

CALIFORNIA WATERSHED COALITION

California Watershed Network
Salmonid Restoration Federation
Urban Creeks Council
Northern California Association of
Fly Fishermen
California Association of Resource
Conservation Districts
Sacramento River Watershed Program
Sierra Nevada Alliance
Sonoma Ecology Center

MEDIA RELEASE

GOVERNOR SIGNS COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER BILL

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California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed AB 2537 to protect the opportunities for volunteers to assist on community projects. Authored by Assembly Member Warren Furutani from Long Beach, AB 2537 extends for another three years the ability of volunteers to participate in community public works projects.

Examples of community projects that would have been impacted by a failure of this bill to pass include trail maintenance, stream-side plantings, and the very popular Coastal Clean-Up days. Scout troops, after-school programs and other civic groups would have been barred from any hands-on activities as of January 1 of 2009.

This bill not only extends volunteer participation for three more years, but establishes a mechanism for the Legislature to be made aware of alleged violations of the Labor Code. This, despite the fact that there have been no such complaints filed in the past three years since legislation was passed (AB 2690) to clarify the status of volunteers. This bill will also help assure the protection of fair wages for hired laborers on public works projects.

The California Watershed Coalition wishes to thank Assembly Member Furutani and Governor Schwarzenegger for their leadership in bringing this bill to a successful conclusion and we look forward to working with the Legislature to review any complaints over the next three years.

We also wish to thank the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts, the Sierra Club, and the Planning and Conservation League for their support and efforts to keep this bill moving through the legislative process.

Michael Wellborn
California Watershed Coalition

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