



State Lands Commission October Meeting Highlights

The Commission held its October public meeting in Sacramento, where California's beautiful and historic State Capitol is located. At the meeting, the Commission issued dozens of leases, permits, and agreements and authorized other actions for the use or occupation of state lands and resources. Below is a snapshot of some of the significant Commission actions that occurred during the meeting.

City of Burlingame

The Commission authorized its Executive Officer to request proposals to develop a roughly 9-acre site in the city of Burlingame, in San Mateo County, adjacent to the San Francisco Bay. This action follows a Public Trust Needs Assessment, an important planning tool, that staff recently completed after community outreach. The Commission's goals are to rehabilitate the vacant site to expand public access to bay waters and the shoreline, enhance the bay trail, and create a waterfront destination for public use and enjoyment.

Mavericks Challenge Surf Competition

The Commission, in the wake of California designating surfing as the official state sport, approved a lease to the World Surf League for the Mavericks Challenge, an annual one-day competition that attracts surfers from around the world. The lease requires multiple heats in the women's division and equal pay for all competitors regardless of gender. This is a precedent-setting victory for equal pay in any sporting event held on state property. It is also the culmination of devoted work over many years and represents a defining, and overdue, moment in California on the important issue of gender equity in athletic competitions.

Public Access at Lake Tahoe

Each year, about 3 million people visit Lake Tahoe. The Commission, as a key steward of Lake Tahoe, authorized two agreements with the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency for shorezone permitting and enforcement of unauthorized buoys, vessels, and appurtenances on the California side of Lake Tahoe. The Commission has roughly 700 leases in Lake Tahoe for recreational structures, such as piers and buoys. An updated shorezone ordinance, which the Agency's board will consider on October 24, 2018, requires that shorezone applications go to the Commission first for a determination of whether the structure encroaches on sovereign land or the Public Trust easement area. If it does, the project must protect or enhance public access. The agreements approved today improve coordination between the Commission and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, increase public access to Lake Tahoe, provide greater process certainty, and memorialize a beneficial partnership between the agencies.

Environmental Justice

Staff provided a comprehensive update on their work to develop a meaningful environmental justice policy and about a community roundtable staff and East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice hosted in Long Beach in October 2018. At the Long Beach roundtable, staff spoke in small groups with attendees about the Commission's draft policy, listened to concerns, and answered questions. Attendees suggested several important Commission considerations, which staff presented to the Commission during this update. Staff is now carefully reflecting on the feedback received during community outreach and determining what feedback is most appropriate for the policy or for the implementation plan. Staff is also compiling written comments, and with the incorporated feedback, will produce a third draft by early to mid-November. This draft will be presented at the December Commission meeting in San Diego. The public is encouraged to attend.

Resolution Acknowledging the Importance of Advancing a Vision for the Blue Economy

The Commission adopted a resolution to advance a vision for California's blue economy that is grounded in collaboration and broad engagement among agencies and policymakers. The resolution resolves that the Commission will work with other agencies to promote the blue economy in policies and programs throughout the state through balanced and optimal use of ocean and coastal resources. It also expresses the Commission's commitment to safeguarding the long-term health and resilience of California's ocean and coastal natural resources to foster economic security, provide opportunities for the workforce of tomorrow, and to enhance healthy ocean and coastal ecosystems for current and future generations. The blue economy promotes sustainable economic growth that enables optimal use, and increased capacity of, ocean and coastal resources coupled with the highest levels of protection of the natural environment.

Public Facing Interactive Web Mapping Application

Staff previewed a web mapping application developed by the Commission and Port of San Diego for the ocean space offshore San Diego County. The Web Mapping Application, slated for release in 2019, will make the best available science and data related to this ocean space easily accessible for everyone. The data will illustrate a broad array of information, from scientific measurements of oceanographic conditions, to vessel density heat maps, to whale migration routes, to locations of kelp and eelgrass habitats.

Dennett Dam

Staff delivered an update about Dennett Dam, a low head dam on the Tuolumne River in Stanislaus County that was removed in August 2018. The dam was constructed decades ago and has been in disrepair for years. The removal eliminates a significant hazard, improves recreational boating on the Tuolumne River, and improves anadromous fish passage and habitat. It also facilitates development of a park along the River that will increase recreational opportunities associated with the River. The removal took less than a month to complete and the cost was shared between the Tuolumne River Preservation Trust and the State.

Other Highlights

The Commission authorized its Executive Officer to use Kapiloff Land Bank funds to remove abandoned vessels, navigational hazards, and marine debris in the San Francisco Bay Area. And separately, authorized the Executive Officer to use Kapiloff Land Bank funds to acquire a groundwater consultant to assist staff with groundwater issues at Owens Lake in Inyo County. The Commission also approved a 5-year lease to Nautilus Data Technologies, Inc for a water cooled data center in the San Joaquin River in the Port of Stockton. This is the first the time the Commission has issued a lease for this type of use. The barge is expected to help support California's renewable energy and greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. It is also expected to eliminate potable water use, wastewater, water treatment chemicals, and chemical refrigerants that are potent greenhouse gas and stratospheric ozone-depleting substances.