clean energy portfolio.

3) **Is the California moratorium to blame for the lack of nuclear power development?**

Proponents of nuclear power must consider the array of reasons that very few nuclear power plants have proceeded to construction in the U.S. since before the accident at Three Mile Island in 1979.

Many other states enacted conditions, moratoria or bans (e.g., Connecticut, Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, Oregon, West Virginia, Wisconsin) in response to the economic and environmental problems plaguing nuclear power in the 1970’s. However, nuclear power has not thrived in the many states without any legal limitations on its development. Several western states are potential sites for nuclear power plants that could serve the California electricity market.

Among the many reasons, in addition to lack of public acceptance, is the fact that nuclear power has not been the choice of the market during the past 30 years of increasing deregulation and competition in the electric utility industry. Cost, financial risk, and need for government/public support for insurance and waste management/disposal all suggest that nuclear power is more suited for centrally-planned, monopolistic approaches to electricity supply, such as the model employed in France.

4) Prior legislation:

AB 305 (Arambula) exempted “small modular reactors” (SMR, a nuclear reactor up to 300 megawatts per unit) from the conditional moratorium and required the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to adopt a plan to increase the procurement of electricity generated from nuclear facilities and to phase out the procurement of electricity generated from natural gas facilities. In 2025, AB 305 died in this committee without a hearing.

AB 65 (Mathis) was identical to AB 305. AB 65 failed in this committee on April 10, 2023.

AB 1035 (DeVore) exempted from the CEC power plant certification laws the first nuclear power plant to obtain an early site permit from the NRC. AB 1035 failed in this committee on April 20, 2009.

AB 1776 (DeVore) repealed the moratorium and established new conditions on siting new nuclear plants related to seismic hazard, cooling water outflow and waste storage. AB 1776 failed in this committee on April 7, 2008.

AB 2788 (DeVore) was identical to AB 1035. AB 2788 failed in this committee on April 7, 2008.

AB 719 (DeVore) repealed the moratorium. AB 719 failed in this committee on April 16, 2007.

- 5) **Related legislation.** AB 2647 (Calderon) exempts “advanced nuclear reactors,” as defined, from both moratoria, provided the projects meets specified requirements requiring construction workers. AB 2647 is pending in this committee.
- 6) **Double referral.** This bill is double-referred to the Assembly Utilities and Energy Committee.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

Radiant Industries

Opposition

Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility
Clean Earth 4 Kids
Climate Resolve
Committee to Bridge the Gap
Ecological Options Network
Environment California
Fresnans Against Fracking
Parents Against SSFL
Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles
Resource Renewal Institute

Samuel Lawrence Foundation
San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace
Santa Cruz Climate Action Network
Sierra Club California
SoCal 350 Climate Action
The Utility Reform Network (TURN)
Union of Concerned Scientists

Analysis Prepared by: Lawrence Lingbloom / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 1960 (Bennett) – As Amended March 26, 2026

SUBJECT: Wildfire Prevention Grants Program: identified cohesive fire communities

SUMMARY: Authorizes self-identified cohesive fire communities, upon certification of any home hardening certification program for having achieved 50% home hardening, to be eligible for grant funds from the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires CAL FIRE to establish a local assistance grant program for fire prevention and home hardening education activities in California and extends eligibility for grants to, among others, local agencies, resource conservation districts, fire safe councils, the California Conservation Corps, certified community conservation corps, Native American tribes, and qualified nonprofit organizations. (Public Resources Code (PRC) 4142.5)
- 2) Requires CAL FIRE to develop and implement a training program to train individuals to support and augment the department in its defensible space and home hardening assessment and public education efforts. (PRC 4291.6)
- 3) Defines “home hardening” as the replacement or repair of structural features that are affixed to the property with features that are in compliance with Chapter 7A (commencing with Section 701A.1) of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR). (PRC 4291.5 (a)(1))
- 4) Mandates in the California Building Standards Code strict, fire-resistant construction standards for new buildings, additions, and renovations in Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) fire areas and requires ignition-resistant materials for roofs, eaves, exterior walls, and windows to protect structures from ember intrusion and radiant heat. (Chapter 7A of Part 2 CCR Title 24)
- 5) Requires the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) to enter into a joint powers agreement with CAL FIRE to develop and administer a comprehensive wildfire mitigation program to (1) encourage cost-effective structure hardening and retrofitting that creates fire-resistant homes, businesses, and public buildings, and (2) vegetation management, the creation and maintenance of defensible space, and other fuel modification activities that provide neighborhood or communitywide benefits against wildfire. (Government Code (GC) 8654.4)
- 6) Requires the State Fire Marshal (SFM), in consultation with CAL FIRE and the Director of Housing and Community Development, to identify building retrofits and structure hardening measures eligible for financial assistance under the wildfire mitigation program that are both cost-effective and provide for appropriate site or structure fire risk reduction. (GC 8654.5)
- 7) Requires, on and after July 1, 2021, a seller of a real property that is located in a high or very high fire hazard severity zone (VHFHSZ) in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and Local

Responsibility Area (LRA), to provide to the buyer documentation stating that the property is in compliance with defensible space requirements. (Civil Code 1102.19)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Defines “identified cohesive fire community” as a neighborhood that has reached 50% of homes certified by any home hardening certification program approved by the SFM on or before June 1, 2027.
- 2) Authorizes any group of residents to apply to CAL FIRE for identified cohesive fire community status. Requires the application to include the community’s justification for why it is a distinct community that should qualify as an identified cohesive fire community.
- 3) Authorizes CAL FIRE to, commencing with the 2028–29 fiscal year, disburse up to 20% of funds appropriated for the Wildfire Prevention Grants Program to identified cohesive fire communities to use for activities related to hazardous fuels reduction, wildfire prevention planning, and wildfire prevention education, among other activities.
- 4) Requires the identified fire cohesive community to work with a fire safe council to be eligible. Requires the fire safe council to be the entity that receives and manages any funding received from the program.
- 5) Requires applications from an identified fire cohesive communities to receive additional points to their application score.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

1) **Author’s statement:**

Last year, we watched entire communities destroyed by ferocious wildfires. As California continues to grapple with more frequent, intense, and destructive wildfires, we need to ensure whole neighborhoods won’t be decimated. AB 1960 allows CAL FIRE to disperse Wildfire Prevention Grant funding to communities that have reached at least 50% of homes hardened. This bill incentivizes California’s communities to reduce risk together, rather than one home at a time. Through strategic planning, retrofitting, and engagement, Californians will decrease property loss and become more resilient in the face of climate change.

- 2) **Reducing wildfire risk.** There are various measures (some of which are statutorily required) that reduce wildfire risk in a fire hazard severity zone (FHSZ), and in conjunction with one another, multiply risk reduction.

Defensible space is the buffer created between a building on a property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surrounds it. This space is needed to slow or stop the spread of wildfire, and it helps protect structures from catching fire. A 2019 analysis done by CAL FIRE of the relationship between defensible space compliance and destruction of structures during the seven largest fires that occurred in California in 2017 and 2018 concluded that the

odds of a structure being destroyed by wildfire were roughly five times greater for noncompliant structures compared to compliant ones.

The defensible space requirements for all structures within the three FHSZs in the SRA and VHFHSZs in the LRA is 100 feet. CAL FIRE additionally requires the removal of all dead plants, grass, and weeds, and the removal of dry leaves and pine needles within 30 feet of a structure. The Board of Forestry and Fire Prevention is currently drafting regulations for a 0-5 foot ember-resistant zone for structures located in the FHSZs (known as Zone 0).

Home hardening includes vegetation management compliance and building materials used to resist the intrusion of flames or embers projected by a wildland fire. It can be applied to new construction or for retrofitting an older home. Home hardening considers the relationship between a structure and its exposure to nearby combustible features such as vegetation, vehicles, accessory buildings, or even miscellaneous structures like a fence.

California's wildfire building code (known colloquially by its citation reference as Chapter 7A) went into effect in 2008 and mandates fire-resistant siding, tempered glass, vegetation management, and ignition-resistant roofs, standards for vents, decks, under eaves, siding, windows, gutters, vents for attics and crawlspaces designed to resist embers and flames. These standards, which are periodically updated, have been shown to work. An analysis by the Sacramento Bee showed that approximately 51% of the 350 single-family homes built after 2008 in the path of the Camp Fire were undamaged. By contrast, only 18% of the 12,100 homes built prior to 2008 escaped damage. Factors that can cause post-2008 homes to combust include not having adequate defensible space and proximity to neighboring non-fire hardened homes.

- 3) **Fire resilience inspections.** In 2023, the SFM established a statewide program to allow qualified entities to support CAL FIRE in its defensible space and home hardening assessment and education efforts. This includes educating property owners about wildfire safety improvements that may be undertaken to harden a structure and make it more resistant to wildfire and assessing whether wildfire safety improvements have been completed on or around a structure.

A pilot program was established using trained personnel from the El Dorado County Fire Safe Council with the first Defensible Space and Home Hardening Assessor course being taught in April 2023. The California Conservation Corps hosted a training for its corpsmembers and staff in the fall of 2023. As of May 2025, there were 214 trained assessors under the program.

CAL FIRE estimates there are about 1.25 million structures in the SRA and an additional 870,000 structures in LRA VHFHSZs¹. Combined, this is estimated to be 17% of all structures statewide. In 2022, CAL FIRE inspected 194,176 homes, up from 83,714 in 2021, representing a major increase due to extended staffing. Further augmented staffing will accelerate the state's ability to meet its goal of completing 250,000 defensible space inspections annually and inspecting a home once every three years.

The Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4) authorizes \$135 million to CalOES for a wildfire mitigation grant program, which will be available, among other things, as grants under the Home

Hardening Program to retrofit, harden, or create defensible space for homes at high risk of wildfire in order to protect California communities, and \$50 million for CalOES to provide grants to conduct fuel reduction, structure hardening, create defensible space, reforestation, or targeted acquisitions to improve forest health and fire resilience. CAL FIRE is requesting \$6.2 million and 31 positions for the Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget and ongoing annual appropriations.

There currently is no dedicated home hardening inspection and certification program. AB 1934 (Bennett) requires, by January 1, 2028, the SFM's Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee to develop a home hardening certification program that identifies home hardening measures that can be voluntarily implemented. Until that bill, or another requirement or administrative effort to certify home hardening is enacted, this bill will not go into effect.

- 4) **Can we create meaningful “herd immunity” with these actions?** Defensible space, in combination with home hardening, substantially reduces a home's ignition risk and increases its resistance from embers, radiant heat, and flame impingement.

The creation and maintenance of defensible space around private properties is an owner responsibility. When homeowners or other property owners fail to maintain defensible space, they can put their neighbors and the larger community at greater risk of devastating wildfires, which can have myriad negative impacts on the state.

Implementation of defensible space requirements works best when applied to all or the majority of structures in the areas where the requirements are intended to be applied. The Legislative Analyst's Office 2021 report on defensible space explains, “While homeowners benefit from defensible space on their properties, the benefits extend to others, as well. For example, when homeowners maintain defensible space, their homes are less likely to ignite other nearby homes, overwhelm firefighters, and ultimately threaten larger communities with wildfire disasters. As such, an individual homeowner's decision to create and maintain defensible space can help protect communities, governments, and insurers from the significant costs of wildfire disasters.” In other words, a resident in the WUI may comply with all of the applicable defensible space requirements, but those clearances will only keep so much fire at bay if the adjacent structures are not managed and have surrounding vegetation that feeds a burning fire.

