Drought Spurs Legislative Action

With today being the final day to formally introduce new bills this legislative session (ignoring the madness in the form of ‘gut-and-amend’ bills that comes at the end of the session), lawmakers are rushing to put forward proposals to address statewide water needs in light of California’s historic drought. On Wednesday, Governor Brown, President Pro Tem Steinberg, and Speaker Pérez introduced a $687.4 million package to speed up existing funding for drought response actions. Discussions on longer-term investments also continue as several revised water bond proposals move ahead in the Legislature. SB 848 (Wolk) passed out of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee on Wednesday (vote: 6-2), where PCL expressed our support for the bill’s efforts to ensure clean drinking water and address the needs of disadvantaged communities. SB 848 has been referred to Governance and Finance, its third Committee out of four in the Senate. AB 1331 (Rendon), the front-runner water bond bill on the Assembly side, will likely start its policy committee process in March. Several other water bond bills have also been introduced, including AB 1445 (Logue), SB 927 (Cannella & Vidak), and intent language in AB 1674 (Bigelow) and SB 1080 (Fuller), and we expect at least one more proposal may get introduced as the say winds down. This past week has also brought a flood of other water-related bills; stay tuned for our analysis once we see all the water-related bills introduced this session.

Symposium Proceedings Now Available Online

Thanks again to all of our sponsors, speakers, volunteers, and attendees for making our 2014 Environmental Symposium such a success. By bringing together so many of the leading experts to explore solutions to our state’s dire water situation, the event is already helping to shape the debate in the Legislature, and will hopefully lead to more sustainable and equitable water solutions for California.

A recap of the event, as well as various resources for download and review, are now available online. These materials include:

Photographs: Photographs of the event can now be viewed on PCL’s Facebook page. You do not need a Facebook account to view them. A huge thank you to PCL Board Member Randy Kanouse and longtime friend of PCL Osha Meserve for being our photographers for the day. While you’re at it, please ‘like’ our page to get all the latest news from PCL!

PowerPoints & Handouts: You can view the panelists’ PowerPoints and download any additional materials on the Symposium website. We are still in the process of adding more
materials from the day, so please check back soon.

**Videos:** Videos of three sessions are available to view online. These include:

**A New Vision for Water**

Featuring: PCL Executive Director Bruce Reznik (Moderator); Peter Gleick, Pacific Institute; Jacob Katz, CalTrout; and Tim Quinn, Association of CA Water Agencies

**What to Expect This Legislative Session: The Water Bond and Beyond**

Featuring: PCL Board Member Randy Kanouse (Moderator); Senator Lois Wolk; Assembly Member Anthony Rendon; and Dave Metz, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates

**What's Next for the Delta**

Featuring: Martha Davis, Inland Empire Utilities Agency (Moderator); Paul Helliker, Department of Water Resources; Jonas Minton, Planning and Conservation League; Doug Obegi, Natural Resources Defense Council; and Sacramento County Supervisor Don Nottoli

We hope to see you at the next PCL Symposium!