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SB-1122 San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy: territory. (2021-2022)

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Senate Bill No. 1122

CHAPTER 718

An act to amend Sections 32601, 32602, 32603, and 32604 of the Public Resources Code, relating to the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

[Approved by Governor September 28, 2022. Filed with Secretary of State September 28, 2022.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1122, Allen. San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy: territory.

Existing law establishes the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy in the Natural Resources Agency and prescribes the functions and duties of the conservancy with regard to the protection, preservation, and enhancement of specified areas of the Counties of Los Angeles and Orange located along the San Gabriel River and the lower Los Angeles River and tributaries along those rivers. Existing law, for purposes of those provisions, defines "territory" to mean the territory of the conservancy that consists of those portions of the Counties of Los Angeles and Orange located within the San Gabriel River and its tributaries, the lower Los Angeles River and its tributaries, and the San Gabriel Mountains, as described.

This bill would additionally include the Dominguez Channel watershed and Santa Catalina Island, as described, within that definition of territory, and would make various related changes to the boundaries of that territory.

Existing law requires the conservancy to prepare a San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Parkway and Open Space Plan with specified elements to be approved by specified entities.

This bill would require the conservancy to update the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Parkway and Open Space Plan to include the priorities for conservation and enhanced public use within the Dominguez Channel watershed and Santa Catalina Island.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

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

SECTION 1. Section 32601 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

32601. The Legislature hereby finds and declares that the San Gabriel River and its tributaries, the lower Los Angeles River and its tributaries, the San Gabriel Mountains, Puente Hills, San Jose Hills, Santa Catalina Island, and the Dominguez Channel watershed constitute a unique and important open-space, environmental, anthropological, cultural, scientific, educational, recreational, scenic, and wildlife resource that should be held in trust to be preserved and enhanced for the enjoyment of, and appreciation by, present and future generations.

SEC. 2. Section 32602 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

32602. There is in the Natural Resources Agency the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, which is created as a state agency for the following purposes:

(a) To acquire and manage public lands within the lower Los Angeles River and San Gabriel River watersheds, the Dominguez Channel watershed, and Santa Catalina Island, and to provide for open-space, low-impact recreational and educational uses, water conservation, watershed improvement, wildlife and habitat restoration and protection, and watershed improvement within the territory.

(b) To preserve the San Gabriel River and the lower Los Angeles River, the Dominguez Channel watershed, and Santa Catalina Island consistent with existing and adopted river and flood control projects for the protection of life and property.

(c) To acquire open-space lands within the territory of the conservancy.

(d) To provide for the public's enjoyment and enhancement of recreational and educational experiences on public lands in the San Gabriel Watershed and lower Los Angeles River, the San Gabriel Mountains, the Dominguez Channel watershed, and Santa Catalina Island in a manner consistent with the protection of lands and resources in those watersheds.

SEC. 3. Section 32603 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

32603. As used in this division, the following terms have the following meanings:

(a) "Board" means the governing board of the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

(b) "Conservancy" means the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy. The conservancy may also be known as the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy.

(c) (1) "Territory" means the territory of the conservancy that consists of those portions of the Counties of Los Angeles and Orange located within the San Gabriel River and its tributaries, the lower Los Angeles River and its tributaries, the San Gabriel Mountains, the Dominguez Channel watershed, and Santa Catalina Island, including, without limitation, all of the following:

(A) The hydrologic basin or watershed that coincides with the upper San Gabriel River watershed, including the Upper Rio Hondo tributary, but not including any land area within the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy as described in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 33100) and Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 33200) of Division 23. The hydrologic basin or watershed is bounded by the San Gabriel Mountains to the north, the San Jose Hills to the east, the Puente Hills to the south, and by a series of hills and the Raymond Fault to the west.

(B) The hydrologic basin or watershed that coincides with the lower San Gabriel River watershed.

(C) The San Gabriel Mountains, including the Foothills Mountains Conservancy and the Puente Hills and San Jose Hills area, except any land area within the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy as described in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 33100) and Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 33200) of Division 23.

