Meeting Date: 10/21/26
Staff: S. Pemberton

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INTRODUCTION

The 2026 legislative session adjourned on August 31. The Governor had until September 30 to sign or veto legislation passed by the Legislature. Legislators introduced 5,060 bills in the 2025-2026 legislative session and sent 1,160 of those to the Governor this year. The Governor signed 1,040 of those bills and vetoed 120 of them. Staff tracked a subset of roughly 40 bills this year. Of specific note are the six highlighted below. While the Commission did not formally support any legislation this year, these six bills align with the Commission's priorities. Additional information on tracked bills including their outcomes is provided later in this staff report.

WATERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY OF MARTINEZ

The Governor signed AB 2312 (Farías), which authorizes the City of Martinez to lease certain public trust lands for up to 66 years, an increase from the current 49 year maximum lease term, and, with State Lands Commission approval, for a longer term if the Commission determines that the longer lease is in the best interests of the state and consistent with the public trust. The new law is intended to facilitate redevelopment of the Martinez waterfront and marina.

OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT

The Governor signed AB 1448 (Hart), which further limits the use of state waters and infrastructure to support new offshore oil and gas development associated with federal leases. AB 1448 modifies requirements for the transfer, assignment, or modification of leases for oil and gas infrastructure on tide and submerged lands in state waters associated with Pacific Outer Continental Shelf leases; prohibits leases and oil- and gas-related infrastructure on tide and submerged lands from being used to support Pacific Outer Continental Shelf leases issued after January 1, 2026; requires the State Lands Commission to consider additional factors when determining whether to approve a proposed lease assignment, renewal, modification, or amendment; and limits the exception authorizing new oil- and gas-leasing in a coastal sanctuary if state oil deposits are being drained from wells on

federal lands to areas not in marine protected areas or national marine sanctuaries.

Coastal Resilience Permitting

The Governor signed AB 2051 (Wicks), which requires the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency, in consultation with the Secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency, to convene a coastal resilience permitting working group to develop a coastal resilience permitting roadmap for coastal resilience projects. The legislation establishes a multiagency working group and requires development of recommendations to improve coordination and streamline permitting for coastal resilience projects. The State Lands Commission is designated as a member of the working group and will participate in its development of a roadmap. The bill requires the Natural Resources Agency to convene a Coastal Resilience Permit Advisory Group to support the working group's deliberations.

Invasive Golden Mussels

Invasive golden mussels were a significant focus of the Legislature this year. The Governor signed AB 2032 (Ramson), which, among other provisions, exempts a public or private agency that operates a water supply system from certain California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) invasive mussel permitting requirements until CDFW approves or denies the agency's control plan. If CDFW denies the control plan, the exemption ends. The bill also requires the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the State Water Resources Control Board to quickly and efficiently respond to the threat of golden mussels by identifying any tools available to assist a state or local agency in rapidly responding to the invasive species threat. The law is intended to strengthen California's ability to rapidly prevent, mitigate, and control invasive golden mussels in water supply systems and public waterways. The 2026-27 state budget appropriates $6 million to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for Delta-based decontamination control sites to prevent the spread of invasive golden mussels.

Tijuana River Transboundary Pollution Crisis

The Governor signed two bills that address adverse health effects from the sewage crisis at the U.S.-Mexico border. SB 58 (Padilla) requires the California Air Resources Board to develop a response framework for hydrogen sulfide from fugitive and natural sources. The bill requires at least three public workshops, including one in

the Tijuana River Valley region and one in the Salton Sea region. The bill requires the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment to update its acute and chronic reference exposure levels for hydrogen sulfide and develop additional health guidance values if warranted. The second bill, SB 1046 (Blakespear), requires the state to develop workplace safety standards to minimize workers' exposure to transboundary pollution.

Below is a list, organized by category, of legislation staff monitored in the 2026 legislative session.

TRACKED BILLS

30 X 30 CALIFORNIA

AB 946 (BRYAN D) NATURAL RESOURCES: EQUITABLE OUTDOOR ACCESS: 30X30 GOAL: URBAN NATURE-BASED PROJECTS.

