

I. Legislative Calendar

October 11th was the last day for the Governor to act on bills passed by the Legislature, marking the end of legislative activity for the year. Of the 941 bills on his desk, Governor Brown signed 808 measures, including two bills – AB 1390 (Alejo) and SB 226 (Pavley) – that would streamline the groundwater adjudication process, as well as one bill that provides local agencies with additional authority to address abandoned vessels in the state’s waterways, in AB 1323 by Assemblymember Frazier.

II. Federal Drought Legislation

In congressional news, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Senator Lisa Murkowski from Alaska, met on October 8th to discuss a number of drought-related measures including House Resolution 2898 by Congressman Valadao and S 1894 by Senators Feinstein and Boxer. While no formal action was taken by the committee, there were a couple aspects that I would note for the Council:

II. Federal Drought Legislation (Cont)

- While the committee did not go into great detail debating the primary differences between the two measures (ESA, cost, or how to pay for it), Senator Murkowski did acknowledge that these factors will be important to determining the committee's decision on what moves forward.
- Senator Murkowski also noted that technology should play a significant role in addressing long-term, Western water supply issues, referring to desalination and water recycling as "game-changing technologies."
- Michael Connor, Deputy Interior Secretary, testified that the Obama Administration is generally more supportive of Senator Feinstein's approach, which was anticipated, given that the Administration threatened to veto the Valadao Resolution when it passed the House earlier this Summer.

While any potential compromise in the Senate appears is still a work-in-progress, the hearing illustrated some areas of common interest, which is encouraging as Congress moves into the final months of Session.

II. 2016 Water Bond

Moving back closer to home, earlier this week a water bond for the 2016 Ballot was submitted to the Attorney General's Office by the Natural Heritage Institute. Given that proponents now have 35 business days to amend the bond, under a law passed just last year, a number of versions were submitted, so the specifics of the measure are subject to change. That said, what I would like to highlight for the Council this morning is that sum total of the bond is expected to be approximately \$5 billion and will include funding for a variety of programs and projects that could impact the Delta and Delta Plan implementation efforts including funding for: ecosystem restoration, wastewater recycling and desalination infrastructure, flood management, invasive plant control and eradication, as well some potential funding for the Delta Science Program.

In the next couple of months, signature gathering is expected to begin and proponents will have 180 days to collect a little more than 365,000 signatures to qualify the bond for the ballot. One interesting side note, since 1970 voters have approved more than 20 water bonds, while rejecting only one – a \$380 million water supply bond in 1990.

III. Levee Investment Briefing, DPC Tour

On October 12th, I had the opportunity to join legislative staff and staff from the Legislative Analyst's Office on a Delta Levees Tour put on by the Delta Protection Commission, which provided a chance to see some of the 1,100 miles of Delta levees firsthand, as well as visit some of the great legacy communities in the Delta. So I want to thank Eric Vink and Catherine Caldwell from the DPC for the opportunity to attend.

And then finally this morning, I wanted to note that Council staff will be providing a briefing to legislative staff on the progress of the Council's Levee Investment Strategy on November 4th at the capitol.