

August 15, 2025
9:00am – 12:30pm

Panel Members in Attendance

Brianna Saint Pierre, CalEPA, State Water Resources Control Board
Leonard Diggs, Pie Ranch
Dr. Jeff Dlott, PhD, LandScan (Chair)
Erik Porse, PhD, California Institute for Water Resources, Non-Voting Member
Don Cameron, Terranova Ranch
Judith Redmond, Full Belly Farm
Shanna Atherton, California Department of Conservation, Member
Jonathan Wachter, California Natural Resources Agency, Member

Not in Attendance

Jon Gustafson, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA, Non-Voting Member

State Agency Staff and Presenters

9:00 am Roll Call

- Chair Dlott
 - Chair Dlott called to order @9:02

9:05 am Approval of May 2025 Minutes

- Chair Dlott – Decisional
 - Moved by Member Cameron
 - Seconded by Member Redmond
 - Minutes approved

9:10 am Tribute to Vice Chair Dawley

- Chair Dlott
 - Background on Vice Chair Dawley given by Chair Dlott
 - Member comments:
 - Chair Dlott, Member Cameron, Member Redmond and Director Mata shared memories and stories of Vice Chair Dawley

- Public Comment:
 - Brian Kolodji (Black Swan) - expressed appreciation of efforts of the panel
 - Kandi Manhart (Glenn RCD) - shared memories of working with Dawley

9:20 am Office of Agricultural Resilience and Sustainability Director Update

- Dr. Tawny Mata, Director, CDFA – Informational
 - Director Mata shared that they are working hard to update policies and discussing framework around Block Grant Programs and provided an update that Legislature has not appropriated funding for bond yet, and OARS teams will not solidify program guidelines until funding is in hand. CNRA is managing bond at state level and has provided draft guidance but are working to incorporate outside guidance. Director Mata is seeking guidance if funds can be used for the HSP Demonstration Program.
 - Dairy Plus: We are sub-awardees and waiting for USDA to approve modification. Until then, we cannot announce awards selected last spring or open new solicitations. Director Mata thanked producers for being patient.
 - Director Mata shared that OARS has an open solicitation for Adaptive IPM for Invasive Agricultural Pest Program
 - Deputy Secretary Virginia Jameson provided an update on the Climate Resiliency Strategy sharing they will be briefing the Governor's office next week then will open for public comment. She thanked those on the panel for reading and providing input.
- Panel Questions:
 - Chair Dlott: Is there anything the panel can do about the exemptions?
 - Director Mata: Not sure, this is for Legislature to decide
- Public Comment:
 - Brian Kolodji: Commented on a company that uses technologies to capture carbon. Has raised concerns to CDFA regarding direct air capture and how this starves the biosphere of CO2. This information has been published and has been sent to multiple agencies, including CDFA.
 - Director Mata: Did send response and stated could not find literature, but happy to have discussion.
 - Brian: Will resend materials and articles. Technology has been established for decades.
 - Elizabeth Christensen: How can we find out about the legislature's schedule?
 - Director Mata: There may be an end of the month deadline, but schedule should be posted on their website. Will be included in larger bill for all bond programs.

9:30 am California's groundwater recharge and its potential effects on groundwater quality

- Aaron Button and Emily Haugen, State Water Board – Informational

- Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment
 - Overview: Water Board Involvement, groundwater fundamentals, GAMA program participation, stakeholder contributions, future goals and discussion
 - Aaron gave an overview of the Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment (GAMA) Program and its goals to assess groundwater conditions and compile available groundwater quality data (state, federal and local groundwater quality data)
 - Aaron provided a background of the program starting with the 2023 atmospheric rivers and analyzed if this recharge affects groundwater quality? Initial study was performed months after atmospheric rivers to periodically sample over 100 wells.
 - Emily gave an overview of groundwater basics and terminology and state groundwater quality is always in flux. Emily also presented on monitoring groundwater quality, utilizing publicly available data, groundwater indicators and the recharge and water quality TAC with a goal to identify next steps for the development of a tool to make more informed MAR decisions.
- Panel Questions:
 - Member Cameron: Asking about clarifications on the graphs in the presentation.
 - Haugen: Used satellite data that showed inundation areas. Used maps to base proximity locations on.
 - Cameron: Did you correlate with new recharge areas?
 - Haugen: Did map these parcels. None of the wells were nearby the parcels but can look at it again. Reiterate this should be used as a first step to these studies.
 - Member St. Pierre: Thanked the presenters for their work
 - Member Wachter: Asking presenters if they were able look at individual constituents?
 - Haugen: Dashboard has a lot of layers including a land-use layer but have not looked into any specifics
 - Chair Dlott: Are there other state or country examples of people doing this? This is a methodological approach
 - Haugen: Not aware of anyone else. Pioneered based on data that was available.
 - Chair Dlott: Are there ways to do retrospective analysis before 2023?
 - Haugen: If there is data, yes. Most wells not sampled regularly but may not have great data coverage.
 - Member Wachter: Are we seeing water quality differences?
 - Haugen: Struggling to find a map with all of these project locations to compare.

