

How do we conserve 30% of California's land and water?

Questions

1. So far, the Newsom administration has not been willing to put money into land protection. For example, it has declined to use the GHG reduction fund for habitat/climate adaptation, nor has it pushed money for the Wildlife Conservation Board in bond acts. How credible is its biodiversity initiative? Is the 30/30 just rhetoric?
2. Could it support the push for conservation to shift the reasoning from "it is good for humans" to "all life is valuable"? We are interconnected yes, and it draws us deep to recognize this truth. But it bothers me to frame this conversation as a game to serve human ends. On the other hand, I could imagine being dismissed as "out of touch" an argument that seeks to protect life for its own sake. What do you think?
3. When you said 22% estimate of conservation in CA, is this both lands and waters or just lands?
4. How will the state will be broken into regions? Seven provinces from SWAP (below)? Other? The seven provinces are North Coast and Klamath; Cascades and Modoc Plateau; Central Valley and Sierra Nevada; Bay Delta and Central Coast; South Coast; Deserts; and Marine.
5. Will protected lands be reassessed to account for damage from overuse? I have watched local systems degrade over time due to folks 'loving it to death'!
6. Can we achieve our conservation goals with the human population as large as it is?
7. I would love to learn more information about what Azul does to engage the Latinx community to connect and be informed about what is happening at the state, regional, local level (CA's 30 by 30 goal, sustainability and climate action, etc.) and how it can connect to these communities in Los Angeles and their relationship to water systems in the region?
8. Invasive species are a real problem in the creeks (and habitats) that need some serious solutions. Is that part of your assessments?
9. Will regenerative farming practices be seriously promoted to get our ag industry off the major chemical use?
10. Is there any emphasis on establishing wildlife corridors and/or increasing habitat connectivity through meeting 30 by 30 goals?
11. Thanks for the excellent talk. I do think more thought about balancing recreation with preserving biodiversity is going to be need as not all uses at all times can be compatible as research has clearly demonstrated. But of course we can all agree on more access for more people is a good goal. But my question is about fire. What I have observed is some of the responses to increasing fires has been implementing solutions in many areas that make us less fire safe and impact biodiversity negatively such as clearcutting. Where I live in the Sierra, government agencies and people are doing this on a widespread basis--and some government grants even support this. How do we focus on the more effective efforts that make us more fire safe (like home hardening) and don't impact biodiversity? Thank you!

Chat Log

What effect does loss of riparian habitat from “small” developments have on the overall target to conserve 30% land and coastal waters by 2030?

What state agency(s) will accept more land for the 30x30 campaign? (State Parks won't accept for more land (even with endowments) and that agency is the natural choice.)

Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is ground zero for the destruction of biodiversity. Why is the Newsom administration dragging its feet in working to fix this problem?

Hoping to see the state provide a more explicit definition of NBS to guide this - certainly one more rigorous than what LA County uses for Measure W. Also hoping to see a framework developed for quantifying the lifecycle carbon cost of all projects proposed for state funding. Without both of these things, it will be challenging to meet these goals in a meaningful and timely way. Are these in the works?

How do you compute the 30% for water? All water bodies in California have some protection, through water quality standards, and almost all surface waters have standards to protect fish and wildlife. Is full protection of biodiversity required? Many wild and scenic rivers and marine sanctuaries fall short of biodiversity goals.

To what extent are ecosystem restoration actions intended to be included on conserved lands as part of 30 by 30? Or is the main priority conservation through protection from degradation by land acquisition or conservation easements?

<https://resources.ca.gov/Initiatives/Expanding-Nature-Based-Solutions>

We are experiencing a lot of pressure from mountain bikers to open trails in conserved lands, including construction of illegal trails, vandalism, and hostility to other trail users. This is exacerbated by an increase in use of electric bikes. How should we deal with this?

What are the biggest impediments to reaching the 30 by 30 goal?

One underutilized strategy is the protections of our waters through the Outstanding National Resource Waters designations. California has only designated two ONRWs and has no formal designation system. Have Resources or the Governor's office considered this approach?

Can the panelists speak to whether and how the 30% by 30 effort includes regenerative principles in agriculture?

How will 30x30 be implemented locally - County Govt. The State Legislature and the Governor, through Executive Order, are elevating firing out quality initiatives (30x30, ag conservation and fair housing solutions among many others) but implementation on the local level is elusive if not impossible in conservative counties. The Gov's orders and Leg. activism is circumvented in an intentional and elusive way. There is lip service to conformance - but no commit to the spirit of the order. backroom deal making is the pattern of practice. Even regional gov'ts (SACOG for example) are not a “help” as policy emanating from regional government must still go through the filter of these local government resisters - aka insurrectionists.

