

**CALIFORNIA RESEARCH BUREAU
CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY**

**Studies in the News:
Environment, Growth Management and
Transportation Supplement**

Contents This Week

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

[Beaches face a rising tide of pollution](#)
[Opinions change on environment](#)
[California climate adaptation strategy](#)
[Environmental justice in West County](#)
[Fresno ranked greenest in Valley](#)
[Modest fisheries reduction could protect ecosystems](#)
[Climate bill costs low for households](#)
[Distributing emissions allowances](#)
[Offsets to reduce greenhouse gases](#)
[Reducing GHG through smart growth](#)
[West coast marine research needs](#)
[Funding parks and recreation land](#)
[Steelhead strategy roils local waters](#)
[Chemicals threaten reproductive health](#)

TRANSPORTATION

[Market penetration of plug-in hybrids](#)
[Texting while driving even more dangerous](#)
[Maritime freight declines](#)
[Economics of congestion pricing](#)
[First amendment implications for transit agencies](#)

Introduction to Studies in the News

Studies in the News is a current compilation of items significant to the Legislature and Governor's Office. It is created weekly by the California State Library's [California Research Bureau](#) to supplement the public policy debate in California.

To help share the latest information with state policymakers, these reading lists are now being made accessible through the California State Library's website. This week's list of current articles in various public policy areas is presented below. Prior lists can be viewed from the California State Library's Web site at www.library.ca.gov/sitn

- When available, the URL for the full text of each item is provided.
- California State Employees may contact the State Information & Reference Center (916-654-0261); csinfo@library.ca.gov) with the SITN issue number and the item number [S#].
- All other interested individuals should contact their local library - the items may be available there, or may be borrowed by your local library on your behalf.

The following studies are currently on hand:

ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

BEACHES

Testing the Waters 2009: A Guide to Water Quality at Vacation Beaches. By Mark Dorfman and Kirsten Sinclair Rosselot, Natural Resources Defense Council. (The Council, New York, New York) July 2009.

["Although California may be famous for its surfing and swimming, the state ranked among the worst in beach water quality nationwide, coming in 22nd out of 30 coastal states. Los Angeles County was home to the most polluted beach water, with 20% of samples exceeding state standards.... Ten percent of water samples at California beaches last year contained more human fecal bacteria than the state allows. Violations of daily maximum bacterial standards at 227 California beaches increased 4% from 2007 to 2008.... Although researchers linked 9% of contamination to sewage and 3% to storm water, the vast majority (81%) came from unknown sources." Los Angeles Times (July 29, 2009) 1.]

[Request #S09-23-3985]

Report. 453 p.

<http://www.nrdc.org/water/oceans/ttw/ttw2009.pdf>

California. 48 p.

<http://www.nrdc.org/water/oceans/ttw/sumcal.pdf>

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

CALIFORNIA

Californians and the Environment. By Mark Baldassare and others, Public Policy Institute of California. (The Institute, San Francisco, California) July 2009. 36 p.

Full text at: <http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=906>

["The percentage of Californians who believe air pollution is a 'big problem' has dropped precipitously in recent years, especially in Los Angeles County and the Central Valley, among the nation's dirtiest regions. At the same time, the support for the state's landmark 2006 law to slash greenhouse gases has declined, and fewer people think that global warming is a serious threat to the economy and quality of life of the state.... Nonetheless, the survey found strong support for tougher pollution standards on cars, diesel trucks and buses, on commerce and industry, and on agriculture. More than three-fourths of Californians say the state should focus transportation dollars on public transit, while just 18% want more freeways." Los Angeles Times (July 30, 2009) A3.]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

CLIMATE CHANGE

2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy: Discussion Draft. By the California Natural Resources Agency. (The Agency, Sacramento, California) August 2009.

["The draft report provides the state's first comprehensive plan to work with local governments, universities and residents to deal with a changing climate. A final plan is expected to be released in the fall after the public weighs in.... Most countries have focused on cutting greenhouse gases in the future, but researchers say those efforts will take decades to have an effect while the planet continues to warm.... California needs to start preparing for rising sea levels, hotter weather and other effects of climate change.... The report warns that rising temperatures over the next few decades will lead to more heat waves, wildfires, droughts and floods.... It also recommends that cities and counties offer incentives to encourage property owners in high-risk areas to relocate and limit future development in places that might be affected by flooding, coastal erosion and sea level rise." Associated Press (August 3, 2009) 1.][Request #S09-23-3986]

Report. 161 p.

