

California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force Sustaining Natural and Cultural Resources Virtual Subcommittee Meeting Summary: April 4, 2025

Meeting Called to Order

Camille Frazier, Strategic Growth Council (SGC), started the meeting at 11 a.m.

Welcome and Housekeeping

Ms. Frazier provided housekeeping information for all meeting participants. Slides and materials presented during the meeting are available on the [\(SGC\) website](#).

Roll Call

Members present:

- Emily Burgueno, Agricultural Land Equity Task Force Vice Chair
- Thea Rittenhouse

Members absent:

- Darlene Franco
- Lawrence Harlan

Quorum was established.

Action: Approval of Past Meeting Summaries

Approval of the July 2, 2024, and October 4, 2024 meeting summaries.

Vice Chair Burgueno requested that the summaries be edited to indicate that the Subcommittee meetings were held virtually.

- Motion to approve summaries with revision made by Vice Chair Burgueno.
- Motion seconded by member Rittenhouse.
- Motion passed (2-0-2*), *Members Franco and Harlan absent for vote.

Staff Updates

Staff provided the following updates:

Working Group Updates:

- The **Land Back Working Group** (Members Franco and Burgueno) is scheduled to meet next week to discuss the *Land Back Special Report*, review related ideas in the draft report, and identify potential case studies for inclusion in the report.
- The **Public Lands Working Group** (Members Harlan and Schwartzman) discussed strategies to increase access to underutilized public lands, leasing terms, and mechanisms such as a first right of refusal for Tribal Nations when the state disposes of land.

Research Updates:

- **Mapping Requests:** Staff presented three existing maps on ancestral lands, agricultural lands, and public lands. Staff are coordinating with the LCI mapping team to explore further mapping possibilities. A comprehensive update is scheduled for the May 14-15, 2025, Task Force meeting.
- **Treaty Research:** Staff summarized research efforts on ratified and unratified treaties. Member Harlan had previously noted that the treaty with the Klamath Tribes was ratified in 1866. Staff reviewed additional resources, including materials from Oklahoma State University.

Legislative Updates:

- Senate Bill (SB) 310 passed in 2024 and allows the California Natural Resources Agency and local air districts to partner with federally recognized Tribal Nations on cultural fire agreements.
- Staff provided an overview of pending key bills relevant to the Subcommittee's work including SB 462 (Cortese), Assembly Bill (AB) 1485 (Macedo), and AB 524 (Wilson).
- During the March 27, 2025 Task Force meeting, members decided to form a subcommittee to track AB 524 and consider drafting a position letter.
- Staff will continue monitoring the progress of these bills.

Staff also shared key takeaways from Dr. Risling-Baldy's presentation on Land Back concepts, originally delivered to the Land Access, Acquisition, and Ancestral Land Return (LA3) Subcommittee, and provided highlights from Michelle Lee's presentation during the Agricultural Land Access and Stewardship Series.

Public Comment:

None.

Working Session

Staff reviewed the draft resolution language regarding the scheduling of future (non-calendared) full Task Force meetings, as developed by the Task Force at the March 27, 2025, meeting. Vice Chair Burgueno proposed revising the draft language to require that both the Chair and Vice Chair ("and" instead of "or") be available for meetings. The revised resolution is scheduled for action at the May 14–15, 2025, Task Force meeting.

Staff next provided updates on Tribal Engagement and Consultation:

- **Susanville Engagement Session:** Scheduled for May 13, 2025, from 4-6 p.m. Outreach to Tribal Nations in surrounding counties is underway.
- **Virtual Engagement Sessions:** Planning is in progress for additional sessions focused on Southern California and the Central Valley, to be held by the end of July. Vice Chair Burgueno offered to help support a Southern California session. Member Franco previously expressed interest in a virtual Central Valley focused session.
- **Formal Consultation:** Staff will initiate the formal Tribal consultation process, which will include using the contact list from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and inviting Tribal Nations to review and comment on the Task Force's draft report.

During the March 27, 2025, Task Force meeting, members emphasized the importance of reconnecting with site visit hosts and speakers after the report is finalized to share how their input informed the recommendations. Members also noted that follow-up with Tribal Nations will be necessary once the report is complete.

Staff next presented an updated list of the nine *draft* report "goals" which incorporates feedback from the March 27, 2025, meeting. Staff requested member reflections on this list. Members highlighted the following:

- The need to define key concepts such as "return" and "sovereignty" to ensure clarity for all readers.
- The need to clearly distinguish between land acquisition and land return.
- The importance of embedding historical and contemporary contexts of Tribal sovereignty throughout the report.
- The value of including specific case studies and actionable recommendations.

Public Comment:

None.

General Public Comment

None.

Staff reviewed next steps, action items, and shared upcoming Task Force meeting dates. The meeting concluded at 12:04 p.m.