Advancing 30x30: Conservation of Lands

Advisory Panel Summary Document

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Note: *Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the organizations or agencies that provided support for its development.*

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Defining Conservation Across California's Landscapes
Conservation of Lands Advisory Panel

California's unique landscapes support our biodiversity, provide clean water and air, and offer important outdoor recreation, education, and cultural opportunities. The State of California has committed to conserving 30 percent of its lands by 2030 in a manner that protects biodiversity, combats climate change, and increases equitable access to nature while safeguarding our economic prosperity, food supply, and cultural values. California's natural and working lands—including our forests, grasslands, farms, ranches, rivers, wetlands, coastal areas, deserts, and urban greenspaces—can be managed in ways that help meet these ambitious goals.

The California Natural Resources Agency created the Conservation of Lands Advisory Panel to help envision land conservation for the purposes of achieving 30x30 and recommend steps towards establishing effective conservation outcomes. The panel includes representatives from tribal, academic, parks and recreation, and nonprofit institutions across California. Panel members have expertise in diverse facets of conservation, from urban parks planning and community engagement, to protecting working landscapes, geospatial analysis, and habitat restoration. Drawing on this breadth of experience, the panel gave input on how to bring a myriad of agencies, entities, nonprofits, private landowners, and other stakeholders together to achieve 30x30.

Panel Recommendations

Conservation must be active, incorporate wise and sustainable human use, and be durable over the long term. The definition of conservation should incorporate many types of lands and related management practices and recognize the need for active and adaptive management (iteratively adjusting an approach based on learnings from prior results) of fish, wildlife, plant, microorganism, and human community members, which are interrelated and mutually dependent. As such, conserved lands should include only those areas with demonstrated stewardship and protection, including:

- Implementation of restoration, management, and/or caretaking for biodiversity and ecosystem health
- Use of adaptive management techniques to support a robust, functional, and diverse community of flora and fauna, and healthy soils and waters
- Appropriate and well-funded resource management strategies and oversight to support compatible and sustainable cultural, economic, and recreational needs while preventing long-term habitat degradation
- Formal and enforceable protection agreements or designations for biodiversity stewardship and/or enhancement of ecosystem services (positive benefits provided by ecosystems, such as preventing soil erosion, improving water quality, and sequestering carbon).

These protections should be maintained long term, inclusive of adaptive response to evolving threats.

1. **Actively manage for healthy ecosystems.** Conservation is an active process incorporating continued caretaking, monitoring, and adaptive management. Managers and decision makers must move beyond ideas of "preservation" and "no net loss" that maintain the status quo and inhibit human stewardship of the land. Our ecosystems benefit from active caretaking—including beneficial fire and fuels reduction; management for plant, animal, and habitat diversity; traditional food cultivation practices; and wise and respectful use of resources, (including selective and sustainable harvest of fish, wildlife, and plant species)—to ensure function and resiliency into the future. Therefore, conservation entities must aim for active and adaptive management that will continually improve ecosystem health, function, and resilience to climate change, including strategies to address growing threats from catastrophic wildfire.

2. **Balance human and biodiversity needs.** Conservation must incorporate goals for biodiversity alongside many other goals, including restoration of traditional and cultural use by Native peoples, equitable access, regional food security, and climate resilience. Humans are part of nature and are, therefore, entirely dependent on and responsible for maintaining healthy natural systems. We are intricately connected to and reciprocally affected by our natural lands and waters; when the health and vitality of an ecosystem improves or fails, so does that of the human population reliant on it. Although some conservation lands and waters should be protected from human pressures and are not suitable for public access, connecting people with nature delivers many benefits and could be achieved by increasing equity in the proximity and quality of conserved lands to all Californians. This will aid community well-being, promote healthy lifestyles, and open doors for diverse conservation stakeholders and advocates. We must also integrate ecological and social sciences to educate, recruit, train, and professionally develop a more diverse workforce. In turn, this workforce will improve the quality of conservation through increases in land stewardship capacity.