<http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/adaptation>

Executive Summary. 10 p.

<http://www.energy.ca.gov/2009publications/CNRA-1000-2009-027/CNRA-1000-2009-027-D-ES.PDF>

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Measuring What Matters: Neighborhood Research for Economic and Environmental Health and Justice in Richmond, North Richmond, and San Pablo. By Eli Moore and others, Pacific Institute. (The Institute, Oakland, California) May 2009.

["West County is home to several sources of environmental pollution, which have considerable cumulative negative health impacts, including General Chemical, the Chevron Refinery, the Port of Richmond, two rail yards, an older, possibly lead-contaminated housing stock, and several abandoned brownfield sites.... The concentration of environmental hazards and lack of economic assets in the West County neighborhoods where black, Latino, and Asian-American residents have lived and continue to live can seem overwhelming, yet there is also a strong tradition of community organizing and advocacy that has played a crucial role in creating thriving, healthy neighborhoods."][Request #S09-23-4001]

Report. 108 p.

http://www.pacinst.org/reports/measuring_what_matters/index.htm

Summary of Findings. 9 p.

http://www.pacinst.org/reports/measuring_what_matters/summary.pdf

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

"City Adoption of Environmentally Sustainable Policies in California's Central Valley." By Mark Lubell and others. IN: Journal of the American Planning Association, vol. 75, no. 3 (June 2009) pp. 293-308

Full text at:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~db=all~content=a911992385>

["Out of 100 Central Valley cities, Fresno has the greenest ideas for growth over the next three decades. But Fresno still may not be able to protect land, water and air from explosive growth, says Mark Lubell. He doubts other cities will have much luck either. Green policies still could be pushed aside for pollution-causing sprawl that earns more money for city treasuries.... For the last 18 months, Lubell and a team of researchers looked at Central Valley cities to see whether they are preparing for sustainable growth. In the study, sustainable growth refers to such factors as air quality, ground-water recharge, high-density residential land use and renewable energy sources, such as solar.... Bigger cities are trying to fix decades of planning mistakes. By using more progressive planning policies, smaller, lower-ranked cities could skip those mistakes." Fresno Bee (July 4, 2009) 1.]

[Request #S09-23-3903]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

FISHERIES

“Beyond Marine Reserves: Exploring the Approach of Selecting Areas Where Fishing Is Permitted, Rather than Prohibited.” By Natalie C. Ban and Amanda C. J. Vincent. IN: PLoS One, vol. 4, no. 7 (July 22, 2009) 8 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0006258>

["The study proposes modest reductions in areas where fisheries take place, rather than the current system of marine protected areas which only safeguard several commercially significant species, such as rockfish, shrimp, crab, or sea cucumber.... Using British Columbia's coastal waters as a test case, the study affirms that small cuts in fishing -- if they happen in the right places -- could result in very large unfished areas. For example, a two per cent cut could result in unfished areas covering 20 per cent of the B.C. coast, offering real conservation gains.... 'Given the dismal state of many fisheries, we urgently need to identify alternative approaches to sustaining marine life while respecting the needs of fishers and fishing communities,' says Amanda Vincent." Science Daily (July 23, 2009) 1.]

[Request #S09-23-3987]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

GREEN HOUSE GASES

Energy Market and Economic Impacts of H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009. By the Energy Information Administration, U.S. Department of Energy. (The Administration, Washington, DC) August 2009. 81 p.

Full text at: [http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/servicerpt/hr2454/pdf/sroiaf\(2009\)05.pdf](http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/servicerpt/hr2454/pdf/sroiaf(2009)05.pdf)

["The climate change bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives would raise annual energy costs for U.S. households less than \$150 in 10 years, significantly lower than some industry estimates. The projection from the EIA is in line with projections made by the Congressional Budget Office and the Environmental Protection Agency, and contradict claims by energy and business trade groups that consumers would pay thousands of dollars more a year under the plan to fight global warming.... The lower emission levels would be accomplished through a cap-and-trade system, where a U.S. company would be required to have a pollution permit to emit one ton of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions each year. Carbon permits are projected to cost \$32 a metric ton in 2020 and \$65 in 2030, the EIA said." Reuters (August 5, 2009) 1.]

