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SB-1126 Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group: river ranger program. (2017-2018)

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Senate Bill No. 1126

CHAPTER 895

An act to amend Section 33220 of the Public Resources Code, and to amend Section 2 of Chapter 452 of the Statutes of 2017, relating to the Los Angeles River and tributaries, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[Approved by Governor September 28, 2018. Filed with Secretary of State September 28, 2018.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1126, Portantino. Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group: river ranger program.

Existing law provides for the protection, enhancement, and restoration of rivers in this state. Existing law establishes the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and prescribes the membership, functions, and duties of the conservancy with regard to the acquisition, preservation, and improvement of real property within the Santa Monica Mountains zone, as defined. Existing law establishes within the conservancy the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group and requires, by March 1, 2019, the working group to develop, through watershed-based planning methods and community engagement, a revitalization plan for the Upper Los Angeles River, the tributaries of the Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and Verdugo Wash, and any additional tributary waterway that the working group determines to be necessary. Existing law requires the revitalization plan to address the unique and diverse needs of the Upper Los Angeles River, Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and Verdugo Wash, and the communities through which they pass, and to include watershed education programs.

This bill would specify the Arroyo Seco as a waterway for the working group to include in the revitalization plan and watershed education programs. The bill would authorize the working group to include representatives from the Cities of La Cañada Flintridge, Pasadena, and South Pasadena. The bill would authorize a representative appointed to the working group to designate an alternate in his or her place. The bill would instead require the revitalization plan to be developed on or before June 30, 2020, and the conservancy to provide a copy of the plan to certain legislative committees by that date.

Existing law requires the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Conservation Corps, and the State Lands Commission to develop a river ranger program, as prescribed. Existing law requires the conservancies, no later than June 30, 2018, to develop a plan for the design and implementation of the program and to provide a copy of the plan to certain legislative committees by that date.

This bill would instead require the plan to be developed and a copy to be provided to the legislative committees by March 30, 2019.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 33220 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

33220. (a) There shall be within the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy an Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group. The Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency, in consultation with the conservancy, and, to the extent that they wish to consult, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the City of Los Angeles, shall consider requests from local agency representatives to participate in the working group and may appoint no more than 23 representatives to the working group. A representative appointed to the working group may designate an alternate in his or her place. The working group may include, but need not be limited to, representatives from the conservancy, the County of Los Angeles, the Cities of Burbank, Glendale, La Cañada Flintridge, Los Angeles, Pasadena, San Fernando, and South Pasadena, elected officials of the cities riparian to the Pacoima Wash and Tujunga Wash, and nonprofit organizations serving the Upper Los Angeles River, San Fernando Valley, Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and Verdugo Wash.

(b) On or before June 30, 2020, the working group shall develop, through watershed-based planning methods and community engagement, a revitalization plan for the Upper Los Angeles River, the tributaries of the Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and Verdugo Wash, the Arroyo Seco, and any additional tributary waterway that the working group determines to be necessary. The revitalization plan shall address the unique and diverse needs of the Upper Los Angeles River, Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, Verdugo Wash, and Arroyo Seco, and the communities through which they pass. The plan shall be consistent with and enhance, and may be incorporated into plans that include, but are not limited to, the County of Los Angeles' Master Plan. The plan shall include watershed education programs that help the Upper Los Angeles River, Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, Verdugo Wash, and Arroyo Seco communities recognize the value of the waterways and the importance of protecting the river's watershed resources and its vitality to their communities. The revitalization plan shall require a master planning process that includes community engagement and a prioritization of disadvantaged communities, identified pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code.

(c) The conservancy shall provide any necessary staffing to the working group to assist in the development of the plan.

(d) The development and implementation of the revitalization plan may be eligible for funding from any public or private source, including, but not limited to, funding available pursuant to Section 79735 of the Water Code. Entities that are eligible to implement the revitalization plan include, but are not limited to, state agencies, local agencies, and nonprofit organizations, and may be eligible for state funding. An entity receiving funding to implement the revitalization plan shall submit progress reports to the conservancy that include the status of funding.

(e) The working group shall submit the revitalization plan to the conservancy for approval. Upon adoption by the conservancy, the revitalization plan shall be considered an amendment to the Watershed and Open Space Plan for the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers. To the extent that the city or county wishes to consider the revitalization plan, the conservancy shall submit the plan for adoption to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors for inclusion in the Master Plan of the County of Los Angeles and to the Los Angeles City Council for inclusion into the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan.

(f) No later than June 30, 2020, the conservancy shall submit a copy of the plan to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water.

SEC. 2. Section 2 of Chapter 452 of the Statutes of 2017 is amended to read:

Sec. 2. (a) For purposes of this section, "conservancies" means the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.

(b) The conservancies shall collaborate with the Department of Parks and Recreation, the California Conservation Corps, and the State Lands Commission to develop a river ranger program to provide a network of river rangers who provide assistance to the public at sites along the Los Angeles River and its tributaries. The conservancies shall solicit the participation of representatives of local governments that have jurisdiction over segments of the river, including the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles. The conservancies, in cooperation with the Lower Los Angeles River Working Group, no later than March 30, 2019, shall prepare a plan for the design and implementation of the program, including recommendations regarding ways to finance the establishment and ongoing implementation of the program, and shall ensure that the plan is developed to accomplish all of the following objectives:

(1) Establish an identity for the Los Angeles River as a place for its communities to enjoy recreational opportunities and learn about the river's history and environmental resources.

(2) Improve public safety for visitors to the Los Angeles River.

(3) Foster collaboration among state and local government entities and other public agencies with jurisdiction over the Los Angeles River, and coordinate the work of these entities and public agencies with regard to the development, maintenance, and enhancement of the river and its resources.

(4) Protect the parks, open space, and other public places adjacent to the Los Angeles River.

(5) Engage communities along the Los Angeles River in the protection and preservation of the Los Angeles River and its resources.

(6) Promote equal access and equity among all communities along the Los Angeles River with regard to the development and placement of improvements along the river.

(7) Monitor the physical conditions, environmental health, and development of green space along the Los Angeles River.

(8) Provide a system for coordinating the work of river rangers with programs and services offered by local governments and conservation corps.

(9) Incorporate the findings and principles expressed in the "Presidential Memorandum--Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in Our National Parks, National Forests, and Other Public Lands and Waters," dated January 12, 2017.

(c) No later than March 30, 2019, the conservancies shall submit a copy of the plan required to be prepared pursuant to subdivision (b) to the Assembly Committee on Water, Parks, and Wildlife and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water, in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

(d) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2020, and as of that date is repealed.

SEC. 3. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

In order to protect the Los Angeles River watershed's resources and its vitality to the community, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.