



 [The Planning and Conservation League](#)

PCL INSIDER: News from the Capitol

WAR ON CEQA ESCALATES

Your Help Needed Soon to Save California's Foundational Environmental Law

As we have been reporting, the efforts to dismantle California's foundation environmental law – the California Environmental Quality Act - are intensifying. No longer content with mere CEQA exemptions and judicial streamlining, critics of strong environmental review are now seeking to take the heart out of this great law. These efforts, if successful, will render CEQA's environmental and community protection moot. Moreover, these attempts – as is increasingly the case – are coming in the form of last-minute, behind-closed-door 'gut-and-amend' legislation that violates the Legislature's own protocols.

The good news is that we are starting to see pushback from a broad array of environmental, environmental justice, community and labor advocates who are fighting to ensure that this law is protected. In addition, nearly [three dozen lawmakers](#) have signed onto a joint letter opposing any significant re-writing of the law at the end of session. And today, the [Los Angeles Times](#) has joined the call for a more thoughtful – and less reactionary – approach to CEQA reform.

PCL is working with a broad coalition to mobilize broad-based support for CEQA, and we will need your help making calls, sending emails and making your voice heard over the next week. We will be sending out a separate Action Alert in the next few days detailing how you can help save CEQA.

LESS THAN TWO WEEKS UNTIL THE END OF SESSION: BIG ENVIRONMENTAL DECISIONS YET TO BE MADE

End of Session Chaos Approaches All-Time High

With the end of the 2012 Legislative Session winding down to its final week-and-a-half, legislators will be grappling with seemingly more environmental bills than ever.

In addition to what transpires with CEQA in the coming days of session, the Legislature is also considering laws aimed at implementing or amending another landmark – and controversial – law; AB 32 (The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006). Specifically, several bills seek to direct how funds gathered from AB 32 cap-and-trade auction revenues, which could be in the hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars, will be spent to achieve measurable greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions. PCL is supporting several pieces of legislation that can work in concert to allocate funds to a variety of GHG-reducing projects, ranging from investing in greening schools ([SB 1572](#), Pavley); providing at least 10% of revenues to California's most impacted and disadvantaged communities ([SB 535](#), de León); and funding a variety of energy efficiency and clean energy programs, sustainable land-use and transportation projects, and natural resource protection ([AB](#)

[1532](#), J. Pérez). At the same time, rumors (and even some draft language) have been swirling around the Capitol that seek to weaken the nation's hallmark climate law; PCL is working with our many partners to stall these efforts.

[SB 568](#) (Lowenthal) and [AB 298](#) (Brownley), if passed, will help reduce the amount of plastics that contaminate our beaches, coastline and local communities. SB 568, the Foam Food Container Phase-out bill, would ban the use of polystyrene foam (a.k.a. Styrofoam) containers used at food establishments statewide by 2016. Polystyrene foam contains styrene, a carcinogen that leaches out of food containers into food and beverages. AB 298, Single-Use Bag Phase-out bill, would prohibit grocery stores and convenience stores from providing plastic single use bags to customers after 2015. California taxpayers spend approximately \$25 million annually to collect and bury the 12 billion plastic bags we use each year. Bags and Styrofoam clog our stormdrains, foul our beaches and bays and are costly to remove. Many cities and counties have already passed local ordinances aimed at curbing single-use bags and polystyrene; legislation will help create more consistent statewide approach to plastic pollution.

[AB 1750](#) (Solorio), the Rainwater Capture Act of 2012, would authorize and encourage Californians to capture rainwater off their roofs for non-potable purposes, such as landscaping. The bill provides safeguards to protect public health and potable water systems, as well as authorizes landscape contractors to install rainwater capture systems. AB 1750 will help California move forward on rainwater capture, thus improving regional self-sufficiency.

PCL also supports [AB 685](#) (Eng), one of a series of bills known as the [Human Right to Water](#) package, which would declare that it is the policy of the state that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes.

Another important bill coming up is [AB 1990](#), Assemblymember Fong's "Solar for All" bill that will create a pilot program to install solar in the most impacted and disadvantaged communities through clean energy contracts (long-term, fixed rate contracts) with a preference for local hire. AB 1990 will create local green jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, and give people control over their energy future.

Despite the recent news of undisclosed funds from the Department of Parks and Recreation, many parks remain threatened by pending closures. [AB 1589](#) (Huffman), Helping State Parks State Open bill, provides a creative funding approach to keep these precious parks open.

The 2012 Legislative Session ends at midnight on Friday, August 31st. If the bills receive legislative approval, they make their way to the final step of the legislative process; the Governor's desk for his approval or veto.

Please contact your [state representatives](#) immediately, and let them know you support strong climate laws (AB 1532, SB 535, SB 1572), reduced plastic pollution (SB 568, AB 298), sustainable and equitable water policies (AB 685, AB 1750), clean energy for all communities (AB 1990), and California's State Parks (AB 1589)!

PCL SEEKS MEMBERSHIP AND EVENTS COORDINATOR

PCL's Membership and Events Coordinator will be moving on at the end of this month, which means that PCL is looking to hire an energetic, self-motivated individual with communication and event planning experience to direct the Planning and Conservation League's promotion and communication. The Membership and Events Coordinator will oversee PCL's internal and external communications, coordinate all PCL events and manage membership relations. For a more detailed job description, please click [here](#). Resumes should be submitted to <mailto:resumes@pcl.org> by Friday, August 31.

BUY YOUR TICKETS FOR SAN FRANCISCO FUNDRAISER!

Please join PCL and longtime environmental champion [Assemblymember Jared Huffman](#) on October 4th from 5:30 -7:30pm for an intimate fundraiser at [Mark Wolfe Contemporary Art in San Francisco](#). In addition to Huffman's keynote address, PCL Executive Director Bruce Reznik will be on hand to discuss the 'state of the environment' in the Capitol and PCL's "One Vision, One Voice" campaign aimed at mobilizing communities around a shared vision for our future. Local beer, wine and light appetizers will be served. Local activists will be recognized by PCL. Participants will be able to bid on amazing art, with proceeds going to PCL. Host tickets are \$250, with general admission at \$100. Tickets are now available through PCL's [website](#).



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

Please add pclmail@pcl.org to your address book to ensure delivery to your inbox.

You are receiving this email because the email address was subscribed to our email list.
Having trouble reading this email? View it on our [website](#).

Copyright, 2008 The Planning and Conservation League. All rights reserved.
[Privacy and Contribution Policies](#) [Click here to unsubscribe](#)