In an earlier talk on the Delta ecosystem, we learned that water flows out to the Bay are so limited that much aquatic life is jeopardized including salmon. Will you work to help this situation?

That's pretty tricky. Unfortunately, that is a tough topic at the moment, especially since electric mountain bikes/bikes fall under a gray area. I think there needs to be a development of policies that address this topic/issue at the local/state level. From visits to Utah National Parks, vandalism, graffiti and trash seem to be an issue that may be unrelated to mountain bike folks in general and may be due to an increase of park visitors. However, in National Parks that I've visited in Utah have designated bike areas for visitors to use when visiting the park. However, electric mountain bikes are prohibited in the park. Overall, there may be need to be a study or policy to address this issue/topic. I hope this is helpful. I am a mountain bike user and can see this issue arising from the mountain bike/e-bike user community.

Secretary Crowfoot mentioned wetland restoration (a great nexus between groundwater recharge and carbon sequestration) - what resources are available to make floodplain restoration/land reclamation for wetlands easier? It seems the funding sources and permitting processes make this difficult to accomplish at the local government level.

The impact of fracking on biodiversity?

Hope to see prioritization of ecosystem function and a multi-solving approach so we avoid funding just landscaped concrete infrastructures

For the past 40 years the land managers have failed when it comes to the damage from mountain bike access, especially illegal access to sensitive areas.

How is the state's 30x30 analysis considering connectivity and wildlife movement?

When you look to conserving 30% of California's land and water, how much do you fret over continuing sprawl development? Is it still a major problem in your view?

Is there any policy being pushed or new funding sources proposed to help make multi-benefit projects/best management practices (ie- aquatic/terrestrial habitat enhancement or creation, groundwater recharge and carbon sequestration) easier and faster for local government agencies to implement and/or interested entities like water districts or individual landowners to get off the ground? Also, could you elaborate on how 30 by 30 is elevating/expanding regenerative agriculture?

Jonathan at the start I heard you say we were at 12% with regard to protection, then Jennifer indicated we don't have a clear definition of what protection means or is, but that the baseline in CA is 22% based on USGS. (I think Bay Area % is higher than that - Conservation Land Networks does this work and has - <https://www.bayarealands.org/> and I believe has a pretty clear definition of conserve and protect) Can you clarify what the 12% was referring to? Also there are exemplary projects of wetland restoration and access in the Bay Area especially within East Bay Regional Park District. (Parchester Village with Breuner Marsh) and Bay Point Regional Park.

How can small nonprofits participate/cooperate/coordinate in projects organized at State level?

Bay wetland restoration is really critical to sea level rise and biodiversity. Are you acting fast enough to prevent some currently proposed development on the wetlands such as Newark wetlands under planning now for big housing developments.

LWCF could decline in importance with increasing phase-out of reliance on fossil fuels?

Another possible funding opportunity for wildlife and conservation - Recovering America's Wildlife Act. PCL is working with NWF on this - <https://www.nwf.org/Our-Work/Wildlife-Conservation/Policy/Recovering-Americas-Wildlife-Act>

Yes! How will state 30 x 30 planning integrate with legislation that is streamlining CEQA to achieve quick build transportation projects and housing goals? How will it set initiatives that help regional and local planning elevate conservation that supports biodiversity and climate goals?

Another opportunity is the Farm Bill and particularly the wetland reserve easement program within NRCS

What opportunities exist to help rural landowners/ranchers/farmers drive the 30 by 30 goals forward with regenerative agriculture practices? (i.e. - carbon sequestration x habitat x recharge). Are there any emerging funding sources, technical/permitting support and/or pathways for partnerships to support project proponents?

You've mentioned local efforts going "right" - it might be helpful for the 30X30 effort to lift up local examples of success - those in particular that show case biodiversity, access, regen ag/sequestration - to show progress, show the way.

The Growing Climate Solutions Act (proposed not passed yet) aims to encourage broad use of soil carbon sequestering practices in agriculture.

Is the SF Bay Trail a good example of a regional plan with local groups working together for access and natural solutions?

Education was pointed out to be important especially in developing an individual's worldview.

This needs to start at a young age. How can this improve?

Pacoima Beautiful has also done great work at a grassroots level and led collaboration efforts with the city and other partners in addressing environmental injustices in their community. They also have worked to create open green spaces in former vacant lots for its community. The Pacoima Wash - 8th Street Park example: <https://pacoimabeautiful.org/portfolio/>

Please connect with Azul: <https://www.facebook.com/AzulDotOrg>

<https://resources.ca.gov/Initiatives/Expanding-Nature-Based-Solutions>

I just wanted to clarify: Jennifer - what was that existing program you mentioned earlier, after you touched on easements you said something supports working lands/green spaces?

