

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 2, 2008

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 17, 2008

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2007–08 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2785

Introduced by Assembly Member Ruskin

February 22, 2008

An act to amend Sections 1930 and 1932 of, and to add Sections 1930.5 and 1932.5 to, the Fish and Game Code, relating to fish and game.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2785, as amended, Ruskin. Wildlife conservation.

Existing law requires the Department of Fish and Game to administer the Significant Natural Areas Program, and requires the department, among other things, to identify and seek the maintenance of significant natural areas, as defined, and to maintain, expand, and keep current a data management system, designated the California Natural Diversity Data Base.

This bill would revise the program to require the department, contingent upon funding, to investigate, study, and identify those areas in the state that are most essential as wildlife corridors and habitat linkages and prioritize vegetative data development in those areas. The bill would require the department to develop and maintain a spatial data system that identifies those areas in the state that are most essential for maintaining habitat connectivity, including wildlife corridors and habitat linkages. The bill would require the department to make all of the described data sets and associated analytical products available to the public and other government entities. The bill would require the

department to actively pursue grants and cost sharing opportunities with local, state, or federal agencies, or private entities that use the data sets and benefit from their creation and maintenance.

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

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 1930 of the Fish and Game Code is
2 amended to read:

3 1930. The Legislature finds and declares that:

4 (a) Areas containing diverse ecological and geological
5 characteristics are vital to the continual health and well being of
6 the state's natural resources and of its citizens.

7 (b) Many habitats and ecosystems that constitute the state's
8 natural diversity are in danger of being lost.

9 (c) Connectivity between wildlife habitats is important to the
10 long-term viability of the state's biodiversity.

11 (d) Increasingly fragmented habitats threaten the state's wildlife
12 species.

13 (e) There is insufficient incentive for private landowners to
14 maintain and perpetuate significant local natural areas in their
15 natural state.

16 (f) Efforts to preserve natural areas have been fragmented
17 between federal, state, local, and private sectors.

18 (g) Analysis of the state's habitat connectivity benefits from the
19 consideration of all relevant data, including information from
20 private and public landowners.

21 (h) The Department of Fish and Game's existing mapping
22 activities and products should be developed and sustained.

23 SEC. 2. Section 1930.5 is added to the Fish and Game Code,
24 to read:

25 1930.5. (a) Contingent upon funding, the department shall
26 investigate, study, and identify those areas in the state that are most
27 essential as wildlife corridors and habitat linkages, as well as the
28 impacts to those corridors from climate change, and shall prioritize
29 vegetative data development in these areas.

30 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the Wildlife
31 Conservation Board use various funds to work with the department
32 to complete a statewide analysis of corridors and connectivity to

1 support conservation planning and climate change adaptation
2 activities.

3 SEC. 3. Section 1932 of the Fish and Game Code is amended
4 to read:

5 1932. There is hereby established the Significant Natural Areas
6 Program which shall be administered by the department. The
7 department, in administering this program, shall do all of the
8 following:

9 (a) Obtain access to the most recent information with respect
10 to natural resources. In order to accomplish this, the department
11 shall maintain, expand, and keep current a data management
12 system, designated the California Natural Diversity Data Base,
13 designed to document information on these resources. That data
14 shall be made available to interested parties on request.

15 (b) Develop and maintain a spatial data system that identifies
16 those areas in the state that are most essential for maintaining
17 habitat connectivity, including wildlife corridors and habitat
18 linkages. This data should include information essential for
19 evaluating the needs of wildlife species, as defined in Section
20 711.2, that require habitat connectivity for their long-term
21 conservation, including distribution and movement patterns.

22 (c) As appropriate, develop and maintain the database by
23 incorporating mapping products and data developed by other state
24 agencies.

25 (d) Make all of the data sets, and associated analytical products,
26 available to the public and other government entities.

27 (e) Ensure cost sharing by all who use the data management
28 system and develop an appropriate schedule of compensation to
29 be paid by individuals using the data management system, not to
30 exceed the actual costs for use of the data management system.

31 (f) Ensure recognition of the state's most significant natural
32 areas, including those ~~threatened by fire and~~ *affected by* climate
33 change. The department shall, after consultation with federal, state,
34 and local agencies, education institutions, civic and public interest
35 organizations, private organizations, landowners, and other private
36 individuals, identify by means of periodic reports those natural
37 areas deemed to be most significant.

38 (g) Seek the maintenance and perpetuation of the state's most
39 significant natural areas for present and future generations in the
40 most feasible manner. The department shall consider alternative

1 approaches for that maintenance, including alternatives to fee
2 acquisition such as incentives, leasing, and dedication.

3 (h) Reduce unnecessary duplication of effort. The department
4 shall provide coordinating services to federal, state, local, and
5 private interests wishing to aid in the maintenance and perpetuation
6 of significant natural areas.

7 (i) Actively pursue grants and cost sharing opportunities with
8 local, state, or federal agencies, or private entities that use the data
9 sets and benefit from their creation and maintenance.

10 SEC. 4. Section 1932.5 is added to the Fish and Game Code,
11 to read:

12 1932.5. (a) In carrying out its responsibilities pursuant to this
13 chapter, the department shall solicit and utilize all relevant results
14 of existing studies and information from local government, state,
15 and federal agencies, academic institutions, nonprofit organizations,
16 certified environmental documents, private and public landowners,
17 and agricultural and rangeland information developed by the
18 Department of Conservation and agriculture associations.

19 (b) The department shall seek input from representatives of
20 other state agencies, local government, federal agencies,
21 nongovernmental conservation organizations, landowners,
22 agriculture, recreation, scientific entities, and industry in
23 determining essential wildlife corridors and habitat linkages.
24 Private and public landowners shall be given a reasonable
25 opportunity to review and comment on the wildlife characteristics
26 of their land if it is identified pursuant to this chapter. The
27 department shall utilize all relevant information when developing
28 data sets and associated analytical products pursuant to this chapter.

29 (c) This chapter does not require, mandate, or authorize, under
30 state or federal law, any state or local planning, zoning, or other
31 land use action or decision.

32 (d) This chapter does not alter any legal rights and privileges,
33 under state or federal law, of ownership or use of privately or
34 publicly owned property.

35 (e) The Legislature finds and declares that the data sets and
36 associated analytical products required pursuant to this chapter are
37 for inventory and planning purposes and may not be suitable to

- 1 support regulatory actions without additional specificity or
- 2 information.

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