



Sustainable Conservation

## MAKING BIG IDEAS WORK

Campaign Update • Year 2 Results

Dear Friends,

When it comes to water supply, the future is now. And while the reality of California's drought is stark, it has also reinforced and expanded Sustainable Conservation's relationships with farmers, businesses, and government – all of whom are increasingly receptive to creative solutions.

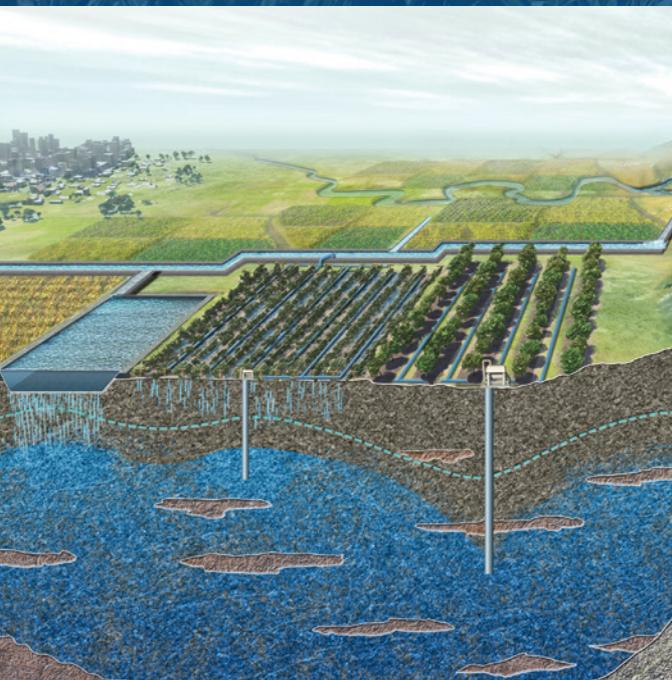
Thanks to your early gift to our **MAKING BIG IDEAS WORK** Campaign, Sustainable Conservation has significantly increased its scope and impact statewide. Since the launch of the Campaign, we've been able to bring people together on a greater scale to steward the resources upon which we all depend – in ways that make economic sense.

I'm pleased to share that we've made excellent progress toward our Campaign goal of \$14 million. To date, Sustainable Conservation has raised \$11.9 million, 85 percent of our Campaign goal. We are on track to raise the remaining \$2.1 million by the end of 2015.

We are inspired by your support and energized by recent accomplishments. I hope you enjoy reading about our proudest achievements of 2014. We are in the right place, with demonstrably effective solutions, at the right moment.

Sincerely,

Ashley Boren  
Executive Director



### PARTNERING WITH FARMERS TO GROW A VIBRANT FUTURE

Thanks to you, we have expanded our work on a critical issue for California – increasing groundwater supply reliability and water quality through regional partnerships. We are working side by side with farmers, water agencies, and industry to evaluate and promote new approaches to manage water use so farms, the environment, and communities have the water they need for years to come.

In the Kings River Basin (Fresno and Kings counties), many communities are completely reliant upon groundwater. In 2014, we expanded a pilot project that enables farmers to apply floodwater to active cropland. This will help replenish groundwater when rainfall is plentiful in a very short window of time. We also partnered with Coca-Cola to provide the final funding needed to complete a new groundwater recharge basin.

**BIG IDEA: REPLENISH 25,000 ACRE-FEET OF GROUNDWATER ANNUALLY THROUGH ON-FARM RECHARGE IN THE KINGS RIVER BASIN. 2014 MILESTONE: NEW GROUNDWATER BASIN HAS THE CAPACITY TO RECHARGE 2,600 ACRE-FEET OF GROUNDWATER ANNUALLY.**

## SUPPORTING LANDOWNERS TO RESTORE CALIFORNIA'S LANDS AND WATER

In 2014, Sustainable Conservation achieved landmark legislation for accelerating restoration statewide. On September 26th, Governor Brown signed Assembly Bill 2193, which was sponsored and championed by Sustainable Conservation. The passage of AB 2193 – The Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Act – created an expedited review process with California Department of Fish and Wildlife that recognizes restoration projects as environmentally beneficial.

Voluntary projects that restore streams, rebuild habitat, and reduce soil erosion can now move ahead in a few months rather than a few years. The potential scope of this legislation is enormous: private landowners, state and national parks, land trusts, and other public land managers now have greater incentive to complete conservation projects than ever before.



**BIG IDEA:** ALL AGENCIES HAVE SIMPLIFIED PERMITS TO ENCOURAGE MUCH NEEDED RESTORATION STATEWIDE.  
**MILESTONES TO DATE:** NOAA FISHERIES, CA COASTAL COMMISSION, AND CA DEPT. OF FISH AND WILDLIFE HAVE SIMPLIFIED RESTORATION PERMITS.



## ENGAGING BUSINESS TO SOLVE ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

We couldn't be prouder to announce that in 2014, we formally signed The Home Depot to PlantRight's Retail Partnership Program. The Home Depot has incorporated PlantRight's "do not sell" list of invasive plants, as well as our suggested alternatives, into their Garden Center playbook. This is momentous given that big box stores represent 70% of retail plant sales in California.

We also took a giant step toward preventing new plant invasions with the publication of a scientific paper on PlantRight's Plant Risk Evaluation (PRE) tool by PLOS ONE – an international, peer-reviewed, and open-access online publication. Publication in this prestigious journal gives our tool the scientific validation it needs to be used by scientists and the industry to determine a plant's potential for invasiveness before bringing it to market – protecting California's native plants and wildlife for generations to come.

**BIG IDEA:** PLANTRIGHT'S 19 KNOWN INVASIVE PLANTS ARE NOWHERE TO BE FOUND IN CALIFORNIA'S RETAIL NURSERIES AND GARDEN CENTERS.  
**2014 MILESTONE:** ACCORDING TO OUR 2014 SURVEY, 82% OF NURSERIES DID NOT SELL ANY OF OUR ORIGINAL LIST OF 19 SPECIES.

Your financial support of the **MAKING BIG IDEAS WORK** Campaign was critical to our ability to pilot new approaches and implement lasting solutions to the toughest challenges facing California's air, land, and water. Thank you for helping California thrive!