[Request #S09-23-3993]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

Climate Change Policy: Preliminary Observations on Options for Distributing Emissions Allowances and Revenue under a Cap-and-Trade Program. By John Stephenson, U.S. Government Accountability Office. GAO-09-950T. (The Office, Washington, DC) August 2009. 22 p.

Full text at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09950t.pdf>

["Available literature and economists we interviewed point to five main options for distributing a program's allowance revenues, although numerous other options exist. First, the government could lower the overall cost of the cap-and-trade program to the economy through accompanying reductions in taxes on income, labor, or investment. Second, auction revenues could be distributed to households through lump-sum payments, which could offset the higher consumer prices resulting from a cap-and-trade program and mitigate any disproportionate impacts on low-income households. Third, the government could expand the scope of the Earned Income Tax Credit to further benefit low-income working families. Fourth, the government could compensate regulated entities and their shareholders for lost profits by allocating them free allowances. Finally, revenues might be used to fund climate-related programs, such as research on low-carbon technologies, or used to support climate change mitigation activities in developing nations."]

[Request #S09-23-3994]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

The Use of Offsets to Reduce Greenhouse Gases. By Natalie Tawil, Congressional Budget Office. (The Office, Washington, DC) August 3, 2009. 8 p.

Full text at: <http://cbo.gov/ftpdocs/104xx/doc10497/08-03-Offsets.pdf>

["If offsets -- which can be defined as reductions in GHGs from activities not subject to limits on emissions -- are less expensive than reductions from limiting the use of fossil fuels, they can reduce the overall economic cost of meeting a target for emissions. Yet the difficulty of verifying offset activities raises concerns about whether the specified target will actually be met; those concerns may be especially acute when allowable offsets include actions taken outside of the country setting the target for emissions. Preliminary evidence suggests that they can significantly lower the economic cost of a cap-and-trade program, even after accounting for the costs of steps taken to increase confidence that offsets represent true incremental reductions in GHGs. However, estimates of the savings that would result from including offsets in a cap-and-trade program are imprecise and depend importantly on policy design."]

[Request #S09-23-3988]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

LAND USE

Cost-Effective GHG Reductions through Smart Growth & Improved Transportation Choices: An Economic Case for Investment of Cap-and-Trade Revenues. By Steve Winkelman and others, Center for Clean Air Policy. (The Center, Washington, DC) June 2009. 25 p.

Full text at: [http://ccap.org/docs/resources/677/CCAP%20Smart%20Growth%20-%20per%20ton%20CO2%20\(June%202009\)%20FINAL%20.pdf](http://ccap.org/docs/resources/677/CCAP%20Smart%20Growth%20-%20per%20ton%20CO2%20(June%202009)%20FINAL%20.pdf)

["This report analyzes the benefits of reducing GHG emissions through smart growth, improved transportation choices, and transportation pricing. Our analysis indicates that these reductions can be achieved profitably, when factoring in avoided infrastructure costs, consumer savings and projected tax revenue growth... Smart growth is not only cost-effective compared to other mitigation measures, it can be profitable. If we ignore the full economic benefits of smart growth and improved transportation choices, we miss inexpensive GHG reductions that also provide additional community benefits and reduce the burden on other sectors to reduce their emissions. Dedicating a meaningful portion of allowance value to smart growth planning would be a cost-effective investment that can lower economy-wide GHG mitigation costs."]

[Request #S09-23-3867]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

OCEAN RESOURCES

West Coast Regional Marine Research and Information Needs. By Julie Risien, editor, Oregon Sea Grant. (Oregon Sea Grant, Corvallis, Oregon) 2009. 60 p.

