

Date of Hearing: June 16, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WATER, PARKS, AND WILDLIFE

Diane Papan, Chair

SB 832 (Allen) – As Amended May 21, 2026

SENATE VOTE: 39-0

SUBJECT: Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group: membership: revitalization plan

SUMMARY: Increases the number of members of the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries (ULART) Working Group and requires the ULART Working Group to meet regularly to evaluate the implementation of the ULART revitalization plan. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Increases the maximum number of members of the ULART Working Group from 23 to 25.
- 2) Requires one of the members of the ULART Working Group to represent the Los Angeles City Council district with the greatest number of Upper Los Angeles River miles.
- 3) Requires the ULART Working Group to meet at least annually to evaluate and report on the implementation of the revitalization plan to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) and to submit proposed amendments to the revitalization plan to SMMC.
- 4) Requires SMMC to adopt proposed amendments to the revitalization plan within 60 days of submission and provides that amendments shall become effective immediately upon adoption by SMMC.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes SMMC to acquire, restore, and consolidate lands in the Santa Monica Mountains, Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor, Upper Los Angeles River Watershed, and watersheds of Santa Monica Bay for park, recreation, and conservation purposes [Public Resources Code (PRC) § 33000 *et seq.*].
- 2) Establishes the ULART Working Group within SMMC to develop, on or before June 30, 2020, a revitalization plan for the Upper Los Angeles River, the tributaries of the Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, the Arroyo Seco, and any additional tributary waterway deemed necessary by the ULART Working Group (PRC § 33220).
- 3) Requires the ULART Working Group to meet at least twice per year to evaluate and report on implementation progress, and to propose any amendments to the revitalization plan to SMMC, and requires that any amendments to the revitalization plan be submitted to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water [Chapter 240, Statutes of 2021, Budget Act of 2021 (Item 3810-101-0001)].

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. This bill is keyed fiscal.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose of this bill.** According to the author, “[The ULART Working Group] has done commendable work developing a plan for revitalizing waterway areas in Los Angeles, identifying opportunities for multi-benefit projects to restore natural habitat and increase outdoor access for nearby communities. However, current statute does not accurately reflect the ongoing nature of their work, and does not allow for the addition of more members to the working group to reflect post-redistricting changes. [This bill] would update the working group’s statute and ensure appropriate representation on the working group.”
- 2) **Background.** Los Angeles has a long and complex relationship with green space and equitable access to the outdoors. In 1930, the Olmsted-Bartholomew “Parks, Playgrounds, and Beaches for the Los Angeles Region” plan proposed a vast network of parks and reserves that would place every resident within a ten-minute walk of a park (the plan was never acted on). Over the ensuing decades, rapid urbanization resulted in a Los Angeles with relatively few parks compared to other large cities. Growing desire to utilize the 51-mile Los Angeles River corridor for parkland and urban connectivity resulted in Los Angeles County’s adoption of the 1996 Los Angeles River Master Plan, which was most recently updated in 2022.

Development of the ULART revitalization plan. The Master Plan covers the entire Los Angeles River corridor; the ULART Working Group was created by AB 466 (Bocanegra, Chapter 341, Statutes of 2017) to focus revitalization efforts, consistent with the Master Plan, for the headwaters of the Los Angeles River (a separate revitalization plan was created for the Lower Los Angeles River). The need for a unified, focused approach is highlighted in the 2022 Master Plan update, which identifies 114 distinct planning documents in the ULART study area. Over the course of 20 months, the ULART Working Group held 23 public meetings to inform its final revitalization plan, which it submitted to the Legislature in April 2020.

Ongoing work of the ULART Working Group. The ULART revitalization plan includes site-specific projects for over 250 locations, in addition to templates for improvements throughout the ULART study area. As funding has been made available to implement revitalization projects, the ULART revitalization plan has been used as a guide. The 2021-22 Budget made \$10 million available to SMMC in part for projects that are part of the revitalization plan. Additional funding was appropriated in 2022-23 (\$6.7 million), 2025-26 (\$20 million), and is proposed by the Governor for 2026-27 (\$6 million).

