
SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER

Senator Josh Becker, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: SB 1268 **Hearing Date:** April 21, 2026
Author: Gonzalez
Version: March 23, 2026 Amended
Urgency: No **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Edith Hannigan

Subject: Outdoor public recreation spaces: equitable access

SUMMARY

This bill would establish the Outdoors for All initiative, to be administered by the California Natural Resources Agency.

BACKGROUND AND EXISTING LAW

Outdoors for All Initiative. The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) administers the Outdoors for All initiative championed by Governor Gavin Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom. CNRA published a strategy (Strategy) for the initiative in November 2023 identifying six priorities:

- 1) Establish Spaces for People and Nature to Thrive.
- 2) Foster Belonging.
- 3) Connect People and the Outdoors.
- 4) Co-Create with Communities.
- 5) Build Equitable Career Pathways and a Representative Workforce.
- 6) Align Funding to Achieve Outdoors for All.

30x30. California's 30x30 initiative to conserve 30% of the state's land and coastal waters by 2030 is part of an international movement to conserve natural areas across our planet, through which scores of countries have established their own 30x30 commitments. California's initiative seeks to protect and restore biodiversity, expand access to nature, and mitigate and build resilience to climate change.

Equitable Outdoor Access Act. The Equitable Outdoor Access Act (AB 30, Kalra, Chapter 939, Statutes of 2022) established that it is the policy of the state to 1) ensure all Californians have equitable opportunities to the benefits of nature; 2) maximize public access to public lands; and 3) prevent and minimize the intentional and unwarranted limitation of sustainable public access to public lands.

Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. Modeled after the "Brown Act" for local governments, the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act directs that state body meetings are open and public and all persons are permitted to attend any state body meeting except for certain circumstances. The Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act provides for the public's right to access information about public business, as enshrined in the California Constitution (Cal. Const., art. I, § 3, subd. (b)(1); Article 9, Chapter 1, Part 1, Division 3

of Title 2 of the Government (GOV) Code, § 11120 *et seq.*). The Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act defines a “state body” and a “meeting” for the purposes of the Act (GOV §§ 11121; 11121.1; 11122.5).

Existing law:

- 1) 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 (GOV § 12805).
- 2) Establishes a goal to conserve 30 percent of California’s land and coastal waters by 2030 (“30x30”) (Public Resources Code (PRC) § 71450 and Executive Order No. N-82-20).
- 3) Requires relevant state agencies, including CNRA and its departments, boards, offices, conservancies, and commissions, and the Department of Transportation to consider and incorporate state policy regarding equitable outdoor access when revising, adopting, or establishing policies, regulations, or grant criteria, or making expenditures (PRC § 1002).
- 4) Establishes the Equitable Outdoor Access Act, and sets forth the state’s commitment to ensuring all Californians can benefit from, and have meaningful and sustainable access to, the state’s rich cultural and natural resources (PRC § 1000).
- 5) Requires CNRA to submit a report to the Legislature regarding the implementation of the Equitable Outdoor Access Act by January 1, 2024 (PRC § 1003).
- 6) Requires meetings of state bodies be open and public, and all person permitted to attend any meeting, except as provided (GOV § 11123).

PROPOSED LAW

This bill would:

- 1) Establish common definitions for relevant terms in the bill, including:
 - a) “30x30 goal.”
 - b) “Agency.”
 - c) “Barriers.”
 - d) “Disadvantaged communities.”
 - e) “Low-income communities.”
 - f) “Outdoors for All initiative.”
 - g) “Outdoor public recreation spaces.”
- 2) Establish the Outdoors for All initiative to be administered by CNRA in consultation with the Department of Parks and Recreations (State Parks) and other relevant state agencies.
- 3) Establish the goals of the initiative:

- a) Achieve equitable access to outdoor public recreation spaces for all Californians to enjoy, regardless of their income, race, ethnicity, geography, age, disability, or other characteristic background.
 - b) Identify, reduce, and eliminate barriers to access outdoor public recreation spaces and to connect with nature.
 - c) Provide opportunities, investments, grants, programs, and park expansions in disadvantaged and low-income communities to address historical and ongoing inequities to access outdoor public recreation spaces.
 - d) Align the goals described above with relevant goals of the state, including the state's outdoor equity goals and the 30x30 goal, to ensure conservation strategies enhance public access and benefits for disadvantaged and low-income communities.
- 4) Require CNRA, in consultation with State Parks and other relevant state entities, to implement the initiative to accomplish its goals.
 - 5) Require CNRA to consult diverse stakeholders, including community-based organizations, local governments, and environmental justice advocates, to ensure inclusive decisionmaking and prevent loopholes.
 - 6) Require CNRA to provide mechanisms for public input and transparency and consider public feedback in accordance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.
 - 7) Require CNRA to submit a report to the relevant policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature detailing the progress made to achieve the initiative's goals on or before January 1, 2028, and annually thereafter.
 - 8) Make relevant findings and declarations.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT

According to the author, "California is one of the world's premier destinations for outdoor recreation, home to hundreds of national and state parks along with countless regional, county[,] and city parks and open spaces. Outdoor recreation has clear benefits not only for California's economy, but also for public health – research shows that people who visit outdoor spaces for 30 minutes or more during a week have lower rates of depression and high blood pressure, and higher rates of community connection."

"However, despite California's nation-leading outdoor recreation industry, many Californians lack access to the benefits of outdoor spaces. A history of exclusionary zoning, discriminatory policies, and underinvestment has resulted in fewer parks and less outdoor access for urban communities, communities of color, and lower-income communities. Barriers including limited facilities for people with disabilities, the cost of equipment, transportation, and fees, and racial and ethnic discrimination exacerbate these historical inequalities."

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION

None received.

COMMENTS

30x30 progress. According to the CNRA July 2025 annual progress report, the state has conserved 26.1% of lands and 21.9% of coastal waters for 30x30, adding

approximately 1.044 million acres to lands and coastal waters conserved over the past year. In order to reach the 30x30 goal, the report indicates the state must conserve approximately 4 million more acres of land and 283,000 acres of coastal waters.

Implementing Existing Statute. The Outdoors for All initiative is championed by Governor Gavin Newsom and First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom to implement the Equitable Outdoor Access Act, created by the passage of AB 30 (Kalra, 2022, Chapter 939, Statutes of 2022) and the subsequent signature of Governor Newsom.

This bill has many overlaps with the Equitable Outdoor Access Act. Both pieces of legislation address the importance of access to nature for all Californians and the value of California's biodiversity; acknowledge the historical context of Native American stewardship of California landscapes prior to European contact; and establish that the policy and goals of the state are to achieve equitable access to outdoor public recreation for all Californians, to reduce barriers to public access to public lands, and for state agencies to incorporate these policies and goals into policies, regulations, and grant programs, as those are revised, adopted, or established.

Aligning the existing Equitable Outdoor Access Act with this proposed bill. To address the overlap between these pieces of Legislation, the Committee may wish to recommend amendments to incorporate the Outdoors for All initiative and Strategy into the existing Equitable Outdoor Access Act, rather than creating a new division within the PRC **[SEE AMENDMENT #1]**.

Codifying the initiative to implement the Act. The Committee may wish to recommend amendments to:

- 1) Establish relevant definitions.
- 2) Establish the Outdoors for All initiative, to be administered by CNRA, to advance the objectives of the Equitable Outdoor Access Act.
- 3) Require CNRA to implement the priorities of the Strategy.
- 4) Establish a Deputy Secretary for Access in CNRA.
- 5) Require CNRA to review and amend, if necessary, the Strategy no later than December 31, 2028, and every five years thereafter.
- 6) Require CNRA consult with diverse stakeholders.
- 7) Require CNRA to host at least three public meetings.
- 8) Require CNRA to provide at least one 30-day comment period on the draft revised Strategy.
- 9) Require CNRA to post the final Strategy on its website in a place that is publicly accessible.
- 10) Require CNRA to submit a report, on or before January 1, 2028, and annually thereafter, to submit a report to the Legislature detailing the progress made to achieve the Strategy.
- 11) Make technical changes to the findings and declarations. **[SEE AMENDMENTS # 1 and 2]**