3. **Durable over the long term.** Conserved lands must have durable protection mechanisms and plans that guarantee they will be stewarded towards conservation goals and managed and monitored appropriately over the long term. This will require sustainable funding sources and binding agreements. Short-term land conservation agreements (e.g., 10-year Williamson Act agreements) can meaningfully support biodiversity and climate resilience but are too temporary for the lands they cover to be considered durably conserved. Durable protection mechanisms include perpetual conservation easements or other conservation designations that have gone through formal memoranda of understanding (MOU) or similar agreements, rulemaking, or other enforceable decision-making processes, as appropriate to local, tribal, state, or federal government requirements. While legal requirements are currently predominant in enforcing long-term conservation, lands designated as "other effective area-based conservation" could also be considered durable when demonstrable long-term conservation goals are being met. Novel and

innovative legal tools should be evaluated for their ability to ensure long-term active management for conservation goals.

Conservation must recognize that humans are a part of the ecosystem, not external to it. Humans and the lands they rely on exist in a reciprocal relationship. Conservation must be active and adaptable, encompassing a diversity of approaches and proactively incorporating wise and sustainable use to ensure the health and vitality of the ecosystem, inclusive of humans. Lands that provide recreation opportunities must be managed to balance visitor access with resource conservation to prevent habitat degradation. Appropriate resource planning to determine reasonable limits for recreation will be essential for success. For example, public parks require multi-benefit management to support both recreational use and habitat protection. Hunting, fishing, hiking, and other wildlife viewing are examples of low-impact recreational activities that could be sustainably supported where appropriate. Additionally, conserved lands should allow access for cultural and spiritual practices and traditional plant and resource harvesting by Native Americans in California. Activities that are adaptively managed, assist wildlife management, enhance conservation education efforts, or support funding for conservation work are especially compatible with the broader goals of 30x30. However, land managers and parks agencies must be given the appropriate authority and funding to limit and enforce human activities when there is scientific evidence of biodiversity loss or other negative natural resource impacts (e.g., soil erosion) from human overuse or climate change impacts.

Working landscapes with multi-benefit conservation value[1] should be considered as conserved lands when managed appropriately and durably to support biodiversity and climate resilience goals. Examples include flooded rice fields and grasslands grazed by beef cattle. In rice fields, for instance, specific management can provide critical habitat for fish, birds, and other wildlife,[2] but must include wise water use practices. Well-managed grazing lands, with protections in place to support sensitive subsystems within, can encourage native plant diversity and provide habitat for important species of birds, mammals, amphibians, and insects, while also sequestering carbon.[3] Working lands like these should be considered conserved lands if they are well managed and documented to support biodiversity and/or climate resilience goals with durable long-term protections in place.

The 30x30 initiative should work towards not only protecting lands that are already conserved, but also towards restoring and incorporating lands with potential to support multiple benefits. For instance, Baldwin Hills in LA[4] consists primarily of degraded oil fields, but has the potential to be restored into park land that provides equitable access to park-poor communities. Managing entities should be able to participate in incentive programs for transitioning degraded lands along the conservation spectrum towards restored and regenerative ecosystems even if they are not counted as conserved for 30x30 until conservation criteria are satisfactorily reached.

Conservation of our lands must be flexible enough to prioritize local and regional goals. California's lands are diverse and complex and, because of this, conservation is necessarily dependent on local and regional contexts. There is no "one size fits all" approach. Land protection is not durable or effective without local and collective

support; conservation of our lands must be flexible enough to prioritize local goals and integrate local communities in planning. One piece of the 30x30 initiative could be dedicating funding for regional collaborative conservation plans that also require broad coalition building, priority setting, project planning and implementation, data integration, and local agency and organizational support for planning. Through this process, conservation planning would be informed by those working directly on the ground within communities of interest. By prioritizing access and conservation goals together, it is possible to build a vitally diverse constituency for conservation, particularly among California's youth.

Local conservation goals may be most appropriate at the sub-regional level (e.g., county or local jurisdiction) and tailored to the ecosystems within. Freshwater is the lifeblood that connects our lands, and therefore watersheds are ideal units for stewarding and monitoring conserved lands and their connections. California has more than 450 defined vegetation types within 19 ecological regions.[5] Management plans will be different within each ecosystem and depend on unique regional pressures and requirements (e.g., fire, climate, or restoration capacity and needs). Not all regions of the state have local agencies or organizations with the capacity or willingness to take on regional conservation planning efforts. Without incentives and necessary funding, we will continue to have disparities in conservation planning and related investments across regions.

