



CITY OF HIGHLAND

LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA

Special Meeting
May 13, 2025 at 5:00 PM
City Hall Upright Conference Room
27215 Base Line, Highland CA 92346

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Penny Lilburn, Member
District 3

Larry McCallon, Member
District 5

STAFF

Carlos Zamano, City Manager
Leticia Nava-Cruz, Director of Administrative Services/City Treasurer
Lawrence Mainez, Community Development Director
Lissette Nock, Deputy City Clerk

MISSION STATEMENT

Highland is dedicated to the betterment of the individual, the family, the neighborhood and the community. The City Council and the staff of Highland are dedicated to providing the quality of public facilities and services that its citizens are willing to fund and will do so as efficiently as possible.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), if you need special assistance, please contact the City Clerk’s office at (909) 864-6861, ext. 226, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting for any requests for reasonable accommodations, including interpreters.

Any disclosable public records related to an open session item provided to the majority of the Subcommittee after posting of this agenda are available for public inspection at Highland City Hall, 27215 Base Line, Highland, during normal business hours and available online at www.cityofhighland.org.

LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE
May 13, 2025 - 5:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

PUBLIC COMMENT

Submission of Public Comments for ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA ONLY: For those wishing to make public comments by email, please submit your comments by 4:00 p.m. on May 13, 2025, to publiccomment@cityofhighland.org. If you are submitting a public comment pertaining to an item on the May 13, 2025 agenda, please identify the agenda item number in the subject line. Members of the public will be permitted to make public comments in person.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Minutes - April 23, 2025
RECOMMENDATION: Approve the Minutes as submitted.

2. Discussion of Assembly Bill 1358 (Valencia) Santa Ana River Conservancy Program: Lower Santa Ana River Region
RECOMMENDATION: That the Subcommittee review and provide direction whether the City should include itself in the joint opposition letter to the legislature.

ADJOURN

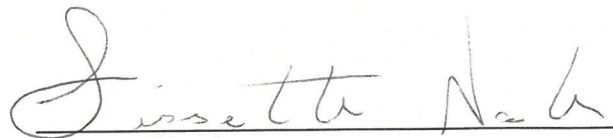
I, Lissette Nock, Deputy City Clerk, of the City of Highland, California, certify that I caused to be posted this Agenda on or before the 12th day of May, 2025, by 4:00 p.m. on our website at www.cityofhighland.org and in the following designated areas:

Highland Branch Library
 7863 Central Avenue

Fire Station No. 1
 26974 Base Line

City Hall
 27215 Base Line

Date: May 12, 2025



 Lissette Nock
 Deputy City Clerk



STAFF REPORT

Business Item No.
1

TO THE LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: May 13, 2025
FROM: Lissette Nock, Deputy City Clerk
SUBJECT: Minutes - April 23, 2025 Meeting
RECOMMENDATION: Approve the minutes as submitted.

CALL TO ORDER

The Legislative Subcommittee Special Meeting was called to order at 12:10 p.m. in the Upright Conference Room, 27215 Base Line, Highland, California.

ROLL CALL

Present: Lilburn, McCallon
Absent: None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Minutes - April 15, 2025
Approved the Minutes as submitted.
2. Discussion of Assembly Bill 647 (González, M.) Housing Development Approvals: Residential Units
The Subcommittee reviewed and approved to send an opposition letter to the legislature regarding Assembly Bill 647 (González, M.).

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Lisette Nock
Deputy City Clerk

Subcommittee Member



STAFF REPORT

TO THE LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: May 13, 2025

FROM: Carlos Zamano, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Alondra Muñoz, City Clerk

SUBJECT: Discussion of Assembly Bill 1358 (Valencia) Santa Ana River Conservancy Program: Lower Santa Ana River Region

RECOMMENDATION: That the Subcommittee review and provide direction whether the City should include itself in the joint opposition letter to the legislature.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

PUBLIC NOTICE: The agenda for this item was posted at the three locations per Resolution No. 2011-047 and on the City's website.

BACKGROUND: Assembly Bill 1358 (Valencia) proposes to allocate 60% of the remaining Santa Ana River Trail (SART) funds to Orange County. This proposed distribution would significantly disadvantage the Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino, as it would hinder the completion of several unfinished trail segments within these regions.

In response to this inequitable allocation, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, along with the Cities of Riverside and San Bernardino, have formed a coalition in opposition to AB 1358. The coalition is seeking support from regional partners who share a commitment to completing the trail network within the Inland Empire.

A joint opposition letter is currently being prepared for potential submission to the Assembly Floor, pending the bill's advancement from the Appropriations Committee. The Common Vision Coalition has agreed to be a signatory on the letter, and additional cities are currently reviewing the draft for potential inclusion.