Status: Senate Appropriations Committee – Held under submission

Summary: This bill would have required the Governor's office, state agencies, and the Legislature, when distributing resources, to aspire to recognize the coequal goals and benefits of the 30 x 30 goal and the Outdoors for All initiative and maximize investment in historically underserved urban communities consistent with those initiatives. According to the author, "California has made a strong commitment to protect and preserve its natural lands, but it is just as important to ensure that densely populated and underserved communities are not overlooked in this work. By urging the state to focus on greening and restoring land in heavily urbanized areas, this bill will ensure we take a comprehensive approach to environmental protection that supports vulnerable communities and expands access to nature throughout California." While this bill would not have assigned the Commission new duties, the shift in statewide investment priorities could have influenced Commission planning, funding alignment, and coordination on conservation and public access projects in urbanized areas.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

SB 1229 (ALLEN D) COASTAL RESOURCES: COASTAL DEVELOPMENT PERMITS: DISASTER EXEMPTION.

Status: Assembly Inactive File

Summary: This bill would have limited an existing coastal development permit exemption enacted following last year's fires in southern California to the replacement of a structure by the property owner of record for the property who was listed as the property owner of record immediately preceding the disaster. Although this bill focuses on disaster-related coastal permit exemptions, narrowing eligibility could have affected inquiries or workload related to Commission jurisdictional questions.

GENERAL

AB 2360 (ARAMBULA D) STATE AGENCIES: GOVERNMENTAL LINGUISTICS.

Status: Senate Appropriations Committee – Held under submission

Summary: Current law requires each department, commission, office, or other administrative agency of state government to write each document that it produces in plain, straightforward language, avoiding technical terms as much as possible, and using a coherent and easily readable style. This bill would have specified that the plain, straightforward language requirement applies to digital and printed documents and define "plain language". The bill would have required each state agency to create, adopt, and post on its website a plain language policy that identifies how the agency will incorporate or strengthen plain language writing and design principles and practices. This bill would likely have required the Commission to develop and post a plain-language policy and ensure all digital and print documents adhere to expanded plain-language standards, creating administrative work for staff.

SB 1337 (RICHARDSON D) TRANSPORTATION FUELS: INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill requires the California Energy Commission

to enter into a memorandum of understanding with air districts and local governments with transportation fuel refining facilities in their jurisdictions to ensure

the transportation fuels sector is successfully managed and maintains environmental, public health, labor, economic and consumer protections.

GRANTED LANDS

AB 2312 (ÁVILA FARÍAS D) STATE PROPERTY: TIDELANDS TRANSFER: CITY OF MARTINEZ: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill extends the lease on the public trust lands for the City of Martinez from 49 years to 66 years or, subject to State Lands Commission approval, for a term longer than 66 years if the Commission finds that a longer lease term is in the best interest of the state.

AB 2525 (WARD D) SURPLUS LANDS: MISSION BAY PARK.

Status: Assembly Inactive File

Summary: Current law requires a local agency, before disposing or negotiating to dispose of surplus land, to provide a written notice of the availability of the surplus land to specified entities and housing sponsors. Under current law, land declared by an agency of the state or any local agency as "exempt surplus land" is not subject to these requirements. This bill would have exempted land that comprises Mission Bay Park in the City of San Diego from these requirements. While the Commission is not responsible for surplus land decisions in Mission Bay Park, changes to exempt surplus land designations may have affected Commission coordination with local grantees and local agencies on land uses adjacent to state tidelands.

LOS ANGELES RIVER

SB 832 (ALLEN D) UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES WORKING GROUP: MEMBERSHIP: REVITALIZATION PLAN.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill adds a member to the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group and requires one member to represent the council district in the City of Los Angeles with the most upper Los Angeles River miles. The bill requires the working group to meet at least annually to evaluate and report on implementation of the revitalization plan and propose amendments to it. The bill requires any

amendments to be submitted to the Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee and the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee. Changes to membership and annual reporting could indirectly influence the Commission's coordination on river-related land use, access, or habitat projects where the Commission has jurisdiction.

MARINE INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION

AB 1691 (DIXON R) MARINE RESOURCES: COPPER-BASED ANTIFOULING PAINT: STANDARDS, STUDIES, AND BEST METHODS.

Status: Senate Appropriations Committee – Held under submission

Summary: This bill would have required the Department of Pesticide Regulation to reevaluate copper-based antifouling boat paint products and decide whether to retain, modify, or suspend its standards or to place new standards on the chemical composition or use of copper-based antifouling paints. The bill would have required the California Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies to collaborate on studies related to the effectiveness of low-leach-rate paint and elevated copper concentrations in saltwater harbors, bays, and marines that are primarily a result of the use of copper-based antifouling paint. The bill would also have required specified state agencies to determine the best way to address elevated copper concentrations in saltwater harbors, bays, and marinas that are a result of the use of this paint. The Commission administers the state's Marine Invasive Species Program. Expanded studies and possible regulatory shifts relating to antifouling paints could have affected the Commission rulemaking and coordination with other agencies.

