

# California Urban Forests Council

## State Public Policy Update

### June 6, 2014



CaUFC has been following a number of items in the California Legislative and Administrative arena this year. We continue to work with Conservation Strategy Group, our partners, and decision makers on supporting urban forestry in Sacramento.

The latest updates on our 2014 public policy efforts are as follows:

#### **AB 32 Implementation (CA Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006)**

- **Scoping Plan Update** – CaUFC has been engaging in the process with Air Resources Board (ARB) to update the Scoping plan, the overarching long-term plan for how the State plans to meet the goals of AB 32. ARB adopted the [First Update of the Scoping Plan](#) on May 22, 2014, and urban forestry is very well represented as both early action and long-term benefit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. More information about AB 32 can be found [here](#).
- **Cap and Trade Revenue** – Previously reported was the [Governor's May Revise Budget](#) maintained the originally proposed \$50 million in cap and trade revenue for CalFire, approximately \$18 million of which is slated for the Urban Forestry Program.

The Legislature has brought forward two additional proposals as part of their budget process, both of which include Urban Forestry funds.

- The [Senate proposal maintains the \\$18 million to CalFire in fiscal year 14/15](#) and proposes a certain percentage of cap and trade revenue towards natural resources efforts, including urban forestry, as part of a [comprehensive long-term strategy](#) for the expenditure of the funds going forward.
- The [Assembly has proposed a one-year expenditure plan](#) for fiscal year 14/15 that gives the lion's share of funding to the Strategic Growth Council, including a pot of \$400 million that state agencies would compete for based on projects' projected greenhouse gas emission reductions.

The [Budget Conference Committee](#) will now deliberate over the three proposals on the table.

CaUFC continues the efforts that have been building over the past several years with the Legislature and the Administration on making early and long-term investments in urban forests for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, focusing in disadvantaged communities, and maximizing co-benefits of investments. A history of the cap and trade revenue program can be found on the Air Resources Board's [website](#).

***Please see June 6<sup>th</sup> 'Call to Action' for how you can help bring this BIG WIN home!***

- **Urban Forest Protocols Update** – Not to be confused with the cap and trade auction revenue allocation efforts (above), CaUFC is working on a committee to update the Urban Forestry Offset Protocols for more applicability and relevance to the potential for urban forests as offsets to capped sectors. Recently, a public draft of version 2.0 was released. More information can be found at The [Climate Action Reserve](#) site. We are feeling dissatisfied with the ability to implement and afford the protocols in the revised version. Efforts are being made to see if there is still the ability to change that.

## 2014 Water Bond

Several pieces of legislation were under negotiation in the Legislature to revise the Water Bond passed in 2009 and currently slated for the November 2014 ballot. CaUFC was closely engaged in the three leading bills. As of May 23, 2014, the two leading bills that are still in play are as follows:

- [AB 1331 \(Rendon\)](#) is now scheduled to be heard by the Senate Governance and Finance Committee on June 11<sup>th</sup>. The bill includes promoting urban forestry pursuant to the Urban Forestry Act, among many other eligible activities, as an eligible expenditure under from the \$1.5 Billion allocated under Chapter 6: Protecting Rivers, Lakes, Streams, Coastal Waters, and Watersheds.
- [SB 848 \(Wolk\)](#) was passed out of the Appropriations Committee and will be heard next on the Senate Floor. CaUFC has a support if amended position on the bill and is working with legislative staff and our partners to strengthen the representation for urban forestry and existing urban watershed programs.

## Parks Bond

Senator de Leon introduced a new bill this year for The Safe Neighborhood Parks, Rivers, and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2014 (i.e. Parks Bond), [SB 1086 \(de Leon\)](#). The bill passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee and will be heard next on the Senate Floor. It was recently amended on May 27<sup>th</sup> to include an urgency clause. Urban forestry, parks, greening, and parkways, etc. are very well represented in the legislation, although it is currently a loose framework and much of the detail and specific dollar amounts are yet to be determined. CaUFC has a support position on this legislation and will continue to follow it through the legislative process.

## Environmental Goals and Policies Report

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research released a [Discussion Draft of the Environmental Goals and Policies Report](#) last fall. This is a high level document setting environmental goals and metrics for the next 20-30 years. The current draft could benefit from a strengthening of the language around urban forestry and urban greening and CaUFC submitted comments into the process with specific suggestions.

We will continue to work on these important opportunities with our partners – California ReLeaf, Local Government Commission, California Urban Streams Partnership, California Native Plant Society, Trust for Public Land, American Society of Landscape Architects, American Planning Association, and more.