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Brown Administration Releases Draft Safeguarding California Plan to Ready State for Impacts of a Changing Climate

Extreme Heat, Sea Level Rise, Other Effects Hit Public Health, Power Grids, Water Delivery – Key Actions Save Lives Now, Property Later

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The administration of Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. today released the draft Safeguarding California Plan to outline key actions needed to ready the state for the impacts of a changing climate. Extreme weather, rising sea levels, decreasing snowpack, among other impacts will touch every part of life in California over the next century, so planning key actions now will help us lessen impacts and cope with changes.

“Thoughtful, early actions will clearly make a major difference in California’s ability to maintain livable and productive communities,” said California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird. “By planning and building a more flexible power grid, modernizing our water delivery system, and finding ways to make each region more self-reliant, we can save lives and money in the future.”

The Safeguarding California Plan provides policy guidance for state decision makers, and is part of the state’s coordinated efforts to reduce impacts and prepare for climate risks. This plan, which is an update to the 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy, highlights climate risks in nine sectors, discusses progress to date, and makes realistic sector-specific recommendations.

“California is a leader in the global effort to combat climate change. We are pursuing an integrated strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build a clean energy economy,” said Secretary for Environmental Protection Matt Rodriquez. “But while these efforts will lessen the magnitude of climate impacts, they will not prevent them from occurring. We must take prudent actions now to prepare for these inevitable changes.”

“California’s entire agricultural economy is reliant on the unique climates throughout our state,” said California Food and Agriculture Secretary Karen Ross. “There is wide consensus that we need to take action-or some of our most valuable industries will suffer incalculable losses. As leaders, it is our duty to chart a better course for the future.”

“The draft plan released today is an excellent addition to the state’s developing climate policy and we look forward to providing input,” said Louis Blumberg, director, California Climate Change Initiative for The Nature Conservancy. “This plan will help guide state agencies to consider escalating climate change impacts into their planning and projects.”

Below are the nine broad areas impacted by climate change. Each suggests real-world, realistic recommendations for actions that we can do today to ensure a better future.

Safeguarding our Everyday Lives from Climate Change:

- A Changing Water Future: Develop an urban water use plan that reduces reliance on distant, unpredictable sources.
- Keeping the Lights On: Promote development of smart grids that are connected, but localized.
- More Hot Days: Protect vulnerable people from extreme heat. More hot days in a row are already responsible for more frequent hospitalizations and deaths.
- Do Better Today, Live Better Tomorrow: By reducing our carbon output today, we can lessen the extent of impacts in the future.

Safeguarding our Natural World:

- Nature Moves with the Climate: As climate patterns shift, so will nature. Proving habitat connectivity and chances for adaptation will help allow species and habitats to survive.
- Help Nature Protect Herself: Improve forest and other habitat resilience.

Safeguarding California – What Science and Lawmakers Can Do:

- Knowing the Real Impacts: Sound science will highlight risks, and help provide a path to solutions.
- Help is on the Way: Assess adequacy of emergency responders.
- Better Together: Collaborate with federal and local government.

Download the draft Safeguarding California Plan here:

http://resources.ca.gov/climate_adaptation/docs/Safeguarding_California_Public_Draft_Dec-10.pdf.

For more information about California's efforts to safeguard the state from a changing climate and to find out how to comment on the plan, please visit

http://resources.ca.gov/climate_adaptation/.

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