



OFFICE OF ASSEMBLYMEMBER

Marc Levine

TENTH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

AB 761 Compost Pilot Project

SUMMARY

AB 761 establishes a \$50 million grant program to fund approximately 50 pilot projects to expand the use of composting on rangelands and other agricultural lands. Research shows that these pilots are expected to increase soil carbon sequestration (reduce greenhouse gasses), improve soil water retention, and make agricultural land more resilient to climate change and drought.

EXISTING LAW/BACKGROUND

A report published in 2014 on research conducted by University of California at Berkeley over seven years on 540 acres in Marin County has indicated that use of compost on rangeland could sequester up to 3 years' worth of California's total annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. All that is required to unlock this ability to sequester carbon is a one-time dusting of compost. Studies show that a one-time dusting of compost will allow the land to sequester carbon for at least 30 years and maybe for as much as a century.

Research also indicates that water needs for this rangeland could be reduced by 25 percent while creating healthier rangeland that has more native grasses.

This research highlights an opportunity to explore the ability to replicate these astounding results on rangeland throughout California. The research will also examine whether similar results can be achieved in other agricultural settings.

A \$50 million grant program could lead to a dramatic transformation in the capacity of the agricultural sector to reduce overall GHG emissions. Additionally, these pilots will also likely make agricultural lands more drought resilient.

In 2006, AB 32 (Núñez and Pavely) required California to reduce its GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. AB 32 allowed for the establishment of the cap and trade program which has been projected to generate up to \$5 billion annually. Those revenues are required to be used on programs that reduce GHG emissions.

In November of 2014 voters approved Proposition 1 (Water Bond). Proposition 1 contains approximately \$7.5 billion dollars to be spent on among other things grants for multibenefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects.

THIS BILL

Establishes a process administered by the Department of Conservation to determine the most effective agricultural practices for addressing GHG reduction and drought resilience.

SUPPORT

Carbon Cycle Institute

Land Trust of Santa Cruz County

California Trout



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The Environmental Action Committee of
West Marin

California Cattlemen's Association

National Audubon Society