Also Azul on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AzulDotOrg>

To sign up for our Nature-Based Solutions outreach list email outreach@resources.ca.gov with "NBS" in the subject line.

<https://www.treasurer.ca.gov/cdlac/>

Moving Towards Renewable Energy in the 21st Century

Questions

1. Your chart shows a huge reliance on batteries. How is the development of storage batteries coming?
2. Have solar panels been installed over the Central Water Project canals where there are main power lines adjacent?
3. How is outreach like for disadvantaged communities who may view renewable energy as a possible tool for displacement when it is installed?
4. Re "game changers," could promoting residential battery packs be a significant factor re balancing energy storage and land use, or would they be too insubstantial for state or regional policy considerations?
5. Do we have eco-sound systems for recycling/disposing of batteries? Also, where does the hydrogen come from for hydrogen energy?

Answered Questions

1. What is the unit of measurement - Gwh? Gigawatt hours? How many Megawatts in a Gigawatt?

A: There is a 1000 megawatts in a gigawatt. Gigawatt was the measurement on that previous slide

2. Why is small hydro considered renewable and large hydro is not?

A: Here is a little insight into the politics of this designation. PCL worked on SB 100 with Sen. De Leon and although we didn't agree 100% with the designation it was a "political" first step and compromise with moving forward with CA's renewable portfolio.

<https://www.governing.com/archive/gov-hydropower-renewable-energy.html>

3. Question re biomass as a renewable energy. I recognize that some basis for it stemmed from wanting to reduce fire risk and drought induced tree deaths, but evidence shows that the biomass process significantly increases carbon releases, while also removing needed organic matter from the natural system. Not to mention its high cost and a variety of other issues that stem from biomass incineration. Is there any movement in removing biomass as a renewable energy since it is so contrary to reducing carbon emissions and clean energy goals in CA?

A: I recommend this resource for more reading: [https://www-
gs.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/energy/Getting_to_Neutral.pdf](https://www-
gs.llnl.gov/content/assets/docs/energy/Getting_to_Neutral.pdf)

Like all energy, there are many tradeoffs to be managed and mitigated.

Chat Log

What is the percent still fossil fuel based?

Around 40%

Is the Battery amount relative to actual solar build out or relative to required build out?

So 60% renewable today versus 40% natural gas? so we are already meeting 2030 renewable standard?

Where is your thinking on putting solar on rooftops, both commercial and residential, and this power included in the analysis?

Where are discussions on the tradeoffs taking place- and how can they best be informed by critical, well-informed thinking on conservation and clean energy approaches

Could the land footprint be greatly reduced by incorporating new generation nuclear into the mix? Preferably these much smaller (than old nuclear) installations could be sited away from the ocean and the more active fault lines. Water is not needed to cool this type of nuclear power plant. They are much safer than the old water-cooled nuclear plants. I realize this is a politically sensitive topic, but largely because of a confusion of the older technology with the newer type. We can't get "wild" lands back after they've been put to industrial uses. Shrinking the overall footprint that is needed for electrification seems imperative.

Environmental justice community equity re development of solutions?

Please don't conflate new generation nuclear with the older technology. There are so many differences. It is not constructive to fail to make the distinction.

You can find TNC's study, Power of Place here:

<https://www.scienceforconservation.org/products/power-of-place>

Could you elaborate a little more on how to advance the nexus between groundwater recharge and renewable energy on working agricultural lands? Are there any resources in place to help offset the costs for rural landowners to take some of their crops out of production to implement renewable energy technology? And is the idea that this could power the grid throughout the community or offset the landowner's personal energy use?

How can we incentivize regenerative agriculture practices to improve carbon sequestration on working lands?

Given CA's fascinating history and amazing landscape, preservation is critical. Can the panel comment upon the conflict between competing needs for clean energy goals and protections for state historical resources in land use planning?

The climate/regenerative ag question is a really good one and something we've thought a bit about at TNC. There are several different ideas on how we can do this, but one that jumps to mind involves re-envisioning the now defunct Williamson Act (which incentivized conserving ag land) to also incentivize implementing land management practices that increase carbon sequestration and/or provide other co-benefits like increased groundwater recharge.

We have some details on this in our recent report on nature-based climate solutions, which you can read about and download here: <https://tinyurl.com/climate-policy-roadmap>

I'm having trouble with the question of what can the land provide for us. We are not separate from the land/ecosystem. We are part of it, and are one of the younger species here. The question might serve us better as a species, if we ask: how do we live harmoniously and in reciprocity with this land that supports our existence?