

I. Introduction

This month's report includes an update on the status of a number of bills with two significant deadlines now passed; as well as an update on the State Budget; and finally, I'll conclude by highlighting a few outcomes related to the June primary.

II. State Bills

Starting here in Sacramento, the last four weeks marked two important bill deadlines. May 27th was the deadline for fiscal bills to pass out of the Appropriations Committees and June 3rd was the house of origin deadline. As you may guess, the combined impact of both deadlines played a substantial role in reducing the number of active bills. For example, AB 1713, by Assemblymember Susan Eggman, which required a public vote on new Delta conveyance such as WaterFix, and AB 2304 by Assemblymember Levine, which required a comprehensive assessment of the water transfer process, both failed to pass out of the Assembly's fiscal committee and are now dead.

That said, Assemblymember Dodd's bill on water and ecological data transparency, AB 1755; Senator Wolk's measure that requires groundwater drilling permits in medium and high priority basins, SB 1317; and Ms. Wolk's SB 554 that seeks to make permanent the state's cost share for DWR's Levee Subventions Program, all moved forward and are still active.

There are also two additional bills that I would like to highlight for the Council. The first is AB 501 by Assemblymember Levine. As you may recall, this measure focused on state-funded research being conducted in the Delta and aimed to develop a process for sharing the data that would result from such work. However, on June 15th, AB 501 was gutted and amended and would now make denim the official fabric of the state of California.

The second bill is SB 1262 by Senator Pavley. This bill would update the provisions of current law that were first put in place in 2001 by what are referred to as the “show me the water bills”¹. In general, current law seeks to ensure that water supply availability is a key consideration in the land-use decision-making process. For instance, a new large-scale development of at least 500 units or a project that would demand an equivalent amount of water, must be accompanied by a water supply assessment, prior to land use authorizations being granted. Given that current law does not reflect the state’s recent groundwater statutes adopted under SGMA, SB 1262 seeks to integrate groundwater sustainability agencies and their plans into the land use planning process; while also prohibiting the use of groundwater to supply a new development if the groundwater basin is not SGMA compliant (ie probationary).

Supported by a number of environmental organizations and opposed by building and real estate interests, SB 1262 is set to be heard in Assembly Water Parks and Wildlife on the 28th of this month.

III. State Budget

Turning to the State Budget, with the June 15th constitutionally-mandated deadline approaching, the Legislature passed the state’s spending plan for the upcoming fiscal year last Tuesday. In addition to setting aside \$2 billion for the state’s rainy day reserve and providing \$4.2 million to accelerate habitat improvement and reduce stressors for Delta Smelt, the \$122 billion general fund deal also includes, as you may recall, \$1.45 million for the next two years for the Council to update its Delta Plan and \$2.1

¹ SB 610 (Costa/2001) requires a project proposing at least 500 new connections prepare a water supply assessment.

million in permanent resources to support critical science investigations. With the new fiscal year beginning July 1st, Governor Brown is expected to sign the Budget Act within the next week.

IV. Primary Election Outcome

And then finally, earlier this month California held its primary where half of the 40 State Senate seats, all 80 Assembly seats, and for the first time since 1993, an open United States Senate seat were on the ballot. Given California's open primary system – which advances the top two vote getters to the November general election regardless of party affiliation, intraparty contests in the general have become far more common in recent elections. In fact, come November there will be 15 such races between the two houses, including Senate District 3, a seat that represents a large majority of the Delta and is currently held by Senator Lois Wolk, who will be terming at the end of this year. This race will feature current Assemblymember Bill Dodd, whose 4th Assembly District encompasses an area predominantly northwest of the Delta², and former Assemblymember Mariko Yamada, who preceded Mr. Dodd in holding the 4th district seat. With more than a third of the votes going to other candidates in the primary, this race certainly bears watching in the coming months.

² AD 4 includes Davis and stretches as far north to include portions of the Mendocino National Forest.