CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE

2024 SESSION

SUMMER RECESS UPDATE

JULY 9, 2024

On Friday, July 3, 2024, the California State Legislature went on their one-month Summer Recess, returning on Monday, August 5, 2024, for the final frantic four weeks of the two-year 2023/2024 State Legislative Session.

This *Report "California State Legislature – 2024 Session – Summer Recess Update"* will provide you with the latest status of all bills of concern currently under consideration at our State Capitol.

In the interest of brevity, detail on legislation reported in a previous *Report* on the 2024 Session as either "dead" or having been pulled from consideration is not included below. Rather, links to full detail on those bills are provided below.

All new activity since our last *Report* and the status of each bill is shown in italics.

Legislation is listed in bill number order, not in order of priority or interest.

- AB 262 (Holden) **– Children's Camps: Safety and Regulation**

As amended September 1, 2023, AB 262 by Assembly Member Chris Holden (D/41-Pasadena) is a "two-year" bill that would require the Department of Social Services (DSS) to convene and consult with a stakeholder group on children's camp safety. In doing so, the bill specifically would require that the stakeholder group be composed of representatives from the Department of Public Health, the Department of Education, the Department of Industrial Relations, and the Department of Parks and Recreation. AB 262 would also require that the stakeholder group include various stakeholders – specifically including parent advocate groups and children's safety groups. Further, the bill would require the stakeholder group to make recommendations to address, among other things, a definition for a children's camp and child supervision requirements – including appropriate qualifications and training for camp staff that oversee activities that carry an "inherent or heightened risk", including "gun ranges".

Of primary concern, AB 262 does not require that the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) or wildlife conservation or recreational shooting groups be included in the stakeholder group. Given that DSS has no history of working with DFW, or with conservation or shooting organizations, our partner and lobbyist remains concerned that if our interests are not specifically called out in the bill we will not be at the table. Without our representation, we believe AB 262 would result in unnecessary and costly regulations being placed on camps, while not appropriately educating youth on wildlife conservation, or our hunting, fishing, and archery pastimes, and firearms safety.

To address these concerns, *our partner and lobbyist, Ducks Unlimited (DU),* and *California Rifle and Pistol Association (CRPA)* met with the author's office several times during the 2023 Session to try to

secure amendments to the bill which would ensure wildlife conservation, shooting organizations, and DFW are appropriately represented in the stakeholder group discussions.

Early in the current 2024 Session, we met again with the author's office to seek necessary amendments. However, we were told that AB 262 had been handed over to the Governor's office at their request and that we should coordinate any future discussions regarding the legislation with them. In February we met with the Governor's office to discuss our concerns. The meeting went well, giving us hope that, should the bill move forward, it will be amended to address our concerns. Since that meeting, we have continued to stay in touch with both the Governor's office and the author's office on AB 262, but with the budget and countless other more critical issues at play, there have been no new developments on AB 262.

During the 2023 Session, AB 262 easily passed through the Assembly and the Senate. Passing off the Senate Floor in early September, AB 262 was immediately sent back to the Assembly for their vote of approval of amendments placed in the bill in the Senate. However, prior to being brought up for that vote, AB 262 was ordered to the inactive file at the request of the author and became a "two-year" bill.

On June 17th, AB 262 was pulled off the inactive file and ordered to the Senate, where it has been held at the desk. Latest reports are that the bill is dead. However, not having missed any deadline or having not yet been formally pulled from consideration, AB 262 is technically still alive. Because AB 262 was pulled from consideration one final Assembly Floor vote short of making it to the Governor's desk, it has until the last day of the 2024 Session – August 31st – to be taken up for that final vote.

During the 2022 Session, we actively opposed and defeated AB 1737 – somewhat similar legislation also brought forth by Assembly Member Holden.