According to fire simulation-based research by Kunreuther, et al. (2023), researchers found that when homes are closer together, the percentage of mitigated homes needed to reach peak marginal benefit increases. The research was done based on the assumption that mitigations reduced fire spread by 80%, and the marginal benefit of mitigations peaked between 35-60% of the housing stock depending on spacing between homes. What that suggests is that while there is not much benefit in hardening/defending a small percentage of homes, communities may not need to harden/defend 100% of the homes in a given community to reach a ‘herd immunity’ condition where the expected wildfire losses drop back down to a level we can handle.

- 5) **Wildfire Prevention Grants Program.** CAL FIRE's Wildfire Grants Program (Program) is a broad set of competitive grants to fund wildfire prevention and related activities, which includes the wildfire prevention grants funded by California Climate Investments (cap-and-trade funds) and other state appropriations. These grants enable local organizations like fire

safe councils, to implement activities that address the hazards of wildfire and reduce wildfire risk to communities, including hazardous fuels reduction, wildfire planning, education and outreach, and other ecosystem-based activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect public health.

This bill authorizes a group of residents to apply to CAL FIRE as an “identified cohesive fire community” as having reached 50% of its homes certified by any home hardening certification program in order to be eligible for funding from the Wildfire Prevention Grants Program. The application is required to include the community’s justification for *why* it is a distinct community that should qualify as an identified cohesive fire community, which could be tethered to current Program eligibility requirements, fire hazard severity zone designation, details on home hardening retrofits, plans and resources for maintaining defensible space, past wildfire footprints on or near the neighborhood, and so forth.

- 6) **How is a neighborhood defined?** There is no statutory or uniform definition for “neighborhood,” so it is unclear how 50% of a neighborhood will be determined to be home hardened if the parameters are unknown. This bill could instead lean on the definition of “community” as it’s defined in GC 65302.10 (a)(1), which is defined as an inhabited area within a city or county that is comprised of no fewer than 10 dwellings adjacent or in close proximity to one another.
- 7) **Fire Safe Councils.** Fire Safe Councils are grassroots community-based organizations in California that share the objective of making communities less vulnerable to catastrophic wildfire. Fire safe councils use education programs and projects such as shaded fuel breaks or firebreaks to protect area residents against an oncoming wildfire and to provide firefighters with a place to fight the oncoming fire. The first fire safe councils started in the early 1990s, and there are now more than 100 around the state.

It is unclear if there is a fire safe council in every community where an identified cohesive fire community would want to apply for funding. It is also unclear how the fire safe council would manage any funds awarded by the state.
- 8) **Establishing priority.** While community-wide coordination and shared investment in fire resiliency should be acknowledged, the real reward is the increased fire resiliency shared by neighbors. Communities that have invested in home hardening and defensible space maintenance are less likely to need state resources for wildfire prevention activities over other communities who do not have compliance with home hardening and defensible space. The upfront costs, absent a state subsidy or grant, can be cost prohibitive for many disadvantaged and low-income communities – and those are the communities that should be prioritized for the Wildfire Prevention Grants. The bill could prioritize disadvantaged communities for state funding while still rewarding eligibility to those communities who have successfully been certified.
- 9) **Double referral.** This bill is also referred to the Assembly Emergency Management Committee.
- 10) **Committee amendments.** The *committee may wish to consider* amending the bill to:
 - a) Define “community” pursuant to GC 65302.10 (a)(1);

- b) Create tiered percentages of achieved community home hardening to be eligible for the certification;
- c) Allow certification of an identified cohesive fire safe community by an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit scientific research and communications organization supported by property insurers, reinsurers, and affiliated companies until a state home hardening certification program is created;
- d) Strike (b) and instead require an identified cohesive fire community to work with a fire safe council to apply on their behalf to CAL FIRE for grant funding from the Wildfire Prevention Grants Program;
- e) Strike the 20% earmark in the wildfire Prevention Grants Program for identified cohesive fire communities;
- f) Require a fire safe council to determine how to use the funds in the identified cohesive fire safe community for hazardous fuels reduction, wildfire prevention planning, and wildfire prevention education, among other activities; and,
- g) Strike the provision of application points and instead require CAL FIRE to prioritize disadvantaged fire cohesive communities.

11) **Related legislation:**

AB 1934 (Bennett) Requires the SFM's Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee to develop a home hardening certification program that identifies home hardening measures, including defensible space, that can be voluntarily implemented during renovation or property improvement projects, or both, to substantially reduce the risk of loss during a fire and bring existing building stock into alignment with state building standards for wildland-urban interface area. This bill is referred to the Emergency Management Committee.

AB 1986 (Bennett) Requires, upon request for a premium quote for residential property insurance, an insurer to provide a premium quote for the residential property that includes the price of insurance if the property is certified as "hardened" by a home hardening certification program established or approved by the SFM and a premium quote for the residential property in its current state. This bill is referred to the Assembly Insurance Committee.

AB 261 (Quirk Silva, 2025) Authorizes the SFM to confer with entities and members of the public on actions that may impact the degree of fire hazard in an area or the area's recommended FHSZ designation, and authorizes the SFM to provide a written response to an entity on actions that may impact the degree of fire hazard, and would require this written response to be posted on the SFM's internet website. This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 1143 (Bennett, 2025) Requires, on or before January 1, 2027, the SFM's Wildfire Mitigation Advisory Committee to develop a home hardening certification program that identifies home hardening measures, including defensible space, that can be implemented during renovation or property improvement projects, or both, to substantially reduce the risk of loss during a fire and bring existing building stock into alignment with state building standards for wildland-urban interface areas. This bill was vetoed by the governor.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Fire Chiefs Association
Fire Districts Association of California
Matador Fire
Sierra Club

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Paige Brokaw / NAT. RES. /

ⁱ [fire-safety-zone-zone-0-faq-sept-17-2025.pdf](#)

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2184 (Wilson) – As Introduced March 26, 2026

SUBJECT: Cap-and-Invest Program: nature-based climate solutions: funding

SUMMARY: Requires, after specified expenditures, \$250 million to be appropriated from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) in the annual Budget Act annually from fiscal year (FY) 2027-2028 to 2045-2046, for solutions on natural, working, and urban lands pursuant to targets established by the Natural Resources Agency (NRA), the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the Air Resources Board (ARB).

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires the Air Resources Board (ARB) to prepare and approve a scoping plan for achieving the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from sources or categories of sources of GHGs by 2020. (Health and Safety Code (HSC) 38561)
- 2) Requires the GHG emissions reduction limit to be at least 85% below the 1990 level by 2045 and establishes a goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2045, commonly known as carbon neutrality. (HSC 38562.2)
- 3) Requires, on or before January 1, 2024, the Natural Resources Agency (NRA), in collaboration with ARB, the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), the Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), the expert advisory committee, and other relevant state agencies, to determine an ambitious range of targets for natural carbon sequestration, and for nature-based climate solutions, that reduce GHGs for 2030, 2038, and 2045 to support state goals to achieve carbon neutrality and foster climate adaptation and resilience. Requires these targets to be integrated into the scoping plan and other state policies. (HSC 38561.5)
- 4) Defines “nature-based climate solutions” as activities, such as restoration, conservation, and land management actions, that increase net carbon sequestration or reduce GHG emissions in natural and working lands. (HSC 38561.5 (a)(3))
- 5) Establishes the GGRF and requires all moneys in the GGRF to be available for appropriation by the Legislature. Requires all moneys deposited in the GGRF to be appropriated and be separately identified in the annual Budget Act. (Government Code 16428.8)
- 6) Requires that moneys in the GGRF be used to facilitate the achievement of GHG emissions reductions. Specifies that moneys appropriated from the GGRF may be allocated to reduce GHG emissions in the state through investments that include, but are not limited to, funding to reduce GHG emissions:

- a) Through energy efficiency, clean and renewable energy generation, distributed renewable energy generation, transmission and storage, and related actions;
 - b) Through the development of state-of-the-art systems to move goods and freight, advanced technology vehicles and vehicle infrastructure, advanced biofuels, and low-carbon and efficient public transportation;
 - c) Associated with water use and supply, land and natural resource conservation and management, forestry, and sustainable agriculture;
 - d) Through increased in-state diversion of municipal solid waste from disposal through waste reduction, diversion, and reuse;
 - e) Through investments in programs implemented by local and regional agencies, local and regional collaboratives, Native American tribes in the state, and nonprofit organizations; and,
 - f) Research, development, and deployment of innovative technologies, measures, and practices related to programs and projects. (HSC 39712)
- 7) Requires the Legislature to appropriate the GGRF for the purpose of reducing GHG emissions in accordance with the requirements of HSC 39712. (HSC 39719 (a))
- 8) Requires the annual proceeds of the GGRF to be continuously appropriated for the following:
- a) 35% for transit, affordable housing, and sustainable communities programs, as specified;
 - b) 25% to the High-Speed Rail Authority for the specified components of the initial operating segment and Phase I Blended System as described in the 2012 business plan;
 - c) 5% of the annual proceeds of the GGRF, up to \$130 million, to the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund, until June 30, 2030; and,
 - d) \$200 million to Department of Forestry and Fire Protection for healthy forest and fire prevention programs through FY 2028-29. (HSC 39719 (b))
- 9) Dictates, beginning with the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the priority in which GGRF moneys are to be allocated. (HSC 39719.4)
- 10) States the intent of the Legislature to prioritize funding for air toxic and criterial air pollutants; low- and zero-carbon transportation alternatives; sustainable agriculture practices; healthy forests and urban greening; nature-based climate solutions; short-lived climate pollutants; climate adaptation and resiliency; and, climate and clean energy research. (HSC 38590.1)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Requires, after the amounts in HSC 39719 (a)-(b) and HSC 39719.4 are fully allocated as determined by the Department of Finance, \$250 million to be appropriated from the GGRF in the annual Budget Act each FY from the 2027–2028 through the 2045–46 fiscal year, inclusive, to achieve nature-based climate solutions, as follows:
 - a) \$150 million to NRA to fund nature-based climate solutions necessary to achieve the targets set pursuant to HSC 38561.5, and to draw down and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere in soils and biomass while also protecting wildlife habitat, enhancing biodiversity, and increasing clean air, water and food security.
 - b) \$100 million for nature-based climate solutions at the discretion of the Legislature to achieve the targets set pursuant to HSC 38561.5.
- 2) Requires, after the amounts in HSC 39719 (a)-(b) and HSC 39719.4 are fully allocated as determined by the Department of Finance, \$150 million to be appropriated from the GGRF in the annual Budget Act each FY from the 2027–2028 through the 2045–46 fiscal year, inclusive, to fund sustainable agricultural practices and nature-based climate solutions that reduce methane, nitrous oxide, and carbon dioxide emissions and input costs for farmers, increase carbon sequestration and climate resilience, improve water quality, air quality, and other environmental and public health benefits, and maintain food security and affordability, including:
 - a) Multibenefit manure management systems that reduce methane emissions and water use, improve water quality, and increase compost production and soil health;
 - b) Solar-powered, electric, and high-efficiency irrigation systems that reduce nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide emissions and energy use, and improve water use efficiency, water quality, and air quality; and,
 - c) Healthy soils practices and organic systems that reduce nitrous oxide emissions, soil carbon loss, fertilizer and pesticide use, and dust and increase carbon sequestration, water infiltration and retention, drought and flood resilience, and biodiversity.
- 3) Authorizes the use of up to 10% of the total funding allocated under this bill to be used for technical assistance.
- 4) Specifies that for any fiscal year in which the Department of Finance determines that, if after fully allocating the amounts in in HSC 39719 (a)-(b) and HSC 39719.4, there are insufficient annual proceeds to fully fund the appropriations in this bill, the allocated funds be proportionally allocated, as specified.
- 5) Specifies that funded nature-based climate solutions and sustainable agriculture practices shall maximize co-benefits to the greatest degree possible, as specified.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Nature-based solutions.** Current law defines natural lands as lands consisting of forests, grasslands, deserts, freshwater and riparian systems, wetlands, coastal and estuarine areas, watersheds, wildlands, or wildlife habitat, or lands used for recreational purposes such as parks, urban and community forests, trails, greenbelts, and other similar open-space land. Working lands include lands used for farming, grazing, or the production of forest products. Natural and working lands cover approximately 90% of the state's 105 million acres, including California Native American tribes' ancestral and cultural lands and waters.

