



**WEEKLY UPDATE
MARCH 21 - 27, 2021**

THIS WEEK

THERE IS A LOT TO TALK ABOUT THIS WEEK

**TUNE IN MIKE BROWN ON THE ANDY CALDWELL
RADIO SHOW 3-5 PM MONDAY MARCH 22ND**

FM



IN SLO

OR

AM 1440 IN SOUTH COUNTY, SANTA MARIA, AND SANTA YNEZ

OR

**AM 1290 IN SO. SANTA BARBARA COUNTY & NORTH VENTURA
COUNTY**

**MIKE ON SOUND OFF WITH JAIME UMPHENOUR
AM 1230 KPRL PASO ROBLES**

ON

WEDNESDAY MARCH 24TH 1-2 PM



NO BOS MEETING

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CHEVRON SOIL CLEAN UP IN GUADALUPE DUNES
LARGE CANNABIS PROJECT NEAR LAKE SHORE ESTATES**

CURRENT ISSUES

**BOS COMMITTEE TO PROGRAM \$54 MILLION
(WITH CAO IN THE BACK ROOM - UNDERMINES CAO ROLE)**

COVID INFECTION RATE REMAINS LOW

LAST WEEK

**COASTAL COMMISSION DEATH STAR KILLS OCEANO
DUNES OFF-ROAD RIDING AND CAMPING**

BAN TAKES PLACE IN 3 YEARS

**REAL GOAL IS GENTRIFICATION & HIGH END INVESTMENT PROFITS
LOCAL BUSINESSES TO BE REPLACED BY NATIONAL "UPSCALE" BRANDS**



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FEDERAL CENSUS DELAY – SUPERVISORIAL REDISTRICTING GETS TIGHT

**BOS UPDATES HARASSMENT POLICY BUT EXEMPTS THEMSELVES
RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF NACI WATER?**

GENERAL SGMA STATUS UPDATE – ALL BASINS

**2ND QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT – FLUSH WITH MONEY AND MORE COMING
(THE COVID BLUE STATE SLUSH)**

COVID STATUS AND REOPENING REPORT

**BOARD SUPPORTS SANTA BARBARA COUNCILWOMAN MEAGAN
HARMON FOR COASTAL COMMISSION**

**CAVE LANDING/PIRATE’S COVE APPROVED AS COUNTY PARK
(SOME OF THE PIRATES ARE WORRIED ABOUT ACCESS)**

**SGMA IMPLEMENATION STARTUP FOR PASO BASIN
COULD PROVIDE WATER RELIEF FOR MORATORIUM TRAPPED FARMERS
BOARD ASKS IF PRIVATIZATION OF IMPLEMENTATION IS FEASIBLE?**

**LAFCO ADDS A FUNCTION TO SAN SIMEON
WORKS ON EXEC DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT**

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
ADOPTS ETHNIC STUDIES UNANIMOUSLY
VARIOUS LEGISLATIVE BILLS WOULD MAKE IT A LEGAL REQUIREMENT**

COLAB IN DEPTH

SEE PAGE 21

FEDERALISM UNDER SIEGE

IT'S NOT JUST AN ELECTION THAT'S AT STAKE.

BY BRUCE THORNTON

**STIMULUS PLAN A BAILOUT BONANZA FOR
CALIFORNIA**

BY TIM ANAYA

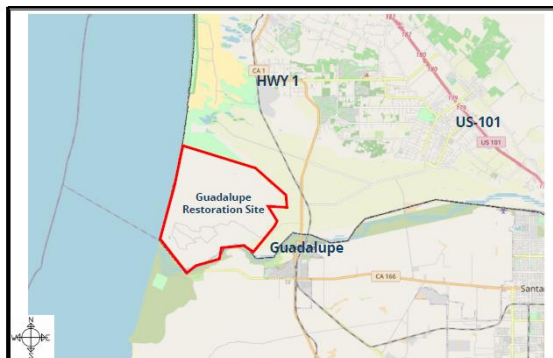
THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, March 23, 2021 (Not Scheduled)

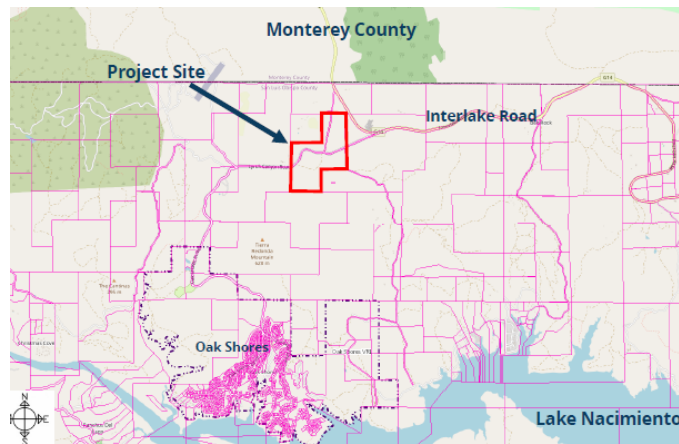
The next scheduled meeting is set for April 6, 2021. It will contain major policy with respect to the Paso Basin water moratorium.

Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, March 25, 2021 (Scheduled)

Item 5 - Hearing to consider a request by Chevron Environmental Management Company for Development Plan/Coastal Development Plan (DRC2019-00069) to amend previously approved Development Plan/Coastal Development Plan (D890558D) for the Guadalupe Restoration Project, to construct and operate a Soil Management Area (SMA) for handling hydrocarbon affected soils that are generated as part of the ongoing restoration activities at the former Guadalupe Oil Field. The proposed SMA will be placed at the T-9 site, which currently has a large sump. The sump would be excavated prior to construction of the SMA as part of the ongoing Guadalupe Restoration Project. When completed, the SMA would be re-vegetated with Coastal Dune Scrub. The SMA is estimated to take approximately three to five years to complete. The project would disturb approximately 18 acres of previously disturbed area on two parcels totaling 939-acres (092-041-001 & 092-041-005), including 1.2 million cubic-yards of earthwork. The project is located at 2184 West Thornberry Road, approximately 5 miles southwest of community of Nipomo, in the South County Coastal Planning Area. Also to be considered at the hearing will be adoption of the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the item. The Environmental Coordinator, after completion of the initial study, finds that there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment, and the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report is not necessary. Therefore, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., and CA Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.) has been issued on January 20, 2021 for this project. Mitigation measures are proposed to address Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, and Hydrology & Water Quality are included as conditions of approval. This is a big cleanup project required by the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The staff write-up does not indicate how much the permitting fees are or what the County will be charging them for the 5 years during which the remediation will take place. It looks like permanent employment for some of the County staff and the Regional Water Control Board staff. You will be paying for it at the pump for years.



