

California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force Virtual Restorative Lands Subcommittee Meeting Summary: Sept. 24, 2025

DRAFT until approved at subsequent meeting.

Meeting Called to Order

Facilitator Wylie opened the meeting at 3:03 p.m.

Welcome and Housekeeping

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

Roll Call

Roll call was conducted by the facilitator. Members present:

- Lawrence Harlan
- Thea Rittenhouse

Members absent:

- Irene de Barraicua
- Doria Robinson

Quorum was established.

Staff present:

- Camille Frazier, SGC
- Tessa Salzman, SGC
- Meagan Wylie, Sacramento State

Action: Approval of Summary

Approval of Sept. 5, 2025, Meeting Summary.

Task Force Discussion:

- None.

Public Comment:

- None.

Action:

Member Rittenhouse moved to approve the meeting summary. Member Harlan seconded. Motion passed. (2-0-2). (*2 absent)

Working Session

Staff shared follow-up research from the last meeting, including connections with Donald Tamaki, a lawyer and member of the California Reparations Task Force (RTF). Members requested legal insight on:

- How eligibility was approached by RTF, including in relation to Proposition 209.
- How the Agricultural Land Equity Task Force relates to the work of the RTF.

Staff reviewed related legislation that is currently pending and may influence the draft recommendations:

- AB 57: Allocates 10% of funding from certain home loan programs to descendants of enslaved persons.
- AB 62: Establishes a claims process for victims of racially motivated eminent domain.
- SB 437: Funds research to verify descent and reparative claims.
- SB 518: Creates a Bureau within the Civil Rights Department to verify eligibility and administer programs.

Members agreed to await outcomes on these bills and requested staff provide updates at the October Task Force meeting.

Community Engagement Context

- Engagement input emphasized the need for dedicated funding, strong accountability metrics, and support for cooperative and community ownership models for descendants of enslaved people.
- The Task Force received a letter from organizations that highlighted the Uniform Partition of Heirs' Property Rights Act (2021) and called for a comprehensive study to assess:

- The extent of agricultural land held as heirs' property.
 - The unique challenges heirs face in maintaining ownership and stewardship.
- Staff clarified that heirs' property issues are particularly prevalent in Black communities, often leading to land loss when succession is unclear.
- Members noted that resolving heirs' property disputes requires specialized legal expertise and suggested funding for legal assistance to address these challenges.

Draft Recommendation Revisions

- 3.4a: Add language acknowledging and addressing the specific needs of Black farmers in all Technical Assistance (TA) and capacity-building programs.
- 3.4b: Add provisions for tailored technical and legal assistance to resolve heirs' land ownership and succession issues.
 - Members noted that 3.4b is covered in the new goal language and should not be duplicated elsewhere.
 - Members emphasized the importance of identifying which entities should provide these services (e.g., state agencies, nonprofits, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs).
 - Members agreed language should reference leveraging USDA programs, while staff will flag areas needing further refinement for October.

Eligibility Language and Historical Events

- Members asked whether should use "descendants of enslaved African Americans" across recommendations.
 - Staff agreed to review Reparations Task Force and adjust language accordingly.
- Suggestions were made to clarify references to historical events such as eminent domain and dam-related flooding.
 - Agreement to frame recommendations around determining "eligible historical events" as requiring further legal review and definition.

Cooperative and Community Land Ownership

- Members discussed how recommendations should support cooperative and community land ownership structures, while ensuring language remains clear and understandable.
- Emphasis on providing legal and TA support for multiple business and governance models, leaving choice with community members.

Public-Private Partnerships

- Members reaffirmed the importance of enabling public-private partnerships to contribute to restorative land programs.
- Discussion included the need to ensure philanthropic contributions can be integrated into state programs to address gaps.
- Staff will refine language and consult with California Department of Food and Agriculture and SGC staff who may have further guidance

Next Steps

- Members supported moving the restorative lands proposal forward as Goal 2 for inclusion in the October draft report.
- Staff will:
 - Ensure consistent use of terminology.
 - Incorporate refinements into the October draft, including flagged language for further review.
 - Provide updates on the status of AB 57, AB 62, SB 437, and SB 518 at the October Task Force meeting.
 - Refine eligibility language and philanthropic funding mechanisms.

Public Comment:

- None.

General Public Comment:

- None.

Facilitator Wylie summarized action items and next steps and highlighted upcoming meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.