Healthy natural and working lands can sequester and store carbon, limit future carbon emissions into the atmosphere, protect people and nature from the impacts of climate change, and build resilience to future climate risks. Forests and shrublands contain the majority of California's carbon stock because they cover the majority of California's landscape and have the highest carbon density of any type of land cover.

AB 1757 (Garcia), Chapter 341, Statutes of 2022, requires NRA to develop an ambitious range of targets for natural carbon sequestration, and for nature-based climate solutions, that reduce GHGs for 2030, 2038, and 2045, to support state goals to achieve carbon neutrality and foster climate adaptation and resilience

In February, ARB released the second edition of California's Natural and Working Lands Carbon Inventory, an updated inventory calculating carbon stored in California's natural and working lands using design principles established by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The data show plants have absorbed twice the carbon lost to wildfires, demonstrating the important role of nature as the state works toward carbon neutrality.

The inventory is developed to identify how lands can help California achieve carbon neutrality by measuring annual gains and losses year over year. The inventory shows that California lands store nearly five billion metric tons of carbon with more than 70% of all carbon in forests and shrublands. The inventory accounts for all organic carbon stored in living and dead biomass, near-surface soils, and wood products harvested from within the state.

ARB produced the inventory using design principles established by the IPCC and a combination of remote sensing data and ground-based measurement data.

The inventory underscores the massive amount of carbon in California's vegetation and soils and the importance of achieving state's nature-based solutions climate targets.

- 2) **GGRF investments.** AB 1207 (Irwin), Chapter 117, Statutes of 2025, extends authorization for ARB's cap-and-trade regulation through 2045; requires ARB to ensure that emissions from covered sources decline with the 2030 and 2045 GHG emissions targets; maintains existing offsets limits, but requires offsets to be exchanged for allowances under the emissions cap; unfreezes industry assistance factors used to determine allocation of free allowances, allowing ARB, beginning in 2031, to set factors to minimize leakage risk; extends regulatory protections for the oil and gas industry; and, revises use of revenue from allocation of allowances to utilities to increase and target credits on electric utility bills, except for 5% of revenues directed to support public financing of transmission projects.

SB 804 (Limón), Chapter 121, Statutes of 2025, establishes a new structure for allocating the GGRF beginning with FY 2026-27, including \$1 billion for high-speed rail, \$1 billion reserved for discretionary appropriation, commitments to other major categories consistent with previous appropriations, and \$3 million to establish a new climate bureau at Legislative Counsel. This bill additionally requires ARB to update all existing compliance offset protocols to reflect best available science.

- 3) **This bill.** This bill is intended to ensure long-term funding for nature-based climate solutions by directing moneys in the GGRF available after meeting current statutory requirements for this purpose. The author states that the conservation and restoration of natural, working, and urban lands will not only reduce climate pollution but will also provide the necessary adaptation benefits to safeguard California communities and ecosystems from climate extremes. The author notes that nature-based climate solutions have historically been underfunded, in spite of their potential to deliver climate benefits. Unlike many other climate priorities, nature-based solutions do not currently receive any continuously appropriated funding.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

350 Bay Area Action
American Bird Conservancy
California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF)
California Climate & Agriculture Network (CALCAN)
California State Parks Foundation
California Wildlife Foundation
Californians Against Waste
Californians for Pesticide Reform
Carbon Cycle Institute
Center for Environmental Health
Climate Health Now Action Fund
Community Environmental Council
Endangered Habitats League
Environment California
Escondido Creek Conservancy
FACTS: Families Advocating for Chemical & Toxics Safety
Friends Committee on Legislation of California
Friends of Plumas Wilderness
Hills for Everyone
Jonas Philanthropies
Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
Los Angeles Waterkeeper
Mono Lake Committee
Office of Kat Taylor
Pacific Forest Trust
Pesticide Action & Agroecology Network
Planning and Conservation League

River Partners
San Francisco Baykeeper
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
Santa Cruz Climate Action Network
Save the Bay
Sequoia Riverlands Trust
Sierra Consortium
Sierra Nevada Alliance
South Yuba River Citizens League
Straus Family Creamery
Sugar Pine Foundation
The Climate Center
The Wildlands Conservancy
Wild Farm Alliance
Wildcoast

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Elizabeth MacMillan / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2234 (Papan) – As Introduced February 19, 2026

SUBJECT: California Environmental Quality Act: geothermal exploratory projects

SUMMARY: Revises the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) definition of “geothermal exploratory project” to accommodate “enhanced” geothermal exploration techniques.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) CEQA requires lead agencies with the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a proposed project to prepare a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report (EIR) for this action, unless the project is exempt from CEQA. (Public Resources Code (PRC) 21000 *et seq.*)
- 2) Provides that the Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) shall be the CEQA lead agency for all geothermal exploratory projects. However, CalGEM is authorized to delegate its lead agency responsibility to a county that has adopted a geothermal element for its general plan (e.g., Sonoma County). Requires a county to assume lead agency responsibility upon the request of a geothermal exploratory project applicant to the county and CalGEM. Requires a county lead agency to confer with CalGEM regarding necessary information that should be included in the environmental review for the project to facilitate CalGEM’s exercise of its authority as a responsible agency. (PRC 3715.5)
- 3) Defines “geothermal exploratory project” as a project composed of not more than six wells and associated drilling and testing equipment, whose chief and original purpose is to evaluate the presence and characteristics of geothermal resources prior to commencement of a geothermal field development. Wells included within a geothermal exploratory project must be located at least one-half mile from geothermal development wells which are capable of producing geothermal resources in commercial quantities. (PRC 21065.5)
- 4) Defines “geothermal field development project” as a development project composed of geothermal wells, resource transportation lines, production equipment, roads, and other facilities which are necessary to supply geothermal energy to any particular heat utilization equipment for its productive life, all within an area delineated by the applicant. (Government Code 65928.5)

THIS BILL revises the definition of “geothermal exploratory project” to specifically include “equipment and activities necessary to establish interconnectivity between wells and reservoirs, temporary roads, electric distribution lines, and infrastructure to provide power for drilling and testing equipment” and adds exceptions to one-half mile limit for “wells connecting to geothermal reservoirs whose permeability or capacity to allow the flow of geothermal fluids, including water, has been increased from its natural or original state through stimulation, horizontal drilling, the use of closed-loop configurations, or other techniques.”

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Background.** Geothermal is a form of renewable energy defined as heat energy from the earth. Geothermal resources are reservoirs of hot water that are naturally occurring or are manufactured to operate at varying temperatures and depths below the earth's surface. Wells, ranging from a few feet to several miles deep, can be drilled into underground reservoirs to tap steam and hot water that can be brought to the surface for use in electricity generation, direct heating, and industrial processes. The United States is the world's largest producer of geothermal electricity and California has the highest geothermal capacity of all states. "The Geysers" geothermal steam field, located within Lake, Mendocino, and Sonoma Counties, contains 349 out of California's 563 high-temperature geothermal wells. Imperial County (including the Salton Sea) houses 194 wells, and the remaining 20 are located in Lassen, Modoc, and Mono Counties. California has installed 2,627 MW of geothermal nameplate capacity – accounting for 72% of the total geothermal plant capacity in the United States. Many of these geothermal resource areas are known to have been inhabited and visited by Native Americans for thousands of years prior to European settlement.

Under current law, a geothermal project is divided into two discrete components for purposes of CEQA. The "exploration" phase involves drilling one or more exploration wells at a given site to map out the subsurface environment and assess exactly where a new geothermal power plant should be located. The subsequent "geothermal field development" phase involves drilling the necessary injector and producer wells, building the power plant, grid connections, and associated infrastructure. This phase is much more complicated and expansive. Typically, a geothermal developer cannot move forward with geothermal field development until some level of exploration has taken place as they need to site the wells in precisely the right location to make sure they are getting enough heat to support power generation, and that information can only be ascertained through exploration.

This bill expands the definition of geothermal exploratory project, explicitly including temporary roads and power lines, while also relaxing the prohibition on exploratory wells within one-half mile of existing commercial wells. Though not explicit, these changes appear to be intended to accommodate more intensive exploration activities associated with "enhanced" geothermal systems, which may include hydraulic, thermal, chemical and/or explosive well stimulation techniques not previously used in California for geothermal production.

- 2) **Author's statement:**

AB 2234 can expand clean energy generation head-on by modernizing the statutory definition of "geothermal exploratory projects" to reflect emerging geothermal technologies.

California has a massive underground network of untapped geothermal energy. While the industry has taken great strides toward unlocking this firm energy source and supplying it to end-users, state law has not kept pace with technological advancements. Innovations like closed-loop and enhanced geothermal systems (EGS) can potentially supply many gigawatts more energy than previous technologies. Traditional geothermal is limited in scope since developers rely on naturally occurring groundwater — but these location

restraints do not make sense for new technology that can harness heat from deep within the earth.

The new definition is modernized in two ways; first, by removing the half-mile restriction between exploratory and commercial wells for advanced systems, it acknowledges that newer tech has built-in safeguards to avoid disturbing neighboring wells. Second, the definition recognizes that all equipment and infrastructure necessary for modern development should be considered part of a project, not separate.

By aligning statute with innovation, AB 2234 can expand access to firm, clean energy and signals that California is open for exploration.

3) **Prior legislation.**

AB 527 (Papan, 2025) established a CEQA exemption for geothermal exploratory projects, and included the same definition revisions as this bill. AB 527 passed this committee on April 28, 2025, but was later vetoed by the Governor, who commented:

In addition to delaying much-needed regulations that are already in process, the Division would need to substantially increase fees on geothermal operators to implement the new requirements imposed by the bill. While I support the expansion of the geothermal energy industry in California as a much-needed source of baseload clean power, the increased fees caused by this bill could disincentivize geothermal development in California beyond any incentive provided by a CEQA exemption for one part of a project's permitting process.

Additionally, I signed Assembly Bill 1359 (Papan) last year, which made a series of targeted reforms to the review and approval of geothermal exploration projects. It is prudent that we understand the effects of these changes before granting wholesale CEQA exemptions with costly and complicated conditions.