Item 7 - Hearing to consider a request by Greenmilk LLC for a Conditional Use Permit (DRC2018-00223) to establish cannabis operations with up to 3.75 acres of outdoor cultivation area in hoop houses, 22,000 square feet of indoor cultivation, 17,388 square feet of indoor commercial nursery, and 19,250 square feet of manufacturing, processing, non-storefront dispensary and offices. The manufacturing/processing and dispensary activities will be housed within a new 19,250 square foot building; indoor cultivation and nursery activities will take place within a 40,572 square foot greenhouse attached to the processing building. In addition, the project includes a 10,000 square foot building to be occupied in the future by offices and a warehouse. There is substantial area opposition from Oak Shores Community. Nevertheless, it meets the distance and other requirements. If approved by the Commission, it may be appealed to the Board.



Please see the table below on the next page for the details.

Project Component	Quantity	Area (sf)	Cannabis Canopy (sf)	Canopy (acres)
<i>Outdoor Cultivation</i>				
Hoop Houses – Mature/Flowering	49	163,350	130,680	3.00
		<i>Total</i>	<i>163,350</i>	<i>130,680</i>
<i>Indoor Cultivation and Nursery</i>				
Greenhouse – Mature/Flowering	1	23,184	20,160	0.46
Greenhouse – Commercial Nursery	1	17,388	14,686	0.34
		<i>Total</i>	<i>40,572</i>	<i>34,846</i>
<i>Indoor Cultivation and Nursery</i>				
Greenhouse – Mature/Flowering	1	23,184	20,160	0.46
Greenhouse – Commercial Nursery	1	17,388	14,686	0.34
		<i>Total</i>	<i>40,572</i>	<i>34,846</i>
<i>Indoor Processing, Manufacturing and Non-Storefront Dispensary Building</i>				
Indoor Cultivation	1	760	760	0.01
Processing (Drying/Curing/Trimming/Fertigation)		7,447	n/a	n/a
Offices		829	n/a	n/a
Employee Facilities (restrooms, lockers)		1,255	n/a	n/a
Non-storefront Dispensary		174	n/a	n/a
Manufacturing		1,876	n/a	n/a
Storage		2,218		
Other (mechanical, entry)		1,468	n/a	n/a
		<i>Total:</i>	<i>19,250</i>	<i>760</i>
<i>Future Warehouse and Offices</i>				
Offices	1	1,000	n/a	n/a
Warehouse		9,000	n/a	n/a
		<i>Total:</i>	<i>10,000</i>	<i>n/a</i>
		<i>Total Project:</i>	<i>233,172</i>	<i>166,286</i>
		<i>Area of Disturbance</i>	<i>357,192</i> <i>(8.2 acres)</i>	<i>n/a</i>
Parking	68	125,788	n/a	n/a
Wells/Water Lines	various	8,600	n/a	n/a
Employees	38 full time, 30 part time	n/a	n/a	n/a

ISSUES

Item 1 - Failure of the Board of Supervisors to Follow Sound Budgetary and Policy Making Practice: It is projected that the County will receive \$54 million in COVID relief and economic stimulus funds as part of the recently approved Federal \$1.9 billion pork and patronage package designed to expand government and cement Democratic power in the blue states and expand it in the red states for decades to come.

SLO County has already received \$27 million from the first \$2.1 trillion version earlier this year. It is not clear how much has been expended, how much remains, and how that is to be expended. It is not clear how the \$27 million has been used as budget stabilization in the current fiscal year.

Notwithstanding this lack of transparency, the Board determined to appoint an ad hoc committee of Supervisors Gibson and Peschong to go into the back room and create a spending plan for the new \$54 million. No doubt it will also deal with the invisible \$27 million.

This secretive approach is bad public policy making and bad public administration. It fails to follow the County's normal budgeting practices and intrudes dangerously into the proper role of the professional County Administrator. It may well ignore current budget priorities. Board apologists stated at the last meeting that it will all be transparent because the recommendation will be brought back to the full Board. This ignores the fact that scriveners exercise a huge amount of power and that Gibson and Peschong can form a 2-vote alliance coming into the public consideration process and thus set up a powerful block which only requires one more vote – perhaps Supervisor Ortiz-Legg.

The structure and process of the SLO County Government is for the independent, apolitical, professional County Administrator and expert staff to study County needs and finances and, subject to adopted policy priorities, make independent recommendations in public to the full Board.

The State Government Code is instructive in this regard:

ARTICLE 3. Recommended Budget [29060 - 29065]

(Heading of Article 3 amended by Stats. 2009, Ch. 332, Sec. 23.)

[29060.](#)

The administrative officer or auditor, as designated by the board, shall compile the budget requests.

(Amended by Stats. 2009, Ch. 332, Sec. 24. (SB 113) Effective January 1, 2010.)

[29061.](#)

The board shall designate either the administrative officer or auditor to review the budget requests and prepare a recommended budget. Any differences may be described in the written recommendations or comments, or both.

(Amended by Stats. 2009, Ch. 332, Sec. 25. (SB 113) Effective January 1, 2010.)

[29062.](#)

The recommended budget shall be submitted to the board by the administrative officer or auditor, as designated by the board, on or before June 30 of each year, as the board directs.

(Amended by Stats. 2009, Ch. 332, Sec. 26. (SB 113) Effective January 1, 2010.)

29063.

Upon receipt of the recommended budget, the board shall consider it and, on or before June 30 of each year, at such time as it directs, shall make any revisions, reductions, or additions. Any official or person whose budget requests have been revised shall be given the opportunity to be heard thereon before the board during or prior to the hearings required by Section 29080.

(Amended by Stats. 2009, Ch. 332, Sec. 27. (SB 113) Effective January 1, 2010.)

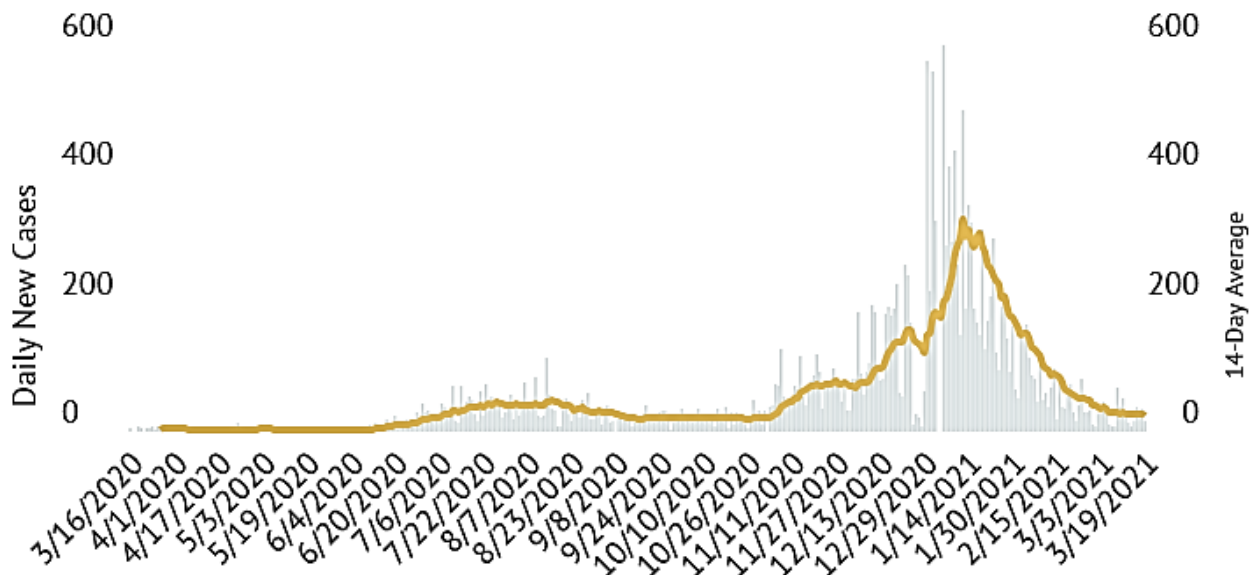
Given that the 2 tranches of COVID relief funding total \$81 million, and even though they are not yet part of the annual budget (which they will certainly become), why would the Board deviate from the proven practice? This is too much money to shove off into an ad hoc process controlled by 2 Supervisors who are the CAO's bosses.