Full text at: <http://seagrant.oregonstate.edu/sgpubs/onlinepubs/q09001.pdf>

["Oregon, Washington, California and Southern California Sea Grant Programs have spent more than three years working in collaboration with state, federal and tribal agencies to assess the region's marine research and information needs. The efforts included dozens of stakeholder meetings up and down the coast, along with public surveys and comments. The culmination of that effort, the West Coast Regional Marine Research and Information Needs report identifies new and continued research and information needs that, if met, could aid the region in adopting an ecosystem-based approach to resource management. This report is intended to: 1) assist regional researchers and information providers to plan and prioritize; and 2) spark regional-scale initiatives and investments in natural and social science research that might provide the best possible science for wise policy and resource-management decisions."]

[Request #S09-23-3909]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

PARKS & RECREATION

Great Outdoors America. By the Outdoor Resources Review Group. (The Group, Washington, DC) July 2009. 60 p.

Full text at: http://www.orrgroup.org/documents/July2009_Great-Outdoors-America-report.pdf

["The Land and Water Conservation Fund, the primary vehicle for federal and state acquisition of park and recreation lands, had never been adequately funded. Budget deficits and diversion of funds to other purposes left many worried about future levels of support. This occurred even as population and demographic changes have taken place, as anxieties about childhood obesity and public health have emerged, as community livability concerns have moved to the forefront, and as other urgent and unmet needs at the national, state, and local level have surfaced.... Immediate and bold action is critical to keeping America's outdoor resources high on the national agenda. Next steps could include congressional hearings, a congressional or presidential commission, a White House conference, and a coordinated national initiative led by the Obama administration and Congress."][Request #S09-23-3946]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

SALMON

Southern California Steelhead Recovery Plan. By the National Marine Fisheries Service, Southwest Regional Office. (The Office, Long Beach, California) July 23, 2009.

["A new federal proposal to reel Southern California steelhead salmon back from the brink of extinction threatens to disrupt fragile water systems that serve millions of residents from Santa Barbara to North County. The effects would ripple countywide when those providers seek more imported water, effectively competing with other local suppliers.... After steelhead were added to the Endangered Species Act list in 1997, federal officials have spent years on the complex process of developing a recovery plan for the fish.... The agency's proposal calls for making more water available in the targeted rivers at certain times of the year, removing or modifying dams, minimizing water pollution, curbing fishing and fully enforcing laws and regulations concerning steelhead." San Diego Union-Tribune (August 4, 2009) 1.][Request #S09-23-3989]

Report. 430 p.

http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/recovery/So_Cal/Southern_California_Steelhead_Public_Draft_Recovery_Plan.pdf

Press Release. 2 p.

http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/media/NR_workshop_social_steelhead_swr_FINAL.pdf

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

TOXICS

Reproductive Roulette: Declining Reproductive Health, Dangerous Chemicals, and a New Way Forward. By Reece Rushing, Center for American Progress. (The Center, Washington, DC) July 21, 2009. 75 p.

Full text at:

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/07/pdf/reproductive_roulette.pdf

["Reproductive health in the United States is headed in the wrong direction on a host of indicators. Fertility problems, miscarriages, preterm births, and birth defects are all up.... As reproductive health has declined, chemical production has increased dramatically. the number of chemicals registered for commercial use now stands at 80,000 -- a 30 percent increase since 1979.... Our chemical safety laws do not provide adequate protection from these chemical groups and other dangerous substances.... The prospects for addressing this situation fortunately appear to be brightening.... This presentation offers recommendations for modernizing chemical safety. Implementing these recommendations would reduce human exposure to dangerous chemicals, which in turn promises to lift reproductive health."]

[Request #S09-23-3966]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

TRANSPORTATION

AUTOMOBILES

PHEV Marketplace Penetration: An Agent Based Simulation. By J. L. Sullivan and others, University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute. (The Institute, Ann Arbor, Michigan) July 2009. 44 p.

Full text at: <http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/2027.42/63507/1/102307.pdf>

["New advanced technology vehicles need to be considered such as plug in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV), which hold the promise of considerably improving fleet energy efficiency and reducing fleet carbon footprint. However, because these vehicles cost a lot more than their conventional counterparts, especially in the near term, their market viability is in question, especially if no government policy initiatives are instituted to enable successful market penetration.... Our results show that by 2015, sales could reach 2 – 3 percent with fleet penetration of around 1%. By 2020, sales could reach around 4 – 5 percent with fleet penetration a little more than 2%. And in 30 years, they could be around twenty percent of sales with a fleet penetration of about 16%. Without subsidies, the current policy case would result in a fleet penetration level of less than 1% in ten years. Subsidies are critical."]

