

Staff Summary for August 12-13, 2026

3A. Commission Executive Director's Report**Today's Item****Information** ☒**Action** ☐

Receive updates from the executive director and staff on items of note since the previous Commission meeting in June 2026.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions (NA)**Background**

The Commission employs an executive director to manage the Commission's operations and ensure that its broad responsibilities and authorities are fulfilled daily to the extent resources allow. To maintain functionality across all capacities, the Commission has delegated various authorities to its executive director, who "...shall report to the Commission at each regular meeting on important, delegated actions."

Today's report covers two topics:

- Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Awareness
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

JEDI Awareness*Disability Pride Month – July*

On July 22, 2026, Acting Governor Robert Rivas declared July 2026 as **Disability Pride Month** in California. The gubernatorial proclamation commemorates the 36th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), notes that more than 7 million adults in California live with disabilities, and highlights ongoing efforts to expand inclusion, civil rights, education, and employment opportunities.

This year's theme, "*The World Works Better with Us*", celebrates inclusion and emphasizes the importance of ensuring people with disabilities are fully included at work, in our communities, and in everyday life. Throughout the month of July, the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) celebrated Disability Pride Month by hosting a series of virtual and in-person events. The exciting lineup included an ice cream social hour, a speaker series titled "*The Power of Leaders with Disabilities*," and a career panel. The events honored the diverse experiences of people with disabilities, recognized their invaluable contributions, and advanced accessibility across California. For a complete list of events, visit CNRA's [Disability Pride Month](#) webpage.

Building on California's commitment to Disability Pride Month and a focus on inclusion across communities and public services, staff wants to highlight and commend our primary partner agency, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, that partners with the Fish for Life Program, a nonprofit organization that provides complimentary ocean fishing trips for children with special needs and their families. The Department supports Fish for Life by issuing free group fishing permits, sharing marine science information with participants, and providing

Staff Summary for August 12-13, 2026

“Fishing Passports” for documenting their catch. Department wildlife officers also join the excursions to deputize youth and explain how California’s ocean resources are protected. For more information visit [Fish For Life - Fishing Trips for Children with Special Needs](#).

Latino Heritage Month – September

California’s Latino Heritage Month, celebrated annually from September 15 to October 15 and first established in 1968, recognizes the historical, cultural, and environmental contributions of Latino communities across the state. The celebration highlights how Latino culture is deeply rooted in community, land, and resilience. This year’s theme, *“Esperanza en Acción: Honoring Roots, Defending Nature,”* honors the strength and hope found in Latino traditions and the ongoing efforts to protect California’s natural and cultural resources. With more than 15 million Latino residents—about 40% of the state’s population—Latino Californians continue to shape the state’s identity, economy, and democratic values in meaningful and lasting ways.

In addition to environmental and cultural programs, the celebration is officially recognized through a gubernatorial proclamation. An example from Governor Newsom in 2025 is in Exhibit 3; this formal declaration not only affirms the month’s significance but also marks the state’s unity in rejecting anti-Latino sentiment and advancing inclusivity. The proclamation underscores California’s commitment to the California Dream, pledging to uphold diversity as a strength, protect civil rights, and support Latino progress in all sectors —showcasing this observance as both a festive celebration and a powerful social statement. A complete list of CNRA events, including virtual, can be found at [California Latino Heritage Month](#).

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

The Commission has delegated authority to its executive director to take actions necessary to comply with CEQA. The authority includes conducting—or causing to be conducted—initial studies and deciding whether to prepare draft environmental impact reports, negative declarations, mitigated negative declarations, or determinations of exemption.

Since the June 2026 meeting, your executive director determined that one regulatory action regarding recreational gear restrictions for white shark is exempt from CEQA, and that a potential regulatory action regarding western spadefoot would also be exempt from CEQA, if adopted at this meeting.

Significant Public Comments (N/A)**Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

1. [“Staff Time Allocation and Activities,”](#) dated July 31, 2026
2. [“Disability Pride Month Proclamation,”](#) dated July 22, 2026
3. [“Latino Heritage Month Proclamation,”](#) example dated Sept 15, 2025

Motion (N/A)

California Fish and Game Commission Staff Time Allocation and Activities

July 31, 2026

For the months of June 2026 and July 2026, this report identifies where California Fish and Game Commission staff (including limited term and temporary help) allocated its time in general activity categories, trends in staff time allocation, and examples of specific activities in which staff engaged.