Supervisor Compton was quick to object when this circumvention of good and proper practice was proposed, and she voted against it. The Board should meet quickly and revise its direction to have its CAO prepare a professional recommendation in line with the Federal and State guidelines for the grants as well as the existing budgetary priorities.

The Board may then exercise its proper policy making function. Relatedly, please see the article on page 24 on the state wide implications of the money dump bonanza for California.

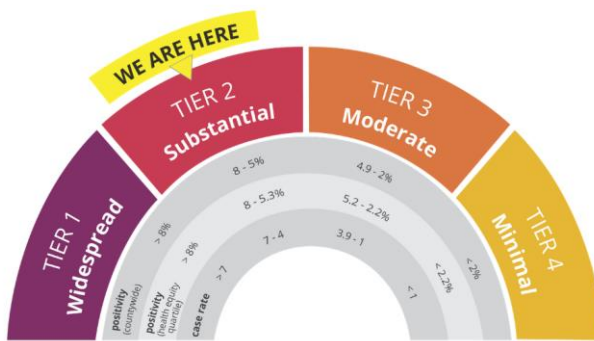
Item 2 - COVID Status: If the infection rate remains low, the County could move into tier-3 (Orange) in another week. At this point the State and localities have pretty much lost control. They might as well just allow things to open up. The Board of Supervisors should start to have live meetings with public attendance.

Daily New Cases (and 14-Day Average)



9 (3 ICU)**

SLO County Residents with COVID-19 in Hospital



LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, March 16, 2021 (Completed)

Item 3 - Submittal of an update on the County's 2021 Redistricting effort; and request to cancel the Special Board Meeting scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 which was intended to serve as the first required hearing related to redistricting, to be rescheduled at a later date. The Board received the report about the delay. Supervisor Arnold pointed out that notwithstanding that the Census Bureau is behind, the Board should still hear an item on the public agenda about the process and how the public will be engaged. This was originally to have been in April but will probably be rescheduled for June.

Background: The Federal Census has been delayed by COVID and technical problems in the count. This means the County will have to delay its supervisorial redistricting process, which is one of the most significant actions of a board. In SLO County the balance between conservatives and the left progressives can be heavily influenced or even determined by this process.

According to the report, the data will not be available until September 1, 2021. Staff recommends that the process of redistricting be completed by November 15, 2021, because notwithstanding the Federal delay, the County is legally required to complete the process by December 15, 2021. The County has already assigned staff and a consultant to be ready to go as soon as the numbers are in.

Item 13 - Request to appoint Philip Henry III to the Planning Commission as the District 4 representative. The appointment was made without objection or comment on the consent calendar. The application indicates that he is a retired County employee and has project management and IT skills. He served in the USAF. With a name like Philip Henry III, some wags wondered if there is to be a Plantagenet restoration in SLO County. After all, Santa Barbara County now has the Windsors.

Item 22 - Request to 1) approve three updated County Policies: Policy Against Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Bullying, Abusive Conduct and Retaliation; Drug and Alcohol Policy; and

Equal Opportunity Plan for 2018-2023; and 2) authorize the Human Resources Director to modify these policies, as needed, to comply with state and federal law or for administrative reasons. This item was also adopted on the consent calendar without discussion or questions. We were unable to comment, as the consent calendar was processed so quickly that it was over before the call-in process could log in any of the potential speakers.

It is time to resume in-person meetings. The Board meeting room is large enough to separate people by rows and seats. There is also a large classroom next to the meeting room where people can be spread out.

Background: The Board unanimously adopted an updated policy that governs discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying, abusive conduct, retaliation, etc. Right off, there was a problem because the elected officials, including the Supervisors, are not included. Everyone else is subject to the rules per the paragraph below, but the top leaders are not included.

This policy applies to all County employees, contractors, volunteers or vendors when they are on County property, when performing County-related business, or while designated as on standby duty or on-call duty. To the extent permitted by law, this policy may apply to off-duty employee conduct, depending on the nexus to the job and the impact to the County.

Why would the Board exempt themselves and the elected department heads, including the DA, Sheriff, Auditor-Controller, Clerk Recorder, and Assessor. Back when we were requesting the Board to investigate former Supervisor Adam Hill for violation of virtually all these rules, we were told that County Counsel had opined that elected officials cannot be subject to them. For this reason, it was ostensibly determined that “It would not be worth it to investigate Hill.” This seems bogus. Put the rules in an ordinance and list their titles. Let’s see if someone challenges the ordinance. If Bill Clinton, Governor Cuomo, a flock of Congress people, state legislators, city council members, and others can be disciplined, why aren’t elected county officials included in this group?

Policies pertain to the items listed below. Details of the meaning of each of the items below can be seen in last week’s Update at the link :

[Weekly Update Mar-14 Mar-20 2021.pdf \(colabslo.org\)](#)

- **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**
- **POLICY AGAINST DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT**
- **POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT**
- **POLICY AGAINST WORKPLACE BULLYING**
- **POLICY AGAINST WORKPLACE ABUSIVE CONDUCT**
- **POLICY AGAINST RETALIATION**

Do these policies apply to the way employees and elected officials treat the citizens?

Item 23 - Removal of Restrictions on Uses of Nacimiento Project Water. The Board authorized staff to seek amendment to a State permit which restricts the use of its entitlement to about 17,000 acre-feet of Naci water per year. It holds a permit from the State Water Resources Control Board

(SWRCB) to use the water. The permit, in what appears to be a little known fact, restricts uses of the water. Specifically, the permit contains what is termed as the Place of Use (POU) limit.

The POU limit restricts the uses to 7,000 acres for urban/suburban use and 500 acres for agricultural use. Note that this is not acre-feet, but acres where the water is used. The write-up states in part:

Eliminating the POU net area limits would allow the District, through subsequent approvals with existing and potential future participants to use its 17,500 AFY of Nacimient water anywhere within the District boundaries. Note that the District Boundaries (of the County Flood Control and Water District) are the same as the County.

The write-up goes on to state:

Eliminating the POU net area limits would allow the District, through subsequent approvals with existing and potential future participants to use its 17,500 AFY of Nacimient water anywhere within the District boundaries.