[Request #S09-23-4000]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

DRIVERS

New Data from VTTI Provides Insight into Cell Phone Use and Driving Distraction. By the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. (The Institute, Blackburg, Virginia) July 27, 2009. 4 p.

Full text at: http://www.vtti.vt.edu/PDF/7-22-09-VTTI-Press_Release_Cell_phones_and_Driver_Distraction.pdf

["Texting while driving increases the risk of a crash much more than previous studies have concluded with motorists taking their eyes off the road longer than they do when talking or listening on their cell phones. It found that when drivers of heavy trucks texted, their collision risk was 23 times greater than when not texting. Dialing a cell phone and using or reaching for an electronic device increased risk of collision about 6 times in cars and trucks.... The institute recommended that texting should be banned for all drivers and all cell phone use should be prohibited for newly licensed teen drivers. Fourteen states do ban texting while driving. The study also concluded that headset cell phone use is not substantially safer than hand-held because the primary risks associated with both are answering, dialing, and other tasks that take drivers' eyes off the road." Associated Press (July 28, 2009) 1.]
[Request #S09-23-3957]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

PORTS & SHIPPING

America's Container Ports: Freight Hubs That Connect Our Nation to Global Markets. By the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation. (The Department, Washington, DC) June 2009. 44 p.

Full text at:
http://www.bts.gov/publications/americas_container_ports/2009/pdf/entire.pdf

["This report provides an overview of the movement of maritime freight handled by the nation's container seaports in 2008 and summarizes trends in maritime freight movement since 1995. It covers the impact of the recent U.S. and global economic downturn on U.S. port container traffic, trends in container throughput, concentration of containerized cargo at the top U.S. ports, regional shifts in cargo handled, vessel calls and capacity in ports, the rankings of U.S. ports among the world's top ports, and the number of maritime container entries into the United States relative to truck and rail containers. The report also presents snapshots of landside access to container ports, port security initiatives, and ongoing maritime environmental issues."]
[Request #S09-23-3928]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Economics: Pricing, Demand, and Economic Efficiency: A Primer. By the Federal Highway Administration. (The Administration, Washington, DC) November 2008. 24 p.

Full text at:

<http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop08041/fhwahop08041.pdf>

["States and local jurisdictions are increasingly discussing congestion pricing as a strategy for improving transportation system performance.... The aim of the primer series is not to promote congestion pricing or provide an exhaustive discussion of the various technical and institutional issues one might encounter when implementing a particular project; rather, the intent is to provide an overview of the key elements of congestion pricing, to illustrate the multidisciplinary aspects and skill sets required to analyze and implement congestion pricing, and to provide an entry point for practitioners and others interested in engaging in the congestion-pricing dialogue.... This volume describes the underlying economic rationale for congestion pricing and how it can be used to promote economic efficiency."]

[Request #S09-23-3999]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)

TRANSIT

First Amendment Implications for Transit Facilities: Speech, Advertising, and Loitering. By Joseph Van Eaton and others, Miller & Van Eaton. (Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC) June 2009. 42 p.

Full text at: http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_lrd_29.pdf

["The nation's 6,000 plus transit agencies need to have access to a program that can provide authoritatively researched, specific, limited-scope studies of legal issues and problems having national significance and application to their business. Some transit programs involve legal problems and issues that are not shared with other modes; as, for example, compliance with transit-equipment and operations guidelines, FTA financing initiatives, private-sector programs, and labor or environmental standards relating to transit operations.... The Legal Research Digests (LRDs) are developed to assist transit attorneys in dealing with the myriad of initiatives and problems associated with transit start-up and operations, as well as with day-to-day legal work. The LRDs address such issues as eminent domain, civil rights, constitutional rights, contracting, environmental concerns, labor, procurement, risk management, security, tort liability, and zoning."]

[Request #S09-23-3929]

[\[Back to Top\]](#)