Improper reference to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act. The Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act is only relevant to meetings of state bodies (GOV § 11121). There is no “state body” established to implement the Outdoors for All initiative, so it would be impossible for the agency to meet the requirements of the Act. The Committee may wish to recommend amendments to the bill that are inspired by the Act, such as public meetings, public comment periods, and public postings, but that do not cause confusion regarding “state bodies.” **[SEE AMENDMENT #1]**

Related Legislation

AB 900 (Papan, Chapter 385, Statutes of 2025) requires CNRA to develop strategies to reduce barriers and increase support for stewardship of conserved lands.

AB 2440 (Reyes, Chapter 716, Statutes of 2024) requires CNRA to prioritize promoting and supporting partnering state agencies and departments that acquire and steward state land, and requires the 30x30 progress report include information on the amount of funding expended by each partnering state agency and department for land and water conservation, science and research, public outreach and engagement, and managing, monitoring, and restoring conserved lands and water, as well as information on state funding invested in equitable outdoor access.

SB 1402 (Min, 2024) would have required all state agencies, departments, boards, offices, commissions, and conservancies to consider the 30x30 goal when adopting, revising, or establishing plans, policies, or regulations that directly affect the use of coastal waters or land, management of natural resources, or biodiversity conservation. This bill was held on the Assembly Appropriations suspense file.

AB 30 (Kalra, Chapter 939, Statutes of 2022) established the Equitable Outdoor Access Act.

SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS

AMENDMENT 1

Revise proposed section 2 of the bill as follows:

SEC. 2. Section 1005 is added to the Public Resources Code, to read:
~~**Division 1.7 (commencing with Section 1030) is added to the Public Resources Code, to read:**~~

~~DIVISION 1.7. Outdoors For All Initiative~~

~~**1030. 1005.**~~ (a) For purposes of this section ~~**division**~~, the following definitions apply:

(1) “30x30 goal” means the goal, established by ~~**subdivision (b) of Section 71450 and**~~ Governor Gavin Newsom’s Executive Order No. N-82-20, ~~**known as the 30x30 goal**~~, to conserve at least 30 percent of California’s lands and coastal waters by 2030.

(2) “Agency” means the Natural Resources Agency.

~~(3) “Barriers” include, but are not limited to, those concerning financial costs, including park entry fees and equipment costs, transportation limitations, the lack of access to information, the lack of parks and open spaces, safety concerns, physical accessibility issues, and discriminatory practices and policies.~~

~~(d) “Disadvantaged communities” means communities identified as disadvantaged communities pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code.~~

~~(e) “Low-income communities” has the same meaning as defined in Section 39713 of the Health and Safety Code.~~

“Outdoors for All initiative” or “initiative” means the initiative established pursuant to subdivision (b).

~~(g)(4)~~ “Outdoor public recreation spaces” or “spaces” include, but are not limited to, parks, open spaces, trails, beaches, forests, and other natural areas.

(b) The Outdoors for All initiative is hereby established, to be administered by the agency, in consultation with the Department of Parks and Recreation and other relevant state entities to advance the objectives of the Equitable Outdoor Access Act.

(c) As part of the initiative, the agency shall implement all of the following priorities provided in the Outdoors for All Strategy, published November 2023:

(1) Establish spaces for people and nature to thrive.

(2) Foster belonging.

(3) Connect people and the outdoors.

(4) Cocreate with communities.

(5) Build equitable career pathways and a representative workforce.

(6) Align funding from federal, state, regional, and private sources to achieve the goals of the Outdoors for All initiative.

(d) The agency shall maintain the position of Deputy Secretary for Access within the agency to coordinate the implementation of the Outdoors for All initiative.