To view all the information currently available on AB 262, click AB 262 Detail

- **AB 293 (Alanis)** – Lifetime Hunting & Fishing Licenses: Gold Star Families – **DEAD**

- **AB 554 (Gabriel)** – Corporations for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals: Enforcement of Laws – **DEAD**

- AB 828 (Connelly) **– Sustainable Groundwater Management: Managed Wetlands**

Established in current law, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires all groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins by the Department of Water Resources that are designated as basins subject to critical conditions of overdraft to be managed under a groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) or coordinated GSPs as of January 31, 2020. Further, SGMA requires all other groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins to be managed under a GSP or coordinated GSPs as of January 31, 2022. However, current law does not recognize the environmental benefits nor make any exception for artificially irrigated wetland habitats in basins subject to SGMA that depend upon groundwater for seasonal management.

As a result of the significant changes to our natural hydrology, only 5% of historical wetland habitats remain in California. Today, nearly all our remaining interior wetlands must be artificially irrigated and intensely managed, year-round, to recreate seasonal wetland values. These managed wetland habitats not only provide critical habitat for migratory waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species, but they also improve water quality, provide groundwater recharge, and offer flood protection and recreational benefits. The availability of a wetland water supply when, where, and in the quantity necessary is integral to the ability of public and private land managers to recreate these important habitat benefits. As such, SGMA generated restrictions placed on the use of groundwater for wetland irrigations in some areas – such as the

Tulare Basin in the southern San Joaquin Valley – could have devastating impacts on the ability of landowners to manage their lands to provide maximum wetland habitat values.

Because of the substantial loss of our historical wetland base, in 1993, the State adopted a "no net loss" wetlands policy pursuant to Executive Order No. W-59-93. The goal of the EO being to balance wetland loss due to economic development with wetland protection and restoration so that the total acreage of wetlands in the state does not decrease, but rather remains constant or increases.

SGMA currently requires a groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) to consider the interests of environmental users of groundwater and GSPs to describe impacts on groundwater dependent ecosystems and beneficial users of groundwater – including managed wetlands. Despite these provisions, SGMA does not protect against wetland losses or ensure availability of historic wetland groundwater supplies. Further, management actions in initial GSPs have shown a significant net loss of managed wetlands in the relatively short period since SGMA implementation. GSAs have begun to impose one-size-fits-all caps on groundwater pumping, regardless of whether land uses provide public beneficial uses, and hefty fees, including up to $500 per acre-foot for additional pumping. With just 5% of historic wetlands remaining, the additional wetland losses likely to occur under SGMA could substantially jeopardize the health of Pacific Flyway waterfowl and other wetland-dependent species.

As amended July 1, 2024, AB 828 by Assembly Member Damon Connelly (D/12-San Rafael) would, among other things, prohibit a GSA from using their authority to limit groundwater extraction by those who must rely upon groundwater for managing wetland habitats. AB 828 would also prohibit a GSA from imposing a fee upon "managed wetland extractors", provided the water use for each user does not increase above the extractor's average annual extraction from 2015 to 2020.

AB 828 defines a "managed wetland" as an existing publicly or privately owned wetland that receives seasonal, semi-permanent, or permanent flooding to simulate natural processes that promote food production and habitat for the benefit of wetland-dependent species, and which is designated as, or administered as a:

> (1) State wildlife area;
> (2) National wildlife refuge;
> (3) Central Valley Project Improvement Act wetland habitat area;
> (4) Conservation easement held by a federal or state resource agency, a local agency whose primary function is managing land or water for wetland habitat purposes, or a non-governmental conservation organization; or
> (5) Wildlife habitat contract or other conservation agreement of no less than ten years in duration administered by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Conservation Board, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or Natural Resources Conservation Service.

AB 828 defines a "managed wetland extractor" as a person who extracts groundwater solely for managed wetland purposes.

Moving quickly, AB 828 passed through the Assembly policy committee, Assembly fiscal committee, and off the Assembly Floor and to the Senate in January 2024.

On June 25th, AB 828 was heard in the Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee, passing out on a relatively narrow 7-4 vote. AB 828 must now go to the Senate Appropriations Committee where it has been set to be heard on August 5th.

