



CEQA Works: Just the Facts

Frivolous CEQA lawsuits are rare.

CEQA cases are rarely filed. They represent just 0.02% of the 1.1 million civil cases filed annually in California. Of projects subject to CEQA, less than 1% are litigated. Moreover, Section 21169.11 of the Public Resources Code authorizes a court to impose a \$10,000 penalty on frivolous lawsuits.

CEQA provides opportunities for good, clean jobs in California while protecting workers and providing tangible quality of life improvements and environmental protections in rural and urban areas. CEQA has resulted in:

- The electrification of the Port of Los Angeles, improving the working conditions for truckers and health of nearby communities.
- The Cornfield and Taylor Yards State Parks, in park-poor low income neighborhoods of L.A.
- A robust tourism industry for California, which is a particularly important economic sector in less-populated counties. According to the California Travel and Tourism Commission, travel generated \$102.3 billion in direct spending and accounted for 893,000 jobs in 2011 alone.
- Protection from offshore oil drilling for the \$6.5 million tourism-based coastal economies.
- Protection for workers – and nearby residents – from undue exposure to toxic chemicals, such as at the ConocoPhillips refinery in the small Bay Area community of Rodeo.
- Prevention of 30M gallons of sewage overflow into San Francisco Bay (mitigation for the Mission Bay development) and more than 200M gallons of sewage overflow into Newport Bay (mitigation for San Joaquin Reservoir conversion) annually.
- A long list of good outcomes for the environment and the public (see www.CEQAWorks.org).

CEQA includes provisions for speeding approval of infill projects.

According to a 2012 survey of planning directors by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, 87% of local governments ranked CEQA 12th on a list of 16 barriers to urban infill. SB 226 (Simitian, 2011) and SB 375 (Steinberg, 2008) included provisions to streamline environmental approval of infill development. The guidelines for SB 226 are still being finalized by the Office of Planning and Research.

CEQA provides important protections not found in subject-specific environmental laws.

CEQA ensures full public disclosure of the likely impacts of significant projects and provides a system through which communities can participate in a meaningful way in environmental review. CEQA ensures that the myriad of content-specific state and federal environmental laws and regulations are considered in a holistic context that includes cumulative impacts. It also allows community members to seek redress when public agencies and project proponents fail to adequately mitigate the environmental impacts of projects.

CEQA is appropriately applied to large-scale renewable energy projects.

Utility scale solar and wind projects typically require thousands of acres of land, which are bulldozed flat, obliterating wildlife habitat, agricultural land, and cultural sites. CEQA requires agencies to consider alternatives and mitigation measures that lessen these significant impacts.