

Cutting Green Tape Roundtable

Agenda and Notes

February 12, 2020

10:00am-3:00pm

California State Railroad Museum, Sacramento CA

Meeting Goals

1. Introduce CGT Initiative, including process and timeline, as one of Secretary Crowfoot's 4 pillars in partnership with other state agencies. [Note some participants have been introduced before but many will be new.]
2. Develop and identify specific recommendations, tactics, mechanisms, and next steps to advance the strategies and potential actions for increasing regulatory efficiencies that have been identified in previous roundtables.
3. Obtain input on the development of a white paper, to be completed by Earth Day, that identifies actionable and achievable outcomes for increasing regulatory efficiencies for natural resource stewardship.

Opening Remarks: Why are we here, why now?

- **Vision for Cutting Green Tape initiative**

Secretary Wade Crowfoot (CA Natural Resources Agency)

- To start, we are in a Railroad Museum, a State Parks facility. It is the epicenter of a quite interesting partnership between State Parks and the City of Sacramento to completely reimagine the land outside and strengthen the connection of this neighborhood to the river.
- Huge thanks for everyone in the room. Some of you traveled quite a long way to be here. And I think we have a really unique set of participants here. We have our federal partners that we've learned a lot from in terms of how to get good things done more quickly and cost effectively. We have our state partners as well. I will point out the Water Board as a real leader in how to improve its processes to get things done.
- While the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) catalyzes this discussion, I want to be very clear that this is not solely about the CNRA. It's really an effort to improve our processes across state government. Two priorities that we have in CNRA that are driven by the governor:
 - **Climate Resilience:** Strengthening our climate resilience – or what I call protecting people and places from the impacts of climate change. And, while we have been a

world leader in reducing greenhouse gas emissions – climate mitigation – I think we have a lot to improve upon as it relates to climate adaptation, or protecting our state from the impacts of climate change.

- **Biodiversity:** Likewise, another priority of ours is maintaining the incredible biodiversity in our state. You all know that we have natural richness that is almost unparalleled in the world as it relates to the diversity of our plants and animals. Governor Brown really named this and elevated biodiversity at the end of his administration. But I would say that as a state, we have not really focused on how we can proactively protect and maintain our biodiversity. We are spending a lot of time and money on navigating complicated questions on protecting endangered species, and we are always going to do that, but we have to be proactive and do a lot more to keep nature healthy.
- We need to focus on what we can do to protect and restore nature but do it much more quickly and cost effectively. We must accelerate restoration work and overcome barriers such as the high cost and length of time it takes to do project planning and permitting.
- The CA Landscape Stewardship Network (CSLN), which is a facilitator of this effort, and what I call it “a coalition of the willing” came to me with some ideas on how to come together to think about how we can innovate on environmental restoration. They came to me and said, “We think that given these climate threats and biodiversity challenges, state government should lead on an effort to figure out how we can get good things done more quickly and effectively.”
- This is a moment in time and the governor, agency secretaries and others all want to improve our processes. We have convened this forum to have a broader conversation and understand how we can collectively do our work better. And that’s what you are a part of.
- We decided to bound this discussion by time, recognizing that we could spend years on this effort. What I’ll observe is that we are already a third of the way through Governor Newsom’s term. So I’m interested in understanding both what we can do in our agency under our own authorities to improve our processes, and also inviting our other agencies to identify potential improvements or changes that we, or they can make to get more good things done more quickly.
- We have set a goal of having a set of recommendations by Earth Day, which is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22nd, and this is part of an arc of discussion and dialogue that will lead to a set of recommendations. Now, there is nothing codified about those recommendations. The notion I have is, can we identify some things that we can do under our own administrative authority within our agency (CNRA) and other partner agencies? We want to identify both the low-hanging fruit changes that we can make fairly easily, and then if there is appetite, a broader process to think about more foundational changes we can make.

- I recognize that political appointees like me come and go, and realistically, if we are going to actually sustain change, we need to listen to the men and women that do this work on a daily basis, deeper into our organizations. So, I am not naïve to the fact that broader change will take time. I want to recognize the Department of Fish and Wildlife who has over the last year under Chuck’s leadership developed a set of changes within its statutory authorities to get work done more quickly and cost effectively on environmental restoration. And so Chuck’s effort which was being “better, stronger, faster”, has dovetailed into this effort.
- Lastly, we are aiming to have an inclusive conversation, and you all are selected based on the diversity of perspectives that you represent. Our goal is to not to be exclusive in the conversation, but obviously to get a reasonably-sized group together so that we can actually go deep on these issues. We want the recommendations that get made on Earth Day to generate more energy and more ideas. I believe what we produce for Earth Day could become a living document.