General Time Allocation

Task Category	June Staff Time	July Staff Time
Regulatory Program	12%	16%
Non-Regulatory Programs	7%	7%
Commission and Committee Meetings	31%	24%
Legal Matters	2%	4%
External Affairs	7%	10%
Special Projects	4%	4%
Administration	31%	28%
Leave Time	13%	13%
Unfilled Positions	0%	0%
Total Staff Time ¹	107%	106%

¹ Total staff time is greater than 100% due to overtime

Trends

Time allocations of note for this period are *Regulatory Program*, *Legal Matters*, *External Affairs*, *Administration* and *Leave Time*.

Regulatory Program hours increased significantly in July, driven by staff efforts to prepare multiple, complex rulemakings for the August Commission meeting and by the initiation of a higher than usual number of core teams beginning work on Commission-approved rulemakings for later in the year.

Entries in the *Legal Matters* category represent significant time responding to an increase in Public Records Act requests and legal questions around multiple, recent rulemakings.

External Affairs hours increased in July due to staff work on the Commission website and an increase in petitions for regulation change from the public. In addition, this category includes intergovernmental coordination, which was a priority for reviewing and providing feedback to other state agencies on draft marine protected area petition evaluations.

Administration hours remained elevated for ongoing training for the program manager, the start of a mandatory 80-hour state supervisor training, archiving records, working with the Secretary of State's office to update the Commission's records retention schedule, preparing for staff to return to the office an additional two days per week, and advancing the application and recruitment for next year's California Sea Grant state fellow.

Leave Time hours increased with staff taking extra time off after an extraordinarily intense spring and others taking planned vacations, on top of the several senior staff participating in leave-reduction plans. Supporting employees to take appropriate time off aligns with our ongoing commitment to helping ensure staff have opportunities to recharge and sustain long-term wellbeing.

Sample Activities for June 2026

- Joined commissioners and directors from approximately 20 other western states at the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies annual meeting to learn more about the issues facing other western state commissions, strategies used to address those issues, and opportunities to collaborate
- Submitted written comment to the Unified Port of San Diego voicing support for the proposed Shellfish and Seaweed Aquaculture Program
- Participated in an offshore aquaculture interagency working group to advance collaboration in aquaculture management across state and federal agencies
- Attended a webinar hosted by the Delta Stewardship Council, together with the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians and California Indian Environmental Alliance, focused on interweaving traditional knowledge
- Participated in an interagency coordination meeting about next steps in the Coastal Fishing Communities project
- Initiated discussions with a regulation change petitioner about developing rulemaking documents for Commission consideration
- Sat on the advisors panel for a Scripps Institution of Oceanography Graduate Program in Marine Biodiversity & Conservation capstone project on tracking California Environmental Quality Act projects and habitat outcomes
- Participated in the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) Headquarters Building Campus Council meeting to support a thriving and engaging campus for thousands of employees
- Participated in a Phase-0 interagency coordination meeting to inform a potential aquaculture state water-bottom lease applicant, and furthered progress on a variety of pending lease action requests for existing state water-bottom aquaculture leaseholders
- Participated in the Ocean Protection Council's June meeting to support adoption of the Statewide Aquaculture Action Plan as a member of the Aquaculture Statewide Leadership Team
- Attended California Government Operations Agency meeting to learn more about upcoming changes to fiscal operations, improvements to the state job application

process, a new payroll system, changes to benefits programs, and “return to office four days” expectations

- Prepared for and conducted one publicly noticed meeting, (Commission) and prepared for one publicly noticed meeting, (Marine Resources Committee)

Sample Activities for July 2026

- Provided support to a regulation change petitioner in developing rulemaking documents for Commission consideration
- Attended a tutorial of the new state water quality protection areas mapping tool developed by State Water Resources Control Board and Coastal Quest
- Attended a webinar hosted by the Delta Stewardship Council, together with the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians and California Indian Environmental Alliance, focused on, "Tribal Beneficial Uses: An Explainer and Applications"
- Traveled to La Jolla for the July MRC teleconference meeting to help conduct the meeting from that location and engage with stakeholders in attendance
- Participated in interagency workgroup for managing and limiting the spread of chronic wasting disease in California
- Prepared and submitted host agency materials for the 2027 California Sea Grant State Fellowship matching process and workshop for 2027
- Attended the Sanctuary Advisory Council meeting for the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary to provide information on the MPA petition process
- Participated in the monthly tribal affairs meeting of the California Natural Resources Agency to discuss ways to strengthen working relations with California Native American tribes and to coordinate tribal affairs policies and programs
- Began brainstorming ways to prepare for October four-day Commission meeting to help ensure a successful meeting and sane staff
- Prepared for and conducted one publicly noticed meeting (Marine Resources Committee) and prepared for two publicly noticed meetings (Commission and Tribal Committee)