The Budget Act of 2021 requires the ULART Working Group to meet at least twice per year to evaluate and report progress on the implementation of the revitalization plan and creates a mechanism for amending the plan; the same provision was also included in the Budget Act of 2022. The ULART Working Group met three times between 2021 and 2023 to consider and recommend ten projects to SMMC and to hear updates on implementation of the revitalization plan.

This bill would instead require the ULART Working Group to meet at least once per year and would create a different process for amending the revitalization plan. Current law requires that amendments be submitted to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water and become effective 30 days following submission. This bill would instead require that amendments be submitted to

SMMC for approval and allow SMMC 60 days to approve the amendments following submission.

The current law directing the ongoing activities of the ULART Working Group is uncodified Budget language and may be constitutionally tenuous as policy language in a Budget item. The new, codified law proposed by this bill would supersede the previously enacted Budget provisions.

Los Angeles city and county redistricting. The Los Angeles City Charter requires that city council districts be redrawn following each decennial U.S. Census. The new districts following the 2020 Census came into effect on December 10, 2021, after the ULART Working Group had been constituted. The Los Angeles membership on the ULART Working Group currently includes the city councilmembers from the 3rd, 6th, and 7th districts. Following redistricting, the 4th district now includes the most Upper Los Angeles River miles but is not represented on the ULART Working Group. This bill would increase the size of the ULART Working Group and require that one of the members represent the Los Angeles City Council district with the most Upper Los Angeles River miles.

Similar concerns exist for Los Angeles County's seats. In 2024, Los Angeles County voters approved Measure G, which, among a variety of charter reforms, increased the number of county supervisors from five to nine, to take effect following the 2030 Census. Three supervisors are currently appointed to the ULART Working Group—those representing the 1st, 3rd, and 5th districts. This bill would increase the size of the ULART Working Group to allow for the possibility of appointing an additional supervisor should the post-2030 district boundaries result in four districts covering a substantial portion of the Upper Los Angeles River watershed.

- 3) **Arguments in support.** The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, the sponsor of the bill, writes, “Appointees to the [ULART] Working Group include representatives from the State of California, Los Angeles County, and cities adjoining the Upper [Los Angeles] River. While the current composition allows for City of Los Angeles representation, the City’s 2021 redistricting process caused substantial shifts in council district boundaries. [This bill] . . . is necessary to allow for an additional city council member whose district now encompasses a large area of the Upper Los Angeles River, as well as updating the number of annual meetings to provide more flexibility.”
- 4) **Related legislation.** SB 105 (Wiener), Chapter 104, Statutes of 2025, amends the Budget Act of 2025 to, among other things, appropriate \$20 million in Proposition 4 (2024) funds to SMMC for projects that improve the climate resilience or the protection of the Los Angeles River Watershed and are a part of the revitalization plan developed by the ULART Working Group.

SB 154 (Skinner), Chapter 43, Statutes of 2022, the Budget Act of 2022, among other provisions, requires the ULART Working Group to meet at least twice per year to evaluate and report progress on implementation and to propose any amendments to the revitalization plan to SMMC, and requires that amendments to the revitalization plan be submitted to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water.

SB 170 (Skinner), Chapter 240, Statutes of 2021, amends the Budget Act of 2021 to, among other things, requires the ULART Working Group to meet at least twice per year to evaluate and report progress on implementation and to propose any amendments to the revitalization plan to SMMC, and requires that amendments to the revitalization plan be submitted to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water.

SB 1126 (Portantino), Chapter 895, Statutes of 2018, increases the number of cities with representation on the ULART Working Group, adds the Arroyo Seco to the jurisdiction of the ULART Working Group, extends the deadline for the revitalization plan to June 30, 2020, and requires the ULART Working Group to submit a copy of the plan to the Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee and the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee.

AB 466 (Bocanegra), Chapter 341, Statutes of 2017, establishes the ULART Working Group and requires a revitalization plan to be developed no later than March 1, 2019.

AB 530 (Rendon), Chapter 684, Statutes of 2015, establishes the Lower Los Angeles River Working Group staffed by the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Mountains Conservancy, and requires a revitalization plan to be developed no later than March 1, 2017.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (sponsor)
Nithya Raman, Los Angeles City Councilmember, 4th District

Opposition

None on file

Analysis Prepared by: Sean Clair / W., P., & W. / (916) 319-2096