

CaUFC State Public Policy Update & Call to Action!

February 20, 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 recently released the [Draft Proposed First Update of the Scoping Plan](#), and urban forestry continues to be very well represented and supported 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 Proposed Budget](#) included \$50 million in cap and trade revenue for CalFire. We have since learned directly from CalFire, that 30% (approx. \$15 million) is slated for the Urban Forestry Program. CaUFC attended the Senate Budget Committee Information hearing on February 13th, submitted a joint letter with California ReLeaf in support, and will attend the Assembly Budget Subcommittee hearing on March 5th and the Senate Budget Subcommittee hearing on April 3rd.

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](#).

- **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. More information can be found [here](#).
- **2014 Water Bond** – Several pieces of legislation are currently being negotiated in the Legislature to revise the Water Bond passed in 2009 and currently slated for the November 2014 ballot. CaUFC is engaged in two of these efforts.
 - [AB 1331 \(Rendon\)](#) was amended on 1/6/14 and 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. AB 1331 has been set for the Senate Natural Resources Committee hearing on March 25th.
 - [SB 848 \(Wolk\)](#) is the Senator's new vehicle for the water bond this year (formerly SB 42). Recent amendments came out on 2/2/14, and the bill has passed through the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee as well as the Senate Environmental Quality Committee. CaUFC has remained in support of the stormwater and watershed restoration pieces of the proposed bond; however we have not taken a formal position, hoping to see stronger representation for existing urban watershed programs.

- **Parks Bond** – Senator de Leon introduced a “spot bill” (i.e. placeholder) [SB 783](#) last year for a Parks Bond. We expect the Senator to continue working on the content of this bill over the course of the legislative session and may offer it as an alternative to the water bond, should negotiations or public interest dwindle. There has not been much movement on this legislation to date.
- **Proposition 39 Clean Energy and Jobs** – The California Energy Commission (CEC) released the [Implementation Guidelines](#) as well as many other tools for the program. Local agencies and organizations are strongly encouraged to review the guidelines and meet with the local Lead Education Agency that is receiving the funds to discuss urban forestry and urban greening projects in the context of energy savings and efficiency at schools.

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.

What You Can Do to Help!

Reach out to your State Senators and Assemblymembers! Call them and share your support for the **30% (about \$15 million) slated for the Urban Forestry program at CalFire** as part of the Governor’s Proposed Budget and cap and trade revenue allocation.



They are busy this time of year and mostly in Sacramento, so if you ask for a meeting be sure to plan on it occurring on a Friday when they are in district.

- Step 1 - [Find your local legislator here](#)
- Step 2 - Call their district office or Sacramento office
- Step 3 - Prepare ahead of time ** This is critical, as your time will be limited. **

Tips for your call

- **Tell them your name and organization/agency** you represent
- **Share your support** for the \$15 million from cap and trade auction revenues to CalFire for the Urban Forestry Program that is in Governor’s Proposed Budget. This is approx. 30% of the CalFire cap and trade allocation.
- **Ask them to speak their colleagues on Budget committees** to put pressure on them to maintain the Urban Forestry funding throughout budget process
 - If they are a Senator, ask them to speak to – Beall, Jackson, and Leno
 - If they are an Assemblymember, ask them to speak to – Bloom, Campos, Gordon, and Skinner
- **Offer to have a meeting** where you share the work you are doing locally that could be supported by this funding in the future.

If you have a meeting (this time of year, typically they are in district on Fridays)

- **Share projects** you are doing in their districts that showcase urban forests, urban greening, and green infrastructure. Pictures and maps are always helpful!
- **Talk about the greenhouse gas emission reduction benefits** of urban forestry. Examples of talking points:

- Urban forests play a significant role in achieving the State's goals for reducing GHG emissions through carbon sequestration and other methods, such as energy savings from shade, reduced heat island effect, and more.
- Currently urban trees in California:
 - sequester 4.5 million metric tons of CO₂ annually
 - cut energy use for cooling by 30% from shade and up to 10% for heating by blocking wind
 - save ~6,400 GWh per year, equivalent to seven 100 megawatt power plants
 - reduce urban heat island effect and ambient air temperatures
- These myriad co-benefits are especially important for improving the quality of life in California's disadvantaged communities, where tree canopies are generally far below average, and where the majority of these funds will likely be spent for targeted projects that meet and exceed the SB 535 requirements.
- **Talk about the multiple benefits of these projects** to their constituents and their
 - Examples of multiple benefits are: air quality improvement, water quality improvement, carbon sequestrations, energy savings, public health, community pride and involvement, improved real estate values and business activity, etc. Visit <http://www.investfromthegroundup.org> for helpful resources.
- **Especially focus on disadvantaged communities in their districts:**
 - State statute, SB 535, requires a significant portion of the cap and trade funds go to disadvantaged communities - <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/auctionproceeds.htm>
 - You can identify disadvantaged communities in their districts through this website - <http://oehha.ca.gov/ej/ces11.html>
- **Ask for their support in Sacramento** to continue funding for these kinds of projects through the Governor's Proposed Budget for cap and trade revenue to CalFire, the 2014 Water Bond, and other sources.
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