



CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

FRIDAY REVIEW

LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENTAL UPDATE

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In an effort to cut state expenses related to reimbursable state mandates, the Department of Finance has proposed to eliminate the local coastal plan (LCP) mandate in a yet to be introduced budget trailer bill. Under this proposal the California Coastal Commission (Commission) would assume authority for all land use decisions in the coastal zone. On March 13th, the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 4 on State Administration rejected all of the Brown Administration's proposed repeals of state mandates, including the elimination of Local Coastal Plans.

Farm Bureau has turned its attention to the Senate side. On April 11th, the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee No. 2 on Resources and Transportation will hear the LCP issue. The members of that subcommittee include: Joe Simitian, Chairman; Jean Fuller, and Alan Lowenthal. We would also urge coastal counties to weigh-in on this issue with these members. Simply remind them that under current law, cities and counties develop a LCP and submit the program to the Commission to ensure its compliance with the Coastal Act. Once determined to be consistent, the local agency applies the LCP requirements to their new development proposals. This process allows local control over land use planning within the coastal zone. It also allows local governments to maintain control over other aspects of the development process that are not within the purview of the Commission.

Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board unanimously voted 6-0 to adopt their staff's recommended Agricultural Order (Ag Waiver) with amended language. After more than three years of work by the California Farm Bureau, the seven county Farm Bureaus and other agricultural organizations in the region, the Board accepted their staff's recommendations with some edits and adopted a new conditional agricultural waiver for the central coast. A comprehensive alternative to the staff's proposal was presented by a large, diverse coalition of agricultural organizations. The board rejected the majority of the agricultural coalition's recommendations that would have protected water quality and the viability of the agricultural community in the region.

The conditions of this new order are now in full effect. In summary the new order creates a tier structure based on a farm's threat to water quality and among other things requires individual surface water monitoring at the edge of the field, groundwater monitoring and individual farm management plans. Given the multitude of changes made in the midst of the board meeting this week, full analysis of the impacts of the adopted order will take time. Farm Bureau and the coalition are considering next steps which may include petitioning (appeal) the regional board's actions to the State Water Resources Control Board.