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Contact: Kathryn Phillips, 916-557-1100 x 103 (desk) or 916-893-8494 (mobile)

Sierra Club California Statement on Governor's Budget Proposal Revisions

SACRAMENTO—Today Governor Jerry Brown released the May Revision to his 2012-2013 state budget proposal. The revision, which reflects changes in revenue projections, notes that the expected budget shortfall for the year has climbed to \$15.7 billion.

Environmental programs or issues that are affected include the following:

- The State Department of Parks and Recreation. The governor's proposal does not changed planned cuts to the department's budget, which will result in closure of up to 70 state parks in July.
- The Department of Toxic Substance Control will lose funding for nearly 84 staff. Another 52 positions will be shifted from other programs within the department to focus on consumer products work driven by the evolving Green Chemistry effort.
- New funding will be developed to support timber harvest plans logging companies must produce, and various state agencies must review and monitor, to ensure that logging is done in a way to reduce environmental impacts.

Sierra Club California Director Kathryn Phillips released the following statement about the May Revision:

"All Californians will be disappointed that the state's budget shortfall is much larger than anticipated. The shortfall isn't good for any public effort in California, including environmental quality and public health.

"We're disappointed that state parks closures remain in the budget. State parks play a role in education, recreation and physical health for millions of California children and adults. They also support the state's tourism industry and local and regional business. Closing parks will cost the state more than keeping them open, but the governor and his Department of Finance refuse to budge.

"State parks would have been a smart investment for the funds the governor is proposing to lend to the General Fund from the Motor Vehicle Account. Every dollar invested in state parks more than doubles its value to the state's economy.

"Californians shouldn't have to wonder how much poison they are exposed to each day. The Department of Toxic Substance Control is one entity that helps identify and reduce Californians' exposure to toxics. We are alarmed by the number of positions the governor is proposing to cut from a department that in recent years hasn't been able to keep up with demand for its services.

"We look forward to seeing details about the governor's proposal to develop new revenues to support timber harvest plans. These plans are often all that Californians can rely upon to make sure the services private forest lands provide society—habitat for wildlife, collection areas for snowpack and water, soil and hillside stabilization—aren't wiped out by reckless logging. But the agencies that review and enforce the plans have been understaffed and need new funding."

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Sierra Club California is the legislative and regulatory advocacy arm of the Sierra Club's 13 chapters and more than 150,000 members in California.