



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Legislative Report

AB 1511 (SANTIAGO):
State Government: Diverse, Ethnic, and Community Media

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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE | Office of Legislative Affairs
715 P Street, 17th Floor | Sacramento, CA 95814



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Assembly Bill 1511 (AB 1511), signed into law in 2024, directs state agencies that expend funds on marketing, advertising, or outreach to develop plans for increasing expenditures directed to ethnic and community media outlets that serve California's priority populations. In response, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is submitting this initial plan.

This plan outlines important next steps for CDFW including exploring current and former outreach and advertising practices and assessing opportunities and challenges in entering into new contracts.

CDFW is committed to fulfilling the requirements of AB 1511 and to ensuring equitable access to information for all Californians through strengthened engagement with diverse media outlets. CDFW will provide an update regarding the department's progress on or before September 1, 2025.

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INTRODUCTION

This report is submitted by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) pursuant to the requirements of Assembly Bill 1511 (AB 1511), Chapter 352, Statutes of 2024. AB 1511 requires state agencies that expend funds on marketing, advertising, or outreach develop a plan for increasing expenditures directed to ethnic and community media outlets that serve California's priority populations.

This report provides CDFW's initial plan, describes preliminary actions taken to prepare for plan development, and outlines the next steps that will be undertaken to ensure compliance with AB 1511 and potential increased engagement with ethnic and community media outlets.

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND OF AB 1511

AB 1511, authored by Assemblymember Miguel Santiago and co-authored by Assemblymembers Eduardo Garcia, Susan Rubio, and Rick Chavez Zbur, was enacted to address the underrepresentation of ethnic and community media in state outreach efforts. The bill establishes the Diverse, Ethnic, and Community Media Program within the Office of Community Partnerships and Strategic Communications (OCPSC) to assist state agencies in integrating these media outlets into their communication strategies.

Key provisions of AB 1511 include:

- Mandating state agencies to develop a plan by July 1, 2025, for increasing expenditures directed to ethnic and community media outlets serving priority populations.
- Requiring annual reporting on the implementation of this plan, including total expenditures directed to these media outlets during the preceding fiscal year.
- Instructing the Department of General Services (DGS) to develop a reporting template by December 1, 2025, to standardize agency submissions.

These provisions are designed to ensure equitable dissemination of information to California's diverse populations, recognizing the critical role of ethnic and community media in reaching underserved communities.

DEPARTMENT ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The mission of CDFW is to manage California's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public.

As stipulated by AB 1511, CDFW is responsible for developing a plan to increase outreach to ethnic and community media outlets. This involves allocating a percentage of the CDFW marketing, advertising, and outreach budget to these media outlets, with a focus on serving priority populations as defined in the legislation. CDFW is also tasked with annually reporting on the progress of this plan, ensuring transparency and accountability in its efforts to communicate effectively with all Californians.

CDFW is committed to conducting a thorough assessment of current practices, engaging relevant partners, and developing a plan that aligns with the goals of AB 1511. This report reflects the early planning work underway to fulfill these statutory obligations.

Brief Summary of CDFW Marketing, Advertising and Outreach Expenditures

CDFW has limited resources related to marketing and advertising. As of July 2025, expenditures in the marketing and advertising space include:

- \$10,000 specifically used for external marketing of the California Sea Otter Voluntary Tax Contribution Fund.
- One full-time and one part-time Marketing Specialists responsible for creating organic and earned media marketing campaigns associated with selling California hunting and fishing license items and promoting national [Recruit, Retain, Reactivate \(R3\)](#) activities at the state level. These activities directly relate to sustaining conservation funding through hunting, fishing, foraging, and shooting sports participation.

CDFW's communication and outreach efforts are more robust than marketing and advertising, but CDFW does not have dedicated budget for these activities. CDFW's Office of Communication, Education and Outreach (OCEO) acts as the oversight body and subject matter experts in this space, providing guidance, strategy, and technical skills in the communications, education and outreach space. CDFW's 2025-26 expenditures on communication, education, and outreach related efforts include:



- \$10,000/year on GovDelivery, an email subscription service open to all CDFW programs.
- \$20,000/FY 25-26 on [Vamos A Pescar](#), a community grant program for fishing programs, classes and activities committed to educating and engaging diverse, multi-generational, bi/multi-lingual participants new to fishing, boating, and aquatic stewardship in California. This program does not have a marketing or advertising budget. Instead, many grantees use a portion of grant funds to create multilingual educational resources, outreach materials, and recruitment strategies for their own programs as part of their grant activities.
- \$16,667/FY 25-26 language translation and interpretation contract. CDFW offers live linguistic interpretation for events, tours, outreach programs, educational opportunities, and public meetings through a department-wide language translation and interpretation contract.
- Five full-time Information Officers responsible for creating press releases, news media content, and other public information and outreach materials.
- Two full-time audio-visual staff responsible for creating audiovisual content to promote CDFW work and programs to the public.
- One full-time and one part-time Graphic Designer responsible for creating graphics, illustration, and providing layout services to CDFW programs for publicly disseminated content.
- Two full-time interpretive staff responsible for oversight of statewide education and outreach activities as they relate to Sportfish Restoration Act funded activities and building capacity, at large, in our K-12 and public education programs.
- One part time Marketing Specialist and one full-time Recruit, Retain, Reactivate (R3) Manager responsible for implementing, monitoring, and updating California's R3 strategy, partnership work with conservation organizations engaged in national R3 work, and R3 data analysis.



CDFW primarily engages with the public through typical organic and earned media outreach methods, including social media channels and email subscription platforms. CDFW platforms are managed in-house by CDFW's Office of Communication, Education and Outreach (OCEO) and Data and Technology Division (DTD) staff. All of CDFW's communication channels including Department web pages, subscription-based email and notifications, and social media are integrated with both captioning and Google Neutral Machine Translation.

Much of CDFW's outreach and education efforts are conducted, in consultation with OCEO, by technical program staff whose essential function is not marketing, advertising, or outreach. Many programs understand their goals are easier to meet with an outreach component. Service Based Budgeting is the only way these hours are captured across CDFW.

CDFW also relies on partnerships for some program implementation and community outreach efforts. For example, CDFW's volunteer-based Hunter Education program does not have a dedicated outreach, marketing, or advertising budget. However, the program offers hunter education instruction in Spanish and Hmong in partnership with bilingual/multilingual hunter education instructor volunteers. Outreach and recruitment for classes is done by individual Hunter Education Instructors and supplemented by OCEO's R3 marketing specialist time who utilize CDFW's organic and earned media and outreach resources.

CDFW Ethnic and Community Media Outreach Plan

CDFW's Ethnic and Community Media Outreach Plan, developed following the passage of AB 1511, utilizes a phased approach in order to effectively understand current and historical expenditures to media outlets, assess opportunities for increasing or changing marketing budgets and expenditures, and identifying ethnic and community news outlets that may be viable partners to showcase conservation-focused efforts undertaken by CDFW.

Phase 1: Understand Current and Former Marketing, Advertising, and Outreach Initiatives and Processes

- By September 1, 2025, CDFW staff will study current and prior initiatives to understand related marketing, advertising, and outreach expenditures.
- Staff will gain a thorough understanding of how external marketing and advertising have been carried out, which media organizations have been hired for advertising services, and why those specific organizations were chosen.
- CDFW will assess, to the extent staff are able, the success of those external marketing and advertising initiatives in advancing CDFW goals and priorities.
- CDFW staff will assess statutory requirements, procurement processes and opportunities regarding marketing, advertising, and outreach activities that may guide future expansion and implementation of practices.
- CDFW will include this information in its first annual report to be published in September 2025.





Phase 2: Assess Opportunities for Additional Marketing and Advertising

- By July 1, 2026, CDFW staff, under the direction of the Deputy Director of Public Affairs and with input from the Deputy Director of Strategic Engagement, Equity and Partnerships, will assess opportunities to enter into new marketing and advertising contracts with community and ethnic organizations serving the priority populations listed in AB 1511.
- CDFW staff will identify ethnic and community media outlets that may assist the department in meeting overall and specific marketing and advertising goals for the department, including media organizations with a focus on conservation, wildlife, and habitats.
- CDFW staff will identify what opportunities and challenges exist in entering into new or additional contracts.
- CDFW will include this information in its second annual report, to be published in September 2026.

CDFW will continue to provide annual updates on department progress on entering into contracts with ethnic and community media outlets, as required by AB 1511. These updates will be posted to the CDFW website.



CONCLUSION

CDFW is committed to fulfilling the requirements of AB 1511 and to ensuring equitable access to information for all Californians through strengthened partnerships with diverse media outlets. Future reports will present updates on this plan, including new and potentially changed goals, and track implementation progress.