Sample Tasks for the General Allocation Categories

Regulatory Program

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Coordinate with the Department to develop timetables and rulemaking documents | • Consult, research, and respond to inquiries from the Office of Administrative Law |
| • Prepare and file notices, re-notices, and initial/final statements of reasons | • Facilitate California Environmental Quality Act document review, certifications of findings, and filings with the state clearinghouse |
| • Prepare administrative records | |
| • Track and respond to public comments | |

Non-Regulatory Program

- Department partnerships in jointly developing management plans and concepts
- Develop, review, and amend Commission policies
- Review and process California Endangered Species Act petitions
- Manage aquaculture/kelp harvest lease applications and amendments
- Review and process experimental fishing permit applications and amendments

Commission and Committee Meetings and Support

- Research subject-specific information
- Develop and distribute meeting agendas and materials
- Conduct agenda and debrief meetings
- Prepare meeting outcomes, audio files, and voting records
- Develop meeting correspondence
- Prepare for and conduct meeting management activities
- Process submitted meeting materials
- Provide commissioner support

Legal Matters

- Public Records Act requests
- California Law Review Commission
- Process appeals and accusations
- Respond to litigation
- Process kelp and state water bottom leases
- Prepare administrative records

External Affairs

- Engage with stakeholders
- Maintain state, federal, and tribal government relations
- Process/analyze non-regulatory requests
- Process/analyze regulation change petitions
- Engage and educate legislative staff, monitor legislation
- Respond to general public inquiries
- Review/respond to correspondence
- Website maintenance
- Workshops

Special Projects

- Coastal Fishing Communities
- Streamlining routine regulatory actions

Administration

- Staff training and development
- Purchases and payments
- Contract management
- Personnel management
- Budget development and tracking
- Health and safety oversight
- Internal processes and procedures
- Document archival

Leave Time

- Personal Leave Plan 2025, holiday, vacation, annual, sick, jury duty, bereavement



**GOVERNOR
GAVIN NEWSOM**

Acting Governor Rivas Proclaims Disability Pride Month

SACRAMENTO – Acting Governor Robert Rivas today issued a proclamation declaring July 2026 as “Disability Pride Month” in the State of California.

PROCLAMATION

California joins communities around the nation in recognizing July as Disability Pride Month, an opportunity to celebrate the many ways that people living with disabilities — whether visible or invisible, mobility or cognitive, vision or hearing, learning or sensory, developmental or acquired — add to the diversity and strength of our state.

Observed in July, Disability Pride Month marks the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a major civil rights milestone signed into law on July 26, 1990. Sponsored by California Congressman Tony Coelho, the ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, removing barriers to employment, transportation, public services and other critical areas.

California is home to more than 7 million adults with disabilities and provides one in seven kids with disability services in schools. For decades, California has been instrumental in driving inclusion and integration of people with disabilities in all aspects of life. With the Newsom administration, the California Legislature is working to expand educational opportunities, employment options, health and homecare access, civil rights, and community living for people of all ages with disabilities. The state also continues to prioritize accessibility of all state services and is deepening our commitment to employment opportunities for people with disabilities within state service.

Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility are integral parts of our ongoing work to build a California for all. As we celebrate Disability Pride Month, let us reflect on the essential contributions of people with disabilities to our communities, our state, and our nation, and reaffirm our commitment to their rights and independence.

NOW THEREFORE I, ROBERT RIVAS, Acting Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim July 2026 as “Disability Pride Month.”

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 22nd day of July 2026.

ROBERT RIVAS
Acting Governor of California

ATTEST:

SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.
Secretary of State



**GOVERNOR
GAVIN NEWSOM**

Governor Newsom Proclaims Latino Heritage Month

SACRAMENTO – Governor Gavin Newsom today issued a proclamation declaring September 15 to October 15, 2025, as "Latino Heritage Month," and released a video with First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom commemorating the observance. The text of the proclamation and a copy can be found below, in both English and Spanish:

PROCLAMATION

California is proudly home to more than 15 million Latinos who are foundational to our state's identity, success, and future. During Latino Heritage Month, we celebrate the central role of Latinos throughout every chapter of our history, and in our rich culture and prosperity as a state and nation.