AB 1359 (Papan), Chapter 678, Statutes of 2024, requires a county to assume lead agency responsibility upon the request of a geothermal exploratory project applicant to the county and CalGEM, and requires a county lead agency to confer with CalGEM regarding necessary information that should be included in the environmental review for the project to facilitate CalGEM's exercise of its authority as a responsible agency.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Sonoma Clean Power (sponsor)

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Lawrence Lingbloom / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2253 (Boerner) – As Introduced February 19, 2026

SUBJECT: Solid waste: products: environmental marketing claims

SUMMARY: Requires that recycled content claims be based on the actual physical recycled content in a product without the use of credit-based mass balance accounting, including free allocation, “book and claim” accounting, or similar approaches that are not based on the actual physical recycled content in the product.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Defines “product” as including, but not limited to:
 - a) A consumer product, as specified;
 - b) A package or packaging component;
 - c) A bag, sack, wrap, or other thin plastic sheet film product; and,
 - d) A food or beverage container or container component, including straws, lids, and utensils. (Public Resources Code (PRC) 42356)
- 2) Defines “plastic food container product” as a product made from plastic that includes a tray, clamshell container, or other receptacle that is used, or intended to be used, to hold food. (PRC 42357.6)
- 3) Requires manufacturers or suppliers making environmental marketing claims relating to the recycled content of a plastic food container product to maintain information and documentation in support of that claim, including the recycled content for materials that have been recovered or otherwise diverted from the solid waste stream either during the manufacturing process (preconsumer) or after consumer use (postconsumer), and the recycled content claim conforms to the uniform standards for recycled content contained in the Federal Trade Commission Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims. (PRC 42357.6)
- 4) Requires a manufacturer or supplier to furnish the information and documentation to any member of the public upon request or to provide the information on its website. (PRC 42357.6)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Defines “postconsumer” as a material that would otherwise be destined for disposal, having completed its intended end use and product life cycle. Specifies that “postconsumer” does not include materials or byproducts generated from, and commonly reused within, an original manufacturing and fabrication process.
- 2) Expands PRC 42357.6 to apply to all products, as defined.

- 3) Requires that recycled content claims be based on the actual physical recycled content in the product without the use of credit-based mass balance accounting, including free allocation, “book and claim” accounting, or similar approaches that are not based on the actual physical recycled content in the product.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Recycled content.** The United States has not developed significant markets for recycled content materials, including plastic. Historically, China has been the largest importer of recyclable materials. In an effort to improve the quality of the materials it accepts and to combat the country's significant environmental challenges, China established Operation National Sword in 2017, which included inspections of imported recyclable materials and a filing with the World Trade Organization indicating its intent to ban the import of 24 types of scrap, including polyethylene terephthalate (PET), high density polyethylene (HDPE), polyvinyl chloride (PVC), and polystyrene (PS) beginning January 1, 2018. In November 2017, China announced that imports of recyclable materials that are not banned will be required to include no more than 0.5 percent contamination.

Following China's actions, other Southeast Asian countries have enacted policies limiting or banning the importation of recyclable plastic materials. Last year, Malaysia and Vietnam implemented import restrictions. India and Thailand have also banned scrap plastic imports.

These limitations are important to reducing plastic pollution worldwide, as these countries have received low-quality mixed plastic waste that is challenging to recycle and has little to no scrap value. The plastic is sorted to remove the materials that can be easily recycled, and the rest is left to be burned or otherwise disposed. In countries with inadequate waste management systems, this can include being left on beaches or otherwise dumped into the environment, contributing to the ocean plastic pollution crisis. For the United States, this has significantly limited our recycling options for plastics.

In order to foster markets for recycled materials, the state has established recycled content requirements for various products. The Rigid Plastic Packaging Container (RPPC) Law requires that RPPCs contain at least 25% postconsumer material, have a recycling rate of 45%, be reusable or refillable, or be a source-reduced container. Plastic beverage containers subject to the state's Bottle Bill are required to contain a minimum of 25% postconsumer recycled plastic through 2029, and 50% on and after January 1, 2030. Statute requires that newsprint contain a minimum of 25% recycled content. Plastic trash bag manufacturers are required to ensure that the bags contain a quantity of postconsumer recycled content equal to 10% of the weight of the regulated bag or ensure that at least 30% of the weight of material used in all of its plastic products is postconsumer recycled content.

- 2) **Mass balance.** Generally, mass balance is a term used to describe chain of custody systems used in the industry to track materials through the production process. Mass balance is widely used to trace materials in supply chains where it is not feasible to physically separate materials. As one chemical producer describes it, “The mass balance approach supports positive environmental impact by substitution of conventional feedstock while not focusing on measurable content in the end product.” Book and claim is similar to mass balance, but

differs in that it does not follow the physical path of a material. Book and claim is more similar to a credit trading system where no amount of physical recycled content may be used in the production process at all, but a “credit” for the amount used elsewhere is claimed as recycled content.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has developed standards to govern the use of mass balance claims. The current ISO standards include:

- Segregated model, which requires physical separation to track actual physical recycled content in a finished product.
 - Controlled blending model, which tracks controlled blending of physical recycled content to determine the actual physical recycled content in a finished product.
 - Rolling average percentage model, which uses the rolling average percentage to track physical recycled content, but allows for physical recycled content fluctuations in individual products. This method is currently used in numerous industries to calculate recycled content for finished products.
 - Proportional credit allocation, allows the use of credits for recycled input into the production process and allows for the allocation of that credit to be distributed proportionally to the various products produced. Fuels can be counted as recycled inputs under this standard.
 - Free credit allocation, allows the use of credits for recycled input into any part of the production process, whether or not any portion of recycled content is in the finished product.
 - Book and claim model, where the recycled content claim is completely decoupled from the physical product. This method is widely used in the renewable energy space, where renewable energy sources are supplied to the grid (booked) and customers downstream can “claim” the renewable energy even though no actual renewable electricity reached their home or business. Fuels can be counted as recycled inputs under this standard.
- 3) **Federal guidance.** Under federal law, unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce are declared unlawful. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has published guidelines (Green Guides) that help explain how the guidelines apply to environmental advertising and marketing, such as claims regarding degradability and recycling content.

While the Green Guides do not explicitly prohibit the use of mass balance claims, they do provide specific examples of how to apply the guidelines. Code of Federal Regulations 260.13 (d) specifies that recycling claims based on the “annual weighted average” (aka, rolling average) of recycled material purchased from the sources after accounting for loss during the production process are not deceptive. In 2023, the FTC began a process to revise the Green Guides and requested input from the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). In its comment letter to the FTC, dated April 20, 2023, the USEPA states that it “does not recommend that the Green Guides promote the mass balance approach as it is not widely implemented or accepted worldwide.” The comment further states that the current weighted average calculation “allows a producer to buy a certain amount of recycled

material, but there is no requirement to use the recycled material. Allowing a producer to advertise that a product contains ‘recycled content’ based on the annual amount of recycled material purchased is deceptive. It would be clearer to focus on calculations that involve the actual amount of material used.” Efforts to revise the guidelines stalled after the change in administration in 2024.

4) **People v. Exxon Mobil Corp.** In 2024, the California Department of Justice (DOJ) filed suit against ExxonMobil and related plastic industry groups based on allegations that the industry has, and continues to, “mislead consumers by engaging in an aggressive campaign to deceive the public and perpetuate the myth that recycling will solve the crisis of plastic pollution.” According to the DOJ:

- The vast majority—92%—of plastic waste processed through ExxonMobil’s “advanced recycling” technology does not become recycled plastic, but rather primarily fuels;
- The plastics that are produced through ExxonMobil’s “advanced recycling” process contain so little plastic that they are effectively virgin plastics deceptively marketed as “circular” and sold at a premium;
- ExxonMobil’s “advanced recycling” process cannot handle large amounts of post-consumer plastic waste without risking the safety and performance of its equipment; and,
- Plastics produced through ExxonMobil’s “advanced recycling” program, in its best case scenario, will only account for less than one percent of its total virgin plastic production capacity, which continues to grow.

Sierra Club, Surfrider Foundation, Heal the Bay, and Baykeeper have also filed a lawsuit against the plastics industry raising similar issues. Both lawsuits are continuing to move through the legal process.

5) **This bill.** This bill is intended to ensure that the recycled content claims made by producers of products, as specified, accurately reflect the amount of postconsumer plastic in the finished product. This bill builds upon an existing requirement for plastic food containers by expanding it to other consumer products and specifying that recycled content claims must indicate the “actual physical recycled content” in the product. Updating these requirements at the state level is necessary to prevent deceptive recycling claims made by the plastics industry, which is especially important as the state implements ambitious new recycling and recycled content requirements.

6) **Author’s statement:**

AB 2253 ensures that consumers know whether the products they are purchasing actually contain recycled content. Currently, companies can utilize accounting to obscure the actual recycled content of their products. This practice of greenwashing means that Californians who think they are making better choices for the environment actually aren’t. And, Californians are not only being misled by these fraudulent claims, but are also paying more for the false belief they are doing good because of misleading claims. California has always been the leader in the nation in protecting consumers and the environment. Californians shouldn’t be bamboozled by these companies’ false marketing on products that are not

green. AB 2253 would protect consumers from deceptive recycled content claims by requiring companies that advertise recycled content in their products to maintain and make available written documentation proving the recycled material was diverted from the waste stream and demonstrate that their claims comply with the Federal Trade Commission standards.

- 7) **Suggested amendment.** While the intent of this bill is to prohibit misleading or deceptive claims regarding recycled content, the current language seems to inadvertently prohibit traditional recycling tracking systems like rolling percent average. In order to ensure that this bill prohibits deceptive accounting systems without hampering the state's existing recycling industry, the *committee may wish to amend the bill* to clarify that it permits accounting approaches used in traditional recycling processes, such as rolling average percentage, while prohibiting deceptive approaches, such as proportional credit allocation, nonproportional and free credit allocation, and book and claim model accounting, that are not based on the actual physical recycled content used in the manufacturing process of a product.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

350 Bay Area Action
 350 Sacramento
 Active San Gabriel Valley
 Ban SUP (Single Use Plastic)
 Beyond Plastics
 Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
 California Environmental Voters
 California Product Stewardship Council
 California State Association of Counties
 Californians Against Waste
 CALPIRG, California Public Interest Research Group
 Center for Environmental Health
 Clean Water Action
 Cleaneearth4kids.org
 Climate Action California
 Climate Reality Project, Orange County
 Day One
 Ecology Center
 Environmental Justice Communities Against Plastics
 Friends Committee on Legislation of California
 Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA)
 Healing and Justice Center
 Indivisible CA: Statestrong
 Just Transition Alliance
 Just Zero
 League of California Cities
 Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
 Nevada County Climate Action Now

Pacific Environment
Physicians for Social Responsibility - Los Angeles
Plastic Pollution Coalition
Purecycle Technologies, Inc.
Regen Monterey
Republic Services
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)
San Francisco Baykeeper
Save the Albatross Coalition
Surfrider Foundation
Sustainable Claremont
The Last Beach Cleanup
The Last Plastic Straw
The Story of Stuff Project
Valley Improvement Projects (VIP)
Wastenot
West Berkeley Alliance for Clean Air and Safe Jobs
Wishtoyo Foundation
Zero Waste Ithaca
Zero Waste San Diego

Opposition

Alliance for Automotive Innovation
Alliance for Chemical Distribution
American Apparel & Footwear Association
American Beverage Association
American Chemistry Council
American Cleaning Institute
American Composites Manufacturers Association
American Institute for Packaging and Environment (AMERIPEN)
Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers
Brea Chamber of Commerce
California Chamber of Commerce
California Food Producers
California Manufacturers & Technology Association
California Retailers Association
Carpet America Recovery Effort
Communications Cable & Connectivity Association
Consumer Brands Association
Corona Chamber of Commerce
Danville Area Chamber of Commerce
EPS Industry Alliance
Fontana Chamber of Commerce
Gateway Chambers Alliance
Glass Packaging Institute
Greater Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce
Greater San Fernando Valley Chamber of Commerce
Household and Commercial Products Association

International Bottled Water Association
International Sleep Products Association
LA Canada Flintridge Chamber of Commerce
Lodi Chamber of Commerce
Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce
Meat Institute
Mission Viejo Chamber of Commerce
Napa Chamber of Commerce
National Association of Printing Ink Manufacturers
National Confectioners Association
Norwalk Chamber of Commerce
Orange County Business Council
Palm Desert Area Chamber of Commerce
Personal Care Products Council
Pet Food Institute
Plastics Industry Association
Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association, the (PIMA)
Power Tool Institute
Printing United Alliance
San Juan Capistrano Chamber of Commerce
Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce
SNAC International
Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance
The Adhesive and Sealant Council
The Toy Association
Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce
Tulare Chamber of Commerce
Vinyl Institute
Western Growers Association
Western Plastics Association
Yorba Linda Chamber of Commerce

Analysis Prepared by: Elizabeth MacMillan / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2254 (Addis) – As Amended March 16, 2026

SUBJECT: Coastal resources: local coastal program: monarch butterfly habitat

SUMMARY: Requires, on and after July 1, 2027, a local government with a monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site located within its jurisdiction and the coastal zone, upon the next amendment to its local coastal plan (LCP), to include monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site protection policies, developed by the California Coastal Commission (Commission).