Regional priorities and planning should take precedence over priorities driven only by statewide mapping of conserved lands. This comes with tradeoffs, as it is easier to compile data at the state level. There will be a strong drive to use California Protected Area Database (CPAD)[6] data since these data sets are standardized across the state. While CPAD could inform an initial assessment of protected areas, as available Gap Analysis Project (GAP) status codes indicate management intent for biodiversity, these should not be the sole measures of the state of conserved lands in a region. Local governments, organizations, agencies, and residents should work together to identify, document, and report conservation measures and metrics, including developing protection for sensitive cultural and ecological data.

The definitions and goals for 30x30 should be reassessed frequently during implementation to ensure the metrics used to measure success achieve the overarching goals of conserving for biodiversity, access, and climate resilience. Therefore, the percentage of conserved lands will be dynamic and increase and decrease as goals evolve and as the quality and quantity of lands change. This flexibility will be particularly important as management needs and priorities must be adjusted to allow for and support the movement of species and vegetation types across and between protected areas to track changing climate conditions. The proposed collaborative CA Nature platform might work well for this purpose if it is set up as a flexible counting framework that allows adaptive management or new conservation approaches to be included as information becomes available.

Conservation should be conducted across a spectrum of landscapes, with tiered goals for each land category. Different categories of conserved lands will fulfill state conservation priorities to differing degrees. For instance, land managed primarily for

recreation may support biodiversity in a more limited capacity compared to a protected area managed specifically for wildlife habitat (e.g., Forest Service versus Department of Fish & Wildlife). Additionally, single-crop farmland protected under perpetual conservation easements may protect working lands that provide regional food security but may provide little biodiversity or climate resilience without other environmental enhancements such as riparian buffers (forested stream and riverbanks), alley cropping (rows of native trees or shrubs within row crops) or other regenerative management practices that build soil health.

Regardless of goals stated, there must be adequate investment for conservation across all land categories, including lands and waters dedicated to habitat preservation, restoration, and climate adaptation, working landscapes, and multi-benefit public lands. Each should be considered equally for conservation prioritization. Within each category there should be a spectrum of tiered conservation goals from "least effective" to "most effective" for supporting biodiversity, equitable access, and climate resilience goals, with the understanding that active, adaptive, and restorative management for biodiversity is of the highest tier and a priority goal. Each land category may contribute to a specific subset of these goals and would need to be evaluated and compared to others within the same category during conservation prioritization and land acquisition decisions. Regional goals should determine which land categories are prioritized during conservation implementation. Finally, monitoring of biodiversity, climate resilience, and access should be central to management plans across all land categories, and sustainable funding to support this monitoring must be a priority within 30x30.

Collecting an array of conservation metrics (beyond simply land area) would improve the 30x30 initiative's ability to track progress toward broader goals. For example, area measurements of conserved lands could be overlaid with weighted measures such as how much the land contributes to biodiversity, climate change, or access goals. A central database, such as the proposed statewide CA Nature platform, or CPAD as noted above, could be beneficial for partners and stakeholders to submit conservation metrics on a regular basis (e.g., annually). Central coordination of data would aid in this process yet will require funding for regular data collection and maintenance. Local universities and their faculty and students could be important resources towards achieving this goal.

Community engagement, inclusion, and partnership building will be essential for reaching the goals of 30x30 and long-term conservation success. Conservation and community partners should come together not just as representatives of the entities for whom they work, but under a broader movement that pushes towards, and beyond, 30x30.

Inclusion is the bedrock of success for 30x30. It will be vital to collaborate across cultures and establish partnerships between communities of interest. This initiative will need to engage private landowners, California Native American tribal organizations (both federally recognized and unrecognized), traditional outdoor recreation stakeholders (e.g., hunters and fisherman), and conservation-related agencies and organizations across sectors (e.g., from NGOs to businesses). Conservation must

occur across both physical landscapes and socioeconomic divides. There are often challenges around shared resources, such as water, which can put conservation and community groups in competing positions. Effective and productive partnerships and co-management of lands, requiring MOUs, co-management agreements, or other cooperative agreements for commitment and accountability should be expanded. A successful example of co-management is the agreement[7] between Sonoma County Regional Parks Department and the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, which has aided cooperative protection and preservation of cultural resources at Tolay Lake Regional Park.

