

SENATE THIRD READING  
SB 427 (Blakespear and Stern)  
As Amended May 23, 2025  
2/3 vote

## SUMMARY

Extends the sunset of the Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) from 2030 to 2035.

## Major Provisions

## COMMENTS

On June 5, 1990, voters approved Proposition 117: The California Wildlife Protection Act. Proposition 117 created the HCF and requires \$30 million to be transferred annually from existing environmental funds and the General Fund to the HCF to support the acquisition, enhancement, or restoration of certain lands for wildlife or open space purposes. Originally, Proposition 117 included a sunset for the HCF in 2020, but language in Proposition 117 allowed the Legislature to extend the sunset without a four-fifths vote. SB 85 (Chapter 31, Statutes of 2019) later extended the sunset to 2030. This bill would further extend the sunset to 2035.

HCF monies are to be expended on the acquisition of habitat for the protection of deer and mountain lions; the acquisition of habitat to protect rare, endangered, threatened, or fully protected species; the acquisition of habitat for significant natural areas; the acquisition, enhancement, or restoration of wetlands; the acquisition, restoration, or enhancement of aquatic habitat for anadromous salmonids and trout resources; and the acquisition, restoration, or enhancement of riparian habitat. Since 1990, over \$1 billion has been transferred into the HCF. Three state entities use their HCF allotment for public grants.

Created by the Wildlife Conservation Law of 1947, the Wildlife Conservation Board is a state grant-making agency within the Department of Fish and Wildlife, dedicated to safeguarding California's spectacular biological diversity and wild spaces by working in partnership with tribes, conservation organizations, and government agencies to acquire lands and design and implement habitat restoration and public access projects statewide through a variety of programs. One such program is the Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program which is funded primarily through HCF and provides for coastal, wetland, and grassland habitat restoration, wildlife corridors, and fisheries enhancement.

### According to the Author

"While the HCF annual allocation is relatively small in comparison to resource-related bond acts that have passed over the life of Proposition 117, it has provided a necessary, consistent, and reliable revenue source for conservation efforts in California—helping to attract and secure other public and private funding critical to completing major acquisitions, restoration, and wildlife connectivity projects.

[This bill] will extend the sunset for this funding to 2035 to protect a necessary, consistent, and reliable revenue source for conservation efforts that benefit California's diverse communities and biodiversity."

**Arguments in Support**

A coalition of environmental groups write in strong support of this bill. These groups celebrate the more than \$1 billion in HCF funds, which have protected over 1.2 million acres of wildlife habitat across California and have supported more than 350 local and regional park projects since 1990. They also note the urgency of signaling a commitment to the HCF, because "in the five years since the Legislature and Governor extended the HCF through 2030, the Department of Finance has proposed (through the May Revision process) to sweep the HCF twice and proposed in 2024 to terminate it altogether." The Legislature has rejected these efforts.

**Arguments in Opposition**

None on file.

**FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee, this bill will result in ongoing costs of \$30 million annually (General Fund, special fund, or bond funds) from fiscal year (FY) 2030–31 until FY 2035–36 to maintain the annual allocation to the HCF.

**VOTES****SENATE FLOOR: 38-0-2**

**YES:** Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Hurtado, Reyes

**ASM WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE: 11-0-2**

**YES:** Papan, Jeff Gonzalez, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bennett, Boerner, Caloza, Hart, Macedo, Celeste Rodriguez, Rogers

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Bains, Tangipa

**ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-1-0**

**YES:** Wicks, Sanchez, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Mark González, Ahrens, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta

**NO:** Tangipa

**UPDATED**

VERSION: May 23, 2025

CONSULTANT: Stephanie Mitchell / W., P., & W. / (916) 319-2096

FN: 0001351