

Introduced by Senator Alarcon

February 23, 2001

An act to add Chapter 1.52 (commencing with Section 5094.70) to Division 5 of the Public Resources Code, relating to river parkways, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 788, as introduced, Alarcon. Parks and Recreation: grants: urban river park projects.

Existing law authorizes the expenditure of state funds for local assistance grants to cities, counties, and districts for the acquisition and development of various park and recreational areas and facilities.

This bill would enact the California River Parkways Act of 2001 for the purpose of directly improving the quality of life in California by providing recreational, open space, wildlife, educational, flood control, and water quality benefits to communities in the state. The bill would authorize the Secretary of the Resources Agency to award grants to state and local agencies and nonprofit organizations for feasible river parkway projects. The bill would require the secretary, in awarding those grants, to give priority to projects that accomplish specified objectives, including help improve blighted urban communities adjacent to urban rivers and streams.

The bill would appropriate \$5,750,000 from the River Protection Subaccount of the Watershed Protection Account of the Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection, and Flood Prevention Bond Fund to the Secretary of the Resources Agency for capital outlay and local assistance projects that are consistent with the bill and the River Protection Program funded by the River Protection Subaccount.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: yes. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 1.52 (commencing with Section
2 5094.70) is added to Division 5 of the Public Resources Code, to
3 read:

4
5 CHAPTER 1.52. CALIFORNIA RIVER PARKWAYS ACT OF 2001

6
7 5094.70. This chapter shall be known, and may be cited, as the
8 California River Parkways Act of 2001.

9 5094.71. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
10 following:

11 (a) River parkways directly improve the quality of life in
12 California by providing important recreational, open-space,
13 wildlife, educational, flood control, and water quality benefits to
14 communities in the state.

15 (b) River parkways can provide communities with safe places
16 for children to play; locations for family picnics; bike and
17 pedestrian trails; areas for water sports including swimming,
18 boating, and fishing, and many other activities.

19 (c) River parkways can also help improve blighted urban river
20 areas that were formerly thriving natural resource preserves by
21 providing important recreational and scenic amenities. By
22 improving these areas, we can help decrease urban problems,
23 including crime, pollution, nuisance activity, and other problems.

24 (d) River parkways can provide accessible open space that can
25 help remedy the severe shortage in park and open-space areas that
26 plague many urban and suburban communities and small towns.

27 (e) River parkways can provide flood protection benefits for
28 our communities by protecting wider corridors along our
29 waterways that help store, and provide safe corridors for, the
30 passage of storm waters.

31 (f) River parkways can also protect and restore wildlife and fish
32 habitat.

33 (g) California can improve the quality of life in this state by
34 assisting local communities, nonprofit organizations, state
35 agencies, and other agencies in establishing river parkways.



1 5094.72. For purposes of this chapter, the following terms
2 have the following meanings:

3 (a) “Parkways Program” means the California River
4 Parkways Program established pursuant to subdivision (a) of
5 Section 5094.73.

6 (b) “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Resources Agency.
7 5094.73. (a) The California River Parkways Program is
8 hereby established in the office of the Secretary of the Resources
9 Agency, to be administered by the secretary.

10 (b) The secretary may make grants to state and local agencies
11 and nonprofit organizations for feasible river parkway projects
12 from moneys appropriated to the secretary, and from other funds
13 that become available to the secretary for these purposes. Those
14 funds may also be used for administrative costs directly related to
15 the administration of the parkways program.

16 (c) Eligible projects include, but are not necessarily limited to,
17 all of the following:

18 (1) The acquisition of real property. Prior to expending grant
19 funds for the acquisition of real property, the grantee shall provide
20 notice to any landowner who owns land immediately adjacent to
21 the real property proposed to be acquired.

22 (2) Site improvement projects, including the provision of
23 compatible improvements that enhance the safety of parkway
24 visitors and neighboring communities.

25 (3) Projects to restore and enhance riparian and other habitat.

26 (4) Projects to provide public access to a stream or river.

27 (5) Projects to develop visitor services, and recreational and
28 interpretive facilities.

29 (6) Trail projects.

30 (d) In awarding grants to state and local agencies and nonprofit
31 organizations under this chapter, the secretary shall give priority
32 to river parkway projects that accomplish one or more of the
33 following objectives:

34 (1) Help improve blighted urban communities adjacent to
35 urban rivers and streams.

36 (2) Provide parks and recreational facilities for underserved
37 communities, in urban and suburban communities, and in small
38 towns.

39 (3) Protect or restore fish and wildlife habitat in a manner that
40 benefits threatened or endangered species.



1 (4) Provide flood control benefits by maintaining or restoring
2 the open-space character of lands along rivers and streams that are
3 subject to periodic flooding.

4 (e) When implementing this chapter, the secretary shall give
5 consideration to providing an equitable regional distribution of
6 funding over the lifetime of the program.

7 5094.74. A state or local agency or nonprofit organization that
8 receives a grant awarded pursuant to this chapter shall, to the
9 extent feasible, utilize the services of the California Conservation
10 Corps and local conservation corps in those efforts.

11 5094.76. Any state agency, local agency, or nonprofit
12 organization that expends grant funds pursuant to this chapter shall
13 file with the secretary an annual progress report on the
14 implementation of the river parkway project that has been funded
15 by the grant.

16 5094.77. It is the intent of the Legislature that this chapter
17 shall supplement, and not replace or duplicate, existing river
18 parkway efforts undertaken by state and local agencies and
19 nonprofit organizations. In implementing this chapter, the
20 secretary may make grants to entities for the purposes of better
21 utilizing existing river parkway programs, to the extent feasible,
22 to achieve the objectives of this chapter, including, but not
23 necessarily limited to, the implementation and administration of
24 river parkway programs undertaken pursuant to Chapter 4
25 (commencing with Section 1300) and Chapter 4.1 (commencing
26 with Section 1385) of Division 2 of the Fish and Game Code, Title
27 7.42 (commencing with Section 66905) of the Government Code,
28 Division 21 (commencing with Section 31000), Division 22.5
29 (commencing with Section 32500), and Division 23 (commencing
30 with Section 33000) of this code, and Section 7048 of the Water
31 Code, and other river parkway efforts undertaken by local
32 agencies and nonprofit organizations.

33 SEC. 2. The sum of five million seven hundred fifty thousand
34 dollars (\$5,750,000) is hereby appropriated from the River
35 Protection Subaccount of the Watershed Protection Account of the
36 Safe Drinking Water, Clean Water, Watershed Protection, and
37 Flood Prevention Bond Fund, established by Section 79019 of the
38 Water Code, to the Secretary of the Resources Agency for capital
39 outlay and local assistance projects that are consistent with
40 Chapter 1.52 (commencing with Section 5094.70) of Division 5



1 of the Public Resources Code and Article 4 (commencing with
2 Section 79100) of Chapter 6 of Division 26 of the Water Code.

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