- Attachments:**
- 1) San Bernardino County Opposition Letter
 - 2) AB 1358 (Valencia) Analysis
 - 3) AB 1358 (Valencia) Text
 - 4) Draft Opposition Letter



**County Administrative Office
Governmental & Legislative Affairs**

Leia Fletes
Director

April 14, 2025

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1358 (Valencia) Santa Ana River Conservancy Funding Allocation - OPPOSED

Dear Chairwoman Wicks and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, I write to express our strong **opposition to AB 1358**, which would require that at least 60% of Santa Ana River Conservancy funds be directed to the lower Santa Ana River region in Orange County.

These funds are currently awarded through a competitive process open to San Bernardino, Riverside, and Orange counties, promoting regional collaboration and prioritizing projects based on readiness and need. Redirecting a majority of the funding to Orange County would unnecessarily disadvantage San Bernardino and Riverside counties, which are still constructing major segments.

Several gaps in San Bernardino and Riverside counties must be completed to ensure the Santa Ana River Trail extends seamlessly from the Pacific coast to the San Bernardino National Forest. Reallocating funds now would jeopardize this progress and undermine the long-standing vision of a fully connected, regional trail system.

This bill reverses years of coordinated planning and shifts focus away from equitable, needs-based investment. It prioritizes one county at the expense of others still working to deliver on voter-supported goals. For these reasons, San Bernardino County respectfully urges your opposition to AB 1358.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Leia Fletes, Director of Government Relations, at (909) 387-4280 or Leia.Fletes@cao.sbcounty.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dawn Rowe".

Dawn Rowe
Third District Supervisor
Chair, San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors

CC: Inland Empire Legislative Delegation

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COL. PAUL COOK (RET.)
First District

JESSE ARMENDAREZ
Second District

DAWN ROWE
Chairman, Third District

CURT HAGMAN
Fourth District

JOE BACA, JR.
Vice Chair, Fifth District

Luther Snoke
Chief Executive Officer

2) Background.

SARCON. In 2014, the Legislature enacted SB 1390 (Correa), Chapter 562, Statutes of 2014, to create SARCON within the State Coastal Conservancy. The program addresses the resource and recreational goals of the Santa Ana River region, including open space, trails, wildlife habitat, agricultural land protection, water quality protection, educational use, and public access. AB 1390 required SARCON to create an advisory group and develop a Santa Ana River Parkway and Open Space Plan to guide the future development and management of the Santa Ana River Parkway. Since its creation, SARCON has supported access and enhancement projects in the Santa Ana River watershed, including through the ongoing development of the Santa Ana River Trail and the Santa Ana River Parkway.

In the enacting legislation, the Legislature acknowledged that not all Orange County residents have equal access to green space. The communities with the least access to parks lie along the river in north Orange County, with low-income levels and high concentrations of people of color. Further, the statute states that, despite vast areas of parkland in the region, many communities in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties are park poor, with less than three acres of green space per 1,000 residents.

Funding. To date, SARCON has issued grants totaling \$60.3 million – approximately \$23.3 million from the General Fund, \$13.4 million from Proposition 68, \$23.4 million from Proposition 84, and \$265,000 from Environmental License Plate Fund. SARCON has spent more than half of this funding on projects benefitting a DAC, in a DAC, or both – \$11.5 million in Orange County, \$20.6 million in Riverside County, \$30,000 in San Bernardino County, and \$185,000 spread across all three counties. SARCON has approximately \$690,000 in Proposition 68 funding that it plans to provide via grants in the coming years.

The Proposition 4 climate bond, approved by voters in 2024, authorizes \$25 million for SARCON. Proposition 4 requires at least 40% of this allocation to benefit DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations. This bill requires at least 60% of Proposition 4, as well as other funding received by SARCON for specified purposes, be used for projects in heavily urbanized areas of the lower Santa Ana River region to benefit DACs, SDACs, or vulnerable populations, as those terms are defined in the bill.

SARCON expects to rely on its Santa Ana River Parkway and Open Space Plan to guide its expenditure of Proposition 4 funds. Projects are funded as they become ready and available, based on this plan and stakeholder input from members of the policy advisory group. SARCON notes that the advisory group is comprised of members of the environmental community, local and regional government agencies, and nonprofit organization representatives. The advisory group makes recommendations to SARCON on project needs, funding priorities, and implementation of the program. All three counties (Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino) are represented on the advisory group and work together to identify the most efficient and effective way to direct funding toward projects based on the project's impact, community benefits, and readiness. SARCON contends that this process has resulted in a fair allocation of funding between the counties and a clear, shared vision of how to proceed.