10:55 Goals and Process

- **Cutting Green Tape work to date and looking forward**
- **General process and timeline Vision for Cutting Green Tape initiative**

Kellyx Nelson (San Mateo Resource Conservation District and CA Landscape Stewardship Network)

- Explanation of the slide show. It’s a moment of inspiration, projects, previous efforts, and photos of process.
- For some folks used to seeing a polished or fully baked, this is not that.
- We are the coalition of the willing, grass roots effort.
- Purpose of CGT: Reduce regulatory barriers to getting environmentally beneficial solutions on the ground. Some of you have been involved in the roundtables already; some have participated in conversations leading up to today; and for some it is your first time engaging on this.
- Energize, iterative, nothing that is fully cooked, reflecting what we have heard so far from conversations and previous meetings.
- Following today:
 - Another roundtable in March in LA.
 - Launch of the CGT initiative in April.
 - Nothing we do today is definitive so email Kellyx and Shelana with questions or comments after the meeting. Shelana is project manager for white paper.
 - Kellyx Nelson Kellyx@sanmateorcd.org
 - Shelana deSilva wordwallah@gmail.com
- Today is a working meeting. Builds from the December meeting in which we shared vision around what we wanted to move forward, and the January meeting when we dug a little deeper to identify actions, and today is diving deeper.
- What you see to today reflects back what we heard so far. It’s not set in stone and we are looking to you to provide comment/feedback. What we begin to connect to lofty vision and goals into real actions.
- Goal for today is white paper that makes recommendations that we can implement to make this vision happen.
- If you see an idea not reflected, the facilitators can find ways to incorporate feedback.

- Last thought: begin to connect lofty vision to real actions in a work plan. Goal is not the white paper, but a thriving CA. Keep the eye of the prize.

11:05 Creating a Plan for Action

- **Revise, develop, and add to table of potential recommended actions and begin to identify workflows and timelines in small and large group activities.**

Jim Robins (Alnus Consulting and CA Landscape Stewardship Network)

- Explaining group activity. Morning is focus on tactics and duration.
 - Each action has lots of ways to accomplish.
 - As a group, think about subset to determine which is recommended to implement.
 - Review duration...how long would it take if starting today...is this kind of thing that takes 3 months or 3 years?
 - Interdependences that are linked together (if this happens, then this does not need to happen- trying to aggregate in meaningful way).
 - Aware that these actions are different scales- Kellyx added.
 - Word of the day... specificity!
 - 2 activities:
 - Each table will use a subset of actions. Preselected scales and types with different regulatory bodies. Some require lots of discussion. Looking for recommended or suggested tactic. Help with duration. (First activity on large paper).
 - Keeping information...momentum to distill down later.
 - Use sheets of colored cards (second activity) to write actions. Will be used on board in afternoon.
 - 2 pronged attack- work on info in morning and come back from lunch for a brainstorming in afternoon.
 - Expect some people will know more than others – use collective brain. Go Team!

Kellyx Nelson (San Mateo Resource Conservation District and CA Landscape Stewardship Network)

- Explanation of Activity
 - Really go through wish list.
 - Mind mapping activity.
 - After lunch will be focus on white paper.
 - Now is the deep dive. Lists of potential actions that are reflecting back what we have heard. Some of the potential recommendations into white paper. Identify suite of actions. Short and long term. Set up conditions to be successful.
 - List reflects what came from the working group roundtables, webinars, and individuals, and conversations.

12:10 Lunch

12:40 A Plan for Action continued

Kellyx Nelson (San Mateo Resource Conservation District and CA Landscape Stewardship Network)

- Explaining afternoon activity.
- Repeat a little of conversation to workshop together.
- Goal now is to step back to look at actions.
- Map in duration.
- From broad brush strokes to next steps.
- How to move into something actionable.
- Many ways to organize information.
- Remember there is another roundtable in March in Southern California.
- This is not the end...we are going to doing a lot of synthesizing.

Jim Robins (Alnus Consulting and CA Landscape Stewardship Network)

- Talking through activity.
- Took summary sheets during lunch...numerous ways to organize...what we have here is time on x-axis and color codes relate to tactics.
- Broad brush strokes to see how things fit together.
- Color coding throughout timeline- nice to see variation.
- Observations: red lines show connections.
- Emphasis on Executive Order in hearing discussions during walking around. Think about how Executive Order feeds into other tactics.
- Pull ourselves out and think about ways to aggregate.
- Maybe more than one way to think about it.
- Use markers to turn into messy collage...begin to open up to discussion.
- Better coordination and new tract for permitting (30's).
- Think about how we can aggregate these actions/tactics into "packages"
 - 3-6 months: #6 (SWRCB on it); #18 (Better utilizing streamlining tools); #17 (EO); #23 (Clarification on fully protected); #3 (cap small habitat cap); #31 (Increased coordination internally & intra-departmentally).