To view our original AB 828 coalition letter of support to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee dated March 21, 2023, click AB 828 – 2023 Support – Assy WPW

To view our updated AB 828 coalition letter of support to the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee dated January 4, 2024, click AB 828 – 2024 Support – Assy WPW

To view our AB 828 coalition letter of support to the Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee dated June 20, 2024, click AB 828 – Support – Senate NRW

To view all the information currently available on AB 828, click AB 828 Detail

- **AB 1507 (Gallagher) –** Firearms: State Property **– DEAD**

- AB 1889 (Friedman) **– Conservation Element: Wildlife and Habitat Connectivity**

Existing law requires cities or counties to adopt a comprehensive general plan that includes various elements, including land use, housing, and conservation elements. Existing law requires the conservation element to consider the effect of development within the jurisdiction on natural resources located on public lands.

As amended June 12, 2024, AB 1889 by Assembly Member Laura Friedman (D/44-Burbank) would require the conservation element to consider the effect of development on the movement of wildlife and habitat connectivity upon the next update of one or more elements on or after January 1, 2028. Among other things, the bill would require the conservation element to identify and analyze connectivity areas, permeability, and natural landscape areas within the jurisdiction, identify and analyze existing or planned wildlife passage features, and consider the impacts of development and the barriers caused by development to wildlife and habitat connectivity.

AB 1889 was double-referred to the Assembly Local Government Committee and the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – easily passing out of both policy committees in April.

On May 8th, AB 1889 was heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee, passing out and to the Assembly Floor on a 10-4 party-line vote. Two weeks later, AB 1889 passed off the Assembly Floor on a 53-14 vote.

On the Senate side, AB 1889 was first heard in Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee on June 25th, passing out on an 8-2 party-line vote. AB 1889 must now go to the Senate Appropriations Committee where it has been set to be heard on August 5th.

To view all the information currently available on AB 1889, click AB 1889 Detail

- AB 2320 (Irwin) **– Wildlife Connectivity and Climate Adaptation Act of 2024: Wildlife Corridors:**

Fish Passage

Existing law requires the Natural Resources Agency, in implementing actions to achieve the goal to conserve at least 30% of the state's lands and coastal waters by 2030 established by executive order, to prioritize specified actions. Existing law also requires the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency to prepare and submit an annual report to the Legislature on the progress made during the prior calendar year toward achieving that goal.

As amended June 19, 2024, AB 2320 by Assembly Member Jacqui Irwin (D/42-Thousand Oaks) would additionally require the agency, as part of that report, to include an update on the state's progress towards

addressing the priority wildlife corridors, as identified in the Restoring California's Wildlife Connectivity report by DFW, and goals for wildlife corridor protection in the next five years. AB 2320 would additionally make it the policy of the state to preserve, protect, and restore wildlife habitats and biodiversity through the acquisition and restoration of blocks of habitat and natural lands that are connected by wildlife corridors and the infrastructure that supports wildlife corridors. The bill would require the state to identify priority projects for the acquisition, restoration, protection, and expansion of wildlife corridors, and authorize the Wildlife Conservation Board to give priority to projects that protect wildlife corridors, including wildlife corridors threatened by urban development.

AB 2320 was also double-referred to the Assembly Local Government Committee and the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee – easily passing out of both policy committees in April.

Moving quickly, AB 2320 was heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 16th, passing out on a 12-1 vote. Five days later, AB 2320 easily passed off the Assembly Floor and over to the Senate on a 64-2 vote.

Maintaining its momentum on the Senate side, AB 2320 passed out of the Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee and to the Senate Appropriations Committee via a unanimous vote on June 17th. On July 1st the Senate Appropriations Committee referred AB 2320 to the suspense file.

AB 2320 must be pulled from suspense, heard, and passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee and to the Senate Floor by August 16th to meet legislative deadline.

To view all the information currently available on AB 2320, click AB 2320 Detail

- AB 2875 (Freidman) **– Wetlands: State Policy**

By Executive Order No. W-59-93, former Governor Pete Wilson declared it to be the policy of the state that its Comprehensive Wetlands Policy rests on three primary objectives, including the objective of ensuring no overall net loss and long-term net gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values.

As introduced, AB 2875 by Assembly Member Laura Friedman (D/44-Burbank) would declare that it is the policy of the state to ensure no net loss and long-term gain in the quantity, quality, and permanence of wetlands acreage and values in California.

