



PCL INSIDER: News from the Capitol

The (CEQA) Fight is On

With the 2013 legislative session barely underway, the rhetoric and battles over the future of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) are already underway. Adding fuel to the fire was the Governor's remarks during his State of the State address that we must '...streamline our regulatory procedures, particularly the California Environmental Quality Act...'.

Unlike recent years, however, PCL is working from the get-go with a broad coalition of civic, conservation, environmental justice, preservation, labor, and public health groups, native tribes, business leaders, and legal experts to protect California's landmark environmental law and ensure its core tenants of public participation and transparency are upheld.

As part of this effort, PCL is working with several State Senators and Assemblymembers on proactive legislation agenda that will allow CEQA to be an even stronger tool for communities to have a voice on development projects that will impact their natural environments and public health.

[Senator Noreen Evans](#) is taking the lead in the Senate to introduce an omnibus bill that will strengthen CEQA, including ensuring more timely preparation of administrative records, greater access to information electronically, and ensuring CEQA reviews address potential public safety threats of projects (to address a recent court ruling known as the Ballona Wetlands Trust decision). Senator [Hannah-Beth Jackson](#) is also considering introducing CEQA legislation relating to greater access to information.

Meanwhile, PCL has also been answering the calls of members of the Assembly who also plan to introduce positive CEQA reforms. Speaker Pro Tem Nora Campos has given language to the Office of Legislative Counsel that would require that CEQA notices be translated where a significant part of the population has limited English proficiency. Assemblymember Roger Dickinson is working on a bill that would require that notices be posted electronically, time periods for review have clear starting points, and public scoping periods are publicly announced. Assemblymember Tom Ammiano will also be introducing a bill to fix the Ballona Wetlands Trust decision to ensure that fault zones, flood zones, and wildfire hazard zones are taken into account in environmental review, and Assemblymember Das Williams is also exploring ways to strengthen CEQA.

Assemblymember Henry Perea already introduced a bill requiring electronic records of proceedings in CEQA cases (AB 37), which PCL supports in its current form. Our friends at the [California Native Plant Society](#) are also working on bills that to reduce conflict of interest between project proponents and environmental planners, to address the use of outdated EIRs, to address the problems spawned by deferred mitigation, and to provide better oversight of lead agencies.

We are thrilled so many legislators have taken up the call to introduce legislation that will actually enhance CEQA's protections and public participation requirements. We do anticipate introduction of bills that will weaken CEQA, and are ready to combat those efforts as they arise. We are also awaiting legislation we expect to see from Senator Michael Rubio who, along with [Senate pro Tem Darrell Steinberg](#), have led a working group and listening tour on CEQA reform.

In addition to the legislative efforts, PCL and our partners have been much more active in getting our pro-CEQA message out to the public. PCL's President, David Mogavero, and Executive Director, Bruce Reznik, penned an [editorial](#) in the San Francisco Chronicle highlighting the need to protect CEQA, while Senator Evans and Assemblymember Williams authored a great piece on CEQA in the [Capitol Weekly](#). A more complete list of positive CEQA stories can be found [here](#).

To support PCL's legislative work on CEQA, click [here](#); to donate to our media and community outreach efforts, click [here](#) – every dollar counts!

First CEQA Community Workshop of the Year a Success

On January 26, 2013, PCL Foundation hosted its first [CEQA Community Workshop](#) of the year just outside San Diego, at Mira Costa Community College's San Elijo Campus. In spite of thick fog, dozens of people turned out to hear PCL Board Member Kevin Johnson explain how community groups and individuals can engage effectively in the environmental review process. Using local project examples and responding to audience questions, Kevin detailed the ins and outs of the review process along with helpful hints on community engagement. Much thanks to Kevin Johnson, our local consultant Melanie Schlotterbeck, and our local sponsors [Heart of Valley Center](#), [Preserve Wild Santee](#), [Endangered Habitats League](#), and [San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy](#). Our next scheduled Community Workshop will be on Saturday, April 6, 2013, at the Seal Beach Public Library; stay tuned for details. Contact Abigail Okrent at aokrent@pcl.org if you would like to bring a Community Workshop to your community. For more information on these workshops, click [here](#).

PCL Comings and Goings

With the new year comes a new makeup of the PCL Team. Recently joining the PCL Board of Directors is **Randele "Randy" Kanouse**, who served as Special Assistant to the General Manager for the East Bay Municipal Utility District from 1989-2011, where he managed EBMUD's congressional and state legislative programs and the agency's Bay-Delta Program. Randy represented EBMUD in a myriad of landmark water legislation, including requirements linking local land use

decisions to the availability of an adequate water supply and phasing out the use of lead in the manufacturing of faucets and other drinking water plumbing parts. Prior to joining EBMUD, Randy served as the Chief of the Legislative and Public Affairs Office for the State Water Resources Control Board, and as staff counsel at the California Energy Commission. He brings a wealth of expertise on water issues as well as navigating the Capitol to PCL.



As excited as we are about having Randy joining the PCL family, we're equally saddened to see two longtime Board members retire. **Doug Linney** of Next Generation, an Oakland-based public relations firm, has served the environmental community in California for over 30 years as an advocate, political strategist, and coalition leader. Doug has either worked for, or served on the boards of, many of California's leading environmental groups, and has garnered much recognition for his conservation work such as the Mark Dubois River Conservationist Award given by Friends of the River.

Also leaving the PCL Board is *President Emeritus* and former California Attorney General **John Van de Kamp**. Mr. Van de Kamp, now at leading global law firm Mayer Brown, has a distinguished career in public service spanning more than 30 years plus 20 years in private practice. In addition to his two terms as California Attorney General, Mr. Van de Kamp has served as US Attorney for the Central District of California, Director of the Executive Office for US Attorneys in Washington DC, the Central District's first Federal Public Defender, and two terms

as Los Angeles County District Attorney. He has served many roles at PCL through the years, including guiding the organization as President for three years, and has served on numerous boards and commissions promoting environmental protection, youth advocacy and criminal justice.



PCL is also seeing some changes to our staffing - after five and a half years managing PCL's water efforts, **Evon Willhoff** has moved on to continue promoting sustainable water solutions for California as an Environmental Scientist at the Department of Water Resources. Evon has worked on a myriad of critical water issues for PCL, including pushing clean water legislation, advocating for more sustainable water planning through the California Water Plan Update, and promoting more environmentally sound solutions for the Bay-Delta. We hope to fill our Water Campaign Manager position soon. Some other recent changes to the PCL Board and staff that were highlighted in our last [California Today newsletter](#).

PCL owes a huge debt of gratitude to John, Doug and Evon for all their hard work that has helped make the organization what it is today, and for all they have done to safeguard California's lands, air, waters and communities. We wish them well in all their future adventures!



1107 9th Street, Suite 901, Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone (916) 822-5631 • Fax (916) 822-5650

pclmail@pcl.org • www.PCL.org • www.PCLFoundation.org

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