



April 30, 2021

Honorable Josh Newman
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 4066
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 266 (Newman) - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Newman,

I am writing on behalf of the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority (SBCTA) to express our support of Senate Bill (SB) 266, which requires the Department of Parks and Recreation to accept and manage prioritized parcels that expand Chino Hills State Park (CHSP).

SBCTA has been leading an effort to create a Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) for the County. As part of our most recent work, we are partnering with numerous stakeholders with diverse backgrounds including: conservation, local cities, permitting agencies, developers, water agencies, and industries. Two of the properties identified in SB 266 are needed to help balance the development and infrastructure needs of the County with the important and timely needs of species and habitat conservation.

More specifically, these two properties are in San Bernardino County and total 1,520 acres. Permanently preserving this land would expand the connection of CHSP to Prado Basin and would meet several of the RCIS' drafted objectives including:

- Continue to maintain and manage grassland habitats in existing protected areas over the next 10 years.
- Conserve grassland vegetation communities and reduce the threat of habitat loss for Focal Species that utilize grassland habitats by acquiring/preserving currently unprotected grassland habitats over the next 10 years that directly benefit Focal Species and habitat connectivity in the Valley subarea.
- Continue to maintain and manage riparian and wetland habitats in existing protected areas over the next 10 years.

Of the 14,107 acres of CHSP, nearly half of the land is in San Bernardino County and is home to a diverse array of species and habitat types. The 1999 CHSP General Plan outlines the vision and goals for the State Park, which includes completing additional acquisitions to connect to the Prado Basin. SB 266 is consistent with the CHSP's General Plan and our RCIS.

For these reasons, SBCTA supports SB 266 since it furthers the completion of CHSP, provides additional park land in an area starved for open space, and would be the first conservation action working with willing sellers or donors to be successfully completed even prior to the adoption of our RCIS. If you have any questions regarding our position, please contact Otis Greer, Director of Legislative Affairs, at (909) 884-8276. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Frank J. Navarro
President, Board of Directors
San Bernardino County Transportation Authority

JN210430-lv