Themes from the Small Group Activities

Actions

- Interest in pursuing ways to address limitations around small habitat restoration

Questions and comments

- Limitations around RWQCB small habitats

- Linkage to LSAA- build in time to coordinate with CDFW for change that both groups buy into and CEQA Exemption- timing is too optimistic- move to 1 year.
 - Maybe not need separate permit action- 6-12 months period. Maybe not be able to assign timeline because it's dependent on agency action.
- 3-6 month: those that have gotten letter from Director to show it has achieved its goals.
- Not clear if a CEQA document is necessary for this effort.
- Executive Order:
 - Bit different than rest of these – it is more all-encompassing as directive for all of these activities.
 - Address resource need/ask in EO for agencies to be more successful
 - Organizing principle: Yes, we can do things, should we continue to assume under existing authority will be done?
- #28- single unified permit application
 - BCDC updating JARPA- which could have statewide benefits.
 - Move to nearer term.
 - Find a streamlined approach that is good for everyone...previous efforts that the agencies did not like using JARPA.
 - One application is great...programmatic permits are in development. Create unified permit application process
- CEQA: Many pieces reflected in actions.
 - CEQA from before might not be what we need today, should ask ‘What should CEQA look like?’ to achieve the ecological benefits we need to meet in face of climate crisis.
 - Granting out so much of our restoration and then not making it possible for grantees to effectively get to implementation.
 - Focus on small habitat or larger projects?
 - Interesting conversation about different proposals and full exemptions. We have the political will to make big shifts so should we make big recommendation of what this should look like instead of tiny, incremental shifts to meet the ecological targets that creates fundamental reforms to help meet the crisis we are facing?
 - Need overarching change...but it's complicated. Some things could be done in short order...but wonder about the idea of key experts to develop a pathway. Way to do thoughtfully.
 - Chuck brought up 2 different CEQA exemptions- already have exemption with a minor modification that would go a long way. Exemptions for habitat restoration... but not for construction projects. Minor modification would make this usable
 - Lots of ways to get from A to B...some of bigger or smaller benefits...balancing to figure out right recommendations.
 - Does this get us to right end goal? For example, given that CDFW is granting out restoration work and with new exemptions it could have the unintended effect of making non-State entities look toward CDFW to be lead agency. Be careful for what you ask for...because it could create a lot work.
 - Having interagency strike teams for collaboration to gain agency investment could be useful.

- Support for exemptions: but it may be a tough sell. Rather than think of exemption think of alternative approach...goal is to not to avoid CEQA, but tailor CEQA for restoration projects. Build in performance measures. Landscape level projects have temporary impacts. Current process is incentive to break up projects. Design a new structure. Big lift.
- Exemptions are difficult: They signify weakening, and there will be narrowing and restricting of proposed exemptions. Instead tailor CEQA to work for restoration: alternative pathway with set criteria for restoration projects.
- Restoration projects do have short-term impacts and CEQA does not allow for exchanging short –term impacts for long-term benefits.
- Questions to group to email or contact: For CEQA is there one to not do one? Some feedback about how one would compromise or undermine others.
- Culture and systems change:
 - Chicken and egg thing: How does more staff not mean more of the same? Examples to solve: specific mechanisms for effecting culture change?
 - CDFW (Shaffer): Internal briefing and outreach (developed with CLSN) to set the clear vision of where culture is headed.
 - USFWS: Feds struggle with culture change – need to reward at individual level to get participation.
 - BCDC (Erik): Has had big cultural change in past 5 years: staff turnover was big part of this, but leadership needed to internalize culture change as well.
 - Funding for specific programs.
 - Staff mind-change: New tools e.g. SWRCB has general permit tool – directive to make this for habitat restoration would prioritize it for agency/staff.
 - Help staff feel ok with pushing boundaries – give them cover to take appropriate risks and combat culture of fear.
 - Performance metrics reflect culture and goals: e.g. forestry department metric of success is board feet harvest.

1:30 Returning to Higher Level Goals

- Discussion and early feedback on process and framework for the white paper that will be the product of the roundtables

Kellyx Nelson (San Mateo Resource Conservation District and CA Landscape Stewardship Network)

- Regardless of when you started engaging in this process it was the right time.
- Goal for today were to step back and look at all of these actions and look at them in totality → ID actionable next steps.
- White paper is a critical path to achieving vision.
- We will be doing a lot of processing on all of the content developed today.