- Elena Bischak: Have biosolids been considered for inclusion in HSP practice list?
 - Director Mata: Please submit this practice to us during the next round
- Seth Myrick: Only grazing in orchards is moving forward as a practice, not vineyards?
 - Dr. Chen: The proposal we received was just for orchard systems
- Raquel Krach: Grazing in orchards reduces GHG emissions associated with multiple passes from mowing or application of herbicides. It's also often associated with off-ground harvesting, which has myriad other benefits as well.
- Jameson Meyst: Is there any need for more research with Whole Orchard Recycling in different crops, like subtropical evergreen varieties?
 - Dr. Chen: we have had research projects in the past for whole orchard recycling. Encouraged to submit a future proposal.
- Margie: Why are the benefits of controlled burns limited to benefit tribal lands rather than all Californians?
 - Director Mata: This is a cultural burning practice and want to consult with tribal groups. Has not been a final decision on what lands will/will not be included.
- Ikumwide: We, RCD of Tehama County, will be having a field day in Red Bluff to demonstrate the use of a Tigercat 6040 producing biochar in an abandoned prune orchard. If you are interested in attending email agriculture@tehamacountyrcd.org.
- Dave Booher: Are the decisions on new practices final or can supporting documentation be provided ?
 - Director Mata: Asked if there was a specific practice comment is referring to
 - Dave Booher: Using Microalgae – there seems to not be enough supporting documentation.
 - Dr. Chen: the proposals included supporting documents which were by all members. If there are additional documents, we can provide it to the subcommittee.
- Hope Zabronsky: I am curious if pasture and hay planting would be considered for grazing land in addition to cropland.
 - Hope: a member of our team submitted hay planting for cropland and grazing land, is this still being considered? There's quite a number of studies supporting this to reduce nutrient loss, promote yield, etc.
 - Dr. Chen: We do have a range planting practice for rangeland and includes pastureland.
- Michael Jaquez: Regarding the Pasture and Hay Planting practice, it is currently only eligible for cropland. I'm wondering if CDFA would consider allowing this practice for grazing land as well.

- Michael: range planting is for range land. The proposal submitted would be an additional practice.
- Dr. Chen: we can compare differences and will respond

10:30 am - Break

10:40 Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) Producer Advisory Committee Block Grant Recommendations

- Thea Rittenhouse, Farm Equity Advisor – Informational
 - Thea provided background on the Farmer Equity Act and formation of committees
 - This group initially helped to inform Block grant programs at CDFA (Example: CUSP) and provided recommendations on block grants processes moving forward.
 - The block grant model came about from this group which is solely focused on issues of trust and flexibility to ensure we are reaching underserved producers and work through challenges.
 - The two, not formalized committees, meet quarterly and consists of technical assistance providers and farmers and ranchers and is instrumental in helping inform and guide our programs.
 - Overall, the committee is supportive of block grant model and recommendations intended to help guide future solicitations, program improvement and accountability.
 - General highlights include: desire to build in more rigor and accountability of block grant organizations but recognizing there is a balance for smaller organizations that may not have the same capacity; note of standardization; farmers and ranchers, mainly BIPOC, to be included in communications; performance assessment; rolling application clarification, setting up expectations, and a want to have as long an application period as possible; Advanced notice of when funds will be released
 - Panel Questions:
 - Director Mata provided clarification that she drafted a response on behalf of Chair Dlott. Our grants have grown a lot in the past 10 years and that she is looking forward to joining the committee to discuss feedback.
 - Member Wachter: Commented that one opportunity of block grants is to facilitate capacity but wondering about demonstrating a block grant's ability to administer a block grant while acknowledging they may not have staff capacity in place. How do we balance this?
 - Thea: A lot more organizations may be interested in applying to be a TA but may not know how. Need to make sure processes are understood and networking is present.