AB 1772 (PAPAN D) FISH AND WILDLIFE: AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES: GOLDEN MUSSELS.

Status: Senate Appropriations Committee – Held under submission

Summary: This bill would have established standards and licensing for a statewide network of recreational vessel inspection and decontamination stations staffed by trained inspectors to prevent the spread of invasive mussels. The bill would have established the use of a recreational vessel tracking system and a new recreational vessel invasive mussel infestation prevention fee to help fund prevention efforts. Previous versions of this bill included intent language directing fee assessments on commercial shipping to support invasive species prevention, essentially aligning with the current Marine Invasive Species Program funding model. The amended bill

excluded a commercial shipping fee and instead established a recreational vessel fee. Although the Commission's Marine Invasive Species Program regulates biofouling and ballast water discharges from large commercial ships, the bill's infrastructure and tracking systems could have required additional coordination between the Commission and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to ensure consistency.

SB 1428 (Committee on Natural Resources and Water) Public lands: marine invasive species: Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill ensures that the State Lands Commission has authority to align its Marine Invasive Species Program regulations with federal regulations and comply with the federal Vessel Incidental Discharge Act. Existing law authorizes the Commission to adopt federally consistent ballast water discharge standards and points to federal standards and an implementation schedule contained in Title 33, section 151.025 and 151.030 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Those sections will become defunct once regulations adopted by the U.S. EPA and U.S. Coast Guard to implement the Vessel Discharge Act become effective, likely in late 2026 or early 2027. The changes will redirect the Commission's authority away from the soon-to-be defunct sections and toward the regulations adopted by the U.S. EPA and to-be adopted by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Ocean Protection

AB 1744 (Addis D) Environmental advertising: sunscreen.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill makes it illegal for a person to represent in advertising or on the label or container of a sunscreen product sold in the state that the product is "reef safe," "reef friendly," "ocean safe," "marine safe," or any term implying the product does not harm marine ecosystems unless the product is free of chemical ultraviolet filters. Misleading standards for sunscreen products related to reef and ocean safety can harm coastal and ocean lands managed by the Commission.

OIL AND GAS

AB 1536 (ADDIS D) OFFSHORE OIL.

Status: Assembly Emergency Management Committee

Summary: This bill would require a public hearing on any requested exemption from the State Fire Marshal's hazardous liquid pipeline safety regulations; requires additional environmental review for approved regulation exemptions; establishes new safety requirements for pipelines that have spilled certain amounts of oil; establishes new leak detection and response plan requirements for oil pipelines; and, creates geographical restrictions on where certain oil pipelines can operation.

AB 1448 (HART D) COASTAL RESOURCES: CALIFORNIA COASTAL SANCTUARY: TIDELANDS AND SUBMERGED LANDS: OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill modifies requirements for the transfer, assignment, or modification of leases for oil and gas infrastructure on tide and submerged lands in state waters associated with Pacific Outer Continental Shelf leases; prohibits leases and oil- and gas-related infrastructure on tide and submerged lands from being used to support Pacific Outer Continental Shelf leases issued after January 1, 2026; requires the State Lands Commission to consider additional factors when determining whether to approve a proposed lease assignment, renewal, modification, or amendment; and limits the exception authorizing new oil- and gas-leasing on state tide and submerged lands in the California Coastal Sanctuary if state oil deposits are being drained from producing wells on federal lands to areas not in marine protected areas or national marine sanctuaries. At its June 2026 meeting, the Commission directed staff to work with Assemblymember Hart's office on amendments to AB 1448 to facilitate implementation of the bill.

AB 2461 (HART D) OIL AND GAS: BONDING REQUIREMENTS.

Status: Senate Appropriations Committee – Held under submission

Summary: This bill would expand the requirement for an oil and gas operator, upon transfer, purchase, or other conveyance of an oil or gas well and production facility, to provide an individual indemnity bond for the full cost of well plug and abandonment, facility decommissioning, and site restoration to include a change

in control of the operator. The changes may affect operators of offshore oil and gas leases overseen by the State Lands Commission.

AB 2716 (Ávila Farías D) Oil and gas: bonding requirements.

Status: Senate Rules Committee – Held under submission

Summary: This bill would raise the maximum additional financial surety that certain risky oil and gas operators are required to provide to the Geological Energy Management Division to $80 million; codify requirements of self –insurance for low risk operators; remove the ban on self-insurance or a corporate guarantee for the full bond required under the transfer, acquisition, or other conveyance of a well or production facility; and exempt from the full bond requirement the transfer, acquisition or other conveyance of a well or facility purely to plug and abandon or decommission as part of a redevelopment pilot program.