Shelana DeSilva (Bay Area Open Space Council and CA Landscape Stewardship Network)

- As Kellyx said...the White Paper is important, but not the end result.

- White Paper at highest level is to share common narrative of outcomes (discrete actions) and about creating accountability to show how we will track progress and momentum.
- Principles of White Paper will be answering how will CGT quicken the pace of restoration outcomes across the state and do these need to be separated/lumped?
- Outcomes answer: If CGT is successful we will be able to...?
- Bringing metrics about cultural change into White Paper.
 - Differentiate between metrics applied to NGO, agencies: E.g. CDFW: what fraction of regional CDFW offices has CDFW director visited this year to deliver this CGT measure?
 - One way to communicate broader narrative, share inspiring goals/outcome. Need help with specific metrics/#s or finding sources for these. Don't constrain themselves- note where numbers could be found.
- Human quotient: How staff hired? How directors communicating down chain?
- Exercise is to create space to respond about reflecting/feedback/guidance.
- Communicate the significance of effort. If we achieve success this is what we can do and vision for the future.

2:00 BREAK

2:10 The Road Ahead

- Identify next steps toward white paper in April and beyond to ensure and sustain desired outcomes

Kellyx Nelson (San Mateo Resource Conservation District and CA Landscape Stewardship Network)

- Kellyx providing in absence of Wade Crowfoot.
- Themes reflect process...at some point we have to hit go button. Figure out place that we start.
- White Paper is critical path that is not the end or beginning.
- Roundtable in S. CA – asking group for any people. Including others from same agencies. Trying to be inclusive of voices caring for lands. March 18 at African American museum. Working with many groups- will circulate to this group. Agenda aggregates efforts to understand gaps.
- Struggled to make meetings inclusive, which has resulted in having meetings having different flavors.
- Will be sending to broader group some version by April 1. Cannot do collaborative writing with a couple.
- 4/15 final roundtable. Agenda in development.
- Start thinking about how it is implemented, resources allocated, who is responsible, where the rubber will hit the road.
- Any other closing thoughts: How to brief up the chain within agencies? First roundtable was with agency leaders. Wade has been talking with other Secretaries and other leaders so reach out if support is needed. Meeting notes are available for distribution. Setting up a webpage with information that will include table of potential actions.

2:50 Closing Remarks & Reflections

Attendees

First	Last	Organization
Julie	Alvis	Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Amy	Bailey	DOT
Chris	Beale	Resources Law Group
Sarah	Beesley	Yurok Tribe Fisheries & CDFW PRC
Chuck	Bonham	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Eric	Buehmann	BCDC
Kim	Caringer	CA Network/Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Madeline	Cavalieri	CA Coastal Commission
Jay	Chamberlin	CA Network/CA State Parks
Matt	Clifford	Trout Unlimited
Phil	Crader	State Water Resources Control Board
Wade	Crowfoot	California Natural Resources Agency
Chad	Dibble	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Chris	Dombrowski	Go-Biz
RaeAnn	Dubay	USDA NRCS
Sharon	Farrell	CA Network/Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
Mike	Fris	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Rebecca	Fris	Wildlife Conservation Board
Virginia	Getz	Ducks Unlimited
Darcie	Goodman Collins	CA Network/League to Save Lake Tahoe
Kevin	Hunting	California Natural Resources Agency
Amy	Hutzel	CA Coastal Conservancy
Campbell	Ingram	Delta Conservancy
Jessica	Law	Delta Stewardship Council
Rosalind	Litzky	CA Network/Save the Redwoods League
Erika	Lovejoy	Sustainable Conservation
Mike	Lynes	California Audubon
Catherine	McCalvin	Department of Water Resources
Darren	Mierau	Caltrout
Jessica	Morse	California Natural Resources Agency
Kellyx	Nelson	CA Network/CA Association of RCDs
Joe	Pecharich	NOAA Restoration Center
Sara	Polgar	CA Network/San Mateo RCD
Armando	Quintero	CA Water Commission
Kevin	Shaffer	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
Emily	Tibbott	Governor's Office of Planning and Research
Kris	Tjernell	CA Dept Water Resources
Julie	Turrini	Resources Legacy Fund
Jeff	Volberg	CA Waterfowl Association
Casy	Walsh Cady	California Department of Food and Agriculture
Jonathan	Warmerdam	North Coast Regional Water Board

Patrick	Wright	Tahoe Conservancy
Isabella	Gonzales	The Nature Conservancy
Nikki	Soltis	Go-Biz