Questions which were not discussed by the Board during the public session included:

*If the petitions **were** approved, the District would not be limited by the SWRCB in where existing Nacimient water allocation could be put to beneficial use in the future. Under the proposed action, the District's two previously approved beneficial uses, urban/suburban and agricultural, would remain unchanged, although the acreages of each use could change over time.*

This was a strange verb tense. Does it suggest that the County attempted to have this restriction lifted in the past and was denied? Or did they mean "if the petitions are approved or were to be approved"?

What if the petitions to eliminate the restriction are not approved? Did the County ,the NACI Water Authority, and contracting water agencies build the NACI project for \$200 million and not know of this restriction? If the SWRCB rejects the petition for some reason, is the water limited to only 500 acre-feet for agriculture forever? Why would such a provision have been included in the license in the first place? Is there some State law or policy?

Item 32 - State Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implantation Update. The report was received without comment. Apparently the various SGMA plans have either been completed or are in progress as scheduled.

Background: Each quarter the staff provides an update for Board review and to receive possible direction. The subject basins include:

- (1) Cuyama Valley (DWR No. 3-013, "Cuyama")
- (2) Salinas Valley - Paso Robles Area (DWR No. 3-004.06, "Paso")
- (3) Salinas Valley - Atascadero Area (DWR No. 3-004.11, "Atascadero")
- (4) San Luis Obispo Valley (DWR No. 3-009, "San Luis Obispo")
- (5) Los Osos Valley - Los Osos Area (DWR No. 3-008.1, "Los Osos")
- (6) Los Osos Valley - Warden Creek (DWR No. 3-008.2, "Warden Creek")
- (7) Santa Maria River Valley - Santa Maria (DWR No. 3-012.01, "Santa Maria")

(8) Santa Maria River Valley - Arroyo Grande (DWR No. 3-012.02, “Arroyo Grande”)

Costs as of December 31, 2020 are displayed in the table below:

Attachment 2
Supplemental Budget Status Update
for SGMA Program
as of 12/31/20

The supplemental table below provides the summary of the expenditures and revenues by basin in the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Program, including categories for County General Fund Budget costs to date, estimated projected costs through the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Development Phase [Fiscal Years 17/18 through 21/22], estimated County share of awarded grant funding, and contributions provided by Flood Control District Zone General (FCZG) and partner agencies.

Basin ⁽⁸⁾	Expenditures ⁽¹⁾		Revenue ^{(2), (3)}			FCZG In-Kind Services ⁽⁴⁾		
	Costs to Date (7/1/17 - Current)	Estimated Projected Costs (Current - 6/30/22)	Estimated Total County Share of Grant Funding (7/1/17 - 6/30/22)	Estimated Total Basin Partners Contribution (7/1/17 - 6/30/22)	Estimated Total County General Fund SGMA Program Costs (7/1/17 - 6/30/22)	Costs to Date (7/1/17 - Current)	Estimated Projected Costs (Current - 6/30/22)	Estimated Total FCZG In-Kind Services SGMA Program (7/1/17 - 6/30/22)
SGMA Program								
Los Osos Basin & Warden Creek Basin	\$ 114,489	\$ 123,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 237,489	\$ 570,122	\$ 87,000	\$ 657,122
Cuyama Basin	\$ 70,316	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 70,316	\$ 168,032	\$ 18,000	\$ 186,032
Paso Robles Basin	\$ 1,062,069	\$ 175,000	\$ 865,596	\$ -	\$ 371,473	\$ 1,621,896	\$ 282,000	\$ 1,903,896
San Luis Obispo Basin	\$ 971,196	\$ 508,000	\$ 565,005	\$ 250,000	\$ 662,191	\$ 543,143	\$ 190,000	\$ 733,143
Santa Maria Basin & Arroyo Grande Basin	\$ 53,035	\$ 978,000	\$ 494,975	\$ 50,000	\$ 486,060	\$ 578,469	\$ 190,000	\$ 766,469
Atascadero Basin	\$ 10,313	\$ 89,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 99,313	\$ 29,627	\$ 60,000	\$ 89,627
Adelaida Area	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 88,005	\$ 75,000	\$ 163,005
One-time FCZG contribution				\$ 750,000	\$ (750,000)			
Program Management ⁽⁵⁾						\$ 630,257	\$ 87,000	\$ 717,257
Total	\$ 2,281,418	\$ 1,871,000	\$ 1,925,576	\$ 1,050,000	\$ 1,176,842	\$ 4,227,550	\$ 989,000	\$ 5,216,550

There do not seem to be any schedule or budget problems at this stage.

The basin-by-basin detail can be read at the link:

<https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/file/getfile/130240>

Item 39 - FY 2020-21 Second Quarter Financial Report. The report indicated that the General Fund is projecting over-expenditures of about \$7.8 million at this point in the year. While the report contained quite a bit of detail about circumstances in various departments, it did not provide a summary forecast of whether the total budget and the General Fund budget will end the fiscal year in the black or if reductions will be necessary.

Significantly, there was nothing in the report about how the \$27 million in COVID relief money received by the County has been expended, how much has been programmed, and how much is remaining.

Process Failure:

Worse yet, the County is to receive \$54 million in the latest \$1.9 billion Federal pork barrel. The Board determined to assign Bruce Gibson and John Peshcong to “work with the County Administrator to formulate a spending plan and bring it back to the full Board.” See the analysis in the Issues Section above on how problematical this is.

Background: This notwithstanding, there is so much slush in the system due to COVID grants and a better than expected economy that we are guessing that they will be in balance and may have greater than anticipated fund balance than originally projected.

Otherwise, they are budgeting full staffing for 2,787.5 FTE at the end of the 2nd quarter. They are also experiencing a decline in the vacancy rate, which may be indicative of the lockdown and people wanting to remain where they are rather than running off to another jurisdiction or retiring.

Another factoid is that cannabis revenue is running well below budgeted expectations. The cannabis people tell us that it is impossible to get through the permitting process.

Item 40 - Coastal Commission Nominees. The Board, on a split vote, put forward the name of Santa Barbara City Councilwoman Meagan Harmon, who although a progressive Democrat, is not regarded as totally in the Woke tank. Supervisor Gibson also requested that Morro Bay Mayor John Heading be included but was voted down on a 3/2 vote by the Board majority. Heading has been a consistent enemy of OTV Dunes riding and camping.

In any case, Harmon may have a shot, as she is a Democrat, as noted above, and was placed on the list by Ventura, Santa Barbara, and SLO Counties.

Background: The central coast counties of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura are entitled to nominate a potential member to the Commission who is a County Supervisor from one of the 3 counties. There is a push by Santa Barbara County to have its 1st District Supervisor Das Williams appointed. They believe that since he is a Democrat and environmentalist, and served in the State Assembly, he could have a chance. Ventura County will nominate someone who will compete. It is not known if any of the SLO County Supervisors wish to be nominated.

Although Williams is an environmentalist and a leftist, he is not a limousine liberal and does from time to time break from the truly woke to support economic development and jobs. What did he think about closing the dunes (a moot point at this juncture)? For that matter, any SLO Supervisor who wishes to be nominated should be committed to keeping the dunes open even in light of the Coastal Commission's ban of last week.

