

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 26, 2000

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 4, 2000

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1999–2000 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1999

Introduced by Assembly Member Dickerson

February 18, 2000

An act relating to conservation camps, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1999, as amended, Dickerson. Conservation camps.

(1) Existing law establishes conservation camps, and provides for the transfer of inmates as specified to be housed and employed therein.

This bill would state findings and declarations of the Legislature regarding the benefits to the state of an expanded conservation camp program, and would direct the Department of Corrections to maximize the availability of conservation camp qualified inmates after health and safety requirements are met at other facilities of the department. This bill would declare the intent of the Legislature to continue to expand the conservation camp program, and would direct the Resources Secretary to provide by November 1, 2000, and each year thereafter, a report to the Legislature and Governor on additional camp construction needs and recommendations for the following fiscal year.

This bill would also provide that the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection shall reactivate a 20-person crew module at 17 specified conservation camps; *in order* to reactivate the camps and *to* provide necessary training, vehicles, and equipment, ~~reestablish a minimum security conservation camp at Green Valley in Sacramento County, construct and equip a 3-fire crew module minimum security work center at Cummings Valley in Kern County, and construct and equip 3 other new conservation camps in flood, fire, and earthquake prone areas of the state, as specified.~~

(2) 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 the
2 following:

3 (a) The Legislative Analyst’s Office projects the state
4 will need to provide additional ~~space for as many as 27,000~~
5 ~~inmates by June 30, 2004. Current inmate space, as~~
6 *current* facilities are at 187 percent of designed capacity.

7 (b) The number of fires and floods in California has
8 increased dramatically during the last decade. Watershed
9 health has declined, creating a backlog of restoration
10 work. Prevention of these natural disasters and changing
11 these conditions will require environmentally sensitive,
12 labor-intensive work by hand crews.

13 (c) Each conservation camp inmate provides an
14 annual return to the community of over twenty thousand
15 dollars (\$20,000) in productive work, while costing
16 taxpayers only thirteen thousand dollars (\$13,000) per
17 year.

18 (d) Conservation camps provide significant
19 rehabilitation benefits, as recidivism rates are lowered by
20 the opportunity to learn strong work ethics, teamwork
21 and job satisfaction, by assisting communities, farms, and
22 the state’s natural resources.



1 (e) Lower disciplinary and custodial costs result due to
2 the fact that the hard-working emergency response team
3 activities curtail disciplinary problems associated with
4 idle time in prisons.

5 (f) Shortened incarceration time ~~results for~~ *helps*
6 nonviolent inmates who reduce their sentence by
7 performing meaningful work.

8 (g) Conservation camps have provided over 2,000,000
9 work-hours of emergency fire and flood assistance to the
10 state and over 4,000,000 work-hours of resource,
11 environmental, and community service in a single year.

12 (h) Minimum-security conservation centers cost less
13 to construct than “hardwall” facilities and considerably
14 less to operate.

15 SEC. 2. The Department of Corrections shall
16 maximize the availability of conservation camp qualified
17 inmates after the minimum health and safety
18 requirements are met at other facilities of the
19 department.

20 SEC. 3. It is the intent of the Legislature to continue
21 to expand the conservation camp program to provide
22 additional beds for low-level inmates and at the same time
23 provide additional capabilities to prevent and deal with
24 fire, flood, earthquake, and other emergencies in the
25 State of California in a more cost-effective manner.
26 Therefore, the Resources Secretary, after consultation
27 with the Secretary of the Youth and Adult Correctional
28 Agency and other benefiting agencies, shall by
29 November 1, 2000, and each year thereafter, report to the
30 Legislature and the Governor on additional camp
31 construction needs and recommendations for the
32 following fiscal year.

33 SEC. 4. The Department of Forestry and Fire
34 ~~Protection shall do the following:~~

35 ~~(a) Reactive Protection shall reactivate~~ an additional
36 20-person crew module at each of the following 17
37 conservation camps, for the purpose of reactivating the
38 camps and providing necessary training, vehicles, and
39 equipment: Baseline, Bautista, Delta, Devils Garden, Eel
40 River, Fenner Canyon, Gabilian, Growlersburg, McCain



1 Valley, Oak Glen, Owens Valley, Preston/Pine Grove,
2 Puerta La Cruz, Salt Creek, Sugar Pine, Trinity River, and
3 Valley View.

4 ~~(b) Reestablish a minimum security conservation~~
5 ~~camp at Green Valley in Sacramento County, to~~
6 ~~accommodate six fire crews, totaling 120 persons.~~

7 ~~(c) Construct and equip a three fire crew module~~
8 ~~minimum security work center at Cummings Valley in~~
9 ~~Kern County.~~

10 ~~(d) Construct and equip three other new conservation~~
11 ~~camps in fire, flood, and earthquake prone areas of the~~
12 ~~state. These camps shall be established in areas~~
13 ~~designated jointly by the Director of Corrections and the~~
14 ~~Department of Forestry and Fire Protection based on~~
15 ~~studies currently underway by the Department of~~
16 ~~Forestry and Fire Protection and after consultation with~~
17 ~~local communities and counties.~~

18 SEC. 5. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the
19 immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or
20 safety within the meaning of Article IV of the
21 Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts
22 constituting the necessity are:

23 ~~In order to determine conservation camp construction~~
24 ~~and other budgetary needs and thereby improve the~~

25 *In order to improve the ability of the conservation*
26 *camp program to provide emergency services in event of*
27 *fire, flood, or earthquake at the earliest possible time, it*
28 *is necessary that this act take effect immediately.*