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Prohibits the take or possession of wildlife for scientific research, education, or propagation purposes without a valid Scientific Collection Permit issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). (Fish and Game Code (FGC) 1002)
- 2) Authorizes CDFW to take feasible actions to conserve monarch butterflies and the unique habitats they depend upon for successful migration. These actions may include, but are not limited to, habitat restoration on department lands, education programs, and voluntary agreements with private landowners. Authorizes CDFW to partner with federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, academic programs, private landowners, and other entities that undertake actions to conserve monarch butterflies and aid their successful migration, including the Monarch Joint Venture. (FGC 1021)
- 3) Establishes the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program to recover and sustain populations of monarch butterflies and other pollinators and to be administered by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). (FGC 1374)
- 4) Pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, makes \$870 million available to WCB for grant programs to protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources and habitat and achieve the state's biodiversity, public access, and conservation goals, including Monarch butterfly and pollinator rescue, among other things. (Public Resources Code (PRC) 93010)
- 5) Pursuant to the California Coastal Act of 1976 (Coastal Act), establishes the Commission, and prescribes the membership and duties of the Commission. (PRC 30301)
- 6) Finds and declares that the California coastal zone is a distinct and valuable natural resource of vital and enduring interest to all the people and exists as a delicately balanced ecosystem, and that the permanent protection of the state's natural and scenic resources is a paramount concern to present and future residents of the state and nation. (PRC 30001)
- 7) Requires each local government lying, in whole or in part, within the coastal zone to prepare a LCP for that portion of the coastal zone within its jurisdiction. (PRC 30500)

- 8) Requires the Commission to adopt, after public hearing, procedures for the preparation, submission, approval, appeal, certification, and amendment of a LCP, as provided. (PRC 30501)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Requires, on or before July 1, 2027, the Commission to develop and provide guidance on model policies to be used by a local government for the protection of monarch butterfly overwintering habitat.
- 2) Requires, on and after July 1, 2027, a local government with a monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site located within its jurisdiction and the coastal zone, upon the next amendment to its LCP, to include monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site protection policies, developed by the Commission.
- 3) Provides that the location of a monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site is determined using the “Monarch Overwintering Areas, Areas of Conservation Emphasis” dataset established by CDFW.
- 4) Requires, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:**1) Author’s statement:**

Monarch butterflies, like many people, travel to California’s coast every year to rest and enjoy the mild climate. However, human development has seriously damaged or even removed their fragile overwintering habitats, which they need to survive harsh winter conditions. Loss of these sites, combined with the constant threat of climate change, has led to a 95% decline in the western monarch butterfly population since the 1980s. As a result, this population is at a serious risk of collapse. As stewards of our natural world, we need to ensure that these sites remain safe and available for the monarchs so that they can have a chance at recovering.

- 2) **Monarch butterflies.** Monarchs (*Danaus plexippus*) are a milkweed butterfly. In North America, monarchs migrate both north and south on an annual basis, making long-distance journeys. Since most of these butterflies only live 2 to 5 weeks, this is a multi-generational migration, with individual monarchs only making part of the full journey. Monarchs travel between 1,200 and 2,800 miles or more from Canada, with Central California as a stop-over on the way to the mountain forests in central Mexico, where they find the right climate conditions to hibernate from the beginning of November to mid-March.

In February 2015, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (US FWS) reported on a study that showed that nearly a billion monarchs had vanished from the butterfly's overwintering sites since 1990. The agency attributed the monarch's decline to the loss and degradation of its breeding, migratory, and overwintering habitats, exposure to insecticides, and the growing impacts of climate change.



Climate change and habitat loss have significantly altered the monarch butterfly's migration behavior. Rising temperatures and the widespread loss of milkweed, the primary host plant for monarch larvae, have disrupted breeding and migratory patterns across North America, contributing to population declines over the past two decades.

According to Xerces Society, sponsor of this bill, the monarch population in California decreased by 86% in 2018, going from millions to tens of thousands of butterflies. The society's annual 2020–2021 winter count showed a further significant decline in the California population. One Pacific Grove site had no monarch butterflies. A primary explanation for this was the destruction of the butterfly's milkweed habitats. This particular population is believed to comprise less than 2,000 individuals as of 2022.

In California, monarchs are not listed under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). They are included on CDFW's Terrestrial and Vernal Pool Invertebrates of Conservation Priority list and identified as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need in California's State Wildlife Action Plan.

In 2014, monarchs were petitioned to be listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. In December 2020, the US FWS found that listing was warranted but precluded by other listing actions on its National Priority List. On December 12, 2024, the Service proposed listing the monarch as threatened with a 4(d) rule and designated critical habitat in California in the western population's overwintering range.

- 3) **Habitat need.** The western monarch population in California overwinters along the coast, where they cluster in forested groves, which provide essential shelter from the elements. Overwintering sites are critical for the survival of the monarchs as they require specific micro-climate conditions to live.

CDFW identifies key monarch overwintering areas, particularly along the coast from Mendocino County to Baja, California, for protection and restoration as part of its Areas of Conservation Emphasis program. These sites are critical for monarch survival, providing winter shelter for the declining western population. This dataset, "Monarch Overwintering Areas, Areas of Conservation Emphasis," includes spatial information on more than 400 known monarch overwintering sites to support non-regulatory conservation, land-use planning, and identifying priority habitats. Protection focuses on coastal groves (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, cypress) that offer necessary microclimates, protecting them from

development and degradation. In partnership with organizations like the Xerces Society CDFW is enhancing 1,500 acres of habitat and improving management strategies on state-owned overwintering sites.

- 4) **Local Coastal Plans.** The Commission administers the Coastal Act and regulates proposed development along the coast and in nearby areas in the coastal zone. Generally, any development activity in the coastal zone requires a coastal development permit (CDP) from the Commission or local government with a certified LCP. About 88% of the coastal zone is governed by a certified LCP. There are 14 jurisdictions (out of 15 counties and 61 cities) without LCPs – also known as “uncertified” jurisdictions – where the Commission is still the permitting authority for CDPs.

This bill requires the Commission to develop and provide guidance on model policies to be used by a local government for the protection of monarch butterfly overwintering habitat, and requires a local government with a monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site located within its jurisdiction and the coastal zone to include monarch butterfly overwintering habitat site protection policies upon the next amendment to its LCP.

Updating an LCP is no small feat; the document is complex and requires significant staff time and resources to complete.

The League of California Cities, California State Association of Counties, and the Rural County Representatives of California express concerns that LCPs are not site-specific plans – they are long-range land use planning documents intended to guide decision-making and permitting in the coastal zone. If there are overwintering specific sites that need greater protection, the development of habitat management plans would be the most appropriate planning mechanism to provide specific protection or mitigations for such sites. There are already local governments that have existing habitat management plans for monarch butterflies and their overwintering sites, which is a more appropriate planning tool to address site specific issues.

To address those concerns, the bill could direct CDFW and the Commission to first identify the monarch butterfly overwintering habitat sites in the coastal zone and then develop guidance on model policies that can be used by a local government for the protection of monarch butterfly overwintering habitat. The state could solicit data sets from local governments, organizations focused on conservation of invertebrates and their habitats, and other relevant and reliable entities to inform their guidance development.

The author may wish to consider working with local governments to further address their concerns about mandating LCP updates.

- 5) **Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program.** The Monarch Butterfly and Pollinator Rescue Program (Program) was created by AB 2421 (Stone), Chapter 760, Statutes of 2018, for the purpose of recovering and sustaining populations of monarch butterflies and other pollinators. Under the Program, WCB provides grants to private landowners, nonprofits, resource conservation districts, and public agencies. To date, more than \$14.4 million has been awarded across 14 grants (from various funding sources).

Proposition 4 authorizes \$870 million for WCB to provide grants for programs to protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources and habitat and achieve the state's biodiversity, public access, and conservation goals, including Monarch butterfly and pollinator rescue. The Program does not have a dedicated funding source, so Proposition 4 funds will be used to support those grants. WCB recently granted \$3.4 million grant to Xerces Society to restore habitat for several at-risk butterflies and identify opportunities for additional restoration across 10 counties along the central coast.

- 6) **Double referral.** This bill is also referred to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee.
- 7) **Committee amendments.** The *committee may wish to consider* amending this bill to:
- a) Require CDFW and the Commission to coordinate to develop monarch overwintering habitat protection guidance for local governments in the coastal zone; and,
 - b) Encourage local governments with updated LCPs for Monarch habitat protections to apply for grants under the Program.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

American Bird Conservancy
 California State Parks Foundation
 Center for Biological Diversity
 Center for Food Safety
 Central Coast State Parks Association
 Defenders of Wildlife
 Monarch Joint Venture
 National Wildlife Federation
 Natural Resources Defense Council
 Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History
 Planning and Conservation League
 Rainforest Rising, INC.
 River Partners
 San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance
 Santa Barbara Zoo
 Social Compassion in Legislation
 The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation
 Valley Eco
 Wild Farm Alliance

Opposition

California State Association of Counties
 League of California Cities
 Rural County Representatives of California

Analysis Prepared by: Paige Brokaw / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2349 (Solache) – As Introduced February 19, 2026

SUBJECT: State Air Resources Board: regional air quality incident response program

SUMMARY: Requires the Air Resources Board (ARB), subject to appropriation, to expand its incident air monitoring program to provide support for a regional network of air quality incident response centers (AQIRCs) operated by local air districts in order to facilitate emergency air monitoring response at the local and regional level.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) The federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and its implementing regulations set National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for six criteria pollutants, designate air basins that do not achieve NAAQS as nonattainment, and require states with nonattainment areas to submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) detailing how they will achieve compliance with NAAQS. (42 U.S.C. 7401 *et seq.*)
- 2) Establishes ARB as the air pollution control agency in California and requires the ARB, among other things, to control emissions from a wide array of mobile sources and coordinate with local air districts to control emissions from stationary sources in order to implement the CAA. (Health and Safety Code (HSC) 39000 *et seq.*)
- 3) Requires ARB to (1) divide the state into air basins based upon similar meteorological and geographic conditions, and consideration for political boundary lines whenever practicable, and (2) adopt air quality standards for each air basin in consideration of the public health, safety, and welfare. (HSC 39606)
- 4) Requires, subject to the powers and duties of the ARB, air districts to adopt and enforce rules and regulations to achieve and maintain the state and federal air quality standards in all areas affected by emission sources under their jurisdiction, and to enforce all applicable provisions of state and federal law. (HSC 40001)
- 5) Requires air districts to develop attainment plans detailing how they will attain and maintain state air quality standards, and submit those plans to ARB. (HSC 40910 *et seq.*)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Requires ARB, subject to appropriation, to expand its incident air monitoring program to provide support for a regional network of AQIRCs operated by districts in order to facilitate emergency air monitoring response at the local and regional level.
- 2) Requires ARB and the districts to jointly select locations to establish AQIRCs throughout the state, including at least one AQIRC in the south coast district. Requires ARB to coordinate with, and provide funding to, districts.

