

CONTROLLER STEVE WESTLY

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

300 Capitol Mall
Sacramento, CA 95814
916.445.3028
www.controller.ca.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
February 5, 2004

**CONTACT: STEVEN FISHER OR
STACEY RAGLAND**
916-445-2636

WESTLY ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN PROTECTS CALIFORNIA FROM BUSH ROLLBACKS

Westly Plan Promotes Clean Air, Takes on Big Oil and Protects Coastline

San Francisco, CA – California State Controller and new State Lands Commission Chair Steve Westly today announced a comprehensive environmental agenda for 2004 designed to help protect California from the Bush Administration's rollback of environmental protections.

In his fiscal year 2005 budget proposal, President Bush requested a 7 percent cut at the Environmental Protection Agency and cuts the National Ocean Service by 35 percent. He has already decimated enforcement at the EPA, relaxed air pollution rules and opened our public lands to polluters.

"The Bush Administration's environmental assault is so offensive it would make Janet Jackson and Justin Timberlake blush," Westly said. "California is the most pro-environment state in America. We're going to show America that we can turn the tide against the polluters."

The Westly agenda is designed to halt anti-environmental initiatives from the Bush Administration, invest in new environmental technologies and protect our natural resources from environmental attack.

Westly on February 2 assumed the chair of the State Lands Commission and will join the State Coastal Commission the week of February 16.

The Westly plan includes six offensive strategies to ensure clean air and water.

PROMOTING GREEN TECHNOLOGIES

Westly will work to encourage the use of fuel-efficient vehicles, by advocating for special parking privileges at municipal parking meters and parking lots, and supporting state and federal legislation that ensures tax fairness for people who drive more fuel-efficient cars. In fact, Westly is supporting legislation authored by Assemblyman Joe Nation (D-Marin) that would ensure this kind of tax fairness.

"Fuel-efficient cars are one of the great advances of the past decade," Westly said. "For the environment as well as economic growth, we must encourage high-tech and environmentally friendly cars."

MORE

STANDING UP TO BIG OIL

To save our coastlines, Westly will oppose new drilling on all existing oil leases and lead the fight against the Bush-Cheney sponsored energy bill that would shift California oil royalties from schools to oil companies. Westly said he would urge other state officials to join the effort to stop this proposal.

“We can’t trade education and our precious coastline for the profits of a few oil barons,” Westly said.

PRESERVING CALIFORNIA’S HERITAGE

From the State Lands Commission, Westly will work to establish an education program, along with rigorous enforcement standards, to prevent looting of submerged Native American artifacts on state lands.

“California is rich in historical and treasured artifacts. They are part of our history and part of our state and must be protected,” Westly added.

CRACKING DOWN ON MARINE POLLUTION

Westly will work to establish new stringent rules for all State Lands leases, including marinas and docks, to ensure the highest environmental protection standards and cut down on sewage dumping and other beach pollution.

PROTECTING CALIFORNIA’S OCEANS

Another top priority is the installation of ocean-observing systems off the California coast. High-tech systems along the shore, on ships and in buoys will record information and trends about oceans, giving policymakers a vital new tool for taking on global warming, pollution and marine habitats.

INVESTING IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Controller Westly has been working with CalPERS and CalSTRS staff to develop responsible guidelines for investing in clean energy companies and is recommending a proposal to the board that calls for creating a core initiative in clean technology.

He is calling for appropriate efficiency standards in all state buildings. Westly, who is the editor of two books on energy efficiency, said, “saving energy starts at home and I want California to be the national leader in energy efficient buildings.”

###