- Director Mata: Looking to offer more directed focus kick-off training in the future, and we will continue to offer resources throughout the process.
 - Chair Dlott: Provided background on block grant program and reflecting on changes over the years. Appreciation for CDFA staff and committee for raising these questions to support getting these grants in the hands of the community.
 - Member Atherton: Asking if there is a platform for grantees to engage with each other?
 - Director Mata: Not at this time. We do have regular office hours, but do want to be more intentional about it.
 - Carolyn Cook: Provided an update on second annual technical assistance conference to bring partners together and about staff member who is focusing on technical assistance for our programs.
 - Member Wachter: Our department has done a lot of innovative thinking in this space – would it be beneficial to hear about their efforts? (MLRP)
 - Chair Dlott: It does help to hear from other agency members and encourage to follow up on concept.
 - Director Mata: will follow up on this request
 - Member Diggs: Have had good experience with block grant process but do feel there are limitations in promoting programs. Have found the knowledge about programs was coming late to potential applicants. Is there a way for CDFA to do some external promotion for the recipients.
 - Director Mata: we are developing standards around this concept to promote grantees
- Public Comment:
 - Joel Kramer: Are funds allocated for CUSP/relief for the 2025 funding cycle? I didn't see it listed in the summary of Prop 4 allocations.
 - Thea: Encouraged to email but do have extreme weather solicitation from the previous budget and no new funds have been allocated.
 - Liz Valdez: you're bringing up a really important point. Access to land is one of the biggest barriers for aspiring farmer and ranchers, especially for people from minority backgrounds or those who didn't grow up in agricultural families. Even if someone is passionate and ready to work hard, the structural barriers, like lack of generational land, capital, or connections, can make it feel almost impossible to get started.
 - Thea: Serve as a member of the land equity task force. Gathering recommendations on underserved, small scale and tribal community lands and that it is open for public comment.

- Elena Bischak: Apologies if I missed this, but is the plan for HSP and SWEEP to be administered exclusively through block grants going forward, or just for this solicitation?
 - Director Mata: Most likely, we will be administering grants through block grants. It is difficult to staff programs appropriately through HR structure and we have also seen great results for regional needs. One drawback is the geographical coverage.
- Liz Valdez: supporting land access initiatives, and offering technical assistance, and funding programs specifically designed for underrepresented communities can make a difference

11:10 am Healthy Soils Program (HSP) and State Water Efficiency Enhancement Program (SWEEP) 2025 Block Grant Program Framework

- Carolyn Cook - Input
 - Carolyn providing overview of Climate Bond Funding – Proposition 4
 - \$65 M for soil health practices (HSP) and \$40 M for SWEEP
 - Key Bond Requirements:
 - Bond language specifies eligibility for grants as local agencies/districts, tribes, nonprofits, and other organizations while identifying farms as the locations for HSP and SWEEP Practices
 - 40% of total funds shall be allocated to projects that provide direct and meaningful benefits to vulnerable populations or disadvantaged communities
 - Funds for HSP and SWEEP shall provide direct and meaningful benefits to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers
 - Proposed changes:
 - Proposed to reduce maximum award from \$5M to \$4M to disburse funds widely and within time frame to complete three years of practices.
 - \$4M set-aside for tribal or tribal non-profit applications for HSP and SWEEP. Unclear if this will be for upcoming solicitation of future solicitation
 - HSP on-farm maximum award of \$150k, single HSP practice limit of \$75k to disburse funds more widely and encourage multiple-practice projects
 - Panel Feedback on funding related topics:
 - Member Cameron: Will we be seeing traditional funding back in the future?
 - Deputy Secretary Jameson: Legislature makes funding decisions so not sure at this time
 - Carolyn Cook: our team is trying not to make too many changes to the programs in order to align with all pots of funding in future.