In the last year or so, most of the Coastal Commissioners have been pathetically slobbering about the need to shut down off-road riding and camping. They did as expected. See the Coastal Commission section **ON PAGE 15** below for details.

Item 42 - Add the County Owned Property at Cave Landing Officially to the County Park System. The proposal was unanimously approved without any opposition or conflict.

Background: The area contains a view site with a parking lot and the Pirates Cove Beach. It has become a problem over the years as a site for drinking, casual sex in public, illegal campfires, and litter accumulation. For whatever reasons, the Coastal Commission has been problematical in allowing the County to control the area by actions such as locking the gate on the road. At this point it seems to be evolving into a homeless camp. By making it an official park, the County will have more control.

The County has received some grants to develop and secure the property. It will incur ongoing operational costs.



Item 45 - Implement the Paso Robles Sub-basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan and Activity Costs and Adopt Resolution Amending the Position Allocation List. The Board did not adopt the recommendation but instead requested that the staff obtain budget figures for contracting out the implementation work. The idea would be to compare the costs and services between a private sector cost model and an in-house staff model. Once the data is in, the Board would assess the matter and move forward. The vote was 3/2 with Gibson and Ortiz-Legg dissenting.

An important related issue is that implementation of the SGMA Plan presents an opportunity to aid farmers (perhaps 5000) who have been trapped in the Paso Basin water moratorium ordinance because they fallowed land or were caught in other restrictions. The problem is that to reduce the strictness of the ordinance by means of land use amendments requires both a program EIR on the entire amendment and potential project specific EIRs on some applicants if the ordinance is ultimately adopted. The latter is an anathema to the agricultural community because of the potential for spread to other geographic areas of the County as well as to adding regulations for grading, plowing, harvesting, and type of crops grown. The Sierra Club is actually advocating for such a policy.

Instead, and if the GSAs could be scaled up to work on moratorium relief on the front end, the land use amendment version could be pended to see if the GSAs could work something out. This would be in the context of the GSPs and save time and money. **This is an urgent matter and a path and schedule should be included for the April 6, 2021 Board item. This would help the Board to not have to pick sides.**

The actual decision point on whether to direct staff to proceed with Paso Water Moratorium amendments takes place at the Board meeting on April 6, 2021. We will have more to say about this at that time. In the meantime, Supervisor Peschong strongly suggested to staff that they consider how helping the farmers by means of SGMA Plan implementation could forestall the problems inherent in the land use water moratorium.

COLAB of San Luis Obispo County, COLAB of Santa Barbara County, the Farm Bureau, Grower Shipper of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties, wine industry organizations, and many other agricultural related entities opposed any regulatory scheme that would subject agriculture to permitting. They would be especially opposed to CEQA. Once a government adopts a land use restriction, it is almost impossible to reduce it.

We recognize the problem faced by thousands of farmers and property other property owners trapped in the moratorium. In fact, back when it was first adopted and then made permanent, we warned everyone, including the Board of Supervisors, in writing and in person at meetings that future changes to the ordinance would beckon CEQA.

Background: Staff had recommended that the County (as Groundwater Sustainability Agency {GSA} for about 61% of the Paso Basin) move ahead and staff up to begin implementing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) under the mandatory State Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The joint plan, which is dovetailed with several water districts, the City of Paso, and several community service districts, was submitted to the State Department of Water Resources by the legal deadline in January of 2020. The State has not yet reviewed the GSP, let alone commented on it or approved it.

It turns out that the State is actually encouraging GSAs to begin implementing their plans and not wait for formal approval. Accordingly, the Public Works Department is approaching the Board to fund staffing necessary to begin to implement the GSP. The PowerPoint at the link below provides an overall picture of the staff recommendation:

<https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/file/getfile/131158>

The cost is hefty and is proposed to be supported by general fund tax dollars or a regulatory fee on the overlayers subject to SGMA. This could be based on the amount of water which they pump. People who use 2 acre-feet or less are exempt from SGMA.

First year activities include estimated County GSA costs and anticipated shared costs with Paso Robles Subbasin GSAs.

County GSA Operating Activities - Paso Robles Subbasin	Estimated Costs for First Year Activities
Salary & benefits	
Public Works - Division Manager (1.00 FTE)	\$ 228,941
Engineer IV (1.00 FTE)	\$ 219,490
Engineer III (1.00 FTE)	\$ 193,811
Civil Engineer Technician III (1.00 FTE)	\$ 174,380
Program Manager II (1.00 FTE)	\$ 165,405
Administrative Services Manager (0.25 FTE)	\$ 47,648
Public Works division overhead	\$ 176,000
Public Works department overhead	\$ 198,093
<i>Salary & Benefits (including overhead) Subtotal</i>	<i>\$ 1,403,768</i>
Other expenditures	
Legal support	\$ 30,000
Non-labor expenses (e.g., vehicles, equipment)	\$ 50,000
Anticipated consultant services	
GSP annual reporting - consultant services	\$ 49,827
Regulatory Fee study development - consultant services	\$ 154,025
Public Works department overhead	\$ 10,872
Total Estimated Cost for First Year Operating Activities	\$ 1,698,492

Estimated County GSA staffing costs are \$1,403,768

Funding source*
County General Fund (FC 20101 SGMA)

**unless a SGMA Regulatory Fee or other funding mechanism is established (tracking costs and fee study are the next steps)*

Local Agency Formation Commission of Wednesday, March 17, 2021 (Completed)

Overall, it was a light meeting dedicated to administrative matters. The FY 2020-21 2nd Quarter Financial Report, next year's budget, and recruitment of an Executive Director were included. Solid Waste operations were approved for the San Simeon Community Service District. The Commission met in closed session to work on recruitment and appointment of a new Executive Director.

California Coastal Commission Meeting of Thursday, March 18, 2021 (Completed)

Item 3 - Oceano Dunes Coastal Development Permit 4-82-300 Review. After a 12-hour meeting, the Commission voted 10/0 to ban off-road vehicle riding, ban street legal vehicles, and severely limit or ban free-style camping on the Oceano Dunes and Beach. The full ban will take place in 3 years.

The Commission slot for the Central Coast is vacant, and we thus had no representation. Assemblyman Jordan Cunningham, Supervisor Compton, and a few municipal officials spoke in opposition to the ban.

Interestingly, several of the Commissioners, during the ex-parte revelations (interests or persons who approached them on the matter) indicated that Supervisor Gibson had contacted them, briefed them on his frustration with State Parks, and supported the staff recommendation to ban the off road activities. As we have been predicting for months, shut-down was the intent of the Commissioners all along. The arrogant staff pushed hard and even displayed some passive aggressive behavior when Commissioners even rhetorically asked questions which seemed to favor a less severe approach.

It is likely that the Friends of the Dunes, a pro-riding and camping organization with 27,000 members will file a lawsuit against the Commission's decision. A question is whether the Board of Supervisors and the impacted cities will have the fortitude to join that suit or file amicus briefs.

Background: The 181-page staff report, plus 688 more pages of exhibits, was purposely an indictment against off-road riding and vehicle camping in the dunes and on the beach. Additionally, there were thousands of pages of public correspondence. To view the completely biased one-sided recommendation directly, please open the attached link AND see the full report. There was no balance and no alternative presented.

