

INFORMATIONAL & OVERSIGHT HEARING:

**UPDATE ON PROPOSITION 1, CALIFORNIA'S WATER BOND:
THE WATER QUALITY, SUPPLY & INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2014**

**AGENCY PANEL: SPEAKERS AND AFFILIATION
BY AGENDA ORDER**

RACHEL EHLERS, FISCAL AND POLICY ANALYST, LEGISLATIVE ANALYST'S OFFICE

Rachel Ehlers is a Principal Fiscal & Policy Analyst with the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO). The LAO provides nonpartisan budget and policy advice to the state Legislature. Ms. Ehlers has worked for the LAO for 11 years in a number of policy areas. Her current program assignments are: development and maintenance of water systems, flood control, wildlife and conservation, Delta-related programs, and coastal programs. Ms. Ehlers holds a B.A. in Psychology from Harvard University.

JOHN LAIRD, SECRETARY, CALIFORNIA NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY

John Laird has served as Secretary for the California Natural Resources Agency since 2011. A long-time resident of Santa Cruz, Secretary Laird has spent nearly 40 years in public service at the state and local level, including 23 years as an elected official. While serving the maximum three terms in the Assembly, Laird authored 82 bills that were signed into law. These bills established the landmark Sierra Nevada Conservancy, restored community college health services, expanded and clarified state civil rights protections, reformed the state mandates system, and significantly expanded water conservation.

As California's Secretary of Natural Resources, Laird has prioritized climate change adaptation, water conservation and supply reliability, enhanced relationships with tribal governments, State Parks access, farmland conservation, and oceans sustainability. He provides administrative oversight to thirty departments, commissions, councils, museum, boards and conservancies – and is a sitting member of sixteen conservancies, councils, boards and commissions within the purview of the Agency.

Agency Panel (Continued)

CHARLTON “CHUCK” BONHAM, DIRECTOR, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & WILDLIFE

Charlton “Chuck” Bonhan is the Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (previously the Department of Fish and Game). The Department maintains native fish, wildlife, plant species and natural communities for their intrinsic and ecological value and their benefits to people. Prior to his appointment as Director in September 2011, Mr. Bonham served in a number of roles for Trout Unlimited (TU) for over ten years, including as the organization’s California director and as a senior attorney. He was responsible for developing, managing, and implementing TU's programs in California, including the California Water Project, Sportsmen’s Conservation Project, and restoration and watershed projects in both northern and southern California.

Mr. Bonham has also served on the Board of Directors of the Delta Conservancy, whose mission is to conserve, sustain and enhance the cultural, agricultural, recreational, wildlife and natural habitat resources of the River Delta region, as well as develop and promote sustainable protection, management and stewardship programs through research and education. Mr. Bonham received his J.D. and Environmental and Natural Resources Law Certificate from the Northwestern School of Law of Lewis and Clark College, in Portland, Oregon.

PAULA J. LANDIS, P.E., EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CALIFORNIA WATER COMMISSION

Paula J. Landis is a Registered Civil Engineer with 30 years of experience in water management and planning with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the California Department of Water Resources. Prior to becoming Executive Officer of the California Water Commission, she was the Chief of the Division of Integrated Regional Water Management for the Department of Water Resources. She has dealt with complex water use and environmental issues including river restoration, groundwater management, grant funding, water transfers, flood management and more.

Ms. Landis holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering, Bachelor of Arts degrees in Art and French and a Master of Arts degree in Art History. She divides her time between Fresno and Sacramento.

DARRIN POLHEMUS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD

Darrin Polhemus is a Deputy Director for the State Water Resources Control Board (the Water Board) and in charge of the Division of Financial Assistance. The Division of Financial Assistance administers the Water Board’s local assistance funding programs, such as the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan programs, Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Fund, Clean Beaches Initiative Grant Program, Water Recycling Funding Program, to name just a few.

Agency Panel (Continued)

The Division's programs provide funding for a wide array of project types, including infrastructure funding for wastewater, recycled water, and drinking water systems; nonpoint source solution projects addressing storm water and beach water quality; and groundwater cleanup and remediation projects.

JOHN P. DONNELLY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD

John P. Donnelly began his public service career with the Department of Fish and Wildlife in 1988 where he served for eight years as the Realty Services Coordinator working on the acquisition of mitigation properties required under the California Endangered Species Act and Streambed Alteration agreements issued by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. In 1996, he transferred to the Wildlife Conservation Board working as a Senior Land Agent and in 2004 was promoted to Assistant Executive Director, responsible for managing its Land Acquisition Programs. Mr. Donnelly was appointed and has held the position of Executive Director of the Wildlife Conservation Board, since September of 2006.

Mr. Donnelly received a B.S. in Business Administration from California State University, Sacramento with a concentration on Real Estate and Land Use Management. He is a recipient of the Department of Fish and Game's Director's Achievement Award and Sustained Superior Accomplishment Award and has served as President of the Organization of Wildlife Lands and Realty Specialists, an affiliate of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

SAM SCHUCHAT, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, STATE COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Sam Schuchat became Executive Officer of the Coastal Conservancy in July 2001. He serves on the boards of the Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority, the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, and the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission. He served on the California Fish and Game Commission from 1999 to 2004 including two years as Vice-President. From 1992 to 1998 he was the Executive Director of the California League of Conservation Voters. Mr. Schuchat has a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Williams College and a Master of Public Administration from San Francisco State University.

Agency Panel (Continued)

JIM BRANHAM, EXECUTIVE OFFICER, SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

Jim Branham has spent more than 30 years working on natural resource and rural community issues in California. He was selected as the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's first Executive Officer by the Conservancy Board in October of 2005. As Executive Officer, Mr. Branham is responsible for day to day management of the organization and works closely with the Governing Board in developing policy and program priorities. The organization's mission is to improve the environmental, economic and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada region in an integrated manner. The Conservancy serves a region comprised of all or part of 22 counties covering 25 million acres, approximately one-quarter of the state of California.

Prior to joining the Conservancy Mr. Branham worked in the California State Legislature, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the California Resources Agency, and the California Environmental Protection Agency. He also worked in the forest products industry, assisting the Pacific Lumber Company with implementation of its Habitat Conservation Plan.