- Member Cameron: how long will prop 4 funding last?
 - Carolyn: Unclear, expecting to get SWEEP funding all at once with `4 years to spend and Healthy Soils may come over 2 years
 - Member Porse: Questions around Disadvantaged communities slide –If you are drawing from the cap and trade investment funds previously, would that have drawn on CalEnviroScreen scoring?
 - Carolyn Cook: yes, the cap and trade funding, the greenhouse gas reduction fund have the CalEnviroScreen tool. One of the terms is disadvantaged communities but takes more factors in than just economic.
 - Member Porse: Drawing on water code definition linked to income, is this required by CDFA or because other grant programs use this definition?
 - Carolyn: this is what is in the bond language itself
 - Member Porse: census tracts can be quite large and hard to identify a community. Need to make sure funds are going to these farmers and ranchers
 - Carolyn: good suggestions for us to talk to other agencies on how they handle this. ‘Direct and meaningful benefits’ may also help address this but unclear guidelines on this yet.
 - Member Dlott: Smaller grant amounts may require balancing. To encourage multiple practices, this may make it simpler. This may be a complex issue, to encourage stacking but need to be clear about how complex this may become if adding more practices. Encouraging stacked practices and paying more for those makes a lot of sense but may put more burden on block grantees.
 - Carolyn Cook: Encourage multiple practice projects through Technical assistance.
 - Member Atherton: Clarifying \$150k max per project and \$75k max per practice, this may be encouraging stacking only two practices.
 - Chair Dlott: If I am a grantee reporting on multiple things versus one thing, I would lean towards one thing. How do we overcome this barrier? Complexity may be worth it if you have multiple practices.
 - Member Diggs: Three-year incentives grant does have its limitations but improving upon this is a challenge. Perhaps not just a dollar amount for multiple practices but look at extending time frame for multiple practices.
 - Member Atherton: With bonds, there is generally more consistency with getting funding and could help extend these timelines.
- Carolyn Cook: Presentation continued
 - Two-Phase application process
 - Greater distribution of projects, encourage partnerships, strengthens project proposals

- Significant rigor and effort will go into full proposals
 - Financial Review:
 - Require submission of documents to allow CDFA's Audit Office to perform a financial review
 - Development of Project Targets for Tracking Outcomes
 - Encourage relevance to local needs and identify metrics to track outcomes and performance
- Panel Questions
 - Carolyn to the panel members: What kind of feedback should CDFA provide to concept proposal applicants to strengthen their applications?
 - Chair Dlott: supports two phase application. Important to get feedback early on. Example: Are you willing to serve as a financial lead? Some organizations may be better suited and specific things CDFA can encourage in project proposals. Think about the grant and what we are trying to encourage. Forecast what expectations are and what services can be provided.
 - Member Redmond: Would we say that the proposal isn't competitive? What kind of feedback will be given?
 - Carolyn Cook: We are thinking not everyone will be invited to apply for phase 2. One benefit is saving review and admin time. We were thinking of inviting applicants representing 125-150% of funding available back to apply for the full proposal.
 - Member Redmond: Supports this, it takes a lot of effort to apply for some of these grants and is helpful to let them know at the concept stage.
 - Carolyn Cook: Every proposal should get some feedback.
 - Chair Dlott: Agree with comments above, and to give feedback to applicants. State beforehand that full proposals will be evaluated on these points and how well are applicants are able to meet these points.
 - Carolyn Cook: At concept proposal stage, we would post a summary of applicants that have applied to encourage partnerships.
 - Member Porse: Encourage to have a webinar on this to spur collaboration and partnerships.
- Carolyn: Presentation continued
 - On-Farm Project Selection
 - Require a written plan for selection of projects including selection criteria as an early deliverable
 - Administration and Technical Assistance Caps
 - Propose a total of 20% of award for TA and Admin, with at least 5% for TA. Allow more flexibility in the distribution of administrative and technical assistance funding.
 - Demonstration and Case Studies

- Require block grant recipients to host demonstration field days and develop at least 3 case studies (photos, quotes to share on social media and on website)
- Panel Questions:
 - Member Atherton: Would we consider requiring a small/medium scale farmer on BGR review committees for awarding projects?
 - Carolyn: It is challenging when offering flexibility to put in requirements about review committees
 - Director Mata: Preliminary block grants are reaching more small farmers
 - Member Wachter: Opportunity for state to provide templates instead of having to develop one on their own.
- Carolyn Cook: presentation continued
 - Equipment Sharing
 - Remove shared equipment as an allowable cost in the HSP Block Grant – Climate Bond includes an allocation of \$15M for Farm Equipment Sharing
 - Bulk Purchase and Invoice Reimbursement
 - For compost, mulch, and possibly biochar, allow bulk purchase or invoice-based reimbursement instead of flat payment rate. BGRs will describe the mode of purchase
- Panel Comments:
 - Member Cameron: Would this help someone with a freight disadvantage? Would this increase their overall cost significantly?
 - Carolyn Cook: Yes, that is something to think about – it depends on how the flat rate process has been working in the state so far.
 - Member Wachter: Seems potential for bulk purchases could apply to other practice (cover crops)? Encourage expanding this.
 - Member Redmond: Clarification on process of spreading/transportation
 - Carolyn Cook: We are suggesting that the BGR can have bulk purchases, or the reimbursement can be based on the invoice, but it should include transportation.
 - Dana Yount: We consulted with BGRs in remote area (like Sisikyou), who has some geographic challenges, and believe the cap proposed is fair. We've also talked with compost spreaders, and the quotes can really depend if the farmers are already on their route, etc. The BGRs we've talked to already have good relationships in place with compost providers so we are hopeful that they will help address these issues working with the producers and grantees.
- Carolyn Cook: Presentation continued

