

Date of Hearing: July 14, 2021

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Lorena Gonzalez, Chair
SB 268 (Archuleta) – As Amended April 5, 2021

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|-------------------|---------------------------|-------|--------|
| Policy Committee: | Local Government | Vote: | 8 - 0 |
| | Water, Parks and Wildlife | | 14 - 0 |

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: Yes Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY: This bill reinstates the authority to establish the Lower San Gabriel River Recreation and Park District (LSGR District) until January 1, 2024, and makes changes to the initial board of directors of the Lower Los Angeles River Recreation and Park District (LLAR District). Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Extends, from January 1, 2020, until January 1, 2024, the deadline to apply to the Los Angeles County (LA County) Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to establish the LSGR District.
- 2) Removes the ability of the City of Montebello to appoint a member to the LSGR District Board of Directors and increases the number of public members appointed to the LSGR District board by the LA County Board of Supervisors, from one to two.
- 3) Changes the initial board of directors of the LLAR District from 13 members to 17 members by:
 - a) Removing the authorization for the cities of Commerce, Downey, Montebello, and Pico Rivera to jointly appoint one member to the LLAR District board, and instead authorizing these cities to each appoint one member to the board.
 - b) Authorizing the LA County Board of Supervisors to appoint three, instead of two, public members to the board.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Cost pressures of an unknown amount, potentially in the tens of millions of dollars, to fund projects along the Lower San Gabriel River, to the extent the new LSGR District is successfully established. (GF, special funds, bond funds)

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** This bill seeks to address the lack of access and funding for parks and recreation opportunities along the Lower Los Angeles River and Lower San Gabriel River by extending the deadline for forming the LSGR District and adjusting the board composition of both districts to better represent the affected communities.
- 2) **Background.**

- a) **Lower San Gabriel River Recreation and Park District.** The Lower San Gabriel River flows 43 miles through Los Angeles and Orange Counties, including through many cities categorized as disadvantaged communities, where residents are disproportionately harmed by poor air quality and a lack of access to recreational and outdoor park space. Most of the Lower SGR is channelized, with the section below Whittier Narrows Dam lined by concrete and compacted by debris and flood control dams.

SB 693, Chapter 466, Statutes of 2017, authorized the establishment of the LSGR District until January 1, 2020, subject to the requirements of LAFCO law and the Recreation and Park District Law. No application was filed prior to the expiration of the authority to establish the LSGR District by January 1, 2020.

This bill reinstates the authority to form the district until January 1, 2024. In addition, this bill maintains a 15-member board for the LSGR District, but deletes the member from the City of Montebello, and authorizes the LA County Board of Supervisors to appoint a second public member from the region.

- b) **Lower Los Angeles River Recreation and Park District.** The Los Angeles River is entirely within the County of Los Angeles, with the 32-mile portion of the river upstream of the City of Vernon considered the upper river, and the 19-mile portion flowing through the Cities of Vernon, Commerce, Maywood, Bell, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, South Gate, Lynwood, Compton, Paramount, Carson and Long Beach considered the lower river.

SB 1374 (Lara), Chapter 486, Statutes of 2016, authorized the formation of the LLAR District until January 1, 2019, subject to the requirements of LAFCO law and the Recreation and Park District Law, and established governance and powers for the district. The authority to establish the LLAR District was extended to January 1, 2021, by SB 875 (Committee on Budget & Fiscal Review), Chapter 453, Statutes of 2018. According to LA County LAFCO, the City of South Gate submitted an application in December of 2019 to form the LLAR District. The LAFCO is reviewing the application.

This bill modifies the initial composition of the LLAR District board and increases the membership from 13 to 17 members in order to better represent the cities impacted by the district.

- 3) **Proposition 68.** In 2018, California voters approved the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018 (Proposition 68), which authorized the sale of \$4.1 billion in general obligation bonds for state and local parks, environmental protection and restoration projects, water infrastructure projects, and flood protection projects.