(e) (1) On or before December 31, 2028, and every five years thereafter, the agency shall update the Outdoors for All Strategy to advance the directives of this division, align with relevant goals of the state, including the state’s outdoor equity goals and the 30x30 goal, and to ensure conservation strategies enhance public access and benefits for disadvantaged and low-income communities.

(2) In implementing paragraph (1), the agency shall consult with diverse stakeholders, including community-based organizations, local governments, and environmental justice advocates, to ensure inclusive decisionmaking and prevent loopholes.

(3) The agency shall host at least three public meetings during the update process. The meetings may be in-person, virtual, or hybrid.

(4) The agency shall provide at least one 30-day public comment period on the draft revised Outdoors for All Strategy.

(5) The agency shall post the final Outdoors for All Strategy on its website in a place that is publicly accessible.

(f) (1) On or before January 1, 2028, and annually thereafter, the agency shall submit a report to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature detailing the progress made to achieve the initiative's strategy.

(2) A report submitted pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

Strike proposed sections 1031 and 1032 of the proposed bill.

AMENDMENT 2

SECTION 1. (a) For purposes of this section, “outdoor public recreation spaces” or “spaces” include, but are not limited to, parks, open spaces, trails, beaches, forests, and other natural areas.

(b) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) Outdoor public recreation spaces are a public good and provide significant health, educational, economic, and environmental benefits to all Californians.

(2) Many communities, particularly disadvantaged and low-income communities and communities of color, face barriers to ~~accessing~~ ~~access~~ outdoor public recreation spaces, including the lack of ~~access to~~ nearby parks; transportation, financial, cultural, and informational barriers; and safety concerns.

(3) All Californians, regardless of their ages or characteristic backgrounds, deserve access to outdoor public recreation spaces with well-maintained public facilities that offer multiple ways to enjoy these spaces.

[...]

(8) The Outdoors for All initiative established pursuant to Section ~~1005~~ ~~1031~~ of the Public Resources Code advances equitable access to nature, conservation, biodiversity protection, and more. This initiative is critical for maintaining progress to meet the state's goals, including the state's outdoor equity goals, and the ~~30x30~~ goal established by Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order No. N-82-20, ~~known as the 30x30 goal~~, to conserve at least 30 percent of California's lands and coastal waters by 2030.

SUPPORT

Active San Gabriel Valley
Allensworth Progressive Association
Amigos de los Rios

Asian Pacific Islander Forward Movement
Audubon California
Azul
Bay Area Ridge Trail Council
CactusToCloud Institute
California Association of Local Conservation Corps
California Association of Recreation and Parks Districts
California Environmental Voters
California Native Plant Society, Alta Peak Chapter
California Outdoor Recreation Partnership
Californians for Western Wilderness
CalWild
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Progressive Reform
Central Valley Partnership
Children and Nature Network
City of Huron
Clean Earth 4 Kids
COFEM
Day One
Endangered Habitats League
Environmental Action Committee of West Marin
Environmental Council of Sacramento
Environmental Protection Information Center
Friends of Harbors, Beaches, and Parks
Friends of the Dunes
Friends of the River
GreenLatinos
Habitat 2020
Hispanic Access Foundation
Justice Outside
KABOOM!
Latino Outdoors
Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust
Los Angeles United Methodist Urban Foundation
Los Cerritos Wetlands Land Trust
Los Padres ForestWatch
Mono Lake Committee
Mount Shasta Bioregional Ecology Center
National Parks Conservation Association
Nature for All
Outdoor Outreach
Prevention Institute
Resource Renewal Institute
River Partners
Salted Roots
Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
Save Mount Diablo
Save the Redwoods League
Sequoia Riverlands Trust

Sierra Club
Sierra Nevada Alliance
Siskiyou Crest Coalition
South Yuba River Citizens League
The LEAP Institute
Tias on Trails
Tuleyome
Wildlands Network
Winter Wildlands Alliance

OPPOSITION

None Received.

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