It is important to regularly and proactively engage with tribal governments to ensure effective co-management of shared resources across jurisdictional boundaries, protection of tribal sacred sites, and respect of tribal sovereignty and ancestral lands. This will be necessary to meet the social, cultural, health, and economic well-being of Native Americans in California. Consistent with Executive Order N-15-19,[8] tribal conservation areas and local management and restoration strategies must be understood as essential components of the overall 30x30 goals. Tribal land ownership is complex, arising from a long history of evolving federal tribal law, and it is incumbent on neighboring land managers and California jurisdictions to incorporate impacts and benefits to tribal lands into conservation planning.

California's 30x30 initiative should start with searching for, and supporting, existing grassroots groups and partnerships. Together Bay Area[9] is an example of a coalition of agency partners, California Native American Tribes, land trusts, academics, environmental justice and health equity advocates, and outdoor education and recreation groups successfully working together to advance climate resiliency and equitable access to conservation lands. This model could serve as a template for other regional collaboratives, especially with a stronger focus on the incorporation of environmental justice and health equity organizations. Other successful examples of conservation partnerships include:

- Regional collaboratives building coalitions at geographic scales feasible for achieving results: WHAM taskforce,[10] Central Valley Joint Venture,[11] Klamath River Renewal Corporation,[12] One Tam,[13] Intertribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council of Northern California[14]
- Statewide groups made of locally based organizations with community relationships: California Association of Resource Conservation Districts,[15] California Council of Land Trusts,[16] California Stewardship Network[17]

Incentives, rather than regulatory threats, can bring willing partners together. To build effective coalitions for conservation, the state should provide capacity building and support for organizations whose missions include land conservation, restoration, and stewardship. The 30x30 initiative must nurture effective partnerships with private landowners and industry to encourage and support proactive conservation actions to protect and restore biodiversity. For instance, conservation easements and similar voluntary agreements have proven to be successful in obtaining wildlife conservation benefits on private lands, most notably for wetland conservation. State legislation, budget augmentations, or new bond funding may be required to help incentivize

more voluntary and durable efforts like these and support existing or new landowner incentive programs. Furthermore, many threatened and endangered species depend on private lands for survival, and landowners should not risk liability repercussions for taking action to restore and protect endangered species. Landowners should be encouraged and supported to enhance education efforts, provide wildlife and nature driven recreational opportunities, or offer other managed public access to reach conservation goals.

It will be impossible for the state to assess each land parcel, so conservation entities will need to self-assess and report lands to be counted towards the 30x30 goal. Establishing a reporting framework would be essential when incorporating other effective area-based conservation lands into the 30x30 count. Accurate self-assessment and reporting could work by establishing incentive programs—balancing potential propensity to under- or over-report conserved land area and quality. For instance, an area that has smaller amounts of conserved land should qualify for funding to acquire, restore, or enhance more land, while reporting lands that are already actively conserved should bring recognition for those areas.

If California is to achieve 30x30, we must ensure adequate funding for state agencies that steward and monitor conservation lands, manage public access, develop and approve conservation plans, and provide critical funding for organizations and local agencies that are helping to meet the state's goals. Building funds for stewardship may need to be a particular focus to ensure lands are adequately cared for to help meet 30x30 goals. As an example, conserved lands purchased via bond dollars do not permit stewardship funding, which continues to be a challenge for many conservation organizations.

At the same time, maintaining current budget priorities should not be an excuse to limit conservation. We must not accept the status quo; conservation proponents should always push to improve California's lands and will need to rely on creative and strategic collaborations to reach state goals.

To reach the 30x30 goal, existing systems and the status quo must be challenged. Many traditional land conservation acquisitions and strategies will remain part of the solution moving forward. However, they must not overshadow approaches that prioritize equitable access to public lands, or innovative solutions for restoration and shared stewardship of lands between agencies, tribes, nonprofits, and volunteer residents. We must look towards the future but not ignore the lessons of the past. For 30x30 to succeed, it will be critical to prioritize enlisting the active engagement of California Native American Tribes, traditionally rural and urban park-poor communities, and persons historically excluded because of their ethnicity or race, as integral partners in conservation. Further, the State of California must work to identify funding streams to support incentives, grant programs, and monitoring and management of conservation efforts to ensure effective action is taken. The 30x30 initiative should fully embrace transparency, intersectional environmentalism, and emerging conservation leaders.