Changes to acceptable financial assurance mechanisms may affect lessees operating on Commission-managed lands, requiring staff to update review processes and ensure compliance with revised bonding frameworks.

Plastic Pollution

AB 2226 (Rubio, Blanca D) Reusable grocery bags.

Status: Assembly Natural Resources Committee

Summary: This bill would repeal requirements governing the types of bags that stores may provide to customers and remove requirements that bags be compostable or made of recycled paper. Changes to plastic bag rules could be detrimental to beaches and waterways under the Commission's jurisdiction.

SB 1180 (Allen D) Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act: California Plastic Pollution Mitigation Fund.

Status: Assembly Floor

Summary: This bill would establish new spending requirements and guidelines for the California Plastic Pollution Mitigation fund and expand the list of entities that are eligible for those funds. Expanding eligibility and guidance for mitigation funding could result in new opportunities for projects addressing shoreline pollution and marine debris.

PUBLIC LANDS

AB 1548 (PELLERIN D) THE MONTEREY BAY AREA STEWARDSHIP AUTHORITY.

Status: Senate Rules Committee

Summary: This bill would establish the Monterey Bay Area Stewardship Authority to raise and allocate funds to restore, enhance, protect, steward, and improve access to natural and working lands in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties. The creation of a new stewardship authority could affect the Commission's coordination on public land management and restoration projects in the tri-county region.

AB 1624 (ZBUR D) PUBLIC LANDS PROTECTION ACT.

Status: Assembly Rules Committee

Summary: This bill, the Public Lands Protection Act, would establish new rules governing the land-use designation and development of certain federal lands transferred to private or nonfederal entities in California after January 1, 2025. The bill is intended to preserve conservation uses for lands that were previously publicly owned by applying protective zoning designations to transferred land to limit future development. Protective zoning for transferred federal lands could influence land use patterns and require enhanced intergovernmental coordination.

AB 2216 (AGUIAR-CURRY D) SACRAMENTO-SAN JOAQUIN DELTA CONSERVANCY.

Status: Senate Appropriations Committee – Held under submission

Summary: This bill would expand the geographic area covered by the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy beyond the Delta to include the Sacramento valley, rename the conservancy the Valley and Delta Conservancy and make other changes and authorize the conservancy to partner with and award grants and loans to tribal organizations. Expanding the Conservancy's geographic scope to the Sacramento Valley may increase collaboration demands for the Commission on Delta projects, including abandoned vessel removal.

AB 2566 (SORIA D) HURON HAWK CONSERVANCY.

Status: Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held under submission

Summary: This bill would establish the Huron Hawk Conservancy in the Natural Resources Agency to acquire, manage, and restore land in the Huron Hawk area

for conservation, recreation, and educational purposes. Implementation would be contingent on a legislative appropriation or approval of a general obligation bond. The Executive Officer of the State Lands Commission would be a member of the new Conservancy's governing board, creating additional workload for Commission staff.

SB 949 (Becker D) Environmental protection: Natural Resources Agency: landscape of statewide significance: Santa Cruz Mountains

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill designates the Santa Cruz Mountains as a landscape of statewide significance that requires special protection. The bill requires the Natural Resources Agency and its boards, departments, and conservancies to encourage collaborative stewardship approaches that support the protection, restoration, and preservation of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Designation of the Santa Cruz Mountains as a landscape of statewide significance could influence the Commission's stewardship priorities or involvement in regional collaboration and collaboration with relevant grantees of public trust lands.

Renewable Energy

AB 2234 (Papan D) California Environmental Quality Act: geothermal exploratory projects.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill revises the definition of a geothermal exploratory project under CEQA to include certain aboveground equipment and activities and specifies that exploratory wells can be located within one-half mile from a commercial scale geothermal development well so long as the well owner or operator provides written consent. Broader definitions and eased siting restrictions for geothermal exploration may increase CEQA-related coordination when exploration projects intersect with Commission managed lands and resources.

AB 2464 (Wicks D) Energy: Firm zero-carbon resources.

Status: Senate Energy, Utilities, and Commerce Committee

Summary: This bill would require the California Energy Commission, working with the California Public Utilities Commission, to complete a statewide assessment on the

role and necessity of firm zero-carbon resources and report findings to the Legislature by January 2028. Although this bill does not impose additional responsibilities on the Commission, the assessment could shape future energy policies affecting Commission managed lands, offshore energy planning, or permitting frameworks.