<https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2021/3/special-hearing/Th3-3-2021-report.pdf>

To view the exhibit file click on:

<https://documents.coastal.ca.gov/reports/2021/3/special-hearing/Th3-3-2021-exhibits.pdf>

Key findings and recommendations by staff to the Commission adopted included:

1. Amend the State Parks Coastal Permit for operations of the Dunes Park to require that off-road riding and permitting street-legal vehicles on the dunes and beach be phased out over the next 3 years.
2. The State Parks Department willfully violated the Conditional Use Permit.
3. The currently allowed vehicle uses are a violation of Coastal Law .
4. Most of the Park is comprised of various environmentally sensitive habitats (ESH) and it is thus illegal for the Parks to operate off-road vehicle recreation
5. The Commission staff found that the SLO APCD's dust analysis totally correct and determined that this is another reason to ban the off-road activities.
6. The staff found that the Park's activities violate racial justice and social equity.
7. The Commission found that the State Parks Department has failed to seriously mitigate problems for decades and is in willful violation of the Coastal Commission's Permit.
8. The staff stated that the Commission would essentially be in violation of the law if it does not take action now.

9. The staff and an economist (at San Francisco State University) accused the prior study of the economic impact of a shutdown on the community as “deeply flawed.”

What is Really Going On:

Given the fact that the Governor did not intervene, notwithstanding that there are hundreds of thousands of votes statewide, which support off-road activities at the Park, there is likely to be a much deeper and more compelling reason for allowing the ban to happen. Oceano, Grover Beach, and some adjacent areas are working- to middle-class areas. There is also a substantial minority population in Oceano, including people who do agricultural labor.

For many of the people who come to the Park with their ATV's, trailers, tents, and campers, the Park is one of the few places where they can actually afford to stay at the seashore. They are by and large not the folks who are going to Hyatt Regencies and Pelican Hill Resorts at the beach or renting condos' on the sand.

In Pismo, Santa Barbara, the Ventura Gold Coast, Malibu, Santa Monica, Manhattan beach, Redondo, the Palos Verde Peninsula, Huntington beach, Newport Beach, and all the way down to San Diego, there are few opportunities for people who are not well off to stay at the beach. The few camp grounds that exist are booked for years ahead. Hotel rooms on the beach start at \$400 dollars and go up. Most communities are restricting vacation rentals which can also be expensive.

Gentrification: This factor is not lost on major state developers who see the current uses and economics as a waste which should be corrected. Removing the working class campers and riders is an important step in gentrifying the entire area. Major new condo and hotel projects could be built just behind the dunes and in the urban places. The mobile home parks could give way to very fancy developments. You can't have a bunch of noisy dune buggies, noisy kids, and smelly campfires messing up the ambience.

When the State of California moves this didactically and forcefully, follow the money. After all, this is supposedly about beach access, but for whom? Why would you cater to a bunch of red neck families from the Valley, when you could have Miramar, Shutters by the Beach, and Balboa Bay Club type development someday. The San Francisco woke political Mafia of the Newsome's, Feinstein's, Gettys, Pelosis, and Browns know where the smart money should go next. All they have to do is create the opportunity. The Coastal Commissioners represent the current power structure and pretend to be protecting plover birds and sand fleas.



Miramar Santa Barbara



Shutters on the Beach, Santa Monica



Balboa Bay Club



Camping in Oceano

Oceano Dunes OHV Use Area



California State Board of Education Meeting of March 18, 2021 (Completed)

Item 9 - Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Adopted. The 12-member Commission adopted the curriculum unanimously after an 8-hour session, including staff presentations and comments by 250 speakers. The curriculum will now be incorporated into AB 101, which will make it mandatory for all 9-12th grade public school students statewide, including those in charter schools. The bill summary states in part:

*This bill would add the completion (to the existing high school graduation requirements) of a one-semester course in **ethnic studies**, meeting specified requirements, to the high school graduation requirements commencing with pupils graduating in the 2029–30 school year, including for pupils enrolled in a charter school. The bill would expressly authorize local educational agencies, including charter schools, to require a full-year course in **ethnic studies** at their discretion. The bill would require local educational agencies, including charter schools, to offer an **ethnic studies** course commencing with the 2025–26 school year, as specified. The bill would authorize, subject to the course offerings of a local educational agency, including a charter school, a pupil to satisfy the **ethnic studies** course requirement by completing either (A) a course based on the model curriculum in **ethnic studies** developed by the commission, (B) an existing **ethnic studies** course, (C) an **ethnic studies** course taught as part of a course that has been approved as meeting the A-G requirements of the University of California and the California State University, except as specified, or (D) a locally developed **ethnic studies** course approved by the governing board of the school district or the governing body of the charter school. The bill would require a pupil who completes a course described above to also accrue credit for coursework in the subject that the course is offered, including, if applicable, credit towards satisfying a course required for a diploma of graduation from high school.*

The requirement is expected to be spread to all grades in the next few years. AB 1040 would extend the provisions to all Community Colleges, and SB 702, by our own Santa Barbara St. Senator Limon, would initiate the process to extend it to the University of California.

Background: Readers can see the actual item at the link <https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/main202103.asp>. When it opens, scroll down to “Day 3” of the meeting and click on item 9. It was the only substantive item scheduled for that day.

You will be shocked (or perhaps not) to see a curriculum which is essentially an attack on our society, history, religions, and civilization being portrayed as a correction to our inherent racism, colonialism, monotheism, and other alleged forms of literal and cultural genocide.

The article below from the March 18, 2021 National Review Editors summarizes the situation:

To graduate from high school in the state of California, students have to take just three years of English and two years of math. Democrats in the state are now trying to add another subject to these paltry requirements, which are among the most lax and lenient in the nation. Chemistry, biology, physics, history, geography, civics, and foreign languages have all been passed over. As it turns out, the subject that California’s political machine wants taught to all children in the state without exception is ethnic studies. Today, the state’s Board of Education will vote on whether or not to approve a model curriculum for this subject to be used in each and every Californian public school. The state legislature has signaled its intention to make the curriculum mandatory if the Board of Education gives its approval. If such a bill is signed into law, ethnic studies will be the only subject in California with the same pedagogical priority in K–12 classrooms as reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Last year, Governor Gavin Newsom vetoed legislation to this effect due to a lack of clarity about the proposed draft curriculum, which was then unfinished. The Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum has since been completed and has undergone three draft revisions. The Board of Education will examine the final, 894-page version today.

The proposed Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum is probably the most radical, polemical, and ideologically loaded educational document ever offered up for public consideration in the free world. Even after all of the many revisions made to the document, it remains at bottom a political catechism, clearly formulated for the purpose of indoctrinating children into the intersectional electoral priorities of the far Left.

The first draft of the curriculum was so far outside the boundaries of the Overton window in California that it was rejected out of hand by the Board of Education, the governor, and even by the editorial board of the Los Angeles Times, who ridiculed it as an “impenetrable mélange of academic jargon and politically correct pronouncements.” One of its lesson plans included a list of 154 influential people of color but omitted to mention Martin Luther King Jr., Thurgood Marshall, or even the late congressman John Lewis. Pol Pot, however, the architect of the Cambodian genocide, did make an appearance, alongside other violent revolutionaries.

