

Introduced by Senator CannellaFebruary 18, 2016

An act relating to the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, making an appropriation therefor, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1264, as introduced, Cannella. Monterey County Water Resources Agency: Salinas River System.

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 prevent the contamination or pollution of surface or subsurface water used or useful in the agency.

This bill would appropriate \$1,000,000 from the General Fund to the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, for use in the Salinas River, to assist in the removal of excess vegetation and trash, increase efficiency of instream flow using sediment and vegetation management strategies, and support the development and implementation of long-term management policies.

This bill would make legislative findings and declarations as to the necessity of a special statute for the Salinas River System.

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

Vote: $\frac{2}{3}$. Appropriation: yes. 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 all of the
2 following:

3 (a) The Salinas River System, which includes the Salinas River
4 and the Salinas River Lagoon, undergoes an annual aggressive
5 vegetative insurgence, causing an accumulation of waste in the
6 river and putting the surrounding communities and prime
7 agricultural lands at risk of flooding.

8 (b) Because the Salinas River System is predominately
9 privately-owned and required to meet permitting standards set by
10 local, state, and federal agencies, maintenance on the river
11 represents a unique opportunity for public and private partnerships.

12 (c) The Salinas River System has been designated by the
13 National Marine Fisheries Service as critical habitat for
14 federally-threatened South-Central California Coast steelhead trout
15 (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*).

16 (d) Because the Salinas River lies upstream from the Monterey
17 Bay, waste and vegetation in the river threaten the health of the
18 bay. Thousands of people every year travel to Monterey Bay to
19 enjoy its natural beauty and, as a public resource and source of
20 tourism revenue, the state has an interest in protecting it.

21 (e) Annual vegetative insurgence, along with the accumulation
22 of waste in the river, puts surrounding communities, including
23 farming communities and the land that is farmed, at risk for
24 flooding.

25 (f) The Salinas River Lagoon is home to rare, threatened, and
26 endangered species, including tidewater goby (*Eucyclogobius*
27 *newberryi*) and western snowy plover (*charadrius nivosus*), and
28 home to numerous plant communities.

29 (g) The Salinas River Lagoon is surrounded by some of the
30 most productive agricultural lands in the world, which support an
31 annual \$40,000,000 artichoke crop agricultural industry.

32 (h) Lagoon management is essential to the safety of the
33 developed residential and agricultural areas surrounding the lagoon
34 within the 100-year floodplain due to the periodic flooding from
35 high river flows and ocean storms almost annually or, in some
36 cases, multiple inundations in one year.

1 (i) Management of the lagoon is a component of the long-term
2 Salinas River Management Program and represents an essential
3 element of the Salinas River system.

4 (j) The Board of Directors and Board of Supervisors of the
5 Monterey County Water Resources Agency have approved the
6 Winter 2015–2016 Sandbar Management Plan Project, and
7 permitting agencies expect that measurable progress occur on
8 obtaining full, nonemergency, permits and a commitment to
9 developing a long-term plan.

10 (k) Providing the Monterey County Water Resources Agency
11 with the resources necessary to address annual aggressive
12 vegetative insurgence, trash, and sediment management in the
13 Salinas River is critical in helping maintain the natural splendor
14 of the Monterey Bay environment and its economies, while
15 protecting the people in surrounding communities.

16 SEC. 2. The Legislature finds and declares that a special law
17 is necessary and that a general law cannot be made applicable
18 within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California
19 Constitution because of the unique need to maintain the Salinas
20 River and the Salinas River Lagoon in order to protect the
21 ecosystem of the Monterey Bay, as both a public resource and a
22 source of tourism revenue, and to protect surrounding communities
23 from the risk of flooding.

24 SEC. 3. There is hereby appropriated one million dollars
25 (\$1,000,000) from the General Fund to the Monterey County Water
26 Resources Agency to initiate efforts to do any of the following in
27 the Salinas River:

28 (a) Assist in the removal of excess vegetation and trash.

29 (b) Increase the efficiency of instream flow using sediment and
30 vegetation management strategies.

31 (c) Support the development and implementation of long-term
32 management policies.

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

- 1 In order to protect the Salinas Valley and Monterey Bay from
- 2 flooding during a historic El Niño weather pattern, it is necessary
- 3 that this act take effect immediately.

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