



# 2020 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL ASSEMBLY

## Our Climate Crisis: Beyond Seawalls and Electric Vehicles

McGeorge School of Law  
January 25, 2020

### REGISTRATION OPENS & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST WELCOME – Main Hall

**9:00 AM -  
10:00 AM**

**Howard Penn**, Executive Director, Planning & Conservation League  
**Graham Brownstein**, Chairman, Planning & Conservation League

### AMONG THE DRAGONS: THE SPIRITUAL PATH IN THE CLIMATE CRISIS John Tarrant

Grief, rage, and despair are familiar, but we can also rely on uncertainty, sweetness, and be sustained by a kind of light that is in trees and birds and even in the darkest moments. We have the capacity and also an obligation to love the world as we work to change it. That love is also something to pass down. A crisis can last for centuries and during that time, it's important that we care for ourselves. To do this we have to value forests and art and beauty, and let our minds be free and natural like national parks.

The old Chinese sages worked to persuade Genghis Khan to manage the country rather than burn it. Now it's our turn to work with difficult times. Forces larger than our plans appear every day, but we too are part of those forces; the small can influence the large and there is always unforeseen help from surprising directions. Join our opening speaker to learn how to stay opportunistic and hopeful in times of uncertainty.

### NETWORKING BREAK

**10:15 AM -  
11:45 AM**

**REACTION TO GOVERNOR NEWSOM'S WATER RESILIENCE PORTFOLIO**  
**Marguerite Patil**, Special Assistant to the General Manager, Contra Costa Water District  
**Alex Biering**, Government Affairs and Communications Manager, Friant Water Authority  
**Eric Wesselman**, Executive Director, Friends of the River

**Jennifer Clary**, Programs Manager, Clean Water Action

**Moderator - Jonas Minton**, Senior Water Policy Advisor, Planning and Conservation League

By the end of 2019, Governor Newsom will issue his vision for California's water future. Hear the reaction to the Governor's Portfolio from agricultural, urban, enviro, and environmental justice representatives.

**10:15 AM -  
11:45 AM**

**LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION: HOW TO ACHIEVE OUR HOUSING AND CLIMATE GOALS TOGETHER**

**Chanell Fletcher**, Executive Director, ClimatePlan

**Moderator - Matthew Baker**, Policy Director, Planning and Conservation League

California's new Governor has put forth extremely ambitious housing goals for the state, 3.5 million homes by 2025. But how do we ensure that our housing and infrastructure investments are providing for the right thing in the right place? PCL believes it is imperative that the State's housing goals are aligned with California's goals for climate, health, and equity, and achieving all of these goals holistically in addressing our housing shortage demands consideration of where our housing is and who it will serve, not solely the sheer number of units we can produce.

PCL is actively working with cross-interest partners around the State with an aim to inform proposals for how to better align our housing and transportation investment with all of these goals. This panel will discuss multiple recommendations that have emerged.

**10:15 AM -  
11:45 AM**

**LITIGATION AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL ROLLRACKS UNDER THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION**

**Michael Wall**, Litigation Codirector, Natural Resources Defense Council

**David Zonana**, Supervising Deputy Attorney, Office of the Attorney General

**Kassie Siegel**, Climate Law Institute Director, Center for Biological Diversity

**Moderator – Jan Chatten-Brown**, Founder and Co-Owner, Chatten-Brown, Carstens & Minteer, LLP

The scope and content of the “deregulation” efforts of the Trump administration have been ongoing, seemingly relentless and, in many respects, unprecedented in modern American history. Concurrently, states like California and a wide range of national environmental organizations have filed a wide range of lawsuits, with the California Attorney General’s office having approximately 60 lawsuits pending against the federal government, many of which are challenging specific environmental rollbacks.

In this context, Governor Gavin Newsom, recently vetoed Senate Bill 1, by Toni Atkins, which was designed to be a comprehensive “backfill” for protecting the environment. This assembly panel will discuss key, pending litigation against the federal government and explore evolving options for protecting our environment.

**10:15 AM -  
11:45 AM**

**PHASING OUT OIL AND GAS: IS IT LEGAL TO KEEP IT IN THE GROUND?**

**Ingrid Brostrom**, Assistant Director, The Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment

**Moderator - David Weiskopf**, Senior Policy Advisor, NextGen Policy

As California works to achieve carbon neutrality and address concerns relating to health, safety, air quality, water quality, and environmental justice associated with oil and gas production, many are advocating for a "managed" decline in production, rather than allowing market forces alone to determine where drilling phases out first, and where it is allowed to continue longest. This panel will discuss how the state of California is currently studying this issue and the landscape of policy options for beginning a managed phaseout. It will also examine underlying legal questions surrounding a managed oil and gas production phaseout in California, including whether state or local governments have the ability to void existing permits, deny new permits, enact drilling buffer zones, or reclassify oil and gas wells as non-conforming uses under zoning codes.