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Advisory Panel Questions

1. How might the State define ”conservation” for the purposes of 30x30 — What types of lands could be considered conserved and under what conditions?

2. 2. The IUCN defines “other effective area-based conservation” as “a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and, where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic, and other locally relevant values.”

   What kinds of other effective area conservation might be considered conserved for the purposes of 30x30 in California and under what conditions?

3. How might the State quantify other effective area-based conservation lands? How might we efficiently improve our ability to consistently assess and count lands, uses, and benefits not easily delineated on maps?

4. Just as critical to the question of what will count as conserved lands is the question of how will the myriad federal, state, local agencies, Tribal entities, nonprofits, and private parties work together to achieve 30x30 conservation in the next ten years. What efficient, effective, diverse, and equity-driven tools, strategies, partnerships, and approaches are available or need to be refined and developed to reach 30x30 in a way that is publicly supported and sustainable?

Advisory Panel Biographies

Justin Brashares, Ph.D.

Professor of Wildlife Ecology & Conservation, University of California, Berkeley Department of Environmental Science, Policy & Management

Justin Brashares is the G.R. & W.M. Goertz Distinguished Professor in UC Berkeley's Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management. Justin's research combines approaches from ecology with interdisciplinary environmental science to better understand how human activities are impacting biodiversity, and to highlight and communicate the everyday consequences of these changes for society. Work in Justin's group extends traditional environmental science to consider the economic, political and cultural factors that drive and, in turn, are driven by global change. Through these efforts, Justin and his group at Berkeley strive to propose empirically-based, action-oriented strategies for conservation of ecosystems and the services they provide us.

Anjuli Jain Figueroa, Ph.D.

Associate Director, GreenInfo Network

Dr. Anjuli Jain Figueroa is Associate Director of GreenInfo Network, a California-based non-profit organization that focuses on geospatial data analysis and communication in the public interest. GreenInfo has been involved in informing land conservation decisions through the development and maintenance of crucial datasets like the California Protected Areas Database (CPAD) and the California Conservation Easement Database and close collaborations with land trusts, non-profits and public sector agencies. Anjuli holds a Ph.D. from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a B.S.E. from University of Michigan in Civil and Environmental Engineering. She also holds a M.S. in Technology and Policy from MIT to complement her training in engineering and science. Her doctoral work has focused on water's relationship to many sectors including cities, agriculture, hydropower, sanitation, and disasters, both domestically and abroad. She worked at Stanford University on a multi-disciplinary team to identify sustainable development pathways in the urban food-water-energy nexus. She also has experience in the private sector as an environmental consulting engineer. Now, in the non-profit sector she has the opportunity to make a positive impact by helping advance the use of geospatial data for data-informed decision-making.

Mark Hennelly

Vice President of Legislative Affairs and Public Policy, California Waterfowl Association

Mark Hennelly has been a legislative advocate on behalf of the California Waterfowl Association for the last 21 years. In this capacity, he represents the interests of hunters, private landowners and wetland conservationists. He also annually works with the California Fish and Game Commission on hunting seasons and bag limit regulations as well as the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the public hunting programs for Wildlife Areas and Refuges. Mr. Hennelly helped sponsor and pass into law state legislation that created the SHARE program to increase public recreational opportunities on private land, increased funding for state waterfowl habitat programs, increased penalties for serious poaching violations and ensured that Fish and Game fine monies are used for wildlife conservation purposes. He has also helped to create regulations to increase youth hunting opportunities and, most recently, implement a veterans-only hunt for waterfowl. Mr. Hennelly previously worked for the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee as an Associate Consultant and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife as a Scientific Aide. He has a B.A. in Political Science from Santa Clara University and an M.A. in Government from California State University, Sacramento. He is an alumnus of the National Conservation Leadership Institute.

Nina S. Roberts, Ph.D.