Antisemitism has also plagued the development of the model curriculum from the start. An early draft listed the anti-Semitic BDS campaign alongside Black Lives Matter and #MeToo as an example of an historic American social movement and also referred to the 1948 Israeli War of Independence only as the “Nakba,” an Arabic word meaning “catastrophe.” Even in the final version of the curriculum, Jews have been relegated to an appendix. Their outsized contribution to American life does not warrant a place in the core content of the course in the eyes of the curriculum’s authors.

It was hoped by many that the criticism directed at early drafts of the document would be taken under advisement by its authors and its backers, leading to a more palatable final version. These hopes were misplaced. Changes have been made to the curriculum, particularly to address, or perhaps to better conceal, the naked anti-Semitism of earlier iterations. But the radicalism of the document hasn’t been blunted in any significant way. As evidence of this, we need only look at the part of the curriculum that has to do with religion. White Christians are accused of having committed “theocide” against indigenous peoples, murdering their gods and replacing them with the god of the Bible. This, students are told, has led directly to “coloniality, dehumanization, and genocide,” and to the “explicit erasure and replacement of holistic Indigeneity and humanity.” In response, students are encouraged to establish for their generation a new social order characterized by “counter-genocide” and “counterhegemony,” which will eventually allow for the “regeneration of indigenous epistemic and cultural futurity.”

As far as the religious content of the curriculum is concerned, the bill’s proponents may even have overplayed their hand from a constitutional perspective. Teachers are encouraged by the authors of the curriculum to lead students in traditional indigenous chants, songs, and prayers to the Aztec gods. One lesson plan recommends that students clap and chant to the god Tezkatlipoka — traditionally worshipped with human sacrifice and cannibalism — asking him to grant students the power to be “warriors” for “social justice.” For obvious reasons, this kind of religious instruction in public schools runs afoul of the First Amendment. No doubt James Madison would have been surprised to learn that

the Constitution would one day stand athwart Tezkatlipoka yelling “Stop!” — but he would not, we think, be displeased at such a development.

If this curriculum is endorsed by California’s Board of Education and manages somehow to pass constitutional muster, 6 million American children could soon have it forced upon them from the age of 5 or 6 all the way up through the dawn of their adulthood. How many of them will be able to resist such a consistent and widespread program of indoctrination? It would be bad enough for California and the country if an initiative like this were being spearheaded and sponsored by private actors, but on top of everything else, the curriculum’s political backers are asking American taxpayers to foot the bill.

As board members cast their votes, they must ask themselves, “How would this curriculum look different if it had been written by America’s worst enemies, by all of the bad actors in the world who would relish the sight of American society collapsing in upon itself?” If they can answer that question honestly, they’ll do their duty and stop this document in its tracks. If they can’t, another bill mandating the curriculum state-wide will soon land on Governor Newsom’s desk. The governor must make it clear that any such proposal will be vetoed yet again. Otherwise, it will fall to the courts to spare the children of California the fate of an early life lived as lab rats for the state’s most insane and depraved would-be social engineers.

COLAB IN DEPTH

IN FIGHTING THE TROUBLESOME, LOCAL DAY-TO-DAY ASSAULTS ON OUR FREEDOM AND PROPERTY, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE LARGER UNDERLYING IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CAUSES

FEDERALISM UNDER SIEGE

IT'S NOT JUST AN ELECTION THAT'S AT STAKE.

BY BRUCE THORNTON



Fresh off their \$1.9 trillion “COVID relief” pork binge for their blue-state political clients, the Dems have now set their sights on “election reform,” which is Newspeak for legalizing patent election fraud. Having passed the House, H.R. 1 is now before the Senate, and should it pass there, it will de facto disenfranchise millions of American voters. It also will launch an assault on a critical bulwark of our political freedom—the sovereignty of the 50 states that the Constitution makes responsible for running their own elections

The particulars of the legislation is a catalogue of antidemocratic horrors that will undermine the core mechanism of political accountability—one citizen, one vote; all voters on record as having personally cast their vote; and all votes counted expeditiously under bipartisan the supervision. The alternative is the chaos, last-minute rule changes, and numerous suspicious anomalies that took place last November.

The provisions of the bill point us to exactly that outcome, as the Heritage Foundation points out: H.R. 1 would mandate same-day and automatic voter registration, and encourage vote trafficking of absentee ballots. It would eviscerate state voter ID laws and limit the ability of states to verify the accuracy of their voter registration lists. This would institutionalize the worst changes in election rules that occurred during the 2020 election. But H.R. 1 would go even further in increasing the security weaknesses inherent in the current “honor” voter registration and voting system that exists in states across the country.

As Heritage regularly documents, voter fraud is real. Yet after the January 6 protest at the capitol—preposterously called an “armed insurrection” despite not a single weapon having been seized—there was a bipartisan stampede to dismiss out of hand any possibility that the election had been compromised by fraud. To drive home the need for omerta, Donald Trump was impeached, and even seven Republicans voted with the Democrats’ patent show-trial. Yet no serious investigation was conducted to establish empirically whether or not the election was fairly decided.

What makes this negligence more galling is that H.R. 1 exists at all. If, as we keep hearing, the election was won fair and square, and there was not enough fraud to change the outcome despite the razor-thin margins in some swing states, why this bill now? Having just presumably demonstrated that fraud was negligible, why legalize the “worst changes in election rules” that will make the already substantial risk from, say, mail-in ballots, even greater?

Of course we know the answer to that question. For decades Democrats have been flogging “voter suppression” as an invented crisis for leveraging electoral advantage. Deeming in-person voter identification as “racism” was merely the banal tactic for obscuring the Dems’ real objective, which was to remove all checks on the voting process in order to multiply Democrat voters. There’s substantial evidence that, facilitated and rationalized by the virus lockdowns, it worked last November. So the natural next step is to build on that success and institutionalize in federal law these practices that guarantee voter fraud will proliferate.

Which makes one wonder why so many conservatives who criticized Trump for challenging the results, which they implied were unsullied by substantial fraud, are now complaining about this bill. Weren’t some of these same hinky practices like mail-in ballots, extended deadlines, revision of cast ballots, and ballot-harvesting widespread in November? If the election was not decided by fraud, then why not make

those practices into law? Perhaps because next time the Dems won't have a fortuitous plague to rationalize such dubious practices.

But let's not forget the larger aim, one progressivism has been pursuing since Woodrow Wilson. The whole Constitutional architecture has been the target of those who favor concentrated and centralized power instead of the divided and balanced powers of the Constitution. The progressives dismiss the Founders' achievement as the product of old, bankrupt ideas left behind by the progress of enlightenment and "scientific," advances in understanding human nature and behavior. Now "experts" trained in these "sciences" are better able to govern and achieve a more efficient rule once the antique "checks and balances" of a divided government are subordinated to technocrats.

