

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2285

Introduced by Assembly Member Rendon

February 8, 2024

An act to add Section 71453 to the Public Resources Code, relating to environmental protection.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2285, as introduced, Rendon. Environmental protection: 30x30 goal: urban nature-based investments: parity.

By Executive Order No. N-82-20, Governor Gavin Newsom directed the Natural Resources Agency to combat the biodiversity and climate crises by, among other things, establishing the California Biodiversity Collaborative and conserving at least 30% of the state's lands and coastal waters by 2030. Existing law requires the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency to prepare and submit, on or before March 31, 2024, and annually thereafter, a report to the Legislature on the progress made in the prior calendar year toward achieving the goal to conserve 30% of California's lands and coastal waters by 2030. Existing law provides that it is the goal of the state to conserve at least 30% of California's lands and coastal waters by 2030, known as the 30x30 goal.

This bill would encourage the Governor's office, state agencies, and the Legislature, when distributing resources towards conservation and restoration goals during future budgetary deliberations, to ensure parity in allocations toward urban nature-based investments. The bill would require state funding agencies, including certain state conservancies and the Wildlife Conservation Board, when programming and awarding funds to revise, modify, or amend guidelines as necessary to meet the

30x30 goal, to allow for urban nature-based projects on degraded lands to be eligible and competitive for state funds.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.

State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (1) Executive Order No. N-82-20 by Governor Gavin Newsom
4 directs the Natural Resources Agency to combat the biodiversity
5 and climate crises by, among other things, establishing the
6 California Biodiversity Collaborative and conserving at least 30
7 percent of California's lands and coastal waters by 2030, known
8 as the 30x30 goal.

9 (2) Hundreds of millions of dollars in General Fund allocations
10 have been directed to the Wildlife Conservation Board, the
11 Department of Conservation, and state conservancies, among
12 others, to meet the 30x30 goal.

13 (3) Governor Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom
14 are championing the Outdoors for All initiative under the Natural
15 Resources Agency that, among other things, seeks to expand parks
16 in communities with little outdoor space and supports and
17 underwrites programs to connect people who lack access to green
18 space, fostering a sense of belonging and stewardship of the state's
19 outdoors.

20 (4) Senate Bill 337 (Chapter 392 of the Statutes of 2023) codifies
21 the 30x30 goal.

22 (5) The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks &
23 Recreation has piggybacked off the Governor's and First Partner's
24 work on the 30x30 goal and Outdoors for All and prepared the
25 2022 Parks Needs Assessment Plus (PNA+) that identifies areas
26 for Los Angeles-based environmental conservation and restoration
27 that form the basis of the 30x30 goal.

28 (6) PNA+ goes beyond traditional conservation models that
29 involve the acquisition and protection of natural lands and
30 reimagines the 30x30 goal through a more equity- and
31 access-facing lens to direct funding and resources into the healing
32 and conversion of blighted, degraded, and otherwise underutilized
33 urban-based lands into green spaces and microhabitats promoting

1 nature-based opportunities, access, and enhanced community and
2 neighborhood aesthetics.

3 (7) Through thorough analysis, PNA+ identifies possible green
4 space acquisition and restoration opportunities within the county
5 and reveals a sharp contrast among regions in the county.

6 (8) PNA+ discovered that most of the available land for
7 acquisition pursuant to the 30x30 goal was in the north County of
8 Los Angeles, an area already rich in park and open-space resources
9 as compared to the south County of Los Angeles, an area richer
10 in diversity and more challenged economically, wherein the
11 opportunities for 30x30 projects are confined to degraded and
12 underutilized lands.

13 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to codify the priorities
14 identified in the November 2023 report of the Outdoors for All
15 initiative, “Providing Equitable Access to Parks and Nature,” and
16 to encourage the Governor’s administration and the Legislature,
17 when distributing resources towards conservation and restoration
18 goals during future budgetary deliberations, to ensure parity in
19 allocations toward urban nature-based investments.

20 (c) It is the intent of the Legislature to require state funding
21 entities, including, but not limited to, state conservancies and the
22 Wildlife Conservation Board, when programming and awarding
23 funds to revise, modify, or amend guidelines as necessary to meet
24 the 30x30 goal, to allow for urban nature-based projects on
25 degraded lands to be eligible and competitive for state funds.

26 SEC. 2. Section 71453 is added to the Public Resources Code,
27 to read:

28 71453. (a) The Legislature finds and declares that the
29 November 2023 report of the Outdoors for All initiative, “Providing
30 Equitable Access to Parks and Nature,” proposes the following
31 priorities to achieve Outdoors for All:

32 (1) Establish spaces for people and nature to thrive. This priority
33 includes strategies that:

34 (A) Develop, improve, and maintain local and regional outdoor
35 spaces.

36 (B) Support tribal ancestral land return as a pathway for outdoor
37 access.

38 (C) Support the use of cultural easements by California Native
39 American tribes to protect cultural and sacred sites.

1 (D) Support multibenefit solutions for access and environmental
2 priorities.

3 (E) Support deferred maintenance projects statewide that seek
4 to expand access to recreation and provide a safe and welcoming
5 experience for visitors.

6 (F) Coordinate with school districts and regional governments
7 to enhance green schoolyards and explore opportunities for
8 schoolyards to fill gaps outside of school hours.