**NETWORKING BREAK**

**LUNCH SESSION**

**12:00 PM - TBD  
1:15 PM**

**NETWORKING BREAK**

**1:30 PM -  
3:00 PM**

**THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE: WHAT IT MEANS TO ALL OF US**

**William R. Horwath**, Chair, Department of Land, Air & Natural Resources

**Moderator - Karen Ross**, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture

California agriculture produces one-eighth of all the nation's food and most of its fresh fruits and vegetables, contributing more than \$50 billion to the state's economy each year. It occupies roughly half of the state's land area, uses about three-quarters of its developed water supplies and generates seven percent of its greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change is likely to have a profound impact on California agriculture. For example, a shrinking Sierra snowpack would mean less irrigation water even as rising temperatures will necessitate more water to keep crops alive. The risk of flooding of agricultural land would be exacerbated by stronger atmospheric rivers. Increased temperatures would also put additional stress on farmworkers and dairy cattle while limiting where mainstay fruit crops, including citrus and wine grapes, can be grown. It could also disrupt pollination cycles and expand the range of insect pests and

diseases. Many mitigation measures can be taken to avoid or reduce these impacts, and to adapt to inevitable changes. Among these measures are capturing and storing floodwaters and runoff in depleted aquifers, more efficient irrigation, sustainable farming methods, soil carbon sequestration and preventing the urbanization of farmland, which increases per acre greenhouse gas emissions seventy-fold. The panelists in this workshop will elaborate on all these potential impacts as well as adaptation and mitigation measures.

**1:30 PM -  
3:00 PM**

### **SECURING THE FUTURE OF CALIFORNIA'S LIVING DIVERSITY**

**Kim Delfino**, Executive Director, Defenders of Wildlife

**Charles Striplen**, Environmental Scientist, North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board

**Dan Gluesenkamp**, Executive Director, California Native Plant Society

**Moderator - Kevin Hunting**, Biodiversity and Conservation Coordination, California Natural Resources Agency

In 2018, California launched the Biodiversity Initiative –a historic commitment to saving the web of life that underpins our health and prosperity. Already, this initiative is reshaping how we build a better future --500 California biodiversity scientists have signed “A Charter to Secure the Future of California’s Native Biodiversity,” agencies are urgently scoping how they can contribute to the change, and Governor Newsom’s administration recently budgeted \$18.6M toward ambitious biodiversity projects such as the effort to seed bank all of California’s plants and end plant extinction in the Golden State.

This panel will explore how we can ensure resilient biodiversity in the face of climate change. We will highlight how attendees can be included in this opportunity for system-level change. In addition, we will discuss how California can lead the way nationally and internationally on policy and science, including bringing California’s successes to inspire the world at the UN Convention on Biodiversity meetings in October 2020.

**1:30 PM -  
3:00 PM**

### **CEQA 2.0: THE EFFORT TO RESOLVE LONGSTANDING CONTROVERSIES ABOUT CEQA**

**Jim Moose**, Senior Partner, Remy Moose Manley LLP

**Susan Brandt Hawley**, Attorney, Brant-Hawley Law Group

**Douglas Carstens**, Managing Partner, Chatten-Brown, Carstens & Minteer LLP

**Moderator - Kevin Johnson**, Attorney, Kevin Johnson APLC

During the summer of 2018, PCL formed a twelve-member advisory group of CEQA experts from around the State to begin developing legislation to streamline CEQA. The group consists of lawyers and one planner, whose daily professional work involves representing a broad range of interests in the State.

Over the course of 15 months, the volunteer group met for a full day, twelve times and worked out multiple proposed amendments which now make up a package pending in the legislature. Today's panel will discuss the rationale behind the proposed changes and will welcome the audience's comments.

Topics include avoiding "11th hour submissions" for the administrative record; allowing a real party or lead agency to opt to prepare the administrative record if it agrees to pay all costs, win or lose; tolling agreements; deterrence of CEQA suits brought only for monetary settlements; reducing record content requirements dealing with emails; expediting record preparation by requiring more active management of CEQA cases by CEQA Judges; improving the training for CEQA Judges; providing experienced CEQA Judges for smaller counties in the state; deterring suits against emergency shelters and affordable housing projects; environmental justice considerations under CEQA including the need for translation of certain documents; affordable housing displacement; proper baseline considerations; eliminating obsolete language and provisions in CEQA; and the past use of initiatives to avoid CEQA compliance.

**1:30 PM -  
3:00 PM**

### **HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE: TELLING THE STORY OF CLIMATE CHANGE'S IMPACTS ON OUR COMMUNITIES**

**Martha Arguello**, Executive Director, Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles

**William Barrett**, Director of Clean Air Advocacy, American Lung Association

**Moderators - Karly Hampshire**, Medical Student, UCSF School of Medicine and **Sarah Schear**, Co-Founder, California Climate Health Now, Medical Student, UCSF School of Medicine

"Today we have nine out of 10 people breathing bad air, by the time we get to the point where 10 out of 10 people are breathing good air, we will have addressed the roots of climate change."

-- Christiana Figueres, International climate leader, vice-chair of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy

Join our lively panel bringing to life what the dry climate science has been telling us for decades. We will tell the stories of the health impacts of climate change and magnify the immediate health co-benefits our families and communities will enjoy as we transition to clean, renewable energy to fuel our societies. Because the most vulnerable among us are already paying dearly in the health tolls of climate change, they will be the first to benefit from climate solutions. In response to the climate crisis, [the medical community is unifying](#) around a declaration that climate change is a health emergency.

Our panel discussion will illustrate how the universally shared value of human health--particularly for the next generation--may be our most powerful tool for unlocking political gridlock in order to open the door to swift climate solutions. We hope you join us for this

conversation telling the story of climate change's health impacts as an important tool to build social will for health-protecting climate action.

## NETWORKING BREAK

## CLOSING PLENARY SESSION

**3:15 PM - TBD**  
**4:15 PM**

## RECEPTION & HAPPY HOUR