AB 2875 was heard in the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee in early April, passing out to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a unanimous vote.

AB 2875 was heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 16th, passing out and to the Assembly Floor via a unanimous vote. Six days later, AB 2875 passed off the Assembly Floor and over to the Senate by way of another unanimous vote.

Once on the Senate side, AB 2875 passed out of the Senate Natural Resources & Water Committee a unanimous vote on June 17th. Keyed non-fiscal, AB 2875 is now on the Senate Floor.
AB 2875 has until the last day of Session – August 31st – to be taken up for vote on the Senate Floor.

To view all the information currently available on AB 2875, click AB 2875 Detail

- AB 3064 (Maienschein) **– Firearms: Safety Devices**

Existing law requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to compile and maintain a roster listing of all the firearm safety devices that have been tested by a certified testing laboratory, have been determined to meet DOJ's standards for firearm safety devices, and thus may be sold in this state.

As amended April 25, 2024, AB 3064 by Assembly Member Brian Maienschein (D/76-San Diego) would, commencing on January 1, 2026, authorize DOJ to charge an annual fee to each entity that manufactures or imports into the state for sale any firearm safety device listed on the roster. The fee may not exceed the costs of research and development, report analysis, storage of prototype devices, and other program infrastructure costs necessary to implement the requirements of the bill. Among many other things, AB 3064 would also require that any device newly added to the roster have the name of the manufacturer, the model number, and the model name, as they appear on the roster, engraved or otherwise permanently affixed to the device.

Existing law requires a person bringing a firearm into the state, to mail or personally deliver to the Department of Justice (DOJ) a report within 60 days describing the firearm and providing personal information. Among other things, AB 3064 would allow the person to electronically submit the report and authorize DOJ to request photographs of the firearm to determine if it is a prohibited weapon.

Because AB 3064 would impose a tax, it would require for passage the approval of 2/3rds of the membership of each house of the Legislature.

AB 3064 was heard in the Assembly Public Safety Committee in April, amended, and passed to the Assembly Appropriations Committee on a party-line vote.

AB 3064 was heard and passed out of Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 16th, and then squeaked off the Assembly Floor one week later with just enough votes to secure the 2/3rd majority needed.

On the Senate side, AB 3064 continued to ride its party-line wave, passing out of the Senate Public Safety Committee on June 25th. AB 3064 must now go to the Senate Appropriations Committee where it has been set to be heard on August 5th.

To view all the information currently available on AB 3064, click AB 3064 Detail

- **SB 8 (Blakespear/Skinner)** – Civil Law: Firearms Liability and Insurance – **DEAD**

- SB 53 (Portantino) **– Firearms Storage**

Existing law imposes storage requirements to prevent children from gaining access to firearms.

As amended May 28, 2024, SB 53 by Senator Anthony J. Portantino (D/25-Glendale) would prohibit the owner or other lawfully authorized user of a firearm from keeping that firearm in a residence owned or controlled by that person unless the firearm is stored in a locked box or safe that is listed on DOJ's list of approved firearm safety devices and is properly engaged so that the firearm cannot be accessed by any person other than the owner.

Existing law also requires a firearm that is sold or transferred by a licensed firearms dealer and any firearm manufactured in this state, to include or be accompanied by a firearm safety device. SB 53 would instead require the firearm to include or be accompanied by a lock box or safe, except if both of the following apply:

1) The purchaser or transferee owns a lock box or safe that is listed on DOJ's roster; and

2) The purchaser or transferee presents to the firearms dealer an original receipt for purchase of a lock box or safe that is listed on DOJ's roster, or other proof of purchase or ownership of the gun safe as authorized by the Attorney General.

Existing law makes it a misdemeanor or a felony if a person keeps a firearm within any premises that are under the person's custody or control and the person knows or reasonably should know that a child is likely to gain access to the firearm without the permission of the child's parent or legal guardian, and the child obtains access to the firearm and causes injury, other than great bodily injury, or death or great bodily injury to the child or any other person, or carries that firearm off-premises to a public place or a school. Existing law, however, exempts a person from the above provisions if the person has no reasonable expectation that a child is likely to be present on the premises. SB 53 would remove that exemption.

