



February 8, 2019

Climate Change

The Natural Resources Agency in collaboration with the Air Resources Board and California Department of Food and Agriculture has developed an updated climate change implementation plan for natural and working lands. The intent of this plan is to ensure that natural and working lands can serve as a sink for carbon rather than a source of carbon emissions. The draft plan includes acreage goals for conservation, restoration, and management activities that will increase carbon sequestration on these lands. Farm Bureau submitted comments on the draft implementation plan recommending that the plan recognize the carbon sequestration benefits that agriculture provides and questioning the achievability of some of the goals included in the plan. Farm Bureau also requested that actions recommended by the plan balance the societal and economic values that California's working lands provide. *Staff contact: Noelle Cremers at (916) 446-4647 or ncremers@cfbf.com.*

Forestry

The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) has announced a Notice of Preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report for a statewide California Vegetation Treatment Program, or CalVTP. Essentially, the CalVTP would create a streamlined process for communities and private landowners to undertake projects designed to decrease vegetative fuels and improve ecological resiliency in California's wildlands. The streamlined process is a mechanism that the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) could use to further increase the pace and scale of land management activities in the state without undergoing duplicative, time consuming and costly environmental reviews.

The CalVTP would be utilized to treat excessive fuel loads to prevent the risk of wildfire in the State Responsibility Areas (SRAs), which consists of 31 million acres of private and public lands. As mentioned in previous iterations of a statewide VTP, not all 31 million acres of the SRA are suitable for treatments; however, CAL FIRE could treat roughly 20 million acres with prescribed fire, manual and/or mechanical mastication, grazing and targeted herbicide application.

The Board is conducting three scoping meetings with one in Northern California, one in Southern California and one in Sacramento. The scoping meetings will also be webcasted over the internet. The meeting schedule and webcast information is provided below:

- Monday, February 11, 2019, 1-3pm; Natural Resources Building Auditorium 1416 9th Street Sacramento, California; Webinar information: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1182936368317342977>
- Wednesday, February 13, 2019, 10am-12pm; Shasta County Board of Supervisors 1450 Court Street Redding, California; Webinar information: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1891381396907387905>

- Tuesday, February 19, 2019, 12-2pm California Fire Safe Council Ontario Office Meeting Room 3200 Inland Empire Boulevard Ontario, California; Webinar Information: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5611350291531610626>

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Marketing

Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia (D-Coachella) has introduced AB 377, a bill which clarifies the requirements for microenterprise home kitchen operations, that allow for in-home food preparation and sale. Specifically, this bill expands the ability for enforcement agencies to inspect operations, clarify advertising obligations (including a notation that the food item was “Made in Home Kitchen,” and prohibit operations to offer catering services. *Staff contact: Taylor Roschen, troschen@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647.*

Rural Health

The State Air Resources Board and the Department of Public Health held a joint meeting on February 4th to discuss the impacts of the drought on public health generally, and specifically, rural communities. Information discussed included food inaccessibility, drinking water quality and quantity, health vulnerability from climate change (such as heat illness), dietary related health diseases (heart disease, obesity, etc.), and emergency management. *Staff contact: Taylor Roschen, troschen@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647.*

Water

The emphasis to find solutions to California’s drinking water problems has continued in earnest early in this 2019-20 Legislative Session. Last month, Governor Gavin Newsom’s budget included trailer bill language that would establish a fund for Environmental Justice-Safe and Affordable Drinking Water and Exide Cleanup. Currently, there are no less than four measures introduced in the Assembly and Senate to establish a fund for clean drinking water and infrastructure improvements.

Earlier this week, the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee; Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee; and the Budget Subcommittee No. 3 on Resources and Transportation held a joint informational hearing in the Capitol on “Safe and Affordable Drinking Water.” Committee members heard testimony from two panels and a line of public commenters. The first panel included Joaquin Esquivel, State Water Resources Control Board Member; Wade Crowfoot, Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency; and Susana De Anda from the Community Water Center. The second panel included Castulo Estrada, Coachella Valley Water District; Cindy Paulson, California Urban Water Agencies; and Paul Jones, Eastern Municipal Water District. The primary focus of discussion was on how to establish a long-term and reliable funding source.

Senator Bill Monning (D-Carmel) presented the framework of SB 623, a bill which failed last legislative session. SB 623 would have established the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund and identified funding sources from:

1. A fertilizer tax of \$0.006 per dollar of sales generating approximately \$18 to \$19 million per year,
2. A \$0.01355 deduction per cwt. from milk producers’ payments,
3. A tax on Confined Animal Facilities (excluding dairies, but including bovine, poultry, swine and other livestock operations).
4. A water tax of \$0.95 per month on residential public water system customers and a \$4.00, \$6.00 and \$10.00 per month tax on larger commercial water meter customers.

In rebuttal, the Association of California Water Agencies and California Municipal Utilities Association suggested establishing a Trust Fund with one-time contribution of State General Fund dollars while the state budget is flush, using the interest earnings each year for a Drinking Water Fund. Assemblymember Devon Mathis, R-Visalia suggested his proposed ACA 3 is the best way to fund drinking water solutions. Assembly Constitutional Amendment 3 would require not less than two percent of the State General Fund be dedicated for paying the principal and interest on Proposition 1, water supply, delivery and quality projects administered by the Department of Water Resources and State Water Resources Control Board. No actions were taken by the joint committee informational hearing. *Staff contact: Danny Merkley, dmerkley@cfbf.com or 916-446-4647.*