



# State Lands Commission November Meeting Highlights

The Commission convened its last meeting of 2017 in Fresno, where the San Joaquin River, one of over 100 state-owned sovereign waterways, is located. It was the Commission's first time meeting in Fresno.

The Commission approved sponsoring several legislative proposals in 2018, including legislation to eliminate the \$300 million cap on the Oil Trust Fund, allowing the account to grow in anticipation of the Long Beach oil field's retirement and to ensure the state will be financially capable of decommissioning the facility and safeguarding environmental and public health. The Commission also approved sponsoring legislation to allow the Commission to provide, as part of an exchange agreement involving granted lands, that land exchanged into the trust is conveyed directly to the grantee, and legislation to improve and update numerous statutes governing the Commission's work. These legislative proposals will enhance and streamline the Commission's work.

The Commission, as owner and manager of millions of acres of public lands, voted to support a bond measure that would fund projects that enhance and protect California's natural resources, including parks, wildlife, coastal resources, trails, rivers, wetlands, and outdoor recreation areas. SB 5 (Chapter 852, Statutes of 2017), the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018, will be on the June 2018 statewide ballot.

The Commission approved a landmark title settlement and land exchange agreement at Pier 70 in San Francisco involving about 72 acres of tidelands, submerged lands and uplands situated between the Giant's Ballpark and Candlestick/Hunters Point. Pier 70 is a historic shipyard and active ship repair facility on San Francisco's waterfront that the Port is trying to revitalize. Commission staff has worked on this important agreement for many years, thoroughly researching the title and boundary history, analyzing various legal principles, drafting legislation, and negotiating the legal settlement. The title settlement and exchange agreement will facilitate the responsible redevelopment of Pier 70, including opening up a significant portion of the site for public access and recreation.

There were presentations at the meeting about California's draft update to its sea-level rise guidance document and staff's activities and efforts to become more educated about the pollution issues within the Tijuana River watershed. The Commission, hoping to reduce pollution and protect the beaches in San Diego County, directed staff to collaborate with the Ocean Protection Council, California Coastal Commission, the State Water Resources Control Board, the State Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and CalEPA to share information, brainstorm, prioritize collaborative endeavors, and discuss funding and staff resource needs.

Another update pertained to PG&E's application to the California Public Utilities Commission for approval of the Joint Proposal, an agreement between PG&E, Friends of the Earth, the Natural Resources Defense Council, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1245, Coalition of California Utility Employees, Environment California, and Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility for the orderly transition and ultimate retirement of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant while facilitating the replacement of nuclear power with other greenhouse gas-free resources and supporting local workers and the community. The ensuing decision on the application could significantly impact the shut down of the Diablo Canyon operations.

The Commission acted on the three Rincon island leases in Ventura County, authorizing the Executive Officer to terminate the leases and take action to ensure the health and safety of the people of California and the surrounding environment. The Commission also considered items relating to public access to California's rivers and navigable waterways, including approving the highly-anticipated Legal Guide to the Public's Rights to Access and Use California's Navigable Waters and an accompanying brochure on the Public's Rights to Access and Use California's Navigable Waters—a meaningful accomplishment.

Staff updated the Commission about its land and resource management activities involving the San Joaquin River, including the Executive Officer's participation on the San Joaquin River Conservancy Governing Board and the proposed Eaton Trail Extension Project. The Commission professed its support of the Executive Officer's work on its behalf as a member of the San Joaquin River Conservancy Board and emphasized the importance of meaningful and equitable public access to the river, and its abiding conviction that public access is paramount.

#### **OTHER MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Item 17 – Wildlands Conservancy Ecosystem Restoration Project**  
The Commission issued a lease for the Eel River Estuary Preserve Ecosystem Enhancement Project, which aims to improve the Eel River Estuary ecosystem. The project also improves coastal access with kayak launches, improved access roads, and facilities.
- **Item 31 – Sacramento Valley Conservancy—Camp Pollock**  
The Commission issued a lease for improvements to Camp Pollock, including public access, conservation, recreation, and education.
- **Item 39 – California State Coastal Conservancy Living Shorelines Project**  
The Commission issued a lease to the State Coastal Conservancy for Giant Marsh, located in San Pablo Bay, Contra Costa County to enhance coastal ecosystem function and resilience. This project would restore oyster beds, eelgrass, and tidal marsh to protect areas of the San Pablo Bay shoreline vulnerable to sea-level rise.
- **Item 50 – Dedication of Lateral Access Easement—Ventura County**  
The Commission accepted an offer to dedicate private land for public beach access in Mussel Shoals.
- **Item 51 – Beach nourishment—Port Hueneme Beach Park**  
The Commission issued a lease to the Oxnard Harbor District for the one-time placement of sediment suitable for beach nourishment at Hueneme Beach, which will facilitate improved coastal access for many inland residents of Central California. Hueneme Beach experiences a high rate of erosion.
- **Item 58 – UC San Diego Research**  
The Commission issued a lease to allow researchers at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography to deploy marine research equipment in waters off Coronado, which is intended to improve models for coastal flooding and erosion during storms and El Niño events.
- **Item 87 – Environmental Justice**  
The staff presented an update about the Commission's efforts to develop a new Environmental Justice Policy and to elicit feedback from environmental justice advocates and others about the new policy, including recent outreach sessions in Fresno with environmental justice advocates and community members.