It is unclear how the bill's required set-aside will interact with this current process, the vision of the Santa Ana River Parkway and Open Space Plan, and the ongoing collaboration via the multijurisdictional advisory group.

3) Support and Opposition. Writing in support, the City of Santa Ana writes:

Over the years, the river has undergone intense usage and development, particularly in the highly urbanized areas and is in need of restoration and conversation. At the same time, disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities who are located alongside the river are disproportionately impacted by climate change...Unfortunately, when efforts are funded to help reduce the harmful impacts caused by climate change, communities with the greatest need are not always prioritized... By prioritizing disadvantaged communities, the bill ensures historically underserved populations gain greater access to green spaces, recreation, and environmental education.

The bill is opposed by the City of Corona, the City and the County of Riverside, and the City and the County of San Bernardino. Riverside Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson writes:

A broad bi-partisan coalition of cities and counties along the river worked to support the bill and place the proposition on the ballot. The voters of the State of California directed the Coastal Conservancy to administer these funds in a competitive grant process along the length of the river. Assemblymember Valencia is now proposing that 60% of the \$25 million be spent on projects in his district. This does not align with the intent of the voters, nor does it uphold the authority of the Coastal Conservancy to equitably distribute these funds as projects are ready to be funded.

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors writes:

Several gaps in San Bernardino and Riverside counties must be completed to ensure the Santa Ana River Trail extends seamlessly from the Pacific coast to the San Bernardino National Forest. Reallocating funds now would jeopardize this progress and undermine the long-standing vision of a fully connected, regional trail system. This bill reverses years of coordinated planning and shifts focus away from equitable, needs-based investment. It prioritizes one county at the expense of others still working to deliver on voter-supported goals.

Analysis Prepared by: Nikita Koraddi / APPR. / (916) 319-2081

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 13, 2025

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2025–2026 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

NO. 1358

Introduced by Assembly Member Valencia

February 21, 2025

An act to amend ~~Section 31178~~ Sections 31172 and 31175 of the Public Resources Code, relating to coastal resources.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1358, as amended, Valencia. Santa Ana River Conservancy ~~Program~~. *Program: lower Santa Ana River region.*

Existing law establishes the Santa Ana River Conservancy Program to be administered by the State Coastal Conservancy. ~~Existing law requires the conservancy, for purposes of carrying out the program, to use the services of the California Conservation Corps and Community Conservation Corps, as provided.~~ *Existing law authorizes the conservancy to, among other things, undertake or fund projects for several purposes, including to implement site improvements, upgrade deteriorating facilities or construct new facilities for outdoor recreation, public access, nature appreciation and interpretation, and historic and cultural preservation.*

This bill would require at least 60% of the funds allocated to fund or undertake the above-described projects to be for projects in heavily urbanized areas, as defined, of the lower Santa Ana River region, as defined, to benefit disadvantaged communities, severely disadvantaged communities, or vulnerable populations. The bill would define various terms for this purpose.

~~This bill would make a nonsubstantive change to the above law relating to the conservancy's use of the corps programs.~~

Digest Key

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: ~~no~~yes Local Program: no

Bill Text

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. *Section 31172 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:*

31172. For purposes of this chapter, the following terms have the following meanings:

(a) *“Disadvantaged community” means a community with a median household income of less than 80 percent of the area average or less than 80 percent of statewide median household income.*

(b) *“Heavily urbanized area” means a city with a population of 300,000 or more.*

(c) *“Lower Santa Ana River region” means those lands west of the Santa Ana Mountains that are located within one-half mile on either side of the riverbed of the Santa Ana River, or any of its tributaries, and adjacent watersheds and lands as described in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 31175 that are west of the Santa Ana Mountains.*

~~(a)~~

(d) “Program” means the Santa Ana River Conservancy Program.

~~(b)~~

(e) “Program lands” means interests in real property acquired, managed, or subject to a project under this chapter.

~~(c)~~

(f) “Santa Ana River region” means those lands that are located within one-half mile on either side of the riverbed of the Santa Ana River, or any of its tributaries, from its headwaters near the San Geronio Wilderness Area to the Pacific Ocean at the Santa Ana River Mouth Beach in Huntington Beach and adjacent watersheds and lands as described in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 31175.