SB 53 would go into effect beginning on January 1, 2026.

Introduced on December 5, 2023, SB 53 launched out of the starting blocks at a record pace – passing out of the Senate Public Safety Committee, through the Senate Appropriations Committee, and off the Senate Floor via party-line votes before the end of January.

Once in the Assembly, SB 53 was heard and passed out of the Assembly Public Safety Committee on June 11th via party-line. SB 53 must now go to the Assembly Appropriations Committee where it must be heard and passed out to the Assembly Floor by August 16th to meet legislative deadline.

To view all the information currently available on SB 53, click SB 53 Detail

- **SB 772 (Dahle)** – Junior Hunting Licenses: Age of Eligibility – **DEAD**

- SB 921 (Roth) **– Animal Welfare**

Existing law makes it a crime to inflict unnecessary cruelty or to abuse an animal in any manner, including, but not limited to, maliciously and intentionally maiming, mutilating, torturing, or wounding an animal.

As amended April 8, 2024, SB 921 by Senator Richard D. Roth (D/31-Riverside) would additionally make it a crime to otherwise abuse or subject a living animal to needless suffering. However, as amended, SB 921 would require that specified handling and husbandry practices widely regarded as routine, including rodeo or rodeo related events, not be presumed to constitute animal mistreatment. As amended, the bill would also make animal treatment laws inapplicable to acts authorized pursuant to permits issued by a state or federal wildlife agency as part of a wildlife conservation research or recovery effort including, but not limited to, immobilizations, vaccinations, tagging, banding, collaring, or similar activities.

Among other things, as amended, SB 921 also expressly states that the bill's provisions do not interfere with any of the laws known as the "game laws." The bill also states that its provisions "do not interfere with the right to destroy any venomous reptile, or any animal known as dangerous to life, limb, or property, or interfere with the right to kill an animal used for food."

Our partner and lobbyist was concerned that the lack of a specific definition of the term "mistreat" in SB 921, as introduced, could have opened the door for animal-rights interests to place law-abiding individuals –including those who are safely training a dog for sporting purposes or other reasons – at risk.

SB 921 was heard in the Senate Public Safety Committee in early April, passing out and to the Senate Appropriations Committee on a unanimous vote.

Having missed the May 17th legislative deadline for fiscal committees to hear and report bills introduced in their house to the floor, SB 921 is dead.

To view all the information currently available on SB 921, click SB 921 Detail

- **SB 922 (Roth)** – Animal Cruelty – **DEAD**

- **SB 1160 (Portantino) –** Firearms: Annual Registration of Firearms – **AMENDED**

- SB 1163 (Dahle) **– Wildlife-Vehicle Collisions: Wildlife Salvage Permits**

As amended June 27, 2024, SB 1163 by Senator Brian Dahle (R/01-Beiber) would improve public safety and greatly promote the health of California's deer and other wildlife by reducing the frequency of vehicle-wildlife collisions on our roadways. SB 1163 is sponsored by the *California Deer Association*.

First, some background. According to researchers at the University of California at Davis Road Ecology Center, as many as 100,000 deer alone may be hit each year on California roads. In addition to causing injury or often death to the deer, these accidents often also cause injury and sometimes death to motorists. To address this very serious concern, in 2019, the *California Deer Association* sponsored SB 395, "The Wildlife Traffic Safety Act", authored by Senator Bob Archuleta (D/30-Norwalk).

Signed into law by Governor Newsom in October 2019, SB 395 authorized DFW to establish a user-friendly cell phone app which would allow motorists to report the location, animal type, date, time, and characteristics of vehicle-wildlife collisions. Armed with this critically needed data, DFW, California Highway Patrol, Caltrans, and other state agencies could better predict road-kill hotspots, measure contributing factors, and evaluate the placement of wildlife road crossings and other remedial actions to greatly reduce future vehicle-wildlife collisions.

