

AB 564

Los Angeles County Flood Control District



AB 564 seeks to update the Los Angeles County Flood Control Act and bring it into alignment with current and future service needs of the public served by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District. Passage of this bill by the State Legislature would authorize the District to collect a fee or charge in compliance with Article XIII D of the California Constitution (also known as Prop. 218).

What is the Los Angeles County Flood Control Act?

The Los Angeles County Flood Control Act (ACT) was adopted by the State Legislature in 1915, after a disastrous regional flood took a heavy toll on lives and property. The Act established the Los Angeles Flood Control District (District) and empowered it to provide flood protection, water conservation, recreation and aesthetic enhancement. The District is governed, as a separate entity, by the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors.

Who does the District serve?

The District covers more than 3,000 square miles, 85 cities and approximately 2.1 million land parcels. It includes the vast majority of drainage infrastructure within incorporated and unincorporated areas in every watershed, including 500 miles of open channel, nearly 3,000 miles of underground storm drain, and 78,000 catch basins.

Why does the Act need to be updated?

Dense urbanization in Los Angeles County was not a problem during the first half of the 20th Century, when the Act was written. Today, an aging flood protection infrastructure, water pollution from urban and stormwater runoff, water conservation, and unmet drainage needs are significant District priorities. The cost of these projects and programs threaten to overwhelm the District's existing revenue stream. While the Act does allow the District to issue bonds or levy assessments on real property, it does not allow it to ask voters for a fee or similar charge. AB 564 makes this option viable.

Will fees or charges be imposed without voter approval?

No. Any fee or related charge would be proposed to voters in compliance with Article XIII D of the California Constitution (also known as Prop. 218).

What types of projects would be covered by a fee or charge?

The complexity of the District's drainage infrastructure calls for a state-of-the-art flood protection, water quality and water conservation system. One example of a project that addresses all of these issues is the Tujunga Wash Greenway and Stream Restoration Project. To reintroduce a sustainable, healthy stream system into the park-poor community of Valley Glen, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District moved water away from the concrete channel that has fed directly into the Los Angeles River since 1952. During a year with average rainfall, as much as 325,000 gallons a day will flow through the Wash's new naturalized streambed, resulting in improved water quality for the region and enough groundwater recharge to provide 760 families of four with drinking water for an entire year.

What can I do to help?

A support letter or e-mail sent to the State Legislature would effectively communicate how important this Act is to addressing important water resource issues within the District.

Contact Hector J. Bordas at (626) 458-5947 or hbordas@dpw.lacounty.gov.