

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 173

Introduced by Assembly Member Evans

June 3, 2010

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 173—Relative to Native Plant Week.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

ACR 173, as introduced, Evans. Native Plant Week.

This measure would proclaim the 3rd week of April, each year, as California Native Plant Week and would encourage community groups, schools, and citizens to observe the week by undertaking appropriate activities to promote the conservation, restoration, and appreciation of California’s native plants.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, California’s native plants provide unparalleled and
- 2 unique iconic, economic, artistic, historical, and environmental
- 3 values to the state; and
- 4 WHEREAS, California’s 5,862 native plant species, subspecies,
- 5 and varieties, of which 2,153 exist only in California, make
- 6 California home to more diverse plant life than all other states
- 7 combined; and
- 8 WHEREAS, California’s native plants include some of the
- 9 oldest, tallest, and most massive living things on Earth; and
- 10 WHEREAS, Public agencies, academic institutions, and
- 11 nongovernmental scientific organizations consider nearly
- 12 one-quarter of the state’s plant diversity rare or endangered; and

1 WHEREAS, California currently contends with over 1,000
2 nonnative plants, some of which compete with native plant species,
3 degrade soil, facilitate erosion and catastrophic wildfire, and alter
4 the state's natural landscapes; and

5 WHEREAS, Many native California plants have played a vital
6 role in the history of our state and our nation, compelling Congress,
7 the Legislature, and many communities to protect the beauty,
8 power, and grandeur of our wild places; and

9 WHEREAS, California's first Indian nations lived and thrived
10 by their knowledge of native California plants, which provided
11 them with food, clothing, shelter, dyes, tools, medicines, and fuel
12 for centuries; and

13 WHEREAS, California's citizens have consistently supported
14 efforts to protect our wild landscapes, including numerous areas
15 within the Coast Redwoods, the Sierra Nevada Mountain range,
16 and the Mojave Desert, spurring a conservation and environmental
17 awareness that helps define California today; and

18 WHEREAS, California's native plants have played a vital role
19 in inspiring the creation and management of our National Park
20 Service, including President Lincoln's 1864 declaration of a park
21 at Yosemite, and the adoption of the Sequoia cone as an official
22 insignia of the National Park Service; and

23 WHEREAS, In 1899, 1903, and 1904, members of the 9th
24 Cavalry and 24th Infantry Buffalo Soldier regiments were
25 dispatched to Sequoia and Yosemite national parks, where they
26 protected giant sequoias from illegal logging, built trails and fences
27 to enhance visitors' experiences among the giant trees while
28 protecting park resources, and developed the first museum in a
29 national park, a California native plant arboretum in Yosemite
30 Valley; and

31 WHEREAS, An interest in protecting California's native plants
32 has played a vital role in the creation of many California state and
33 regional parks, including California's oldest state park, Big Basin,
34 created in 1902 to protect old growth Coast Redwood forests; and

35 WHEREAS, The impact of California's landscape has influenced
36 literary and artistic works, including the works of Mark Twain,
37 John Steinbeck, Ansel Adams, and many other internationally
38 known figures, furthering California's legacy; and

39 WHEREAS, California's native plants have provided and
40 continue to provide foods, medicines, and other products, from

1 the origins of California's strawberry industry to Taxol for cancer
2 treatment; and

3 WHEREAS, California native plant horticulture is a thriving,
4 vital, and growing industry employing thousands of Californians,
5 and the benefits to water conservation and natural area restoration
6 help provide economic stability within the state; and

7 WHEREAS, California's native plants provide essential
8 watershed protections by helping to recharge natural aquifers,
9 filtering water flowing through mountains, hills, and valleys,
10 lessening erosion and flooding, and enabling efforts to beautify
11 and renew our state; and

12 WHEREAS, Gardens and landscapes comprised of California
13 native plants, being perfectly suited to California's climate and
14 soil, require far fewer fertilizers, soil amendments, or pesticides,
15 and use 60 to 90 percent less water than conventional landscapes,
16 exemplified by a City of Santa Monica experiment, in which a
17 native plant garden was shown to use nearly 220,000 fewer gallons
18 of water than a similarly sized conventional garden, a 77 percent
19 decrease in water use; and

20 WHEREAS, Restoring California native plants provides natural
21 links to wild land areas, while introducing people to their beauty
22 and instilling a greater understanding and appreciation for
23 California's natural heritage; now, therefore, be it

24 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
25 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature recognizes the essential
26 value and importance of California native plants to our history,
27 economy, landscape, and environment; and be it further

28 *Resolved*, That the California Legislature encourages community
29 groups, schools, and citizens to undertake appropriate activities to
30 promote native plant conservation and restoration, and to inform
31 their neighbors and communities of the value of native plants in
32 nature and in horticultural settings; and be it further

33 *Resolved*, That the California Legislature hereby declares the
34 third week of April, each year, as California Native Plant Week;
35 and be it further

36 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
37 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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