



For Release: April 16, 2018

Contact: Sean MacNeil (916) 319-2050

Climate Resiliency & Watershed Protection Bill Passes Out of Committee

SACRAMENTO – Today, AB 2528, a measure that incorporates four state watersheds into the triennial *California's Climate Adaptation Strategy* report, passed out Assembly Natural Resources on a 7-3 vote. The bill, authored by Assemblymember Richard Bloom (D-Santa Monica), will help the state create more climate resilient habitats and protect the state's largest estuaries and most pristine river systems.

"Climate change poses a considerable threat to our state's habitats and wildlife. Well managed habitats provide opportunities for energy generation, water storage, and carbon sequestration," said Assemblymember Bloom. "AB 2528 identifies four such habitat areas and makes sure we consider these zones as we contend with the impacts of climate change."

Every three years, the Natural Resources Agency, along with thirty different state agencies, compiles a report entitled *California's Climate Adaptation Strategy*. This report is a highly useful tool that directs the legislature, conservation organizations, and agencies to act to mitigate and adapt in the face of climate change. The Strategy addresses the new reality of decreasing availability of productive habitats, but is insufficient as currently drafted to adequately protect the best remaining watersheds. Source watersheds in the Shasta region supply an estimated 40% of the State's hydroelectric power generation and contribute 700 billion gallons of water to the Shasta Reservoir, yet they are under researched and under protected. There are also 200,000 acres of meadows in the Sierra Nevada, yet 90,000 of these ecosystems are degraded. As the research evolves, it has become abundantly clear that certain watersheds will need to be more resilient as we move towards the realities of climate change.

AB 2528 identifies climate resilient habitat areas that offer the best opportunity to remain ecologically productive and amends the Climate Adaptation Strategy to include definitions of four watershed zones: salmon and steelhead strongholds, spring-fed source watersheds, mountain meadows, and estuaries. By adding these zones, the bill would require the Natural Resources Agency to research the importance of these resilient watershed areas in its next Climate Adaptation Strategy. By maintaining resiliency and mitigating the impacts of climate change in certain resilient watersheds, California can continue to maintain ecological function and support abundant wildlife into the future.

"While we may not spend a lot of time thinking about watersheds on a daily basis, they continually help sustain our ecosystems. Although we may not be able to mitigate every single impact of climate change, it is essential that that we maintain the resiliency of our watersheds," said Assemblymember Bloom.

Richard Bloom represents California's 50th Assembly District, which comprises the communities of Agoura Hills, Bel Air, Beverly Hills, Brentwood, Hollywood, Malibu, Pacific Palisades, Santa Monica, Topanga, West Hollywood, and West Los Angeles.