

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 1933 (Hoover)

As Amended April 8, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Requires a county surveyor to return a record of survey to the respective licensed land surveyor or civil engineer that submitted it, and revises requirements related to a county surveyor's examination of a submitted record of survey.

Major Provisions

- 1) Specify that, when returning a record of survey for corrections, the county surveyor shall return it to the licensed land surveyor or registered civil engineer who presented it.
- 2) Require that, when examining a corner record for compliance with law, a county surveyor shall verify compliance with Section 8772 of the Business and Professions Code related to proper setting and tagging of monuments.
- 3) Make technical changes related to gender-neutral language.

COMMENTS

Land surveyors are an important part of civil administration, land development and property law. Land surveyors establish and update property boundary lines, ensure property boundaries are accurate, aid in creating maps, and provide information regarding topography and geographic features that is critical to construction and civil engineering projects. Land surveyors work with, or sometimes directly for, state and local governments, and can also provide mapping and property information for private entities.

The Public Land Survey System. Developed by the Land Ordinance of 1785 under the direction of Thomas Jefferson, the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) was first developed to divide and map out land ceded to the United States following the Revolutionary War. Since then, the PLSS has been the primary method of subdividing, describing, and making available for sale land that is ceded or acquired by the United States. As such, not every state is included in the PLSS — such as the original thirteen colonies, Texas, and others — but California is.

Land surveyed under the PLSS is divided by state, principle meridian, township, range, and section, with further subdivisions thereafter. Importantly, the corners of each township are marked upon surveillance; early surveyors would mark corners with makeshift physical markers or noted by natural characteristics (i.e. a nearby tree or body of water), while modern technology allows surveyors to set monuments in corners, as further described below. The US Bureau of Land Management continues to maintain and update the PLSS, and as such routinely resurveys and reestablishes the precise placement of these corners. Whenever a licensed land surveyor establishes, re-establishes, or restores a corner as part of a survey, they must file a written "corner record" with the respective county surveyor or county engineer in the jurisdiction of the corner.

Survey monuments. As part of their duties of establishing and maintaining accurate property boundaries and corner records, land surveyors will mark or place "monuments" — also

sometimes called "property markers" — to define the location of private or public property lines. Typical monuments are metal disks placed into the ground or otherwise permanently affixed to the land along the property boundary. Survey monuments must include the certificate number of the surveyor, engineer, or public agency that set it. Monuments are also often imprinted with relevant information, including the name of the surveyor or agency and the date the monument was placed, though this is not required by law.

Records of survey. When a licensed land surveyor performs a full property survey, they prepare a detailed "record of survey" that includes a map of the property boundaries, property corners, notable features, precise distances between property points, and more. While not required under every instance, there are many cases in which California law requires a land surveyor to submit a record of survey to the county surveyor in which the survey was conducted, including in cases which the survey discloses material evidence or changes not previously disclosed on a county or PLSS survey, or would potentially change the property lines of another county or PLSS survey.

Once a record of survey or a corner record is submitted to a county surveyor, they have 20 working days to examine the record of survey, and to either provide a statement of endorsement approving the survey and submit it to the county recorder, or to respond to the person who submitted the record with a list of deficiencies that are required to be corrected before it can be approved. When examining the records, county surveyors are to ensure that the record of survey not only is mathematically accurate, but follows relevant provisions of the Professional Land Surveyors' Act, including proper legibility and disclosure of monument locations. Notably, while current law requires county surveyors to verify that monuments included in records of survey are properly set and tagged in accordance with Section 8772 of the BPC, it is silent on such a requirement for verifying corner records.

In response, this bill seeks to clarify that when reviewing a submitted corner record, county surveyors must ensure compliance with Section 8772 and verify that corner monuments are properly set and tagged with the land surveyor's license number. Moreover, the author and sponsor contend that the current statute requiring county surveyors to return a record of survey to the "person" who presented it is too broadly worded, and poses risk that individuals who are not licensed surveyors could receive or modify survey documents associated with a surveyor's license number unbeknownst to that licensee. As a result, this bill also seeks to clarify that the written statement of changes related to a record of survey be specifically sent to "the licensed land surveyor or civil engineer" who presented it.

According to the Author

This is a common-sense bill that promotes greater reliability and consistency in the land surveying review process. This bill aims to address potential concerns related to the misrepresentation of licensed surveyors and inconsistencies when reviewing records. AB 1933 makes clarifying technical changes to California's Professional Land Surveyors' Act to improve these land surveying procedures.

Arguments in Support

This bill is sponsored by the California Land Surveyors Association, who writes: "AB 1933 is a narrowly tailored measure that strengthens professional accountability, promotes consistency in the review process, and enhances confidence in public land records relied upon by property owners, public agencies, and the broader public."

Arguments in Opposition

There is no opposition on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

- 1) The Board of Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors and Geologists within the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) anticipates minor and absorbable costs.
- 2) Costs of an unknown amount local county surveyors for additional corner record examination requirements. These costs are not reimbursable by the state because a county surveyor has authority to charge and adjust fees as necessary to cover their cost of service.

VOTES

ASM BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS: 19-0-0

YES: Berman, Johnson, Addis, Ahrens, Alanis, Bains, Aguiar-Curry, Caloza, Chen, Elhawary, Hadwick, Haney, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Lowenthal, Macedo, Nguyen, Pellerin

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 13-0-2

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Arambula, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Calderon, Muratsuchi

UPDATED

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