Since the very beginning of statehood, Latino heritage and community have been irrevocably intertwined with our democracy – and with our state as a whole. In 1849, California approved its first constitution, written in both English and Spanish, and included a provision requiring that all laws and official state documents must be published in both languages.

That provision was nullified in 1879, with an amendment that allowed official writings and proceedings to be conducted and written only in English – part of a rising tide of anti-Latino and xenophobic sentiment. Today, we face a similar sentiment, an anti-Latino, anti-immigrant movement that has been fueled by misinformation and hate, and supported by laws, policies, and rulings that ignore the humanity, the civil rights, and many contributions of the Latino community.

But that sentiment is not in the majority. Here in California, we understand that our diversity is a source of strength. The contributions of generations of Latinos are fundamental to the success and scale of California's society, economy, culture, and values. The leadership, service, sacrifices, and vision of Latinos continue to enrich all facets of American life.

The Latino community is strong and resilient, and their legacy and foundational role in the prosperity of this nation and California will not be extinguished by hate – as a state, we will not allow it.

California stands firm in our support. We are a majority minority state – 40% of Californians are Latino, and we are simply not the same state without them.

In California, we know and believe that our state is better off when all our communities can thrive. This Latino Heritage Month, we reaffirm our commitment to making the California Dream a reality for everyone, defending our families and communities, pushing back against hate and injustice, and protecting our collective progress. This month and every month, let us recognize and celebrate the countless contributions of Latino communities to our California story throughout the centuries and for generations to come.

NOW THEREFORE I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim September 15 to October 15, 2025 as “Latino Heritage Month.”

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 11th day of September 2025.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:
SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.
Secretary of State

PROCLAMACIÓN

California se enorgullece de albergar a más de 15 millones de latinos, quienes son fundamentales para la identidad, el éxito y el futuro de nuestro estado. Durante el Mes de la Herencia Latina, celebramos el papel central de los latinos a lo largo de cada capítulo de nuestra historia, así como en nuestra rica cultura y prosperidad como estado y nación.

Desde el inicio de este estado, la herencia y la comunidad latina han estado irrevocablemente entrelazadas con nuestra democracia y con nuestro estado. En 1849, California aprobó su primera constitución, escrita en inglés y español, e incluyó una disposición que exigía que todas las leyes y documentos oficiales del estado se publicaran en ambos idiomas.

Esa disposición fue anulada en 1879 con una enmienda que solo permitía que los escritos y procedimientos oficiales se realizaran y redactaran en inglés, como parte de una creciente ola de sentimiento antilatino y xenófobo. Hoy, nos enfrentamos a un sentimiento similar, un movimiento antilatino y antiinmigrante alimentado por la desinformación y el odio, y respaldado por leyes políticas y fallos que ignoran la humanidad, los derechos civiles y las numerosas contribuciones de la comunidad latina.

Pero ese sentimiento no es mayoritario. Aquí en California, entendemos que nuestra diversidad es una fuente de fortaleza. Las contribuciones de generaciones de latinos son fundamentales para el éxito y la expansión de la sociedad, la economía, la cultura y los valores de California. El liderazgo, el servicio, los sacrificios y la visión de los latinos continúan enriqueciendo todas las facetas de la vida estadounidense.

La comunidad latina es fuerte y resiliente, y su legado y papel fundamental en la prosperidad de esta nación y de California no se extinguirá por el odio – como estado, no lo permitiremos. California se mantiene firme en nuestro apoyo. Somos un estado mayoritariamente minoritario: el 40% de los californianos son latinos, y simplemente no seríamos el mismo estado sin ellos.

En California, sabemos y creemos que nuestro estado prospera cuando todas nuestras comunidades pueden sobresalir. Este Mes de la Herencia Latina, reafirmamos nuestro compromiso de hacer realidad el Sueño Californiano para todos, defendiendo a nuestras familias y comunidades, combatiendo el odio y la injusticia, y protegiendo nuestro progreso colectivo.

Este mes y cada mes, reconozcamos y celebremos las innumerables contribuciones de las comunidades latinas a la historia de California a lo largo de los siglos y para las generaciones venideras.

POR TANTO YO, GAVIN NEWSOM, Gobernador del Estado de California, por la presente proclamo del 15 de septiembre al 15 de octubre de 2025 como el “Mes de la Herencia Latina.”

EN TESTIMONIO DE LO CUAL, firmo la presente y ordeno que se estampe el Gran Sello del Estado de California este 11 de septiembre de 2025.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:
SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.
Secretary of State