(g) *“Severely disadvantaged community” means a community with a median household income of less than 60 percent of the area average or less than 60 percent of statewide median household income.*

(h) *“Vulnerable population” means a subgroup of population within a region or community that faces a disproportionately heightened risk or increased sensitivity to impacts of climate change and that lacks adequate resources to cope with, adapt to, or recover from such impacts.*

SEC. 2. *Section 31175 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:*

31175. In carrying out the purposes of this chapter, and without limiting the express or implied powers of the conservancy in implementing ~~other provisions of~~ this division, the conservancy shall have, and may exercise, all necessary rights and powers, expressed or implied, except as otherwise provided in this chapter. Without limitation, the conservancy may do all of the following:

(a) (1) Acquire interests and options in real property and make acquisition grants for these purposes.

(2) With respect to real property acquisitions by the conservancy of watersheds and lands that are within the Santa Ana River region but not within one-half mile on either side of the riverbed of the Santa Ana River, the conservancy shall provide to the city or county with geographic jurisdiction over the affected real property 30 days’ written notice of the conservancy’s intent, unless the city or county agrees to accept less notice in a given case.

(b) Exercise a right of first refusal, to the extent not in conflict with another law, for surplus public agency property located within the Santa Ana River region, consistent with the Santa Ana River Parkway and Open Space Plan, adopted pursuant to subdivision (b) of Section 31174.

(c) Lease, rent, sell, exchange, or transfer interests in real property.

(d) (1) Undertake or fund projects to implement site improvements, upgrade deteriorating facilities or construct new facilities for outdoor recreation, public access, nature appreciation and interpretation; historic and cultural preservation; or protection, restoration, or enhancement of natural resources and habitat.

(2) If the conservancy intends to undertake a project directly, the conservancy shall provide 30 days' written notice to the city or county with geographic jurisdiction over the affected real property, unless the city or county agrees to accept less notice in a given case.

(3) At least 60 percent of the funds allocated to undertake or fund projects pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) shall be for projects in heavily urbanized areas of the lower Santa Ana River region to benefit disadvantaged communities, severely disadvantaged communities, or vulnerable populations.

(e) Provide for the management of program lands.

(f) Fix and collect fees for the use of any land owned or controlled, or for any service provided, by the conservancy. The amount of the fees shall not exceed the reasonable cost of maintaining and operating the land or providing the services rendered by the conservancy.

(g) The conservancy may apply for and accept grants, gifts, donations of money and property, subventions, rents, royalties, and other assistance from public and private sources. These funds shall be deposited in the Santa Ana River Conservancy Program Account, as specified in Section 31179, for use in furthering the program.

(h) Recruit and coordinate volunteers and experts to conduct interpretive and recreational programs, and assist with construction projects and the maintenance of facilities.

(i) Enter into contracts and joint powers agreements.

(j) Sue and be sued.

~~SECTION 1. Section 31178 of the Public Resources Code is amended to read:~~

~~31178. To the extent feasible, in carrying out the purposes of this chapter, the conservancy shall use the services of the California Conservation Corps and Community Conservation Corps, as defined in Section 14507.5.~~

May 2025

TO: Honorable Assembly Members

FROM: County of Riverside, San Bernardino

RE: **AB 1358 (Valencia) Santa Ana River Conservancy Program: lower Santa Ana River region.
As amended 03/13/25– OPPOSE**

On behalf of the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino, the cities of Riverside, and...we write to urge you to oppose AB 1358.

Our coalition represents a diverse alliance of cities, counties, and stakeholders along the Santa Ana River that advocated to successfully secure these funds. California voters entrusted the Santa Ana River Conservancy with the responsibility of managing these funds through a competitive grant process spanning the entire length of the river.

Currently, funding is available to Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties through a competitive grant process. The funding granted for the Santa Ana River Trail and related projects through the Santa Ana River Conservancy has been focused on completing the trail through all three counties. In November of 2024, the voters approved allocating \$25 million to the California Coastal Conservancy for the Santa Ana River Conservancy Program.

However, AB 1358 is now proposing that 60% of the allocated funds go to projects within Orange County only—an approach that contradicts the voters’ original intent and undermines the Conservancy’s ability to fairly distribute the funds based on project readiness. This bill is far more than a routine local measure—its passage would significantly disadvantage Riverside and San Bernardino, creating yet another unfair imbalance in regional funding and development. Our three counties have worked collaboratively with community partners to plan, pursue funding, and build out a regional trail that connects and benefits all three counties and ultimately our region from the Pacific coast to the San Bernardino National Forest.

Shifting funds at this stage would threaten the momentum of progress and weaken the well-established vision of a fully integrated regional trail system. This bill overturns years of strategic planning and redirects attention away from fair, needs-based investment. It places disproportionate emphasis on a single community, to the detriment of others still striving to fulfill the goals set forth by voters.