- 3) Requires ARB and each district that operates an AQIRC to coordinate to provide emergency air monitoring response for disasters or other crises impacting air quality and public health.
- 4) Authorizes funding for specified purposes.
- 5) Requires, as part of the operation of an AQIRC, air quality monitoring to be conducted for targeted air contaminants of concern, in coordination with unified command centers, joint information centers, other state agencies, and other entities, as appropriate.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Background.** The Palisades and Eaton Fires burned 23,700 and 14,000 acres, respectively. The University of California – Los Angeles’ Anderson School of Management estimates that the economic impacts of the wildfires could range between \$76 billion and \$131 billion, with insured losses estimated up to \$45 billion. The impact on local businesses and employees in the affected areas is an estimated \$297 million.

On top of the economic impacts, wildfires are devastating to public health. Wildfire smoke poses a significant public health threat, particularly due to fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), which can cause respiratory and cardiovascular problems and exacerbate existing health conditions. It can travel deep into the lungs and may even enter the bloodstream. For urban wildfires, air toxics are a concern as smoke and ash from homes and businesses can contain asbestos, metals, and other pollutants of concern.

Wildfires are not the only health-impacting events requiring localized air monitoring. In November 2023, a fire at a historic hangar at the former Tustin Air Base led to a public health emergency due to the presence of asbestos in debris and ash samples collected near the hangar. The smoke and debris also tested positive for heavy metals, including lead, arsenic and nickel. The city of Tustin declared a local state of emergency, and the Orange County Board of Supervisors declared a county-wide state of emergency. The cleanup costs exceeded \$54 million. A similar event also took place in January 2025, when a fire erupted at the Moss Landing Power Plant, a large battery storage facility, located south of San Francisco. The incident led to evacuation orders for about 1,200 nearby residents. About 80% of the structure and its batteries were destroyed in the fire. After burning through the night, emergency officials declared the fire a local emergency.

These events highlight the critical need for enhanced localized air monitoring response to emergency events. This bill is intended to provide timely information on existing levels of potentially dangerous air pollutants emitted as a result of wildfires and other disasters or emergencies to increase public awareness and inform health and emergency response agencies. This information will help improve emergency preparedness and response, protect public health, and strengthen statewide and local air quality management.

2) Author's statement:

California has experienced numerous disasters in recent years that have threatened air quality and public health. Expanding California's emergency air monitoring capacity is essential to protect public health and ensure informed decision-making during disasters. AB 2349 would strengthen California's emergency air monitoring capacity and support coordinated state and local responses during air quality emergencies.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

South Coast Air Quality Management District (sponsor)
California Air Pollution Control Officers Association
San Diego County Air Pollution Control District

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Lawrence Lingbloom / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2513 (Petrie-Norris) – As Amended April 6, 2026

SUBJECT: Wildfire: Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program: local assistance grant program: regional landscape grants

SUMMARY: Amends various state grant programs to explicitly allow regional landscape grants to be directly awarded to regional entities.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity (RFFC) Program at the Department of Conservation (DOC) to support regional leadership to build local and regional capacity and develop, prioritize, and implement strategies and projects that create fire adapted communities and landscapes by improving ecosystem health, community wildfire preparedness, and fire resilience. (Public Resources Code (PRC) 4208.1)
- 2) Defines “regional entity” as a state conservancy, local government, tribal government, resource conservation district, joint powers authority, or nongovernmental organization with a history of implementing related projects, demonstrated capacity to work across regional partners, and ability to serve as fiscal administrators for the RFFC Program. (PRC 4208)
- 3) Establishes, pursuant to Executive Order No. B-52-18, a Forest Management Task Force, now known as the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force (Task Force), involving specified state agencies to create the action plan for wildfire and forest resilience.
- 4) Requires the Task Force to develop a “Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan” (Action Plan) as a strategy to integrate recommendations from existing state and federal plans that tackle various aspects of the state’s forest health and wildfire crisis. Requires the Task Force to develop a comprehensive implementation strategy to track and ensure the achievement of the goals and key actions identified in the Action Plan issued by the Task Force in January 2021. (PRC 4771)
- 5) Requires the Task Force, including the Natural Resources Agency (NRA), the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Office of Planning and Research, and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), in coordination with certain public agencies, to develop a comprehensive implementation strategy to track and ensure the achievement of the goals and key actions identified in the Action Plan. (PRC 4771)
- 6) Requires CAL FIRE to establish a local assistance grant program for fire prevention and home hardening education activities in California. (PRC 4124.5)
- 7) Authorizes the director of CAL FIRE to provide grants to, or enter into contracts or other cooperative agreements with, entities, including, but not limited to, private or nongovernmental entities, Native American tribes, or local, state, and federal public agencies,

for the implementation and administration of projects and programs to improve forest health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. (PRC 4799.05)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Authorizes the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to award regional landscape grants to regional entities to implement regional priority strategies developed pursuant to the RFFC Program.
- 2) Prior to the issuance of regional landscape grants, requires the WCB, in collaboration with the Task Force, to establish guidelines for funding regional landscape grants to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Action Plan, and any subsequent updates to that plan. Exempts development and adoption of the guidelines from the Administrative Procedures Act (APA).
- 3) Defines the following terms:
 - a) “Fire prevention activities” as those lawful activities that reduce the risk of wildfire in California, including, but not limited to, mechanical and manual vegetation management and modification, prescribed grazing, prescribed burns, creation of defensible space, creation of fuel breaks, ignition prevention, replacement of ignition-prone nonnative flashy fuels with heavier and less flammable native vegetation, technologies that improve detection and assessment of new fire ignitions, and retrofitting of structures to increase fire resistance.
 - b) “Ignition prevention” as those lawful activities that reduce the likelihood of wildfire ignitions caused directly or indirectly by human activity or infrastructure, including replacement or modification of ignition-prone nonnative flashy fuels to less flammable native vegetation, hardening of infrastructure, including primary roadways, utility corridors, and public access points, to prevent fire ignition and spread, use of ignition-resistant materials, and community education or planning programs that reduce human-caused ignitions.
 - c) “Nonnative flashy fuels” as a nonnative or invasive plant species including grasses, mustard, and other annual plants, and pine needles and leaves, that dry or cure rapidly, ignite easily, and spread fire quickly, significantly increasing wildlife risk.
- 4) Updates the eligible fire prevention activities under CAL FIRE’s local assistance grant program for fire prevention and home hardening education activities in California, and itemizes ignition prevention activities as eligible for funding.
- 5) Strikes the January 1, 2027, sunset date on DOC’s authority to provide advance payments on grants awarded under the RFFC Program.
- 6) Authorizes the director of DOC to directly award regional landscape grants to regional entities to implement regional priority strategies developed pursuant to the RFFC Program.
- 7) Prior to the issuance of regional landscape grants, requires the director of DOC, in collaboration with the Task Force, to establish guidelines for funding regional landscape

grants to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Action Plan. Exempts the guideline development from the APA.

- 8) Expands CAL FIRE's forest health grant program for landscape-scale projects to additionally include:
 - a) Activities that improve ecosystem health on chaparral, shrubland, grassland, and coastal sage scrub lands, including, but not limited to, replacement of ignition-prone nonnative flashy fuels with heavier and less flammable native vegetation; and,
 - b) Regional landscape grants that the director may directly award to regional entities to implement regional priority strategies.
- 9) For purposes of the forest health grant program, defines the following terms:
 - a) "Ecosystem" includes forest, chaparral, shrubland, grasslands, and coastal sage ecosystems and natural communities.
 - b) "Nonnative flashy fuels" means a nonnative or invasive plant species including grasses, mustard, and other annual plants, and pine needles and leaves, that dry or cure rapidly, ignite easily, and spread fire quickly, significantly increasing wildlife risk.
- 10) Prior to the issuance of regional landscape grants, requires the director of CAL FIRE, in collaboration with the Task Force, to establish guidelines for funding regional landscape grants to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Action Plan. Exempts the guideline development from the APA.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

1) **Author's statement:**

AB 2513 addresses two critical gaps in our efforts to achieve the goals of California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan. First, the bill ensures that Regional Forest and Fire Capacity grantors can distribute funds for wildfire mitigation projects in the flammable shrubland ecosystems typical of Southern California, reflecting the full range of ecosystems at risk of catastrophic wildfire across the state. Second, AB 2513 increases the pace and scale of grant distribution by authorizing the Department of Conservation and the Wildlife Conservation Board to distribute regional landscape grants to local entities.

- 2) **Regional fire prevention.** California's forests naturally adapted to low-intensity fire, nature's preferred management tool, but Gold Rush-era clearcutting followed by a wholesale policy of fire suppression resulted in the overly dense, ailing forests that dominate the landscape today. Compounding risks have made it nearly impossible for nature to self-correct. A cycle of catastrophic wildfires, longer fire seasons, severe drought, intense wind, tree mortality, invasive species, and human population pressure threaten to convert conifer forests to shrublands and shrublands to invasive grasses. With California's landscape heavily divided among multiple landowners, coordinated stewardship is critical to success. Since fire

doesn't abide by human-made land-owner boundaries, regional coordination is critical to forest health management and wildfire prevention.

- 3) **Flashy fuels.** Flashy fuels are a significant concern in wildfire management. According to the California Invasive Plant Council, readily ignitable invasive annual grasses can provide a flashy fuel bed for fires to start and quickly spread into adjacent vegetation. When shrublands burn too frequently, or are disturbed too frequently, they are overtaken by nonnative annual grasses, which can lead to a positive feedback loop of habitat type conversion and more frequent fires on the landscape.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS), along with non-federal agencies and non-profit partners, formed a coalition called the Southern California Ignition Reduction Program (SCIRP) to reduce fire risk (specifically along California's highways), and the tactics include 1) greatly reducing readily ignitable non-native plants along roadsides, and 2) replacing them with less ignitable native vegetation, bare ground, or, in some instances, hardscape.

According to Irvine Ranch Conservancy, Southern California region's strategic fire management priorities are not large-scale fuels reduction or biomass utilization, or a focus on forests, but rather ignition prevention (hardening transportation and utility infrastructure against fire starts) and fuels modification (replacing ignition-prone, non-native "flashy" fuels with fire-adapted native vegetation in high ignition risk areas.) While the existing Forest Health program activities provide effective tools for some of the state, the current definition of "forest" and the strong emphasis on forested natural communities renders shrubland ecosystems, and the millions of Californians who live nearby, ineligible for this critical funding.

AB 2513 allows funding from CAL FIRE's local assistance grant program for fire prevention and Forest Health grants to be used for ignition reduction activities, including the replacement or modification of ignition-prone nonnative flashy fuels to less flammable native vegetation.

The bill defines nonnative flashy fuels to include pine needles, which are highly flammable, but are also native. The bill could clarify the definitions used in the bill by separately defining nonnative fuels and flashy fuels.

- 4) **Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program.** Pursuant to AB 9 (Wood), Chapter 225, Statutes of 2021, DOC launched the RFFC program to build the capacity of regional collaboratives through a common framework of regional forest and community resilience plans. Through RFFC, DOC provides block grants to regional entities to develop regional strategies that develop governance structures, identify wildfire risks, foster collaboration, and prioritize and implement projects within the region to achieve the goals of the program. Block grants are used by recipients to support partner capacity, project readiness, implementation of demonstration projects, and regional priority planning to achieve landscape-level and community wildfire resilience consistent with the Action Plan as well as the California Forest Carbon Plan and Executive Order B-52-18.

Regional block grantees are expected to partner extensively across their region to identify priorities and develop projects. Current block grantees partner heavily with state, federal, tribal, and local governments as well as water agencies, resource conservation districts, fire safe councils, and other nonprofits.

