



Media Contact:

Samuel Chiu, 916-651-7585

Sam.Chiu@resources.ca.gov

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Press Release:
**Secretary Laird Announces Establishment of Climate-Safe
Infrastructure Working Group**

Sacramento, CA – Furthering the State’s continued efforts to address the effects of climate change, California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird today announced the appointment of 14 leaders in state climate science and infrastructure design to the Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group.

“I am proud to announce the appointees of the Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group,” stated Secretary Laird. “These dedicated professionals, with expertise in engineering, science, and policy will provide science-based recommendations to California decision-makers to enable the best infrastructural investment strategies for the state. As changes to the environment continue to affect the public, the establishment of this Working Group reveals California’s ongoing leadership in climate adaptation.”

The impacts of climate change are already being felt in California and include record-breaking drought, wildfires, flooding, sea level rise, coastal erosion, and heat waves. These impacts are projected to worsen with a future punctuated by what are now considered extreme weather events. Established by [AB 2800 \(Quirk, Statutes of 2015-16\)](#), the working group will unite experts from multiple scientific and state infrastructure disciplines to bolster the inclusion of climate impacts in state design processes.

Through its deliberations, the working group will investigate:

- Current informational and institutional barriers to integrating projected climate change impacts into state infrastructure design
- Critical information that engineers responsible for infrastructure design and construction need to address climate change impacts
- How to select an appropriate engineering design for a range of future climate scenarios as related to infrastructure planning and investment.

“The creation of this working group is a reflection of California’s commitment to address the grand challenge of climate change adaptation. I am pleased to know that engineers and climate scientists will be working together to ensure our state infrastructures are resilient enough to withstand the impacts of climate change. Their efforts will save lives, property, and investments,” said Assemblymember Bill Quirk (D-Hayward) who authored AB 2800 last year.

The working group is anticipated to begin deliberations this fall and work through the Spring of 2018. It will report to the Legislature and Strategic Growth Council with its findings by July of 2018.

“Traditionally, engineers have planned and built infrastructure projects based on past climate and weather trends. With climate change, the past is no longer a good predictor of the future and we now must design infrastructure to withstand higher temperatures, more frequent and intense storms, drought, wildfires and sea level rise. The Climate-Smart Infrastructure Working Group will bring California one step closer to having the safe and resilient infrastructure system we need to protect our safety, economy, taxpayer investments, and our environment,” said Jamesine Rogers Gibson, senior climate analyst with the Union of Concerned Scientists, a sponsor of AB 2800.

The Natural Resources Agency leads California’s climate change adaptation efforts under several statutes and executive orders intended to foster change throughout state and local government. In recent months, the California Natural Resources Agency has released a [compelling analysis](#) of the factors that affect how much the ocean will rise along California’s coast in coming decades as well as a [draft](#) of the *Safeguarding California Plan: 2017 Update*, which is the State’s strategy for adapting to a changing climate. The Climate-Safe Infrastructure Working Group will strengthen these efforts as California continues to experience a more variable and unpredictable climate.

Appointees include:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Dr. Amir Aghakouchak, P.E.	University of California, Irvine
Bruce Swanger, P.E.	California Department of Transportation
Chester Widom, FAIA	California Department of General Services: Division of State Architect
Dr. Chris Liban, P.E., ENV SP	Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority; City of Los Angeles; National Council for Environmental Policy and Technology, USEPA
Dr. Dan Cayan	University of California, San Diego: Scripps Institution of Oceanography
Dr. David Groves	RAND Water and Climate Resilience; Pardee Rand Graduate School
Dr. Deb Niemeier, P.E, NAE	University of California, Davis
James Deane AIA, CDT, LEED AP, PMP	California High Speed Rail Authority; Parsons Brinckerhoff
John Andrew, P.E.	California Department of Water Resources
Dr. Kristin Heinemeier, P.E.	University of California, Davis: Energy Efficiency Center

Dr. Kyle Meng	University of California, Santa Barbara: Bren School of Environmental Science and Management
Martha Brook, P.E.	California Energy Commission
Nancy Ander, P.E.	California Department of General Services
Dr. Noah Diffenbaugh	Stanford University: Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment

More information on the appointees can be found at:

<http://resources.ca.gov/climate/climate-safe-infrastructure-working-group/>

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