
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 900
Author: Papan (D)
Amended: 8/29/25 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE NATURAL RES. & WATER COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/24/25
AYES: Limón, Seyarto, Allen, Grove, Hurtado, Laird, Stern

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 5-0, 8/29/25
AYES: Caballero, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab
NO VOTE RECORDED: Seyarto, Dahle

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0, 6/2/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Environmental protection: 30x30 goals: land conservation:
stewardship

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill requires the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to update the 2027 Pathways to 30x30 Report to include recommendations to increase and improve stewardship of 30x30 lands, including innovative ways to reduce barriers and increase federal, state, and local support for science-based management and stewardship, as specified.

ANALYSIS: Existing law:

- 1) Authorizes, pursuant to the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4), \$1.2 billion to protect California's biodiversity and to protect nature and restore landscape health to achieve California's climate change goals (Public Resources Code (PRC) § 93000).

- 2) Establishes CNRA and vests it with the responsibility to restore, protect, and manage the state's natural, historical, and cultural resources for current and future generations (Government Code § 12805).
- 3) Establishes a goal to conserve 30 percent of California's land and coastal waters by 2030 ("30x30") (PRC § 71450 and Executive Order No. N-82-20).
- 4) Requires the Secretary of CNRA to annually submit a report to the Legislature on the progress made in the prior calendar year toward achieving the 30x30 goal (PRC § 71452).

This bill:

- 1) Requires CNRA to develop strategies to reduce barriers and increase support for stewardship of conserved lands.
- 2) Requires CNRA to update the 2027 30x30 Pathways Report to include:
 - a) An estimate of backlogged, critical, recurring, and future stewardship needs throughout the state with associated costs.
 - b) Case studies of effective stewardship.
 - c) A review of stewardship best practices for conserved lands that includes, but is not limited to, new technology and innovative practices that improve outcomes and cost-effectiveness.
 - d) A valuation of the benefits of stewardship on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
 - e) Identification of the ecological workforce needs for stewardship and opportunities to support workforce training.
 - f) A review of the cobenefits of stewardship that includes, but is not limited to, recreation and public access, the provision of habitat and resources for wildlife, carbon sequestration, water and air purification, and climate regulation.
 - g) Recommendations to increase and improve stewardship of 30x30 lands, including innovative ways to reduce barriers and increase federal, state, and local support for stewardship.
 - h) Recommendations to increase ancestral land return and to Recommendations to increase consultation and partnership with California Native American tribes and tribal cultural practitioners.

- 3) Establishes that initial funding from Proposition 4 may be used to further the goals of this bill.
- 4) Defines “stewardship” for the purposes of this bill.

Comments

30x30 progress. According to the CNRA May 2023 annual progress report, the state has conserved 24.4% of lands and 16.2% of coastal waters for 30x30, adding approximately 631,000 acres to lands conserved over the past year and identifying concrete strategies to strengthen conservation in coastal waters. The report concludes that the state is on track to meet the goals of 30x30.

30x30 Pathways. The 30x30 Strategy Report identified ten pathways to achieve the 30x30 goal. Pathway 6 commits the state to expanding and accelerating environmental restoration and stewardship. The 2023 report acknowledges that merely protecting existing habitat is not enough – active restoration and stewardship are necessary to protect biodiversity and increase the sustainability of California’s ecosystems which this bill seeks to address.

Proposition 4. The Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024 (Proposition 4) sets aside \$1.2 billion for the protection of California’s biodiversity and to protect nature and restore landscape health to achieve California’s climate change goals (PRC § 93000). Of that \$1.2 billion, \$870,000,000 is designated, upon appropriation, to the Wildlife Conservation Board for grant programs to protect and enhance fish and wildlife resources and habitat and achieve the state’s biodiversity, public access, and conservation goals (PRC § 93010).

This bill allows the Legislature, when appropriating funds from section 93010 in Proposition 4, to authorize initial stewardship funding as part of a land acquisition project to enhance the benefits of the acquired land in ways that further the purposes of this bill.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/28/25)

California Council of Land Trusts (co-sponsor)
The Nature Conservancy (co-sponsor)
Audubon California

Audubon Canyon Ranch
Big Sur Land Trust
Bolsa Chica Land Trust
California Association of Local Conservation Corps
California Environmental Voters
California Invasive Plant Council
California Native Plant Society
California State Parks Foundation
Cayucos Land Conservancy
Cleaneearth4kids
Coachella Valley Conservation Commission
Defenders of Wildlife
Eastern Sierra Land Trust
Elkhorn Slough Foundation
Grassland Water District
Kings River Conservancy
Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo
Land Trust of Napa County
Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust
Marin Agricultural Land Trust
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Mojave Desert Land Trust
Northern California Regional Land Trust
Ojai Valley Land Conservancy
Peninsula Open Space Trust
Placer Land Trust
Rural County Representatives of California
San Joaquin River Parkway & Conservation Trust, INC.
Sanctuary Forest INC.
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
Save the Redwoods League
Sequoia Riverlands Trust
Sierra Business Council
Sierra Consortium
Sierra Foothill Conservancy
Solano Land Trust
Sonoma Land Trust
Sustainable Conservation
The Wildlands Conservancy

Together Bay Area
Ventura Land Trust

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/28/25)

None received

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the author, “AB 900 is the next step in furthering the state’s 30x30 initiative. California has been making steady progress toward conserving lands that support biodiversity, access, and climate resiliency. However, with over a quarter of state lands considered ‘30x30 conservation areas,’ it is important that we follow through and promote strategies that ensure these lands are both ‘durably protected and managed.’ 30x30 is a critical safeguard in the face of climate change, so it is essential to support our statewide partners in their pursuit of sustainably managing and stewarding our precious natural resources.”

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: None received.

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 77-0, 6/2/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Ellis, Tangipa

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