(D) The hydrologic basin or watershed that coincides with the lower Los Angeles River south of the northernmost boundary of the City of Vernon, as of June 1, 1999, except any land area within the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, as described in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 33100) and Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 33200) of Division 23.

(E) The hydrologic basin or watershed that coincides with the Dominguez Channel watershed bounded by Manchester Boulevard in the City of Inglewood to the north and the Los Angeles and Long Beach Harbors to the south.

(F) Santa Catalina Island, including the City of Avalon and unincorporated areas on the island.

(2) To assist persons in understanding the breadth of the territory included within the territory described in paragraph (1), the Legislature declares that that territory includes the territory in all of the following cities and areas:

(A) The territory within the city or community boundaries, as of January 1, 2022, of the following cities and communities: Alhambra, Anaheim, Arcadia, Artesia, Avalon, Azusa, Baldwin Park, Bell, Bell Gardens, Bellflower, Bradbury, Buena Park, Carson, Cerritos, Claremont, Commerce, Compton, Covina, Cudahy, Cypress, Diamond Bar, Downey, Duarte, El Monte, Fullerton, Gardena, Glendora, Hawaiian Gardens, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Huntington Park, Industry, Irwindale, La Habra, La Habra Heights, La Mirada, La Palma, La Puente, La Verne, Lakewood, Lawndale, Long Beach, Los Alamitos, Lynwood, Maywood, Monrovia, Montebello, Monterey Park, Norwalk, Palos Verdes Estates, Paramount, Pico Rivera, Pomona, Rosemead, San Dimas, San Gabriel, San Pedro, Santa Fe Springs, Seal Beach, Signal Hill, South El Monte, South Gate, Temple City, Vernon, Walnut, West Covina, Whittier, Willowbrook, and Wilmington.

(B) Portions of the following cities and communities that fall within the definition of territory described in paragraph (1): Brea, El Segundo, Los Angeles, Inglewood, Placentia, Redondo Beach, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, and Torrance.

(C) The unincorporated areas of the Counties of Los Angeles and Orange adjacent to the San Gabriel River and its tributaries, the lower Los Angeles River and its tributaries, the Dominguez Channel watershed, Santa Catalina Island, the San Gabriel Mountains, the Foothill Mountains, the Puente Hills, and the San Jose Hills area including, but not limited to, East Los Angeles.

(d) Nothing in this section shall affect the jurisdiction of any other state conservancy.

SEC. 4. Section 32604 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:

32604. The conservancy shall do all of the following:

(a) Establish policies and priorities for the conservancy regarding the San Gabriel River and the lower Los Angeles River, and their watersheds, and conduct any necessary planning activities, in accordance with the purposes set forth in Section 32602.

(b) Give priority to river related projects that create expanded opportunities for recreation, greening, aesthetic improvement, and wildlife habitat along the corridor of the river, and in parts of the river channel that can be improved for the above purposes without infringing on water quality, water supply, and necessary flood control.

(c) Approve conservancy funded projects that advance the policies and priorities set forth in Section 32602.

(d) Prepare a San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Parkway and Open Space Plan to be approved by a majority of the cities representing a majority of the population, the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County, the Central Basin Water Association, and the San Gabriel Valley Water Association. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following elements:

(1) A determination of the policies and priorities for the conservation of the San Gabriel River and its watershed, the lower Los Angeles River, and the San Gabriel Mountains, in accordance with the purposes of the conservancy as set forth in Section 32602.

(2) A plan for incorporating, as relevant, the principles and planning work contained within the Los Angeles River Master Plan prepared by the County of Los Angeles.

(3) An identification of underused existing public open spaces and recommendations for providing better public use and enjoyment in areas identified in the plan.

(4) An identification of, and a priority program for implementing, those additional low-impact recreational and open space needs, including additional or upgraded facilities and parks that may be necessary or desirable.

(e) Update the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Parkway and Open Space Plan to include the priorities for conservation and enhanced public use within the Dominguez Channel watershed and Santa Catalina Island.