



CALIFORNIA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

FRIDAY REVIEW

LEGISLATIVE AND GOVERNMENTAL UPDATE

January 15, 2021

APPOINTMENTS

The Governor announced the appointment of the following to the California Water Commission:

1. Amy Cordalis, 40, of McKinleyville. Cordalis, a member of the Yurok Tribe, has been General Counsel for the Yurok Tribe since 2016 and served as a Staff Attorney for the Tribe from 2014 to 2016. She was Staff Attorney at Berkey Williams LLP from 2012 to 2014 and at the Native American Rights Fund from 2007 to 2012. Cordalis is a member of the Klamath River Renewal Corporation Board of Directors. She earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Denver College of Law. Cordalis is a Democrat.
2. Kimberly Gallagher, 45, of Davis. Gallagher has been Farm Operations Manager at Erdman Farms since 2014 and Owner and Operator of Gallagher Farming Company since 2009. She was a Science Teacher for the Davis Unified School District from 2012 to 2014 and an Independent Study Teacher for the Elk Grove Unified School District from 2004 to 2011. Gallagher is a member of the Colusa County Resources Conservation District, Colusa Glenn Subwatershed Program and the California Rice Commission. She earned a Master of Arts degree in Christian leadership from Fuller Theological Seminary. Gallagher is a Democrat.
3. Fern Steiner, 71, of San Diego. Steiner has been an Attorney at Smith, Steiner, Vanderpool APC since 1987 and a Shareholder there since 1993. She was an Attorney at Richard D. Prochazka APC from 1984 to 1987 and an Attorney at Karmel and Rosenfeld from 1977 to 1984. Steiner is a member of the San Diego County Water Authority Board of Directors and a trustee for San Diego Youth Services. She earned a Juris Doctor degree from John Marshall Law School. Steiner is a Democrat.

These three positions require Senate confirmation and the compensation is \$100 per diem.

CANNABIS

Following passage of [AB 1525](#) (Jones-Sawyer, 2020), the three cannabis licensing agencies—the Department of Food and Agriculture, Bureau of Cannabis Control and the Department of Public Health—are proposing the following draft regulations to facilitate greater access to financial services for licensed cannabis operations. The draft regulations can be reviewed [here](#). These are emergency regulations, meaning they will be active within five days but will have five day formal public comment period. To provide comment, please visit the website of the Office of Administrative Law [here](#).

WATER

A measure was introduced this week that would require the Department of Conservation to establish a program named the “Multi-benefit Land Repurposing Incentive Program” to provide grants to groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs), counties, or other specified entities designated by GSAs or counties. [AB 252](#) (Robert Rivas, D-Hollister) would establish the program to develop or implement local programs supporting multi-benefit land repurposing at the basin scale. The bill would establish procedures for the department’s administration of the program and would require the department to develop guidelines to implement the program and to exercise its expertise and discretion in awarding program funds to eligible applicants. The bill would specify criteria for program eligibility, including compliance with requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The bill would prescribe actions for program accountability and

oversight, including preparation of an annual report evaluating the implementation of local programs and use of program funds. A similar measure sponsored by the Environmental Defense Fund, [AB 2642](#) (Rudy Salas, D-Bakersfield), was introduced last year but failed to move forward in the legislative process. Farm Bureau has not yet positioned on AB 252 but is working with the author to address concerns. Among the concerns is conversion of productive agricultural land to parks or recreation areas after being idled by SGMA.

The California Water Commission will hold their next meeting Wednesday, January 20th. The following agenda items are of interest to Farm Bureau:

- Assessing a State Role in financing conveyance projects as part of the Commission's continuing work on assessing a state role in financing resilient conveyance projects, the Commission will consider information presented to date and discuss how to proceed with formulating recommendations.
- Public hearing where the Commission will consider the adoption of regulations governing the special application for early funding in the Water Storage Investment Program. The Commission adopted these regulations as emergency regulations last August. This item is to adopt the regulations through the regular rulemaking process, pursuant to the Notice of Proposed Action published on November 27th last year, to ensure the regulations become permanent.
- Commission staff will update the Commission on the screening process approved at last month's meeting. The screening process is designed to allow potential projects to meet the statutory deadline set forth in Water Code section 79757.
- Commission staff will provide the Commission information requested during last month's meeting regarding staff's recommendations to:
 1. Adjust the Kern Fan Groundwater Storage Project and Willow Springs Water Bank Conjunctive Use Project's Maximum Conditional Eligibility Determination (MCED) and,
 2. Adjust the MCEDs of all seven projects within the Water Storage Investment Program for inflation. The Commission will continue deliberations on staff's recommendations.

As reported last month the State Water Resources Control Board released revised draft General Waste Discharge Requirements for Winery Process Water in December. The Water Board was scheduled to adopt this General Order at their December 15th meeting, but will now consider adoption of the General Order and the Resolution on the CEQA Initial Study, Mitigated Negative Declaration next week at their January 20th meeting. The revised General Order documents can be accessed at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/waste_discharge_requirements/winery_order.html.

Farm Bureau has been working closely with the Wine Institute, California Association of Winegrape Growers, Family Winemakers and others, and meeting with Water Board staff for several years to address concerns. Significant progress has been made for the smallest wineries (Tier 1 and Tier 2), however Farm Bureau has remaining concerns we wish to address. Farm Bureau will testify at next week's Water Board meeting.

WINE

Assemblymember Villapudua (D-Stockton) has introduced [AB 239](#), which will allow consumers to refill their reusable personal wine containers (i.e. growlers) at wineries and tasting rooms, reducing the amount of bottles needed in the packaging process and allowing wineries to adapt to potential COVID sales impacts. This allowance is currently applicable to breweries, but not to licensed winegrowers. Farm Bureau is in the process of evaluating our position on the bill.