

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Natural Resources Agency consists of 26 departments, boards, commissions, and conservancies responsible for administering programs to conserve, restore, and enhance the natural, historical, and cultural resources of California. The Budget includes total funding of \$9.7 billion (\$7.3 billion General Fund, \$1.5 billion special funds, \$886 million bond funds) for the programs included in this Agency. The Agency's departments help the state become more climate resilient, expand equitable access to parks and wildlands, and conserve California's remarkable biodiversity. The Budget includes investments in each of these areas, and several related items are referenced in the Emergency Response, Statewide and Climate Change Chapters.

OUTDOOR ACCESS FOR ALL

Four of every ten Californians have no access to open space within walking distance of their home and six of every ten Californians live in park-poor neighborhoods, or areas with less than three acres of parks or open space per thousand residents.

The Budget includes initiatives to enable safe and equitable access to state parks and open spaces for all Californians. Investments expand environmental education; improve access; enhance and restore state parks through restoration and climate resilience efforts; and increase recreation opportunities for Californians at a time in which many have relied on state parks to provide relief from the pressures that COVID-19 has placed on Californians' daily lives.

Significant initiatives include:

- **Outdoor Education**—\$43.1 million (\$40 million one-time General Fund and \$3.1 million Environmental License Plate Fund) for outdoor environmental education and access programs through the Outdoor Equity Grants Program under Chapter 675, Statutes of 2019 (AB 209) to enable underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor environmental education experiences at state parks.
- **Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program**—\$180 million one-time General Fund to invest in establishing and revitalizing community open spaces. These grants fund new parks, the beautification of existing parks, and recreation opportunities in underserved communities across the state.
 - \$25 million of the funds available for this program have been set-aside for the India Basin project.
- **Explore the Coast Grant Program**—\$14 million one-time General Fund for the Coastal Conservancy to expand coastal access programming statewide.
- **Whale Tail Program**—\$10 million one-time General Fund for the Coastal Commission to support the Whale Tail Program, which provides grants to connect the public with the California coast and its watersheds through outdoor experiences, education, and stewardship.
- **Innovative Pilot Programs**—\$9.1 million one-time General Fund to launch a state parks pilot to expand parks pass distribution, especially for youth in disadvantaged communities. The pilot would include a “California State Park Adventure” program for fourth graders and new statewide partnerships with the California State Library and California Department of Social Services.
- **Priority Acquisitions**—\$6.3 million one-time General Fund and \$6.3 million one-time federal reimbursements to complete high-priority inholding acquisitions, which will increase access to existing state parks and add additional acres to the state park system.
- **Community Engagement**—\$585,000 ongoing State Park and Recreation Fund to continue community liaison programs that engage underserved and underrepresented communities in urban areas.
- **Wildfire Restoration**—\$217 million (\$113.5 million General Fund, \$103.5 million Reimbursements) for fire restoration projects in the 115,000 acres burned across 23 state park units by multiple fires in the unprecedented 2020 wildfire season. The Budget also includes \$10 million one-time General Fund and \$23.4 million one-time

reimbursements from Federal Emergency Management Agency funds for the continuation of Woolsey Fire restoration projects to restore destroyed facilities and trails.

- **Deferred Maintenance**—\$185 million one-time General Fund to support critical deferred maintenance projects throughout the state park system to enable improved access and an enhanced visitor experience.
- **Indian Heritage Center**—\$95.3 million one-time General Fund for transfer to the Natural Resources and Parks Preservation Fund for the California Indian Heritage Center. This proposal restores the original set-aside for the project enabling the Department of Parks and Recreation to construct a new museum to protect and preserve the history of California's native peoples.
- **Candlestick Point State Recreation Area**—\$2.7 million one-time Proposition 68 bond funds to provide for the design of the initial core improvements to further public access and recreation enhancements at Candlestick Point State Recreation Area.
- **Sacramento Railyards**—\$30 million one-time General Fund for various projects at the historic Sacramento Railyards.

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

California is a global biodiversity hotspot, with more types of plants and animals than almost anywhere else in the world. This natural abundance is increasingly under threat from climate change. The Department of Fish and Wildlife serves as a trustee for California's natural resources and is key in implementing the Governor's Executive Order N-82-20 to maintain California's rich biodiversity through continued conservation and protection.

The Department has been directed to take on increasing mandates to protect habitat, endangered species, and public trust resources. To provide a transparent process to identify sustainable funding solutions and strategies to address increasing mandates, the Department implemented a Service Based Budget (SBB) Initiative and worked with stakeholders to identify current service levels and activities, cost estimates, and staffing requirements to meet the Department's mission and statutory requirements, and perform an analysis of the Department's existing revenue structure.

To advance implementation of the SBB Legislative Report recommendations, the Budget includes investments to deliver more effective and efficient services, make

strategic investments in equipment and technology, address a deferred maintenance backlog, and make other process improvements. These investments will support implementation of the Governor's Executive Order N-82-20 and better allow the Department to maintain California's rich biodiversity through continued conservation and protection. Significant investments include:

- **Biodiversity Enhancements/Strategic One-Time Investments**—\$41.8 million one-time General Fund to make progress toward safeguarding California's biodiversity, increasing access opportunities on state lands, and finding solutions to restore the state's natural ecosystems. These strategic investments will allow the Department to modernize infrastructure, fleet operations, and support systems to build climate resiliency within state-owned lands.
- **Wildlife Habitat Restoration and Public Recreation for Underserved Communities**—\$3.3 million one-time Proposition 12 funding to restore and enhance wildlife habitat and provide visitor amenities on selected state lands to enhance biodiversity conservation and provide equitable access for diverse communities.
- **Water Resilience and Drought Package**—\$50.5 million one-time General Fund to support expeditiously handling drought-related permitting and compliance, as well as modernizing fish hatcheries, providing support and equipment to bolster the capacity to rescue fish and monitor at-risk species, and improving water use efficiency on state-owned habitat lands, which will advance the Department's work to protect and conserve California's natural resources.
- **Cutting Green Tape**—\$3.8 million ongoing General Fund to continue the Cutting Green Tape initiative that increases the scale and pace of restoration work through efficiencies in granting and permitting programs.
- **Protecting California's Endangered Species**—\$53.7 million (\$48.7 million one-time General Fund and \$5 million one-time Environmental License Plate Fund) over five years to directly address protection of endangered species within California and make measurable progress on conservation of these species.
- **Expedited Permitting for Energy Projects**—\$18.8 million one-time General Fund as part of the Energy Package to expedite renewable energy permitting and to aid in interagency offshore wind environmental analyses to support the increase in renewable energy projects throughout the state, while continuing to protect California's diverse species.

- **Deferred Maintenance**—\$15 million one-time General Fund to the Department of Fish and Wildlife to address its backlog of deferred maintenance projects on state-owned lands and facilities.