

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 May Revision includes total funding of \$11.4 billion (\$8.9 billion General Fund, \$1.6 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 May Revision 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

Six of every ten Californians live in park-poor neighborhoods and four of every ten Californians have no access to open space within walking distance of their home. Building on \$82 million proposed in the Governor's Budget, the May Revision proposes an additional \$256.2 million (\$253.1 million General Fund, \$3.1 million special funds) to expand outdoor access for all Californians.

These May Revision investments expand environmental education; enhance safe, reliable access to state parks, public lands, coasts, and other natural, historic, and cultural resources; and increase recreation opportunities. Significant adjustments include:

- **Outdoor Education**—\$108.1 million (\$105 million one-time General Fund and \$3.1 million Environmental License Plate Fund) for outdoor environmental education and access programming through the Outdoor Equity Grants Program and expansion of existing K-12 programs. These programs will support outdoor environmental education for underserved youth statewide, development of new curriculum, and construction of new state parks' facilities that support environmental education programs.
- **Statewide Park Development and Community Revitalization Program**—\$125 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. This funding complements the \$200 million available over two years for the Urban Greening Program (see the Climate Change Chapter for more on the Urban Greening Program).
- **Explore the Coast Grant Program**—\$14 million one-time General Fund for the Coastal Conservancy to expand coastal access programming statewide.
- **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.

ENHANCING AND RESTORING THE STATE PARK SYSTEM

The May Revision includes \$507.3 million (\$403.8 million one-time General Fund and \$103.5 million one-time federal reimbursements) for the enhancement and restoration of state parks facilities statewide.

- **Wildfire Restoration**—\$217 million (\$113.5 million one-time General Fund and an estimated \$103.5 million one-time federal 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. These funds will be used for planning, removal of remaining post-fire hazards, and rebuilding the parks in a manner that reflects the best science to ensure these parks are more climate-resilient, while also addressing access and equity issues.

- **Deferred Maintenance**—\$165 million one-time General Fund for investment in deferred maintenance at state parks. With the \$20 million one-time General Funds included in the Governor's Budget, this proposal provides a total of \$185 million for deferred maintenance projects throughout the state, including cottage rehabilitation at Crystal Cove State Park, lighthouse restoration at Pigeon Point Light Station State Historic Park, and road reconstruction at Border Field State Park to enable improved access and enhanced visitor experience (see General Government and Statewide Issues Chapter for more information on deferred maintenance).
- **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, reversing the one-time General Fund savings implemented in the 2020 Budget.
- **Sacramento Railyards**—\$30 million one-time General Fund for various capital 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 and the mission of the Department, the May Revision proposes \$3.8 million ongoing General Fund to continue the Cutting Green Tape Initiative and \$80.9 million one-time (\$75.9 million General Fund and \$5 million Environmental License Plate Fund) to deliver more effective and efficient services with limited-term and temporary-help staff, make

strategic investments in equipment and technology, address a deferred maintenance backlog, and advance process improvements. These one-time investments build upon the \$41.8 million one-time General Fund included in the Governor's Budget and help the Department continue to improve mission levels of service. Significant one-time investments proposed for May Revision include:

- **Protecting California's Endangered Species**—\$53.8 million and 31 positions, over five years, to directly address endangered species within California and make measurable progress on conservation of these species.
- **Enhancing Stewardship of Refuges, Preserves, and other State Lands**—\$7.5 million and 8 positions, over five years, to address management and oversight on the lands and facilities it manages to conserve native wildlife, threatened and endangered species, sensitive habitats, and to provide for public use and enjoyment.
- **Wolf Conflict Program**—\$3 million to increase the Department's ability to work with rural communities to set up a compensation program that compensates livestock producers for the loss of productivity due to depredation events resulting from the return of the grey wolf to California.
- **Drift Gill Net Transition Program**—\$1.3 million to address payments to voluntary participants to complete the Drift Gill Net Transition Program pursuant to Chapter 844, Statutes of 2018 (SB 1017).
- **Improving Care for Injured Wildlife**—\$350,000 to develop a feasibility study for a state-of-the-art Wildlife Health Laboratory to address and care for wildlife throughout California.
- **Deferred Maintenance**—\$15 million to address its backlog of deferred maintenance projects on state-owned lands and facilities.