- 5) **Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force.** The Task Force was established in 2018 to develop a framework for establishing healthy and resilient forests that can withstand and adapt to wildfire, drought and a changing climate. The Task Force developed the Action Plan to integrate recommendations from existing state and federal plans that tackle various aspects of the state’s forest health and wildfire crisis. The January 2021 Action Plan is the initial five-year plan for implementing the Agreement for Shared Stewardship of California’s Forest and Rangelands (Shared Stewardship Agreement) with the USFS, coordinating the state’s forestry efforts with other federal, local, tribal, regional, and private organizations.
- 6) **This bill.** AB 2513 amends three existing grant programs, including CAL FIRE’s local assistance grant program for fire prevention and home hardening education activities, the RFFC Program, and CAL FIRE’s Forest Health Grants, to explicitly authorize regional landscape grants to be awarded directly to regional entities with regional priority strategies developed pursuant to the RFFC Program, and creates a new grant program for that same purpose at WCB.

For the WCB and RFFC grants, the bill requires the administering state entities to coordinate with the Task Force to establish grant guidelines consistent with the goals of the Action Plan.

- 7) **Committee amendments.** The *committee may consider* amending the bill to create one definition for “nonnative fuels” and a separate definition for “flashy fuels,” and make other technical and clarifying changes. Due to timing of the double referral, the committee amendments will be adopted in the next policy committee.
- 8) **Double referral.** This bill is also referred to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee.
- 9) **Related legislation.** AB 388 (Connolly, 2023) requires CAL FIRE to establish a roadmap for developing and deploying larger landscape level projects to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the implementation strategy for the Action Plan. This bill was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California State Association of Counties
 League of California Cities
 Orange; County of
 Save the Redwoods League
 Sierra Business Council

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Paige Brokaw / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2517 (Calderon) – As Introduced February 20, 2026

SUBJECT: Fire safety: fire hazard severity zones

SUMMARY: Establishes a process for public engagement for the State Fire Marshal's (SFM) development of fire hazard severity zone (FHSZ) maps.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires the SFM to identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high FHSZ based on consistent statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Requires moderate, high, and very high FHSZs to be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the SFM as a major cause of wildfire spread. (Government Code (GC) 51178)
- 2) Requires a local agency to designate, by ordinance, moderate, high, and very high FHSZs in its jurisdiction within 120 days of receiving recommendations from the SFM pursuant to GC 51178. (GC 51179 (a))
- 3) Authorizes a local agency, at its discretion, to include areas within the jurisdiction of the local agency, not identified as very high fire hazard severity zones (VHFHSZ) by the SFM, as VHFHSZ following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of GC 51182 are necessary for effective fire protection within the area. (GC 51179 (b))
- 4) Requires the SFM to periodically review the areas in the state identified as VHFHSZs, and as necessary, make recommendations relative to VHFHSZs. Requires this review to coincide with the review of state responsibility area (SRA) lands every five years and, when possible, fall within the time frames for each county's general plan update. Any revision of areas included in a very high fire hazard severity zone shall be made in accordance with Sections 51178 and 51179. (GC 51181)
- 5) Requires, pursuant to regulations adopted by the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, a person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains an occupied dwelling or occupied structure within a VHFHSZ designated by a local agency pursuant to GC 51179 to maintain specified defensible space requirements. (GC 51182)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Requires the SFM, no fewer than 180 days before finalizing the FHSZ designations, to do all of the following:
 - a) Post draft maps of preliminary designations on its public internet website to ensure the preliminary designations are available for public review and comment;

- b) Post the data inputs, model, and methodology used to develop the preliminary designations on its public internet website;
 - c) Conduct regional, public workshops on the draft maps before initiating the public comment period to receive oral public comments. Provide at least one online virtual option for public participation in a workshop. Consider, within 30 days of a public regional workshop, all oral public comments received;
 - d) Host a 30-day public comment period for interested stakeholders to provide written comment on the draft maps. Requires the SFM to respond to, within 30 days of the end of the public comment period, all written comments received from local agencies regarding land use and zoning matters; and,
 - e) Coordinate with other state agencies to help educate the public during the public workshops on the following topics related to the preliminary designations:
 - i) Mitigation activities;
 - ii) Fire insurance; and,
 - iii) Other related maps and models.
- 2) Requires the SFM to finalize the FHSZ designations and transmit the maps identifying the FHSZs to the appropriate local agency.
 - 3) Authorizes a local agency, at its discretion, to increase the level of fire hazard severity applicable to a parcel in its jurisdiction if a parcel contains two or more designations, so that the higher level of fire hazard severity would apply to the entire parcel.
 - 4) Requires the SFM to publish, within 60 days, the adopted local ordinances designating FHSZs on its internet website to ensure they are publicly available.
 - 5) Requires, on or before January 1, 2030, and every five years thereafter, the SFM to review the local responsibility areas (LRA) lands, including areas identified as moderate, high, and very high fire FHSZs, and, as necessary, recommend changes. Requires review of LRA lands to coincide with the review of SRA lands every five years.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

1) Author's statement:

Wildfires are an increasing reality for communities across California, and the way we plan for that risk matters. When the state updates fire hazard severity zone maps, local governments and residents deserve a clear understanding of what those changes mean and a chance to share their input. Assembly Bill 2517 helps make this process more transparent by requiring advance notice, public workshops, and opportunities for communities to provide feedback before maps

are finalized. By improving communication and collaboration, we can help ensure communities are better informed and better prepared for wildfire risk.

- 2) **Fire Hazard Severity Zones.** FHSZs are categorized as moderate, high, and very high based on consistent statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. FHSZ maps evaluate “hazard” based on the physical conditions that create a likelihood and expected fire behavior over a 30 to 50-year period without considering mitigation measures such as home hardening, defensible space, vegetation management, or fuel reduction efforts. The fire hazard severity model for wildland fire has two key elements: probability of an area burning and expected fire behavior under extreme fuel and weather conditions.

Classification of each zone is based on the average hazard across the zone, which have a minimum size of 200 acres. In wildlands, hazard is a function of modeled flame length under the worst conditions and annual burn probability. Both these factors generally increase with increasing hazard level, but there may be instances where one value is ‘very high’ and the other is low, pushing the overall hazard into a more intermediate ranking. On average, both modeled flame length and burn probability increase by roughly 40-60% between hazard classes. Classification outside of wildland areas is based on the fire hazard of the adjacent wildland and the probability of flames and embers threatening buildings.

In 2007, CAL FIRE mapped the three tiered FHSZs for the SRA and the VHFHSZ for the lands managed locally in the LRA, which includes incorporated cities, urban regions, agriculture lands, and portions of the desert where the local government is responsible for wildfire protection.

SB 63 (Stern), Chapter 382, Statutes of 2021, required CAL FIRE to adopt of the FHSZs in the LRA. The maps – including updated maps for the SRA – were released last year. Approximately 1.2 million acres are now mapped as VHFHSZ – a 35% increase from the old maps published between 2007 and 2011. There are 1.4 million covered acres in the high and very high FHSZs combined. Including all three zones, a total of 6.8 million acres across the state are mapped in a FHSZ. Approximately one in four residential structures in California is located within or near high or very high FHSZ under the new maps.

CAL FIRE uses the same modeling data that are used to map the SRA to develop the FHSZs in the LRA. Creating maps is a laborious process that requires scrutinizing detailed data across the state, including small pockets of potentially flammable wildlands within cities, and then coordinating with hundreds of local jurisdictions for validation of the mapping.

The FHSZs are used for several purposes, including to designate areas where California’s defensible space standards and wildland urban interface (WUI) building codes are required.

- 3) **SFM process for developing the FHSZs.** The SFM designates the FHZS maps based on science and measured fire hazard. Many factors are included such as fire history, vegetation, flame length, blowing embers, proximity to wildland, terrain, and weather. How local governments have zoned their jurisdictions in the LRA is not a determining factor for identifying fire hazard. Neither are impacts on the real estate market, local businesses, or defensible space compliance costs. The maps are simply an indication of fire hazard that subsequently informs how new structures are built, which defensible space requirements may

apply, local evacuation planning, and other safety elements for mapped communities. However, local governments' zoning and land use information may elucidate the current vegetation status of a parcel or area that the SFM's technologies may not have current information about.

This bill requires the SFM, at least 180 days before finalizing the FHSZ maps, to post draft maps online, make available their models and methodologies used for designating the maps, and conduct public workshops to solicit public comments. Further, the bill requires the SFM to respond to all written comments received from local agencies regarding land use and zoning matters.

Development of the FHSZ maps are not subject to the Administrative Procedures Act, which means there is no opportunity for local governments to actively track or participate in the maps' development. Without insight into that process, local governments can feel challenged complying within 120 days with adoption of their own ordinance that accurately reflects their districts.

To prevent creating a public process that could potentially frustrate and/or delay adoption of the maps due to irrelevant comments that shouldn't influence the fire hazard designation, the bill could be tailored to local government input that is germane to the lands being assessed for fire hazard.

- 4) **Local maps.** Once the SFM finalizes the FHSZ designation, it transmits the maps identifying the FHSZs along with a model ordinance to the governing body of a local agency for adoption.

Under current law, local agencies have 120 days from receipt of the state's recommendations to designate FHSZs by ordinance. A local agency may, at its discretion, increase the level of FHSZ identified by the SFM, or include areas within its jurisdiction into its FHSZ ordinance, but a local agency may not decrease the level of FHSZ identified by the SFM.

The SFM's regulations¹ require, within 30 days of adopting a local ordinance designating VHFHSZ, a local agency to transmit a copy of the ordinance and a map to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) and any information about the decision to include areas within the jurisdiction as VHFHSZ that were not identified as such by SFM.

This bill creates redundancy with the SFM's requirements to transmit the maps identifying the FHSZs to the appropriate local agency, but also makes an important clarification in local FHSZ mapping by requiring a local agency to increase the level of fire hazard severity applicable to a parcel in its jurisdiction if a parcel contains two or more designations, so that the higher level of fire hazard severity would apply to the entire parcel.

