

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1585

Introduced by Assembly Member Alejo
(Principal coauthor: Senator Cannella)
(Coauthor: Senator Monning)

January 6, 2016

An act relating to water resources, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1585, as introduced, Alejo. Monterey County Water Resources Agency: water conveyance.

Existing law establishes the Monterey County Water Resources Agency as a flood control and water agency within the County of Monterey. Existing law authorizes the agency to award a design-build contract for the combined design and construction of a project to connect Lake San Antonio, located in the County of Monterey, and Lake Nacimiento, located in the County of San Luis Obispo, with an underground tunnel or pipeline for the purpose of maximizing water storage, supply, and groundwater recharge.

This bill would require no less than \$25,000,000 from an unspecified source to be allocated, upon appropriation by the Legislature, to the agency for the purpose of constructing a water conveyance tunnel between Lake Nacimiento and Lake San Antonio, as specified.

This bill would make legislative findings and declarations as to the necessity of a special statute for the Monterey County Water Resources Agency.

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

Vote: 2/3. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

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

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares as follows:
- 2 (a) Over the past four years, California has grappled with one
- 3 of the worst ongoing droughts in the state’s history.
- 4 (b) The Monterey County Water Resources Agency manages
- 5 Lake Nacimiento and Lake San Antonio, two reservoirs that
- 6 provide water supply, flood control, and recreation in the Salinas
- 7 Valley.
- 8 (c) Lake Nacimiento’s watershed fills the Lake Nacimiento
- 9 reservoir nearly three times faster than Lake San Antonio’s
- 10 watershed fills that reservoir. The Monterey County Water
- 11 Resources Agency often releases water from Lake Nacimiento
- 12 because it reaches its capacity, even when Lake San Antonio still
- 13 has excess storage available.
- 14 (d) The Monterey County Water Resources Agency is planning
- 15 to build a tunnel or pipeline between Lake Nacimiento and Lake
- 16 San Antonio to redirect water from Lake Nacimiento that would
- 17 otherwise be released out to sea and use it to fill excess capacity
- 18 in Lake San Antonio.
- 19 (e) The interlake tunnel project will mitigate the impact of the
- 20 drought and improve the economic viability of the Salinas Valley,
- 21 the environmental sustainability of the region, and agricultural
- 22 production.
- 23 (f) The Lake Nacimiento and Lake San Antonio region scores
- 24 40 percent to 50 percent as a disadvantaged community under
- 25 CalEnviroScreen.
- 26 (g) The state is riddled with water supply and water quality
- 27 challenges posed by the relentless drought and is now facing
- 28 weather forecasts of one of the most powerful El Niño storms ever
- 29 recorded.
- 30 (h) A major flood event in California has the potential to
- 31 devastate communities, regional agriculture-based economies, and
- 32 seriously impact the state’s economy.
- 33 (i) In Monterey County alone, agriculture generates eight billion
- 34 one hundred twenty million dollars (\$8,120,000,000) into the local
- 35 economy and supports more than 76,000 jobs. An additional 20,352

1 jobs are created as a direct result of the prosperous industry.
2 Flooding of our agricultural lands could put all of that into
3 jeopardy.

4 (j) Given the Salinas Valley’s economic contribution to the
5 state’s agricultural economy and the stress the El Niño storms will
6 put on the region, the Lake Nacimiento and Lake San Antonio
7 areas are considered distressed communities and therefore are a
8 priority for state funding.

9 SEC. 2. Upon appropriation by the Legislature, no less than
10 twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000) from ____ shall be
11 allocated to the Monterey County Water Resources Agency for
12 the purpose of constructing a water conveyance tunnel, in
13 accordance with the design-build process authorized by Section
14 11.1 of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Act
15 (Chapter 1159 of the Statutes of 1990, as amended by Chapter 865
16 of the Statutes of 2014), between Lake Nacimiento and Lake San
17 Antonio within zone 2c in order to maximize water storage, water
18 supply, and groundwater recharge at the lakes, within the Salinas
19 River groundwater basin, and the Salinas Valley.

20 SEC. 3. The Legislature finds and declares that a special law
21 is necessary and that a general law cannot be made applicable
22 within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California
23 Constitution because of the emergency circumstances of the
24 ongoing drought and the benefits this project between Lake
25 Nacimiento and Lake San Antonio managed by the Monterey
26 County Water Resources Agency will provide to the region.

27 SEC. 4. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the
28 immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within
29 the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into
30 immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

31 In order to responsibly store water during California’s prolonged
32 drought and to protect the Salinas Valley from flooding during a
33 historic El Niño weather pattern, it is necessary that this act take
34 effect immediately.