To encourage data reporting, SB 395 also authorized the Fish and Game Commission to create a pilot program that allow motorists to salvage edible portions of deer, elk, antelope, and/or wild pig meat that had been accidentally killed via a vehicle collision – provided they obtain a permit which would require they provide the above noted information to DFW. SB 395 also required the Commission to promulgate the regulations necessary to commence the program by no later than January 1, 2022. Lastly, SB 395 would "sunset" on January 1, 2029, to allow DFW, other relevant agencies, and the Commission to evaluate the results and consider next steps.

Unfortunately, to pass SB 395 out of fiscal committee in 2019 we had to take language into the legislation which required a special appropriation by the Legislature for the bill's programs to be enacted.

Each Session since the passage of SB 395, CDA and our partner conservation organizations fought to secure the special appropriation necessary to implement the important programs called out in the bill. Unfortunately, the funding necessary to implement SB 395 was never appropriated, leaving California as one of the very few western states without such a program. Unsuccessful in those efforts, and with the deadline for implementing the programs now passed, follow-on legislation was necessary.

SB 1163 would eliminate the January 1, 2022, deadline for the Commission to establish the previously authorized pilot program, but leave the "sunset" date of January 1, 2029, in place. SB 1163 would require DFW to conclude the pilot program five years after the date of commencement.

SB 1163 was heard in the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee on April 15th, amended, and passed out to the Senate Appropriation Committee on consent.

SB 1163 was heard in Senate Appropriations Committee on April 29th and placed on the suspense file. On May 16th, SB 1163 was pulled from suspense, amended to require a special appropriation from the Legislature to be enacted, and passed out to the Senate Floor via a unanimous vote. On May 24th, SB 1163 passed off the Senate Floor and over to the Assembly via another unanimous vote.

Once in the Assembly, SB 1163 was heard in the Assembly Water, Parks & Wildlife Committee on June 25th, passing out and to the Assembly Appropriations Committee unopposed. SB 1163 must next go to the Assembly Appropriations Committee where it must be heard and passed out to the Assembly Floor by August 16th to meet legislative deadline.

To view our coalition letter to the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee in strong support of SB 1163, click SB 1163 – Support – Senate SNRW

To view our coalition letter to the Senate Appropriations Committee in strong support of SB 1163, click SB 1163 – Support – Senate Approps

To view our coalition letter to the Assembly Water, Parks & Wildlife Committee in strong support of SB 1163, click SB 1163 – Support – Assy WPW

To view all the information currently available on SB 1163, click SB 1163 Detail

- SB 1253 (Gonzalez) **– Firearms Safety Certificates**

As amended June 12, 2024, SB 1253 by Senator Lena A. Gonzalez (D/33-Huntington Park) would prohibit a person from bringing any firearm, except an antique firearm, into this state as a personal firearm importer without obtaining a valid firearm safety certificate within 120 days of bringing that firearm into this state.

Largely due to our collective opposition, SB 1253 has been considerably watered down since it was introduced in February.

Existing law requires any person who purchases or receives a firearm to possess a firearm safety certificate. Further current law requires an applicant to pass the written test to obtain or renew a firearm safety certificate and the payment of a $25 fee. Current law also provides that a firearm safety certificate shall expire 5 years after the date of issuance. However, existing law expresses the intent of the Legislature not to require a firearm safety certificate for the *mere possession* of a firearm.

As originally introduced, SB 1253 would have prohibited a person from *possessing* a firearm without the possession of a valid, unexpired firearm safety certificate.

SB 1253 was heard in the Senate Public Safety Committee in early April, passing out and to the Senate Appropriation Committee on a party-line vote.

SB 1253 was heard in Senate Appropriations Committee on May 6th and placed on the suspense file. On May 16th, SB 1253 was pulled from suspense, amended, and passed out to the Senate Floor via a party-line vote. On May 21st, SB 1253 passed off the Senate Floor and over to the Assembly via a 26-9 vote.

Once in the Assembly, SB 1253 was heard in the Assembly Public Committee on June 11th, passing out and to the Assembly Appropriations Committee via party-line. SB 1253 must next go to the Assembly Appropriations Committee where it must be heard and passed out to the Assembly Floor by August 16th to meet legislative deadline.

To view all the information currently available on SB 1253, click SB 1253 Detail