The bankruptcy of that idea has been obvious this past year with the coronavirus mitigation policies. Multiple experts were serially brought before the cameras and confidently predicted multiple conflicting "facts" about the virus and how it should be handled. At the same time, cost-benefit analyses and common sense were ignored. It wouldn't take rocket science to figure out that locking down the world's largest economy and its third largest population would damage livelihoods and lives, especially of the young. We know from the 2003 Great Recession how high that toll can be from the "deaths of despair" that characterize such calamities. Worse yet, the victims of the virus have been overwhelmingly the already-dying elderly, so these costs of dubious mitigation fell on those with the most to lose. Indeed, this pandemic has been a graphic, deadly repudiation of the technocratic pretensions of our managerial elite.

But there's a darker side to the progressive revision of the Constitution—power. The Founders were tragic realists about human nature and people's ever-present potential to aggrandize their own or their faction's power. They entertained no hopes for utopia or heaven on earth, but sought to guarantee political freedom and ensure that our unalienable rights are protected. What we made of that freedom and those rights would be up to us.

This imperative was necessary because of the great diversity of Colonial America. In our times "diversity" means the old, "scientific racism" version of crude, reductive categories base on superficial physical appearance or specious "cultures." Hence the paradox of those who proclaim the importance of "diversity" ending up being the most intolerant and orthodox when it comes to different ideas and beliefs. But the diversity at the Founding was real, a consequence of diverse settlement patterns, folkway, religious beliefs, regions, and political preferences.

For those varied peoples, the states were the most significant level of government closest to them and their particular interests. The state also defended them from the concentrated power of the new federal government that always would be tempted to aggrandize power at the expense of the states, the people, civil society, and business. For the larger a power grows, the more power it seeks. Hence the need for institutional checks to protect the freedom of all.

But in the progressive view, the conflict of "ambition set against ambition" as a check against excessive power is inefficient and cannot achieve the progress and greater perfection of the political order. In contrast, coordination among centralized government agencies and offices can be directed toward the goal of, say, "social justice," which in fact the means radical egalitarianism of result. One change that advanced this simplification of the American "peoples" into one, abstract "people" was the Seventeenth Amendment that took from the state governments the right to select senators, and gave it to the voters.

The power of selecting senators had given the states leverage over the executive branch, given the need for the Senate to approve a president's cabinet members, federal justices, and treaties. Now the executive does not have to consider the interests of the sovereign states as much, which contributes to the expansion of executive prerogatives and powers.

Turning H.R.1 into law would further weaken federalism by taking away the states' critical responsibility for managing elections and seeing to their integrity, something 50 diverse state-houses can do much more efficiently and justly than technocratic federal agencies in D.C. We have a demonstration of this truth in Florida, where reforms were instituted after the debacle of the contested 2000 presidential election. While much of the country last November was mired in confusion, incompetence, and likely a significant amount of fraud, Florida's election was a model of order and efficiency.

After an election that left 75 million Trump voters believing an injustice was done, we definitely need electoral reform. But not the Potemkin reform that in fact makes it inevitable that fraud will plague future elections. Nor do we need to further weaken the sovereign states, the "laboratories of democracy" that represent our country's diversity and varied interests. What's at stake is not just an election, but our freedom itself.

Bruce Thornton is a Shillman Journalism Fellow at the Freedom Center, a Research Fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institution, and a Professor of Classics and Humanities at the California State University. He is the author of nine books and numerous essays on classical culture and its influence on Western Civilization. His most recent book, Democracy's Dangers and Discontents (Hoover Institution Press), is now available for purchase. This article first appeared in the Frontpaging Magazine of March 16, 2021. California Political Review March 12, 2021

STIMULUS PLAN A BAILOUT BONANZA FOR CALIFORNIA

BY TIM ANAYA



With Congress on Wednesday giving final approval to President Biden's \$1.9 trillion stimulus plan, who is the biggest winner from Washington's biggest ever spending spree? State and local governments in California. In music to Gov. Gavin Newsom's ears, a virtual Brink's truck is about deliver a mountain of cash from Congress to California, to the tune of \$42.6 billion according to the [National Conference of](#)

[State Legislatures](#). State government will reportedly get \$26.1 billion in aid, while local governments will get about \$16 billion.

In prior blogs, I've written about Newsom having pushed Speaker Pelosi's bill to give state and local governments a \$1 trillion bailout since she first proposed it in the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite the fact that California is experiencing a roughly \$15.5 billion budget surplus this year – and likely more given that tax revenue is outpacing projections – Newsom will get to channel his inner-Oprah handing out budget cash.

Republicans in Congress characterized the state and local aid as a bailout for poorly-managed, liberal-run cities running high deficits. Reactions from mayors across California show that the GOP criticisms may be well founded.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti said he was “ecstatic” about the City of Angels standing to receive about \$1.35 billion – part of which will be used to “pay off key debts” [according](#) to the Los Angeles Times. Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg says “we will put this money back to work” of the [estimated \\$121 million](#) the city stands to receive.

The San Francisco Chronicle [reported](#) that the Biden bailout “will erase the majority of San Francisco’s projected \$650 million budget deficit over the next two years.”

House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy noted [in a speech](#) Wednesday on the House floor that the bill will spending only “9 percent on the virus, but San Francisco – the home to our speaker – gets to wipe out 92 percent of their budget deficit,” while also charging that every American will have to pay \$5,000 to fund the San Francisco bailout and the bill’s other giveaways.

Now as they say on late night infomercials, “But wait, there’s more!” According to a [fact sheet](#) from Sen. Alex Padilla’s office, California will get billions more in addition to the state and local bailout, including:

- \$15 billion “to help California’s K-12 schools reopen safely” and \$5 billion to California higher education, “half of which must go to emergency financial aid to students” (though just \$6 billion of the total \$130 billion for school reopening nationwide [would be spent this fiscal year](#))
- \$4.6 billion “to ensure access to safe, reliable transit services”, but not the \$100 million Pelosi wanted to direct to the BART extension to San Jose, which was [stripped from the final bill](#) (and which Congressional Republicans dubbed Pelosi’s “Silicon Valley Subway”)
- \$2.2 billion in “emergency rental assistance,” \$1.2 billion in “homeowner assistance” and \$590 million in “homelessness assistance funding”

It will be interesting to see how Washington’s bailout of California affects the budget-writing plans of Gov. Newsom and lawmakers at the State Capitol later this year. When Gov. Newsom [said](#) in his State of the State address this week that “when this pandemic ends . . . we’re not going back to normal,” consider that an announcement that proposals for higher spending are just around the corner.

What might those be? Legislative liberals, for example, might press to use some of this new money to enact a state single-payer health care scheme. A new single-payer proposal, AB 1400, was [just introduced](#). The last attempt, SB 562 (2017) was estimated to cost \$400 billion annually.

Even though we're flush with cash, legislators might also call to raise taxes even higher. Already this year, lawmakers have proposed [a \\$2.4 billion tax hike](#) to fight homelessness. Last year, a wealth tax was [proposed](#), in addition to several measures to raise income taxes on the wealthy.

Tim Anaya is the Pacific Research Institute's senior director of communications and the Sacramento office.

[This article was originally published by the Pacific Research Institute.](#)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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(Revised 2/2017)