Professor, Department of Recreation, Parks, & Tourism and Faculty Director of Community Engaged Scholarship & Learning, San Francisco State University

A dynamic educator and well-known speaker, Nina S. Roberts is a professor in the department of Recreation, Parks, & Tourism at San Francisco State University. Nina is also faculty director of the SFSU Institute for Civic & Community Engagement. Prior to entering the halls of higher education, Nina spent over 25 years in the field working with small non-profits, a county park system, and the National Park Service, for example. She is a Fulbright Scholar and experiential educator whose social science research in cultural diversity and parks has been well received by public land managers and community partners. She also leads cultural competency trainings ranging from outdoor leaders at Princeton University to senior refuge managers with the Fish & Wildlife Service. She has also served as consultant for the Yale School of Forestry through involvement with their "Broadening the Base" conservation workshop for Land Trust Managers. She has received a variety of distinguished honors and awards for her work and research. Furthermore, her perspectives on diversity and use/non-use of public lands (e.g., visitor constraints) have been widely shared through interviews with CNN.com, L.A. Times, National Geographic, The New York Times, Public Radio International, NBC News Bay Area, and the National Parks Traveler. She is a well published author as she writes about social and environmental justice, conservation across cultures, women and girls outdoors, and youth development. Her work provides leaders, park managers and partners with ideas and resources needed to respond more effectively to changing demographics and social trends across the country.

Tiana Williams-Claussen

Wildlife Department Director, Yurok Tribe

Tiana Williams-Claussen is a Yurok tribal member and native to the North Coast and the Yurok Reservation. She received her Bachelor's degree in Biochemical Sciences from Harvard University, and has been employed by the Yurok Tribe for 14 years, beginning as an intern, advancing to Technician, then Wildlife Biologist, and now acting as the Director of the Yurok Tribe's Wildlife Department. She was instrumental in the creation of the Yurok Tribe's Condor Restoration Program and development of the Wildlife Department overall. Her native upbringing and formal education allow her to bridge the gap between traditional understandings of the world and those rooted in Western-science, and to work toward a cohesive, well-informed perspective on holistic ecosystem management.

Jeannette Tuitele-Lewis

President/CEO, Big Sur Land Trust and Board Chair, California Council of Land Trusts

Jeannette Tuitele-Lewis has been with Big Sur Land Trust (BSLT) since 2014. During her tenure, BSLT has prioritized multi-benefit community-centered projects to restore habitat, increase access to parks/open space, reduce flooding risks through nature-based solutions and engage residents in conservation and parks planning. Prior to this, Jeannette worked for Sierra Foothill Conservancy for nine years, conserving rangeland and building relationships with tribes to help manage and protect cultural resources. Jeannette serves on the board of the California Council of Land Trusts, on the national Leadership Council of the Land Trust Alliance, and as an advisor for a foundation focused on improving the lives of women and girls. Most importantly, she is mom to Amaelia and Malae. Born in California, Jeannette spent much of her early youth between the West Coast and the Pacific Islands. These experiences sparked a lifelong passion for understanding the relationship between land and people. After graduating from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa with an emphasis in ethnobotany, Jeannette worked in the American Samoan Islands. There she documented medicinal plant use by traditional healers, worked with local farmers, and coordinated village tree plantings in areas devastated by hurricanes. She received her master's degree in forest science from Oregon State University, where her studies integrated ecological, social, and cultural analysis of agroforestry systems in American Samoa. Following graduate school, Jeannette worked as a forest science technician, collecting data on carbon storage in old growth forests across the Pacific Northwest, before moving back to California in 2005.

Sean Woods

Chief of Planning, Planning and Development Agency, Los Angeles County Department of Parks & Recreation

Sean Woods is Chief of Planning for Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation where he is responsible for the oversight of planning and management issues related to the Department's 70,000 acres of parkland and diverse facilities which includes local parks, aquatic centers, botanic gardens, wildlife sanctuaries, the largest municipal golf system in the County, and over 200 miles of trails. Sean is particularly focused on assisting LA County Parks develop strategies and implement actions that promote equity, sustainability, climate resiliency and environmental justice within the countywide park system. Prior to that, Sean served for 15 years as the Los Angeles Sector Superintendent for California State Parks with the primary responsibility of implementing the Department's Urban Strategic Initiative in Los Angeles. Through this initiative, State Parks worked cooperatively with local partners to address the needs of under-served urban residents by committing resources to community outreach and development of urban parks. Superintendent Woods oversaw the acquisition, planning, and development efforts at Rio de Los Angeles State Parks, Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook and Los Angeles State Park representing a $150 million investment in the urban core of Los Angeles. Central to these urban planning efforts was the focus on Los Angeles River Parks as vital links in the greening of the LA River and implementation of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan.