

California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force Meeting Summary: Oct. 15-16, 2025

Oct. 15, 2025

Meeting Called to Order

Chair Nelson Hawkins called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. Facilitator Meagan Wylie welcomed attendees, provided housekeeping remarks, reviewed participation guidelines, and previewed the day's agenda.

Roll Call

Roll call was conducted by the facilitator. Members present:

- Nelson Hawkins*, Chair
- Emily Burgueno, Vice Chair (joined at 8:46 a.m.)
- Irene de Barraicua
- Nathaniel Brown
- Ruth Dahlquist-Willard*
- Darlene Franco
- James Nakahara
- Dorian Payán
- Liya Schwartzman*
- Thea Rittenhouse
- Doria Robinson
- Qi Zhou

Members absent:

- Lawrence Harlan

Quorum was established.

Staff Attendance:

Staff members present:

- Camille Frazier, California Strategic Growth Council
- Sean Kennedy, California Strategic Growth Council
- Matt Read, California Strategic Growth Council (Legal Counsel)
- Tessa Salzman, California Strategic Growth Council
- Caleb Swanson, California Strategic Growth Council

- Meagan Wylie, California State University Sacramento

* *Denotes virtual attendance*

Welcome Remarks

Maura Sullivan and Mariza Sullivan, members of the Coastal Band of the Chumash Nation, provided opening reflections. They are Chumash and Mexican, with deep multigenerational ties to California agriculture. Mariza, a former Tribal Chair, commended the Task Force for its thoughtful and inclusive process and for the progress reflected in the October Draft Report. Maura spoke about the importance of engaging all Tribal communities, including unrecognized bands and families, and of holding in mind the full historical and cultural context of the Task Force's work.

Both speakers shared personal and historical perspectives on land loss, agricultural development, and cultural resource protection in Ventura County. Key reflections included:

- Challenges faced by federally non-recognized California Native American Tribes, including limited access to funding and resources.
- Concerns about development and loss of former agricultural and cultural lands.
- Balancing agricultural heritage with pressures of urban development.
- Advancing creative, community-based land access models, including community gardens and small-parcel stewardship, beyond traditional land trusts.
- Ensuring land return efforts provide true access and cultural continuity.
- Restoring wetlands, native plant and animal communities, and cultural burning practices to sustain ecological and cultural health.
- Addressing pollution, housing barriers, and exploitation of farmworkers as interconnected issues of environmental justice and Indigenous wellbeing.

Task Force members expressed deep appreciation for Maura's and Mariza's remarks and reflections. Members acknowledged the importance of including cultural resource access and protection within the Report's recommendations, not only through conservation but through living use and stewardship. The discussion surfaced opportunities to strengthen the Report's treatment of Indigenous cultural resources, including plant and material gathering, and to explore mechanisms for restoring access to these traditional lands and practices.

Action: Approval of Summary

Approval of Aug. 13-14, 2025, Meeting Summary.

Task Force Discussion:

None.

Public Comment:

None.

Action:

Member Robinson moved to approve the meeting summary. Chair Hawkins seconded.

Motion passed. (10-1-2*). (*One abstention. Two absent.)

Staff Report

Staff provided updates regarding:

- Subcommittee and working group activities since the August Task Force meeting.
- Budget:
 - Staff will revisit the *Research and Technical Assistance* and *Local Assistance* fund lines.
- Legislative recap:
 - Senate Bill (SB) 437 and SB 518, which support the implementation of the California Reparations Task Force’s Report, were signed into law.
 - Assembly Bill (AB) 524 was vetoed due to it lacking fiscal appropriation.
 - Proposition 4 includes a \$30 million land-access provision without funding appropriation.

Staff clarified that absent further appropriations, the Task Force’s current mandate concludes December 31, 2025, but future funding could reactivate its work. Members commented on the importance of advocating for continued political support for and visibility of land equity priorities.

Public Comment:

None.

Discussion: Reserved Funds

Sean Kennedy provided background on the \$1 million in Reserved Local Assistance Funds, established to pilot small-scale projects and community-engaged research supporting agricultural land equity. He explained that these funds originated from a 2022 SGC allocation combining General Fund and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund resources through the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities (AHSC) program.

Matt Read, SGC Legal Counsel, clarified that, under state conflict-of-interest (COI) laws (Government Code §1090), the Task Force and its member organizations are ineligible to directly receive or apply for these funds due to their advisory role to SGC. The SGC retains ultimate decision-making authority on the use of these funds but intends to design the program in alignment with Task Force recommendations.

Next steps outlined by staff:

- Propose uses for the funds informed by Task Force input.
- Conduct public engagement, including workshops and webinars, to refine program design.
- Ensure alignment with California Climate Investments and AHSC requirements.
- Consider key factors such as administrative burden, accessibility, and equitable distribution.

Task Force discussion highlights:

- Several members expressed frustration over the late clarification of COI restrictions and the limited opportunity for prior discussion.
- Members agreed that additional time is needed to fully explore funding design options and proposed holding a dedicated meeting or forming a subcommittee.
- Suggestions included: engaging an independent review body, potentially including members of the public; ensuring Tribal representation in any advisory structure; and exploring mechanisms for recusal to allow broader participation.
- Members emphasized the importance of transparency, maintaining public trust, and ensuring the funds reach priority producers and land stewards most in need.

Staff acknowledged the confusion, apologized for the delay in communication, and confirmed that a follow-up discussion would be scheduled to revisit the matter in detail.

Public Comment:

None.

Working Session

Members referenced the [October 2025 version](#) of the updated Draft Report. Staff provided an overview of the working session and its associated goals, then reviewed the Report development timeline. The purpose of this extended working session was to reach broad support on Report content and identify issues requiring further revision before the November near-final Draft. Staff outlined potential pathways and options for moving forward subgoals or other content that did not enjoy support for inclusion by some or many Task Force members.

Staff next reviewed a summary of key revisions made from August – October 2025, as outlined in the meeting's [Briefing Packet](#):

- Addition of a new Goal 2 (“Restorative Land Fund and Education Campaign”), bringing the total to five goals.
- New subgoals addressing coastal access and an agricultural ombuds program.
- Terminology updates to “California Native American Tribes.”
- Plans for comprehensive editorial review, including clarifying language for consistency in structure and tone.
- Plans to add case studies, quotes, and graphics for the November version.

The October Draft Report was shared on screen for members to engage in detailed discussion on each section of the Report, including front matter, goals and associated subgoals, and appendices. Staff made in-line tracked changes edits to the Draft Report as discussion unfolded, and members expressed their level of support for the various sections.

Discussion highlights:

Introductory Content and Definitions:

- Members discussed how systemic trends regarding corporate consolidation, speculative investment, and loss of agricultural land should be more prominently addressed in the Report and debated where this context should appear.
 - Some supported including it in the definition of agricultural land equity. Others preferred situating it in a separate section or preamble highlighting key challenges.
 - *Outcome*: Members agreed not to modify the formal definition of agricultural land equity but to integrate the concept elsewhere in the document, such as under Goal 3 or the introduction to Goal 4.
- Members discussed refining the definition of *priority producers and land stewards* to ensure inclusivity of farmworkers, beginning farmers, and aspiring producers.
 - Members expressed differing views on the use of terms such as aspiring versus beginning, with concerns about inadvertently excluding or misclassifying participants under existing United States Department of Agriculture definitions.
 - *Outcome*: Members agreed to retain flexible language recognizing pathways for farmworkers to become farmers and to revisit the definition during final review.
- Members support adding a footnote acknowledging inaccuracies in Census and National Agriculture Workers Survey (NAWS) data regarding Indigenous and farmworker populations.
 - Members noted the need for consistent capitalization of Indigenous.

Implementation Framework:

- Staff introduced a new section outlining how the Report’s recommendations could be implemented and monitored.
- Members requested stronger, more explicit language acknowledging California’s colonial history and systemic inequities and the need to address ongoing structures of inequity in future implementation efforts.

Goal 1: Tribal Stewardship and Land Return

- Introductory paragraph:
 - Outcome: Members reached full agreement on the introductory paragraph, including the change in terminology from “California Tribal Nations” to “California Native American Tribes,” as recommended by interagency reviewers.
- Subgoal 1.1:
 - Members added clarification referencing Highways Code Article 3, Section 118.1, per interagency review.
 - Members agreed to replace the term “stipends” with “funding” to better reflect the need for financial support of government-to-government consultation.
 - Discussion noted that California Native American Tribes often must draw on their own limited funds for consultation, underscoring the need for State-level investment.
 - Members agreed that identifying a specific funding administrator is premature, as multiple agencies may play roles.
 - Members clarified that the subgoal should apply broadly across federal, state, and local levels, rather than naming one implementing entity.
 - Members endorsed stronger language affirming that the Task Force supports and encourages Tribal consultation as a standard practice in all relevant State and local actions.
 - Outcome: Support.
- Subgoal 1.2:
 - Members agreed to remove any language suggesting a waiver of sovereign immunity and instead emphasize building trust between California Native American Tribes and agencies.
 - Discussion highlighted the historical context of unratified treaties—an inequitable effort by the state to define Tribal land bases.
 - Members emphasized that these treaties were not only unratified but actively concealed, representing early systemic dispossession.
 - There was consensus to include this framing in the contextual narrative rather than as a formal recommendation.
 - Members discussed the relevance of state-owned lands, noting that properties within the Central Valley originally identified in treaty negotiations could be prioritized for Tribal stewardship, when possible.
 - Outcome: Support.
- Subgoal 1.3:
 - Clarified the meaning of “moving forward with land return” to include addressing landlocked parcels and improving road and easement access for California Native American Tribes.
 - Members noted that land return efforts often require negotiation with private landowners and should encourage flexible mechanisms for access.
 - Staff incorporated edits to reflect this broader facilitation approach.
 - Outcome: Unanimous support.

- Subgoal 1.4
 - Discussion focused on the terms “redistributing liability” and “joint jurisdiction” to clarify intent.
 - Members agreed these provisions should enable collaborative stewardship (e.g., cultural burning, co-management of state lands) while reducing legal barriers for California Native American Tribes.
 - Members raised concerns about exposing California Native American Tribes to additional liability; members recommended revising language to focus on removing legal barriers rather than sharing liability.
 - Members suggested referencing Senate Bill 310 (2024) as a relevant model for expanding liability protections for cultural burns.
 - Members endorsed including Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) as a guiding principle, consistent with feedback from the first Tribal engagement session at the Susanville Rancheria.
 - *Outcome:* Support.

Goal 2: Restorative Land Fund and Education Campaign

Staff introduced Goal 2. This is a new goal developed by the *Restorative Land Subcommittee* to address historic and ongoing land-based harms.

- General:
 - A few members expressed concern that this section represents new content not previously shared in community or Tribal engagement sessions.
 - Others noted that related themes emerged during engagement sessions in Bakersfield and Allensworth, where participants emphasized the need to explicitly address the Black farming experience and land loss.
- Title and Introductory Framing:
 - Members agreed that the title “*Restorative Land*” should be revised and reflect the goal’s purpose more clearly.
 - Several members emphasized distinguishing restorative approaches (repair and healing) from retributive concepts (punitive framing).
 - Members supported framing this goal as addressing *historic harms specific to California*.
 - Members reaffirmed the importance of naming specific harms, including slavery, the mission and reservation systems, genocide, discriminatory labor practices, and land seizures, without diluting their distinct histories.
 - Members emphasized that addressing African American land loss does not preclude addressing other communities’ harms; rather, specificity is essential to prevent invisibility and ensure accountability.
- Subgoal 2.1:
 - Members agreed the recommendation should call for the creation and funding of a Restorative Land Fund dedicated to repairing historic and current land dispossession.

- Discussion highlighted the need to:
 - Include descendants of enslaved African Americans explicitly, ensuring visibility and direct benefit.
 - Consider other groups also subjected to land loss and discrimination in California, including California Native American Tribes, Japanese Americans, Filipino and Mexican laborers, and immigrants displaced through exclusionary policies.
 - Reference the California Reparations Task Force Report and integrate California-specific historical examples.
 - Prioritize public investment over philanthropy, with members urging the State to accept direct responsibility for reparative funding rather than relying on private donors.
- Members agreed that associated recommendations (e.g., 2.1 b 5-6) could be relocated under an education and outreach campaign to support awareness, eligibility, and participation.
- Members agreed that funding mechanisms must include direct support for land acquisition, not solely planning or technical assistance.
- Subgoal 2.2:
 - Members proposed developing a public education campaign tied to restorative land efforts to ensure broader understanding of California’s agricultural and racial history.
 - The campaign should:
 - Document and disseminate the stories of communities harmed by land theft, slavery, forced labor, and exclusionary policies.
 - Serve as a “never again” initiative to educate the public to prevent future inequities in land access and ownership.
 - Ensure culturally appropriate outreach so that African American farmers and other historically excluded groups are not left out of future programs.
- Merging with other goals:
 - Members discussed aligning Goal 2 with Goal 4.2 (transitional land grant and acquisition programs) to ensure consistent treatment of funding, land transfer, and restorative outcomes.
 - Some suggested merging these strategies so that Goal 2 establishes the Restorative Land Fund while Goal 4 details its operational framework.
 - Members agreed the merged structure should maintain specificity for African American communities while ensuring inclusivity of other groups affected by historic and ongoing dispossession.
- Outcome: General agreement to retain Goal 2, refine its title and introduction, and direct staff to merge funding and implementation details with related recommendations in Goal 4 for the November near-final Draft.

Goal 3: Preserved and Thriving Agricultural Lands

- Introductory Framing and Terminology:
 - Members discussed proposed edits to reference “California Native American Tribes” consistently and to include language acknowledging the historic and ongoing impacts of colonial and extractive land practices that have led to environmental degradation and climate change.
 - Members requested staff refine the language to emphasize these drivers while avoiding repetition or conflict with the section’s focus on state programs, including 30x30 and Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) initiatives.
 - Some members expressed concern that the term “climate-smart” can be overly prescriptive and not fully aligned with regenerative practices.
 - Alternative terms suggested included “regenerative,” “ecologically restorative,” and “sustainable climate adaptation.”
 - Consensus emerged to reference these practices as part of California’s evolving framework for climate-resilient, regenerative agriculture while clarifying the distinction between State terminology and community-driven approaches.
- Subgoal 3.1:
 - Members confirmed that 30x30 includes grazing and cropland conservation, aligning with prior feedback to reference existing state goals.
 - Discussion emphasized the need to:
 - Clarify distinctions between conservation, stewardship, and access programs.
 - Ensure the section reflects active preservation and management of agricultural lands, not just protection from conversion.
 - Strengthen connections between 30x30 implementation and community-based stewardship, particularly through public and Tribal partnerships.
 - Incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and cultural easements into conservation frameworks.
 - *Outcome:* Support to refine 3.1 to explicitly state how the Task Force’s recommendations can improve 30x30 outcomes by supporting hands-on, community-driven Traditional Ecological Knowledge and stewardship of conserved lands.
- Subgoal 3.2
 - Members observed overlap between this section and Goals 2 and 4, particularly around funding, loan forgiveness, and land access.
 - Discussion highlighted the need to clarify eligibility distinctions—Goal 3 recommendations apply primarily to institutions and public entities, whereas Goal 4 focuses on individual producers and land stewards.
 - Several members recommended:
 - Consolidating redundant content;
 - Moving recommendations related to land access or acquisition to Goal 4;
 - Expanding Goal 3 to focus more directly on conservation improvements, such as soil health, water quality, and multi-benefit land management.

- *Outcome:* Members agreed to maintain Goal 3 as a distinct, conservation-oriented section and requested staff to reorganize recommendations for clarity in the November Draft.

Goal 4: Equitable Land Transition and Acquisition

- Introductory Discussion:
 - Reframing Urgency:
 - *Outcome:* Members agreed that the opening paragraph should reflect that land turnover and consolidation are already occurring, rather than phrasing these as future expectations. Members supported describing these trends as current and escalating threats to equitable land ownership and stewardship.
 - Members emphasized integrating stronger language on the financialization of farmland and the role of hedge funds and corporate investment in removing wealth from rural communities.
 - Financialization and Consolidation:
 - Members emphasized integrating stronger language on the financialization of farmland and the role of hedge funds and corporate investment in removing wealth from rural, coastal, mountain, and desert communities.
 - Discussion highlighted the economic, cultural and social impacts of consolidation, including loss of local control, community displacement, and extraction of rural capital.
 - *Outcome:* Members agreed to elevate this issue to the beginning of the goal narrative and connect it directly to the need for equitable land transition mechanisms.
 - Addressing Systemic Racism:
 - Members discussed including an explicit acknowledgment of racism and discriminatory land acquisition practices, referencing examples shared during engagement sessions (e.g., Susanville).
 - *Outcome:* Agreement emerged that such acknowledgment should appear in the introductory context rather than as a recommendation.
- Subgoal 4.1:
 - Members discussed the mechanics of right-of-first-refusal (ROFR) and purchase-option agreements as tools for improving access to land when ownership changes.
 - Key points included:
 - Clarifying distinctions between ROFR and purchase-option contracts.
 - Exploring whether a dedicated fund should cover the costs of acquiring or managing these agreements.
 - Ensuring recommendations are written to encourage both private and public land transactions that prioritize socially disadvantaged and Tribal producers.

- *Outcome*: Members generally supported consolidating related recommendations under a broader funding mechanism rather than maintaining multiple separate funds throughout the document.
- Goal 4 discussions continued on Day 2 of the meeting.

Discussion on Funding Mechanisms:

- Members observed that references to funding were scattered across multiple goals and subgoals, creating confusion.
- Recommendations included:
 - Developing a single, comprehensive Land Equity Fund with multiple programmatic “buckets” (e.g., Tribal access, priority producer assistance, ROFR, technical assistance).
 - Creating a one-page summary or visual consolidating all funding references for reader clarity.
 - Tagging each recommendation that includes funding to clearly indicate how it aligns with the overarching fund.
- Members noted the need for the Report to be readable and actionable, with simplified structure for external audiences.

Overall Document Structure and Terminology:

- Members engaged in a broader discussion about document structure, suggesting that “Goals” be reframed as Policy Recommendations or declarative statements.
- Key ideas included:
 - Shifting from “Goal 1–5” format to “Section 1-5” or similar, and ensuring sub-sections are written as clear policy recommendation statements. This idea received broad support and the change in terminology from “goal” to “section” is reflected throughout the rest of this summary.
 - Presenting a short-form summary version for policymakers alongside the full report.
 - Considering organization by tools or policy mechanisms rather than goal themes.
 - Developing a priority list or roadmap that identifies short-, medium-, and long-term actions.
- Members agreed this restructuring would improve readability and accessibility, helping the final Report communicate its recommendations more effectively to both decision-makers and community stakeholders.

Public Comment:

- Jamie Fanouse, California Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), urged the Task Force to include stronger recommendations addressing land consolidation and corporate ownership, emphasizing the need for “off-ramps” to counter inequity alongside “on-ramps” for access. Jamie cited examples from Solano County where large landholders displaced farmers and suggested splitting Section 4 to separately address anti-corporate consolidation.

- Rubie Simonson, First Mother Farms / CAFF Policy Committee, supported CAFF’s comments and highlighted the importance of centering Indigenous people and culture. Rubie reflected on personal ancestral experiences and urged the Task Force to recognize that policy change alone is insufficient, calling for attention to “unseen spaces” where Tribal and community members sustain cultural practices outside of formal systems.
- Elias Aceves, Santa Barbara County Food Action Network, spoke about zoning and regulatory barriers that prevent equitable land use and ownership. Elias cited a local example where agriculture zoning restrictions blocked small farmers from developing housing on their property, preventing land transfer. Elias urged the Task Force to address county-level regulations that obstruct equitable land distribution.
- Agustin Vega, Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy, (CAUSE, Project MILPA), recommended creating a dedicated policy section to curb farmland consolidation and financialization. Agustin emphasized that access to affordable agricultural land remains a major barrier for farmworkers transitioning to ownership and called for an explicit, stand-alone recommendation to reflect the urgency of the issue.
- Julieta Muñoz, Growing Roots, Pomona, requested that the Task Force adopt a distinct section addressing corporate land consolidation and the need for active policies to prevent land grabs. Julieta suggested measures such as community benefit agreements, enhanced monitoring, and enforcement of land grant provisions.
- Beth Smoker, California Food and Farming Network, encouraged inclusion of a clear recommendation on corporate farmland consolidation, noting its growing but often invisible impacts on small producers and farmworkers. Beth stressed the importance of incorporating data transparency and policy action to counter corporate control of agricultural land.
- Li Schmidt, Cultural Roots Nursery, highlighted personal challenges accessing farmland and stated that financialization and consolidation are major barriers for emerging farmers. Li requested a separate section focused on supporting new and next-generation farmers through anti-consolidation measures.
- Justina Salinas, Farmer and Land Steward, Solano County, commended the Task Force for its progress but cautioned that large-scale land grabs and consolidation threaten the long-term success of its goals. Justina recommended adding anti-consolidation and ownership regulation language across multiple sections and explicitly linking current trends to California’s colonial history of land dispossession.
- Hektor Calderon-Viktoria, Farmer, Santa Clara County, supported prior comments calling for a clear, actionable section curbing corporate farmland consolidation. Hektor urged inclusion of policies addressing hedge fund and private equity acquisitions, along with stronger monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to prevent speculative land purchases and protect agricultural viability.

General Public Comment

- Veronica Mazariegos-Anastassiou, Farmer, San Mateo County, thanked the Task Force for its work on Recommendation 5: Securing Land Tenure and noted the importance of addressing challenges with Williamson Act contracts. Veronica recommended ensuring contract structures do not place undue burden on tenant farmers and called for stronger enforcement mechanisms to prevent consolidation and promote equitable land management.
- Antonio Romano commended the Task Force for its thoughtful work and urged greater emphasis on corporate farmland ownership and consolidation. Antonio suggested balancing incentive-based approaches with accountability measures, noting that generational landownership has often benefitted from historic dispossession and exploitation.
- Claudia Quezada, Líderes Campesinas, spoke on behalf of a group of women farmworkers and highlighted major barriers to land ownership, including immigration status, high land costs, and corporate control. Claudia noted that many tenant farmworkers pay elevated rents and lack access to state loans and subsidies. Claudia encouraged the Task Force to pursue policies that prevent corporate land concentration and to develop a farm equity law promoting justice and opportunity for all.
- Elias Acevez, Santa Barbara County Food Action Network, reported on community mapping in Bloomington and Watsonville showing displacement caused by warehouse development and corporate land acquisition. Elias urged the Task Force to support legislation limiting corporate consolidation and consider property-rights mechanisms and right-of-first-refusal ordinances to keep land in local control. Elias cited international examples, including Scotland's land reform efforts, as models for addressing inequitable land concentration.
- Jamie Fanouse, CAFF, ALETF Advisory Committee member, expressed support for the Task Force's work and referenced the CAFF letter submitted on land equity and consolidation. Jamie noted her involvement in developing the related section and offered to assist in ongoing refinement and implementation.

Meeting Adjourned

Chair Hawkins provided closing comments and adjourned day one of the meeting at 5:32 p.m.

Oct. 16, 2025

Meeting Called to Order

Chair Nelson Hawkins called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Facilitator Meagan Wylie welcomed attendees, provided housekeeping remarks, reviewed participation guidelines, and previewed the day's agenda.

Roll Call

Roll call was conducted by the facilitator. Members present:

- Nelson Hawkins*, Chair
- Emily Burgueno, Vice Chair
- Irene de Barraicua
- Nathaniel Brown
- Ruth Dahlquist-Willard*
- Darlene Franco
- James Nakahara
- Dorian Payán
- Thea Rittenhouse
- Doria Robinson
- Liya Schwartzman*
- Qi Zhou

Members absent:

- Lawrence Harlan

Quorum was established.

Staff Attendance:

Staff members present:

- Camille Frazier, California Strategic Growth Council
- Sean Kennedy, California Strategic Growth Council
- Tessa Salzman, California Strategic Growth Council
- Caleb Swanson, California Strategic Growth Council
- Meagan Wylie, California State University Sacramento

* *Denotes virtual attendance*

Working Session, Continued from Day 1

Task Force members continued their review of the October Draft Report, beginning with Section 5 (formerly Goal 5) and appendices, before returning to Sections 2, 3, and 4 for further discussion and revision.

Section 5: Secure Land Tenure

- Introductory Framing:
 - The introductory list in paragraph 2 should reflect the order of corresponding recommendations within Section 5, and staff will adjust accordingly.
 - Outcome: General support was expressed for the overall framing and sequencing of recommendations.
- Subsection 5.1:
 - Members requested additional review by urban agriculture practitioners to ensure relevance and completeness of the *Agricultural Tenants' Bill of Rights (Appendix B)*.
 - Discussion focused on lease length and property tax reassessment issues:
 - Members noted that leases exceeding 35 years currently trigger county tax reassessments, creating barriers for long-term ground leases.
 - Members proposed revising recommendations to remove the preliminary change-of-ownership trigger while retaining flexibility for renegotiation.
 - Members suggested clarifying language for urban agriculture lease agreements on city-owned or small parcels.
 - Outcome: General support for edits and for integrating new examples within the forthcoming appendix.
- Subsection 5.2:
 - Members supported enhancing and expanding the capacity of CDFA's Farmer Equity Office (FEO), rather than establishing a new process.
 - Recommendations included:
 - Providing permanent funding and staffing for the FEO.
 - Aligning this recommendation with findings from CDFA's Regulatory Alignment Study.
 - Requiring formal response and accountability mechanisms from regulatory agencies when engaging with the FEO.
 - Offering stipends or compensation for producer representatives serving on advisory committees.
 - Members discussed the concept of regional or satellite offices for agricultural equity, potentially modeled after farmworker resource centers.
 - Members emphasized the importance of a non-regulatory liaison entity to coordinate with local partners, ombuds, and community organizations.
 - Outcome: Support.
- Subsection 5.3
 - Members endorsed the inclusion of Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) alongside UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) as eligible technical assistance partners.
 - Members agreed that regional coordination roles should remain open and flexible to reflect differing local contexts.
 - Members added clarification that positions should be non-regulatory to maintain trust with producers.

- *Outcome*: Support.
- Subsection 5.4
 - Members recommended defining specific roles for each regulatory program when implementing technical assistance and compliance reforms.
 - Discussion emphasized creating a scaled, tiered pesticide licensing system for small-scale and organic producers:
 - Members suggested differentiating certification levels by chemical risk and application scale.
 - Members proposed including non-toxic or organic-approved products under simplified licensing.
 - Members recommended language-accessible, culturally appropriate training materials for private and commercial applicators.
 - Members supported referencing the University of California Cooperative Extensions’s existing pesticide training programs and including “farmworker-led” language where relevant.
 - *Outcome*: Support.
- Subsection 5.5:
 - No substantive discussion.
 - *Outcome*: Support.
- Subsection 5.6
 - Members supported consolidating all urban agriculture–related recommendations into a dedicated section, ensuring a coherent and visible treatment of urban farming, food production, and related infrastructure.
 - Members recommended referencing existing CDFA urban agriculture grant programs (including those funded under Proposition 4) and expanding or adapting them, rather than creating new standalone programs.
 - Members suggested including examples of local urban agriculture ordinances and model zoning policies.
 - Members discussed barriers related to urban water rates, metering costs, and access.
 - Members proposed expanding 5.6(b) to include research, education, and policy actions that promote water conservation and equitable pricing.
 - Members highlighted that connection fees and water meter installation costs can be prohibitive (up to \$30,000) and should be acknowledged.
 - Members agreed to retain language addressing compost production but to broaden it to encompass additional infrastructure challenges for urban producers.
 - *Outcome*: Support to create a new standalone section (anticipated as “Section 6 – Urban Agriculture”) consolidating these items.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

- Agricultural Land Equity

- Expand definition beyond people to encompass land, ecosystems, and reciprocal human-land relationships; include reference to exploitation and stewardship/care.
- Outcome: Support for edit.
- Prime Agricultural Land
 - Add a definition aligned with FMMP (Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program) terminology.
 - Outcome: Staff to insert FMMP-based language.
- "Beginning Farmer or Rancher" and "Aspiring Farmer"
 - Extensive debate on whether to define aspiring farmer separately or reference it within "beginning farmer or rancher."
 - Concerns: over-breadth of "aspiring," alignment with USDA usage, preventing unintended eligibility, and farmworker inclusion.
 - Proposals considered: (a) separate "aspiring farmer" definition; (b) note under "beginning farmer or rancher" that it includes aspiring farmers; (c) use "aspiring" descriptively without a standalone definition.
 - Outcome: No consensus. Staff will explore options and bring back clarifications for the November draft; "aspiring" may be used as an adjective, pending further review.
- Priority Producers and Land Stewards (PPLS)
 - Requests to split "priority producers" and "priority land stewards" or clarify both within one entry; aim to reflect that producers are actively engaged in production, while land stewards may include non-commercial caretakers.
 - Outcome: Keep operative usage as PPLS for now. Staff will refine glossary entries with Task Force support to consider in November: Nathaniel Brown will assist with priority producer and Darlene Franco and Irene de Barraicua will assist with Land Steward.
- Terminology and Style Corrections
 - Replace "Native Indians" and ensure consistent use of "California Native American Tribes."
 - Update "underserved producer" bracketed references; review capitalization (e.g., Indigenous).
 - Add a note that some Tribes' ancestral territories extend beyond California's colonial boundaries.
 - Clarify terms for non-federally recognized California Native American Tribes: Member Franco will suggest alternatives to "organization."
 - Request to consider adding practical pathways for land return (beyond acquisition) within glossary/context language.
 - Outcome: Staff will apply global terminology fixes across the report and evaluate other edits for the November Draft Report.

Appendix B: Tenant Bill of Rights

- Staff will circulate the most recent version for Task Force review by Oct. 17, 2025.

- Members were asked to review the draft Appendix B closely and submit tracked-changes edits to staff by Oct. 24 for inclusion in the November Draft Report.

Appendix C:

- No substantive discussion.
- Outcome: Support.

Revised Section 2: Restorative Land Fund

Staff presented a revised version of Section 2, reflecting the extensive discussion from Day 1 regarding the creation of a Restorative Land Fund. The updated draft sought to clarify intent, refine language, and integrate feedback on historical context, eligibility, and fund structure.

- Framing and Context:
 - Members agreed the section should emphasize healing and forward progress, not full restitution.
 - Edits will clarify that California’s first enslaved people were Native Americans, and references to indentured servitude will be included via footnote or cross-reference to the introduction.
 - A member requested adding language on the forced incarceration of Japanese Americans.
 - A member opposed “remedying colonization,” preferring language around healing rather than repair of the irreparable.
- Fund Structure and Key Revisions:
 - “Third party” will be replaced with “intermediary organization” for entities temporarily holding land until transfer.
 - The fund will support acquisition, tenure, and long-term ownership; “set-aside” language will prioritize descendants of those historically harmed while keeping the fund open to all PPLS.
 - Members supported consolidating all related efforts into one statewide fund with designated allocations and integrating technical assistance for deeds and ownership.
- Differentiation of Historic Harms:
 - A member emphasized that Tribal experiences of genocide are distinct and should not be grouped with other historical harms. They requested adding a note clarifying that the new Section 2 was not reviewed through the Tribal engagement sessions held prior to drafting this section.
 - Members generally support including a statement clarifying which recommendations emerged from engagement versus internal Task Force deliberation.
 - Some suggested adding a Tribal-specific fund to Section 1 to maintain distinct but parallel approaches.

- *Outcome*: Broad support for the revised Section 2 framework, with one “do not support.” Staff will integrate edits on framing, fund structure, and engagement transparency into the November 2025 near-final Draft Report.

Section 4: Equitable Land Transition and Acquisition (Continued from Day 1)

- Structural Adjustments:
 - A member proposed creating a new recommendation area focused specifically on land consolidation and financialization, moving subsections 4.7 and 4.8 into that new section, while relocating 4.1c to Section 1 (to align with discussions on land access for Priority Producers and Land Stewards).
 - Members agreed the new section would include a context narrative explaining consolidation as a foundational barrier to land equity. Staff will incorporate this in the November Draft.
 - It was suggested to sequence sections logically, e.g., place land tenure after land acquisition to reflect the natural process of securing and holding land.
 - *Outcome*: Consensus to reorganize recommendations to better highlight land consolidation as a core issue. A new section will be created on Land Consolidation and Financialization (moving 4.7 and 4.8)
- Content Revisions and Additions:
 - Members supported pairing the Land Market Monitoring Program (LMMP) with research on the social, economic, environmental, and cultural impacts of land consolidation on rural communities.
 - A member emphasized including mechanisms to report anticompetitive land holdings to the Department of Justice.
 - A member requested context noting that California’s first consolidation began during the mission system and process of statehood.
 - Others supported broadening research to include abandonment and speculative landholding.
 - Members agreed LMMP data should be retrospective, tracking trends over time rather than attempting to report sales before they occur.
 - A member proposed adding enforcement language to the “Farmland for Farmers” recommendation.
 - Members debated a vacant land tax or penalties for speculative holdings.
 - *Outcome*: Move the vacant land tax concept to “Ideas for Further Consideration” and request Advisory Committee review of speculative and abandoned land dynamics.

Public Comment:

- Melody Ng, University of California Los Angeles, expressed appreciation for the Task Force’s attention to land consolidation and emphasized that the issue is worsening. Melody urged the Task Force to establish a distinct section focused on addressing consolidation and include recommendations that limit private corporate ownership and leasing of farmland.

Work Planning and Next Steps

Staff reviewed the remaining timeline for completing the Task Force’s Final Report:

- **Oct 24:** Deadline for Task Force comments on the October Draft Report
- **Nov 3:** Staff distribute the November 2025 Draft Report to the Task Force along with a short poll to prioritize sections of the Report
- **Nov 3–12:** Task Force review period
- **Nov 10 (10 a.m.):** Deadline for members to submit tracked changes edits to the November Draft Report, and poll responses
- **Nov 13:** Task Force meeting in Berkeley
- **Dec 11** Task Force meeting: Finalize report, celebrate

Members and staff discussed the final meeting, final Report distribution, and associated outreach materials. Members supported developing short-form summaries, such as 2-4-page overview sheets or entity-specific one-pagers, with QR codes linking to the full Report. Several members suggested developing visual and audio materials to increase accessibility and community engagement. Staff will identify which languages materials should be translated into and explore formats suitable for diverse audiences.

Members agreed that the Dec. 11 final meeting should serve as a forward-looking session, focusing on how recommendations can be implemented beyond Report submission. Members proposed inviting community partners, Tribal representatives, and Advisory Committee members to the final meeting and including a group photo in the report.

There was interest to publicly present the final recommendations, including to the Governor’s Office, the California Strategic Growth Council, and relevant partner organizations. Staff confirmed that other groups may advance the recommendations through advocacy and community channels.

Public comment:

None.

General Public Comment

- Adam X, Advancing Initiatives, expressed strong support for Section 2 and the proposed Restorative Land Fund. Adam noted that with the passage of SB 518, California has taken meaningful steps toward land return. Adam emphasized that “Land Back” for Native communities and land restoration for Black communities are complementary

efforts rooted in shared histories of genocide and discrimination. Adam encouraged the Task Force to retain Section 2 as a foundation for future statewide action.

- Jamiah Hargins, CropSwap LA, voiced support for Section 2 and its associated education campaign, describing it as one of the most powerful concepts advanced by the Task Force. Jamiah highlighted CropSwap LA's experience demonstrating the transformative impact of community land ownership and emphasized that landownership is a right long denied to Black Californians. Jamiah urged the Task Force to pursue restorative, land-based policies that promote healing and long-term equity.
- Rasheed Hislop urged the Task Force to fully adopt Section 2, calling it a cornerstone recommendation that provides a framework for reparative policy. Rasheed noted that California's agricultural system was built on extraction and inequity, and that Section 2 offers a blueprint for addressing historical harms. Quoting engagement session participants, Rasheed emphasized the need for tangible land return rather than further study, and called on the Task Force to advance bold, undiluted recommendations to lawmakers.

Meeting Adjourned

Chair Hawkins and Vice Chair Burgueno provided closing comments and adjourned day two of the meeting at 2:20 p.m.