

# Agenda Item VIb

## Status Update on Proposed Water Bond, Park Bond, and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

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# A 2018 Water Bond?

The Natural Heritage Institute (NHI) had recently received a circulating title and summary for a prospective water bond.

Their plan now is to refile the measure in 2017 to qualify their water bond for the 2018 General Election.

The proposal would provide a direct allocation to the SNC of \$150 million.

# Key Aspects

Aside from the prospect of a direct allocation of \$150M to the SNC, there are other favorable components:

- Ability to direct-fund projects in addition to grants
- Ability to provide funding to federal agencies
- Favorable language relative to focal points of WIP

Staff will continue to monitor this through the coming years and will provide periodic updates to the Board.

# A 2016 Park Bond?

Most Recent Vehicle: SB 317 (De León)

Included funding for a wide variety of activities and areas, including Lake Tahoe, LA River, and Salton Sea for the “protection/restoration of rivers, lakes, and streams.”

The most recent version of the measure did not include specific funding for the Sierra Nevada or SNC.

# So What Now?

SB 317 failed a key deadline and is effectively dead, but we must be mindful of:

- The possibility of rule waivers to revive the measure
- The potential for a new bill to be introduced

In anticipation of further work on this issue, we must:

- Build support among the Sierra delegation
- Generate enthusiasm among the environmental community both within and outside the Region
- Expand support-base to urban interests who “get it”

# Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund

The GGRF is the single largest opportunity for increased investment in the Sierra over time; however, a number of key issues remain.

- Need for a CARB-approved methodology for quantifying the GHG benefits of forest/fuels management
- Development of biomass energy and other utilization infrastructure
- Use of Enviroscreen 2.0 to define disadvantaged communities largely omits the Sierra

# Good News on GGRF

Governor's proposed budget recognizes the need to invest in watershed health through GGRF:

- \$150M to CAL FIRE for Healthy Forests
  - Supports the work of the Tree Mortality Task Force
- \$60M to CDFW for Wetlands and Meadow Restoration
  - Potential for substantial portion to be spent in Sierra
- \$100M to CalRecycle for Waste Diversion
  - Some portion could relate to future actions on tree mortality

# Watershed Improvement Program

The WIP articulates the need for increased investment as well as the consequences of not doing so.

- Watershed health will continue to deteriorate, affecting water quality, yield, and reliability
- Tree mortality will increase and amplify fire risk
- Loss of stored carbon and increase in GHG emissions through intense wildfire will continue

The presence of the WIP provides the opportunity for a strategic, holistic approach.