

California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force

Sustaining Natural and Cultural Resources

Subcommittee Meeting Summary: October 4, 2024

DRAFT until approved at subsequent meeting

Meeting Called to Order

Facilitator Wylie started the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Welcome and Housekeeping

Facilitator Wylie provided housekeeping information for all meeting participants. Slides and materials presented during the meeting are available on the Strategic Growth Council ([SGC](#)) [website](#).

Roll Call

Members present:

- Thea Rittenhouse
- Lawrence Harlan
- Darlene Franco
- Emily Burgueno*, Agricultural Land Equity Task Force Vice Chair

**Indicates intermittent participation due to internet connectivity issues*

Approval of Last Meeting's Summary

Approval of the July 2 meeting summary was tabled until the subsequent meeting.

Work Plan Discussion

Staff updated the Subcommittee on research requested during the July 2 meeting. Staff are evaluating existing policies and their impact on sovereignty in key areas such as cultural fire; ancestral land return; the protection of Native sites, remains, and artifacts; and Consultation. Members suggested the research should have a clear focus on Native and Tribal sovereignty.

To address a research request from the previous meeting for a summary of ratified treaties, staff proposed working in collaboration with historians and other experts to provide a summary as part of a broader historical context-setting portion of the final report. A member questioned the focus on ratified treaties, noting their understanding that there

were no ratified treaties in California. Another member shared their understanding there is at least one ratified treaty and might be others. Members requested that unratified treaties also be reviewed as part of this effort.

Members expressed interest in identifying whether the state holds unused land promised to tribes in unratified treaties and whether this land could be transferred to Tribal ownership, particularly in relation to the high-speed rail project. Staff shared this is being considered by the Public Lands Working Group, and they will also examine the issue in both contemporary and historical contexts.

Staff next discussed plans to map ancestral lands in relation to contemporary public and private land ownership using existing resources to create an interactive map that displays these components alongside other relevant factors. They are working with a GIS specialist within the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation to advance this work. This product can serve as an educational tool. Facilitator Wylie encouraged members to consider how this resource could inform the Task Force's recommendations.

Staff aim to share initial research findings with the Subcommittee in December, thus allowing the Subcommittee six to eight weeks to prepare draft recommendations (or concepts for recommendations) ahead of the February Task Force meeting. Members requested an analysis of proposed recommendations' feasibility. Staff encouraged Task Force members to also analyze the recommendations, leveraging their expertise, knowledge, and experiences. They noted the soon-to-be-formed Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) can also contribute to this analysis.

Staff noted that other subcommittees, including the *Land Access, Acquisition, and Ancestral Land Return Subcommittee* and its *Land Back* and *Public Lands Working Groups*, as well as the *Land Use Governance and Sovereignty Subcommittee*, are addressing related issues. Staff asked how members view the work of this Subcommittee in this context and whether there are additional issues it should address that other subcommittees are not considering.

Members suggested the Subcommittee focus on the protection of cultural sites and cultural land use. It was noted that the Task Force is not currently addressing resource protection when land changes ownership. Members proposed the Subcommittee could address Consultation, cultural fire practices, protection of cultural sites, game hunting, and root gathering. Members emphasized the need to address both cultural and natural resources and asked staff to analyze how existing policies protect these resources. Members also requested that staff reassess potential areas of focus for the Subcommittee and share their ideas at the next meeting.

Members commented it is difficult to track all the work happening across the various subcommittees. Staff can provide regular reports on the work of related subcommittees and working groups. Members also inquired about the logistics of working groups and

emphasized that they view the work of this Subcommittee as complementary to work happening in other spaces, particularly in its focus on protecting cultural resources from a Native perspective.

Facilitator Wylie and staff suggested the Subcommittee wait to reconvene until staff research and other subcommittee work is far enough along for this Subcommittee's review, likely in December.

Staff encouraged members to share perspectives or knowledge they would like to incorporate into the work of the Subcommittee or the Task Force more broadly. Staff plan to facilitate this by inviting guest speakers to a Subcommittee meeting, which non-subcommittee members can attend as observers.

Staff inquired if the Subcommittee or Task Force might benefit from engaging with the Redbud Resource Group (RRG) and highlighted resources developed by RRG, such as the Land Back Spider Graph, policy timelines, and land easement materials. Members supported this idea. They requested representatives of this organization be invited as guest speakers and/or host a workshop for the Task Force, perhaps at an upcoming Task Force meeting. A member specifically suggested using the spider graph as a tool in developing its recommendations, while another member thought it would be helpful for RRG to present to the Subcommittee on issues specifically related to natural and cultural resources.

Public Comment

None

Facilitator Wylie shared upcoming Task Force and subcommittee meetings. Members requested the survey being considered in the Community Outreach Subcommittee be recirculated to the full Task Force for review before finalization. The meeting concluded at 12:02 p.m.