9 (G) Support connecting different sized outdoor spaces, including
10 statewide and regional trail networks, to provide diverse
11 experiences for all skill levels, with the cobenefit of creating
12 wildlife corridors.

13 (H) Ensure outdoor space development and management is
14 consistent with California's Climate Adaptation Strategy, Scoping
15 Plan, and Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy.

16 (I) Support implementation of antidisplacement measures to
17 ensure access to open space does not lead to gentrification.

18 (J) Collaborate with private landowners and federal, state,
19 regional, and local governments to explore opportunities to expand
20 recreation access on private lands.

21 (2) Foster belonging. This priority includes strategies that:

22 (A) Share culturally diverse, relevant, and relatable stories and
23 images of California's people and history through the
24 programming, interpretive materials, art, and signage offered at
25 outdoor spaces, cultural and historic places, and museums.

26 (B) Foster public appreciation of, and connection to, California's
27 natural and cultural resources.

28 (C) Support improvements to language access for outdoor
29 programming, educational materials, and staff at open spaces,
30 cultural and historic places, and museums.

31 (D) Build trust between and among staff and visitors.

32 (E) Create adult and youth-centered programming, including
33 intergenerational opportunities, at outdoor spaces to inspire and
34 build confidence across a broad range of recreational users and
35 activities.

36 (F) Rename offensive and derogatory geographic features and
37 place names across outdoor spaces to address historical wrongs
38 and create safe and inclusive spaces.

39 (3) Connect people and the outdoors. This priority includes
40 strategies that:

1 (A) Make information about California's parks and outdoor
2 spaces easier to find and understand.

3 (B) Explore opportunities to offer free broadband on state
4 recreation lands, and cultural and historic properties, allowing for
5 more accessible information, inclusive signage, programming, and
6 connectivity to address safety concerns.

7 (C) Enhance and create more green, accessible, safe, active,
8 public, and shared transportation options linking the outdoors and
9 communities.

10 (D) Explore ways to provide free access to California state parks
11 for low-income communities.

12 (E) Support tribal members in harvesting culturally significant
13 materials in outdoor spaces.

14 (F) Explore public-private partnerships to support gear libraries
15 and low-cost outings and classes at outdoor spaces.

16 (G) Prioritize funding and a streamlined process for building
17 lower cost coastal accommodations.

18 (H) Prioritize partnerships with nonprofits that provide youth
19 and families from underserved communities and people with
20 disabilities with access to state lands through supervised
21 programming.

22 (4) Cocreate with communities. This priority includes strategies
23 that:

24 (A) Conduct early, often, and meaningful tribal consultations
25 with the goal of enhancing tribal partnerships and collaboration.

26 (B) Invite and embed meaningful tribal consultation and
27 community engagement into grant processes.

28 (C) Update the grant applications of the Natural Resources
29 Agency and its departments to increase support and reduce barriers
30 for underserved communities, including California Native
31 American tribes, and the organizations that serve them.

32 (D) Collaborate with other agencies to build best practices for
33 public meetings that are accessible to people with disabilities and
34 increase involvement by underserved communities through
35 language access and greater transparency about state processes.

36 (E) Collaborate with the Governor's office to enhance outreach
37 efforts for appointed positions on Natural Resources Agency boards
38 and commissions to increase community representation.

1 (F) Identify opportunities for tribal governments and
2 community-based organizations to cocreate and comanage parks
3 and outdoor spaces.

4 (G) Continue to grow the Natural Resources Agency's capacity
5 to meaningfully engage underserved communities.

6 (5) Build equitable career pathways and a representative
7 workforce. This priority includes strategies that:

8 (A) Bridge internship, conservation corps, and other career
9 development programs to careers with the state.

10 (B) Enhance strategies and inclusive career outreach and
11 programming through dedicated staff at the Natural Resources
12 Agency's career center.

13 (C) Continue coordination of intra-agency workgroups and the
14 Department of Human Resources to reassess job classifications,
15 hiring processes, and salary ranges.

16 (D) Continue coordination efforts of intra-agency workgroups
17 to develop career pathways strategies to support aligned efforts in
18 employee retention.

19 (6) Align funding to achieve Outdoors for All. This priority
20 includes strategies that:

21 (A) Develop and communicate an inventory of equitable access
22 investments and impact.

23 (B) Prioritize resource efficiency and reduce redundancies.

24 (C) Establish partnerships with philanthropic and for-profit
25 sectors.

26 (D) Align existing funding sources to create multibenefit projects
27 and programs.

28 (E) Streamline standards and decisionmaking tools for equitable
29 outdoor access to determine strategic investments for the state.

30 (b) The Governor's office, state agencies, and the Legislature,
31 when distributing resources towards conservation and restoration
32 goals during future budgetary deliberations, are encouraged to
33 ensure parity in allocations toward urban nature-based investments.

34 (c) State funding agencies, including, but not limited to, the
35 conservancies established pursuant to Sections 31100, 32320,
36 32510, 32555, 32602, 32633, 33200, and 33501 of this code and
37 Section 66906 of the Government Code and the Wildlife
38 Conservation Board, shall, when programming and awarding funds
39 to revise, modify, or amend guidelines as necessary to meet the

- 1 30x30 goal, allow for urban nature-based projects on degraded
- 2 lands to be eligible and competitive for state funds.

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