

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Natural Resources Agency consists of 27 departments, boards, commissions, and conservancies responsible for administering programs to conserve, protect, restore, and enhance the natural, historical, and cultural resources of California.

The May Revision includes total funding of \$7.9 billion (\$2.2 billion General Fund and \$5.7 billion other funds) for all programs included in the Agency.

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

The Department of Water Resources protects, conserves, develops, and manages California's water. The May Revision includes total funding of \$3.3 billion (\$121.6 million General Fund and \$3.2 billion other funds) to support the Department.

GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

The May Revision builds upon the Water Action Plan and actions proposed in the Governor's Budget to better manage groundwater. The Governor's Budget proposed \$2.9 million General Fund for the Department of Water Resources to collect and update groundwater data and information, as well as \$1.9 million General Fund for the State Water Resources Control Board to act as a backstop when local or regional agencies are unable or unwilling to sustainably manage groundwater basins. Groundwater accounts for more than one-third of the water used by cities and farms and much more in dry years when other sources are reduced. Some of California's groundwater basins are sustainably

NATURAL RESOURCES

managed, but many are not. Inconsistent and inadequate tools, resources, and authorities make managing groundwater difficult in California and impede the state's ability to address problems such as overdraft, seawater intrusion, land subsidence, and water quality degradation. Groundwater extraction, in excess of recharge, results in declining groundwater levels, increasing energy demand and pumping costs, and may contribute to stream flow depletion and declining ecosystem conditions. Excessive groundwater pumping can also mobilize toxins and cause irreversible land subsidence, which damages infrastructure and diminishes future aquifer storage capacity. The strategies identified in the Water Action Plan are intended to address these challenges and move California toward more sustainable management of the state's groundwater resources. When properly managed, groundwater resources can provide a reliable and valuable water supply to communities, farms, and the environment.

Significant Adjustments:

- Sustainable Groundwater Management Program—Groundwater resources are most effectively managed at the local and regional level, and the state's role should be to provide guidance, tools, and resources to local and regional entities to assist them in management of local groundwater basins. An increase of \$2.5 million General Fund in 2014-15 and \$5 million annually for four additional years to support local groundwater management efforts, including:
 - Planning and Oversight—Assess the status of groundwater basins; develop groundwater basin sustainability metrics; track development and implementation of groundwater monitoring programs by local agencies; and review and assess groundwater plans developed by local agencies.
 - Local and Regional Technical Assistance—Offer technical assistance, including guidance and tools for local and regional agencies related to: collecting and reporting local groundwater data, preparing and updating groundwater management plans, assessing the status of local groundwater basins, establishing appropriate and effective groundwater governance, preparing local groundwater basin water budgets to determine sustainable yield, and forming governance structures for managing groundwater basins.

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The California Department of Parks and Recreation operates the state's park system to preserve and protect the state's most valued natural, cultural and historical resources.

The May Revision includes total funding of \$553.3 million (\$115.9 million General Fund and \$437.4 million other funds) to support the Department.

IMPROVING THE STATE PARK SYSTEM

The Parks Forward Commission began an assessment in June 2013 of the financial, operational, and cultural challenges facing the state parks system. The Commission released a draft report with preliminary recommendations in April, and the final report will be released in the fall of 2014. The Administration is prepared to establish a team of experts to further develop and lead the Department in implementing organizational reforms. In the meantime, the Department has begun implementing many of the Commission's recommendations described in the recent draft report:

- **Increase Number of Cabins in Park System**—The Department is working with the Parks Forward Commission to locate new cabins within the state park system. This would increase the number of cabins available in some parks and make cabin camping available for the first time in other parks. Expanding the types of camping opportunities available in the park system should make camping more accessible and appealing to a broader range of people.
- **Modernize Fee Collection and Technology in Park System**—Currently, visitors must use cash to pay parking and entrance fees in most parks. The Department will modernize the current fee collection system, which would allow visitors to use debit and credit cards. The improved technology would also allow financial information to be communicated electronically from the parks to departmental fiscal systems and to the campground reservation system.
- **Enhance Information on Park System**—The Department will increase the amount of information available about the state park system. New technology will allow images of parks to be available on the internet. Providing such information would facilitate use of the parks by allowing visitors to view the trails and features in advance of their visit.

This page intentionally blank to facilitate double-sided printing.