

Cutting Green Tape
White Paper Principles and Outcomes
March 17, 2020

The example principles and outcomes below are representative of the common language, goals, and metrics we're beginning to develop for the Cutting Green Tape initiative white paper. As you consider the role of the white paper in accomplishing the following four goals, please review this language and think about what resonates with you; what is missing; and how would you add to these elements or revise them? The white paper will provide the following:

- Offer shared language to support movement building towards the sea change we need, including identifying the urgency for increasing the pace, scale, and quality of environmental restoration, and the opportunities to advance this work more effectively
- Articulate a bold vision for land stewardship in California that cuts across agencies and sectors and includes specific government reforms as well as culture change
- Recommend a subset of potential actions that are outcomes from the Cutting Green Tape process
- Suggest accountability efforts and make specific recommendations to track progress and ensure ongoing momentum

**How will Cutting Green Tape improve and quicken the delivery
of restoration and stewardship work?**

EXAMPLE PRINCIPLES

- Create efficiencies in permitting processes and compliance pathways to increase pace and scale of environmentally beneficial restoration and stewardship work to promote climate resilience.
- Forge a shared commitment to finding compliance and permitting efficiencies and aligning funding programs with those new efficiencies to speed implementation of multiple priority initiatives, including but not limited to: Natural and Working Lands implementation, Biodiversity Initiative, Water Portfolio, Forest Stewardship, etc.
- Prioritize permit approvals for environmentally beneficial restoration projects, while maintaining commitment to environmental safeguards of California's regulatory laws/framework (not regime).

- Encourage state agencies to create a shared culture of support for calculated risk, in order to approve restoration and stewardship efforts that seek to build resilience.
- Build regional capacity to restore landscapes, through regional ownership/leadership and collaboration.
- Redesign the way we permit restoration projects so that we can achieve better outcomes within the context of climate change. For example, putting restoration on a separate permitting track to increase efficiency and speed, which will require coordinated and adequate funding, and organizing staff in units to serve as “restoration stewards” rather than “just” regulators. The latter improves process, perspectives, and partnerships, and there are already programmatic-level examples of this matrix approach.
- Create a regulatory agency culture of flexibility and assumed adaptation, with clear sideboards and creative incentives for accountability that support staff. Culture change includes refining hiring processes, encouraging calculated risk-taking, open communication and feedback, addressing vulnerabilities, e.g. be prepared to litigate.
- Commit to a funding pathway to maintain momentum with outcomes, which means analyzing the financing needed to operationalize towards goals and developing an executable strategy to secure the funding.

**At the highest level, what will Cutting Green Tape achieve,
or what are the most exciting opportunities the initiative will help unlock?
Please add new quantifiable metrics, or more high-level outcomes like these examples below.**

EXAMPLE OUTCOMES & METRICS

- Increase habitat for sensitive species to support biodiversity through statewide protection or restoration of oak woodlands, riparian habitat, rangeland, grazing land, and grassland habitat by funding at least 10 projects in each of these WCB programs with at least 25 percent of restoration projects on conserved lands.
Example from Wildlife Conservation Board 2019-24 Strategic Plan Update
- Secure the future of all existing native California species, with an emphasis on those that are endemic.
Example from 2018 Biodiversity Initiative

- Improved tools for identifying and quantifying climate resilience in California’s most vulnerable communities, in order to ensure a just transition to a low carbon economy.
Example from California’s Fourth Climate Assessment
- Implement at least 10 projects each year that enhance stream flow, increase water resiliency and meet priorities in the California Water Action Plan.
Example from Wildlife Conservation Board 2019-24 Strategic Plan Update
- Maintenance and better support of Traditional and Ecological Knowledge (TEK) held by California’s Tribes and Indigenous communities in order to address the climate vulnerabilities resulting from displacement and other Tribal impacts from colonization.
Example from California’s Fourth Climate Assessment
- Quicker recovery of imperiled species and ability to support fish and wildlife populations at target levels, per numerous species recovery plans.
- Cutting permitting timelines in half would mean we’re effectively doubling the amount of habitat (in acres or number of projects?) that get implemented. Reduce the number of days/years to permit.
- Commit to explicit and demonstrable financial support for increased pace and scale of restoration and stewardship.
- Better coordination between agencies on working towards statewide priorities.
- Commit to identifying and making progress towards pre-determined biodiversity goals that are positive and forward-thinking.
- Work with California Tribes to develop self-identified Tribal strike teams focusing on significant environmental restoration and stewardship actions.

QUESTIONS ABOUT OUTCOMES & METRICS

- Should outcomes and metrics be developed at the regional level, so they’re geographically relevant?
- How to define metrics for equity and access, so we’re working towards rectifying historic inequalities and exclusion from parks, natural areas? This is how we ensure everyone is experiencing habitat, species, and nature, in order to create a culture of stewardship. This is a core value for ensuring stewardship in future generations.
- Should we be setting “service level” metrics for agencies’ performance around funding and permitting projects, and working with NGO and other partners?

- Should agencies develop metrics for different focus areas, including setting ecosystem-level or regional/geographically unique goals; goals around “service” to restoration/stewardship permit applicants; and internal accountability metrics, all individually tailored to NGOs, public agencies, and Tribes?
- Should metrics focus on the benefits of restoration as 1) the number of delisted species and 2) quantifiable multiple benefits?
- Is it enough to ensure tighter connection between proposed restoration projects and species recovery plans, TMDL targets, NCCP implementation, etc.?
- How to develop a metric for the cultural shift that the Cutting Green Tape initiative is encouraging?
- What is an appropriate metric around improving and increasing communication and education of the broader public around the role of restoration and stewardship in fighting climate change and protecting Californians? Stewardship must be made more visible and relatable.
- A metric or broad outcome is needed around monitoring and providing funding for monitoring activities.