



Ocean Conservancy



March 7, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor
State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for increasing California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) wildlife officer compensation

Dear Governor Newsom,

Each of our organizations has long supported efforts by California's wildlife officers to improve their compensation to ensure the Thin Green Line is as strong and resilient as it can be at protecting California's citizens and natural resources.

The pay disparity between CDFW's officers and other law enforcement has long needed to be addressed and our officers and resources suffer every year we delay.

In the next few weeks, the rank and file officers will enter collective bargaining with the state, and we urge you to direct state negotiators to address the pay inequities with increased compensation needed to attract and retain the necessary talent.

Wildlife officers have watched while other state employees' pay disparities have been addressed: environmental scientists, attorneys, engineers, and prison guards. As Governor, you can act early to ensure a legacy of stronger and more resilient natural resources enforcement.

Additionally, a long-standing compaction issue facing the exempt classifications also adversely affects recruitment into leadership positions and retention. Collective bargaining efforts will never correct this, but the good news is that funds were allocated from the 2018-19 budget for this purpose and CalHR can approve CDFW's request.

We believe the most significant enforcement issues facing the department are the compensation and compaction challenges that regularly cause capable wildlife officers to leave the agency and reduce the likelihood that other good, diverse candidates apply and promote into supervisory and management positions.

Please support the wildlife officers in their pursuit of fair pay and in so doing also show your commitment to stewarding “California's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public.”

Sincerely,

Michael Lynes
Director of Public Policy
Audubon California

David Goldenberg
Executive Director
California Sea Urchin Commission

John Carlson, Jr.
President
California Waterfowl Association

Diane Pleschner-Steele
Executive Director
California Wetfish Producers
Association

Nancy Foley
Chair
California Wildlife Officers Foundation

Kim Delfino
California Program Director
Defenders of Wildlife

John Devney
Senior Vice President
Delta Waterfowl

Gary Link
Director of Public Policy,
Western Region
Ducks Unlimited

Dan Silver
Executive Director
Endangered Habitats League

Deborah Byrne
Secretary/Treasurer
Friends of Fish and Game

Lynn Cullens
Executive Director
Mountain Lion Foundation

Jay Ziegler
Director of External Affairs and Policy
The Nature Conservancy

Gregory Helms
Program Manager, Pacific
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