SEA LEVEL RISE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

AB 2051 (WICKS D) PUBLIC RESOURCES: COASTAL RESILIENCE PERMITTING WORKING GROUP.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill requires the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency, in consultation with the Secretary for Environmental Protection, to convene a Coastal Resilience Permitting Working Group to develop a permitting roadmap for coastal resilience projects. The bill would designate members of a Coastal Resilience Permitting Working Group and include the State Lands Commission as a member.

AB 2184 (WILSON D) CAP-AND-INVEST PROGRAM: NATURE-BASED CLIMATE SOLUTIONS: FUNDING.

Status: Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held under submission

Summary: This bill would annually appropriate up to $300 million from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund in the annual Budget Act, until fiscal year 2045-46, to achieve nature-based climate solutions, including $150 million to the Natural Resources Agency for nature-based climate solutions. Should funding be appropriated, Commission related restoration, climate resilience, or land stewardship projects may become eligible, potentially expanding capacity and funding for nature-based climate solutions on Commission managed lands.

SB 1048 (BECKER D) STATE SEAL OF CLIMATE LITERACY.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill establishes the State seal of Climate Literacy to recognize high school graduates who have mastered climate literacy disciplines and attained green or technical green skills. Although there is no direct impact on the Commission, increased climate literacy among Californians could enhance

engagement with the Commission's coastal resiliency work and raise awareness about Commission managed land and resources.

TIJUANA RIVER

SB 58 (PADILLA D) AIR QUALITY: STANDARD: HYDROGEN SULFIDE.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill requires the California Air Resources Board to develop a response framework for hydrogen sulfide from fugitive and natural sources. The bill requires at least three public workshops, including one in the Tijuana River Valley region and one in the Salton Sea region. The bill also requires the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment to update its acute and chronic reference exposure levels for hydrogen sulfide and develop additional health guidance values if warranted. While focused on air quality, new thresholds could influence environmental oversight or collaborative efforts involving the Commission related to the Tijuana River transboundary pollution crisis.

TRIBAL ISSUES

AB 2115 (RAMOS D) CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICANS: FORMAL APOLOGY.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill provides that the State of California recognizes and accepts responsibility for the harms and atrocities committed by its representatives who promoted, permitted, facilitated, and enforced policies of violence against California Native Americans. The bill provides that the State of California apologizes for perpetuating the harms California Native Americans as a result of policies enacted, sanctioned, or tolerated by the Legislature. The bill requires a plaque memorializing this apology to be publicly and conspicuously installed and maintained in the State Capitol Building. This action may strengthen expectations for culturally informed engagement and may indirectly influence Commission consultation practices with tribes.

AB 1881 (Ramos D) California Indian Freedom Act of 2026.

Status: Vetoed

Summary: This bill would have enacted the California Indian Freedom Act of 2026 that prohibits a government agency from substantially burdening a California Native American tribe from exercising religious beliefs of spiritual practices on state lands unless it is in the furtherance of a compelling government interest and by the least restrictive means. Restricting state agencies from burdening tribal spiritual practices on state lands and requiring agencies to seek and document written consent of any affected tribes before undertaking a project that may pose a risk to sacred sites may impact the Commission's decision-making process.

AB 2507 (Nguyen D) Office of Tribal Affairs.

Status: Signed into law

Summary: This bill establishes the Office of Tribal Affairs in the Governor's Office headed by a Secretary of Tribal Affairs. The bill requires each state agency that engages, or has programs, services, or responsibilities affecting tribal governments to designate a tribal liaison. The bill requires the office to be advised by a Tribal Advisory Committee that would provide recommendations and tribal perspectives to strengthen government-to-government engagement and improve the design, access, and implementation of state programs and services affecting tribal governments. This bill requires the Commission to designate a tribal liaison (which it already has done) and engage with a new statewide tribal advisory committee, increasing coordination responsibilities and standardizing tribal engagement practices.

SB 1326 (Wahab D) California Environmental Quality Act: tribal cultural resources: mitigation measures.

Status: Assembly Appropriations Committee – Held under submission

Summary: This bill would modify the definition of tribal cultural resource for purposes of CEQA to include a site, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that is identified by the Native American Heritage Commission as a sacred place or included in a local tribal register. Changing the definition of tribal cultural resources could increase CEQA obligations for Commission projects, leading to additional review, consultation, and mitigation requirements.