- 5) **Double referral.** This bill is also referred to the Assembly Emergency Management Committee.
- 6) **Committee amendments.** The *committee may wish to consider* amending the bill to eliminate redundancies, truncate the public process to require one online public workshop, and clarify the relevant stakeholders submitting comments to the SFM.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

American Planning Association, California Chapter	
California Association of Realtors	City of Rocklin
California Building Officials	City of Rolling Hills Estates
California State Association of Counties	City of San Clemente
California Water Association	City of Stanton
City of Artesia, California	City of Thousand Oaks
City of Belmont	City of Tracy
City of Brentwood	City of Ventura
City of Buena Park	City of Vista
City of Carpinteria	City of Walnut Creek
City of Folsom, California	City of Whittier
City of Glendora	City of Laguna Beach
City of LA Quinta	City of Mission Viejo
City of LA Verne	City of Murrieta
City of Laguna Niguel	City of Palm Springs
City of Lakeport	City of Paso Robles
City of Lomita	League of California Cities
City of Los Alamitos	Redwood Empire Division, League of California Cities
City of Moorpark	Riverside County, California
City of Paso Robles Fire Department	West Hollywood/Hernan Molina,
City of Pittsburg	Governmental Affairs Liaison
City of Rancho Santa Margarita	

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Paige Brokaw / NAT. RES. /

ⁱ California Code of Regulations, Title 14, sec. 1280.02 (a)

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

AB 2559 (Ward) – As Introduced February 20, 2026

SUBJECT: Solid waste: construction debris: diversion: deposits

SUMMARY: Requires local governments that collect deposits to incentivize compliance with local waste diversion requirements for construction and demolition (C&D) projects to refund the deposit if, within five years, the entity that paid the deposit submits documentation that demonstrates compliance with the terms of the deposit.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Pursuant to the Integrated Waste Management Act (Public Resources Code (PRC) 40000 *et seq.*):
 - a) Establishes a statewide goal that 75% of solid waste be diverted from landfill disposal by 2020 through source reduction, recycling, and composting.
 - b) Requires jurisdictions, defined as cities, counties, and regional agencies, to divert at least 50% of solid waste generated from landfill disposal through source reduction, recycling, reuse, and composting activities. The amount diverted is known as a jurisdictions “diversion rate.” Since 2008, this requirement has shifted to a 50% disposal rate based on per capital disposal.
 - c) Requires CalRecycle and local agencies to maximize the use of all feasible source reduction, recycling, and composting options to reduce the amount of solid waste disposed.
 - d) Requires CalRecycle to adopt one or more model ordinances that local agencies may adopt that require diversion of C&D waste, as specified.
- 2) Requires that at least 65% of nonhazardous C&D waste generated by residential and non-residential construction and demolition projects be diverted from landfill disposal, as specified. Requires the submission of a construction waste management plan, as specified. (California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen) 4.408 and 5.408)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Defines “deposit” as a refundable deposit, performance security or similar financial guarantee as a condition of a construction, demolition, or building permit for the purpose of ensuring compliance with a construction or demolition debris diversion requirement.
- 2) Requires a city or county that collects a deposit to return the full amount to the person or entity that paid the deposit if, within five years of the final inspection of the work or project that was subject to the deposit, the person or entity submits documentation that demonstrates compliance with the terms of the deposit.

- 3) Specifies that the bill does not prohibit a city or county from denying a refund if the submitted documentation demonstrates noncompliance with applicable diversion requirements.
- 4) States related findings and declarations relating to the use of refundable deposits to ensure compliance with local solid waste diversion requirements.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **California's recycling goals.** An estimated 35 million tons of waste are disposed of in California's landfills annually. CalRecycle is tasked with diverting at least 75% of solid waste from landfills statewide by 2020. Local governments have been required to divert 50% of the waste generated within the jurisdiction from landfill disposal since 2000. AB 341 (Chesbro), Chapter 476, Statutes of 2011, requires commercial waste generators to arrange for recycling services for the material they generate and requires local governments to implement commercial solid waste recycling programs designed to divert solid waste generated by businesses out of the landfill. Commercial waste includes all solid waste generated by businesses, including C&D waste. C&D waste generally includes lumber, drywall, concrete, metals, and other wastes generated by construction and demolition activities. A follow up bill, AB 1826 (Chesbro), Chapter 727, Statutes of 2014, requires generators of organic waste (i.e., food waste and yard waste) to arrange for recycling services for that material to keep the material out of the landfill. California's recycling rate, which reached 50% in 2014, has dropped to 42% as of 2024.
- 2) **C&D management.** California established stringent recycling requirements for solid waste generated by construction projects. CalGreen, the state's green building standards, generally require that 65% of the waste generated by C&D projects must be diverted from landfill disposal. Additionally, local jurisdictions are required to ensure that at least 50% of the waste generated by the jurisdiction is diverted. In order to facilitate compliance with these requirements, the Legislature enacted SB 1374 (Kuehl), Chapter 501, Statutes of 2002, which required CalRecycle to establish one or more model ordinances to assist local jurisdictions with adopting C&D policies.

Most, if not all, local governments in the state have adopted an ordinance relating to C&D waste management. A number of these include a security deposit that is collected prior to the issuance of a permit, which are refundable after proof of compliance is submitted. The amounts vary but are generally based on the square footage of the project or the project valuation.

- 3) **This bill.** According to the author, some jurisdictions require permit holders to submit the necessary documentation to redeem the deposit within a specified time frame. For example, the City of San Diego's ordinance requires documentation to be submitted 180 days from the final inspection of the project to request the return of the deposit. However, the author states that final inspection may be completed before the project is finished, making it impossible for some permit holders to recoup the cost of the deposit. This bill specifies that permit holders have up to five years to submit proof of compliance.

It is not clear that this concern warrants a change in statute that limits the ability of local

governments to establish timelines they deem appropriate, or that five years is the appropriate timeline. The author has identified one instance of a homeowner in San Diego who was unable to redeem their deposit due to the 180 day timeline established by the city. The author notes that the homeowner did not receive the necessary documentation until completion of the project, which was several months after the final inspection. The author's office may wish to consider working with the city to adjust the ordinance to allow permit holders additional time to submit documentation rather than pursuing a legislative solution. Additionally, *the committee may wish to consider amending the bill* to reduce the timeline established by the bill from five years to three years.

4) **Author's statement:**

Local governments across California have adopted construction and demolition waste diversion programs that require refundable deposits as a condition of issuing building permits. However, cities have developed inconsistent timelines in which to refund deposits. Additionally, a request for refund is often tied to the project's final inspection, which can occur well before construction is fully complete. As a result, permit holders—who often rely on contractors to manage projects and paperwork—may miss the refund deadline even when they ultimately comply with recycling requirements, losing deposits worth hundreds or thousands of dollars. Assembly Bill 2559 addresses this issue by requiring local governments to return the full deposit if the permit holder submits documentation demonstrating compliance within five years of final inspection. This bill preserves local waste diversion programs while ensuring consumers who follow the rules are not unfairly penalized by premature or confusing refund deadlines.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Elizabeth MacMillan / NAT. RES. /

Date of Hearing: April 6, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Isaac G. Bryan, Chair

ACR 149 (Hart, et al.) – As Introduced February 25, 2026

SUBJECT: California Coastal Act of 1976

SUMMARY: Acknowledges and celebrates 50 years of coastal protection through the California Coastal Act.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Coastal Act of 1976 (Coastal Act), establishes the California Coastal Commission (Commission), and prescribes the membership and duties of the Commission. (Public Resources Code (PRC) 30301)
- 2) Finds and declares that the California coastal zone is a distinct and valuable natural resource of vital and enduring interest to all the people and exists as a delicately balanced ecosystem, and that the permanent protection of the state's natural and scenic resources is a paramount concern to present and future residents of the state and nation. (PRC 30001)

THIS RESOLUTION:

- 1) Resolves by the Assembly of the State of California that the Legislature proudly acknowledges and celebrates 50 years of coastal protection.
- 2) Affirms the state of California's longstanding commitment to protecting its coastal waters and recognizes the importance of carefully evaluating activities, including offshore oil and gas drilling and coastal development, to ensure consistency with the state's coastal protection laws, climate goals, and the public trust in a clean and healthy coast.
- 3) Acknowledges the value of ecologically sound coastal protection combined with carefully planned development as essential to the economic and social well-being of the state for the next 50 years and beyond, and reaffirms the findings of our predecessors from 1976 that the permanent protection of the state's natural and scenic coastal resources is a paramount concern to present and future residents of the state and nation.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **California's coast.** California's coastal zone, which represents roughly 1% of California's total land mass, is one of the most unique areas on earth. Stretching 1,100 miles from the Oregon border to Mexico, California's coast boasts the largest ocean-based economy in the United States.

California's marine wildlife – including whales, dolphins, and the threatened southern sea otter – attract millions of visitors a year to our coastline. California's coastline counties are home to 68% of the state, and millions of people visit California coastal state parks every

year. The state coast is home to endangered species, such as the California condor, who find sanctuary along the coast, highlighting the area's importance for conservation efforts, and the coast is a vital part of the Pacific Flyway for migrating waterfowl, shorebirds, and the Western Monarch butterfly.

Coastal tourism and recreation industries in California are valued at approximately \$27 billion annually. Professional surfers brought in \$140 million in surf tourism to California in 2018 alone.

Valued at \$51 billion annually, the ocean off the California coast employs more than half a million people and supports a vast diversity of marine life, as well as fishing communities that depend on fish, shellfish, and seaweeds for their livelihoods. California's aquaculture industry has a \$200 million annual impact on the state economy; fisheries support 19,750 recreational fishing jobs, with the commercial fishing and seafood industry generating 155,258 jobs.

The coastal agricultural economy, represented by hundreds of different fruits, vegetables, flowers, nuts, seeds and other crop commodities, contributes to nearly 1.5 million agricultural jobs in California.

And, California's world-leading 100% clean energy goals are driving interest in exploring use of coastal resources to achieve those goals, including wave renewable energies and assessing offshore wind capacity and feasibility.

- 2) **History of the Coastal Act.** In 1972, the people of California approved Proposition 20, the California Coastal Zone Conservation Act, establishing that protection of the California coast and ocean is a paramount concern to present and future residents of the state and nation.

In 1976, the Legislature enacted the California Coastal Act and the State Coastal Conservancy Act, based on findings that the California coastal zone is a distinct and valuable natural resource of vital and enduring interest to all the people.

Since 1976, California's population has nearly doubled, growing from approximately 22 million to almost 40 million people. But despite ongoing pressure to privatize some of the world's most valuable real estate, the coast is demonstrably cleaner, healthier and more accessible than it was when the Coastal Act was signed into law.

The Coastal Act as implemented by the Coastal Commission in partnership with local governments, nonprofit advocacy groups, and in coordination with other state and federal agencies has been responsible for:

- The creation of more than 2,500 public accessways to and along the coast;
- Protecting 12,000 acres of open space and habitat;
- Restoring or creating more than 4,600 acres of habitat;
- Opening 875 miles of the California Coastal Trail open to the public;

- Providing \$30 million to local governments to plan for sea level rise;
- Awarding \$25.5 million in Whale Tail grants to 1,074 Tribes, schools and nonprofits for outdoor education, stewardship and public access projects;
- The establishment 64 Local Coastal Programs created by local governments to guide development in the coastal zone; and,
- The protection of 350,000 acres of wildlands across five counties covered by fire resilience plans.

The enduring legacy of the Coastal Act is evidenced in the coastal wetlands not filled, the sensitive habitats not destroyed, the access trails not blocked, the farms and ranches not converted to urban uses, the freeways and gated communities and industrial facilities not built.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Coastal Act.

3) Author’s statement:

The California Coastal Act stands as a landmark commitment to protecting and preserving California’s coastline. Enacted at the urging of millions of Californians, the Act reflects a clear and enduring responsibility to safeguard our coastal and marine resources for present and future generations. It establishes the framework to protect marine life, ocean ecosystems, public access, and surrounding coastal areas as shared public treasures to be enjoyed.

For 50 years, the Coastal Act has served as the foundation of California’s coastal stewardship, consistently prioritizing environmental health, sustainability, and responsible use of our invaluable coastal resources. ACR 149 celebrates this legacy and reaffirms the State’s commitment to upholding the Coastal Act’s protections for decades to come.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Audubon California
 Azul
 Black Surf Santa Cruz, INC
 Business Alliance for Protecting the Pacific Coast
 California Coastal Protection Network
 California Coastkeeper Alliance
 Center for Biological Diversity
 City Surf Project
 County Park Friends
 Environment California
 Environmental Action Committee of West

Marin
 Environmental Defense Center
 Environmental Protection Information Center
 Fish on
 Heal the Bay
 Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust
 Los Angeles Waterkeeper
 Monterey Bay Aquarium
 Mujeres De LA Tierra
 Natural Resources Defense Council
 Orange County Coastkeeper

Outdoor Outreach
Paddle for Peace
Queer Surf
Salted Roots

Save Our Shores
Surfrider Foundation
Un Mar De Colores
Wildcoast

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Paige Brokaw / NAT. RES. /