- Anonymous: Do the requirements regarding vulnerability/disadvantaged/etc. apply to the areas or entities chosen as Block Grant Recipients, or will they follow through and be applied for BGRs when choosing awardees?
 - Carolyn Cook: That could influence the selection of the BGRs, but in the end we will want to look at the on-farm projects to see the meaningful benefits.
- Anonymous: With regard to the fund cap of a singular practices, there are scenarios where the pairing of multiple practices is really beneficial, such as compost application paired with range planting, but the cost of implementing one practice far outweighs the cost of implementing the pair practice. With the fund cap, it could really limit the ability of a project to scale the acreage they would be able to pair these multi-practices. Has this been taken into consideration?
 - Carolyn Cook: HSP has experience implementing various funding caps. Team will look at these comments.
- Hope Zabronsky: Another challenge with practice-stacking through the block grant process was the timeline for awarding/implementing projects. For many BGRs, this was their first time awarding projects through such and often times what we found was that producers needed to remove an additional practice once awarded because they didn't have enough time to implement a 3-year practice
- Brian Pimentel: Stacking practices adds a risk of complexity and financial insecurity. It's important to remember that practices must be completed per the implementation and verification requirements and there are instances that farmers do not meet these requirements and are left holding the bag. I do not believe that multi staking practices that require 3 years of implementation are setting small farmers or SDFR for success.
- Margie: FYI, I applied a very novel system approach for the SWEEP grant that was a clearly beneficial system to save substantial amounts of water - it did not clearly/easily fit into the GHG calculator's variables or the Irrigation Water Savings Assessment Tool spreadsheet, and was not awarded because it was not for crop land. It was for a horse ranch, but an extremely beneficial approach to saving water & using surface water in exchange for groundwater. Is there a way to describe the system in a way that would be considered for a grant? i.e., consider beneficial projects for award even when they didn't fit the crop land model?
 - Carolyn Cook: Please email our team so we can discuss the project specifics.
- Anonymous: Is the two-phase proposal for TAPs or for Farmers?
- Emilie Winfield: I am curious to hear if CDFA is making changes to the way it approves projects? One piece of feedback we heard last time is the multiple

layers of project approval made it difficult to implement in a timely way and created additional paperwork. Does CDFA plan on giving block grant recipients more agency to perform their own project approval?

- Carolyn Cook: This has been challenging for block grant recipients. We are hoping to develop more training and template to improve block grant administration. Need to ensure projects are qualified to be a block grant project.
- Heather Nichols: 100% 2-stage process works well in our experience. It's appreciated to know sooner rather than later whether your proposal is competitive or not.
- Elena Bischak: The concept proposal idea is great! I think it would be helpful if concept proposal feedback included explicit feedback on what would disqualify the proposal if not rectified (e.g. "if this project does not serve producers from at least 2 counties, it won't be selected).
- Anonymous: How will the field days and case studies be funded? Will that fall under the administration bucket?
 - Carolyn Cook: Yes, that was our thinking – it would be built into admin and TA budget buckets.
- Rachel Magos: Is there an option for CDFA to put together the selection committee and serve in that capacity or does it have to be put together by the block grant recipient?
 - Carolyn Cook: CDFA has not been asked to serve on a selection committee and we did not specify this last solicitation.
 - Director Mata: Would be hard to create a committee to meet regional needs
- Lillian Power: Regarding the admin and TAP % cap, we recommend increasing the maximum percent allowed for admin and TAP costs to at minimum 25%. We've almost fully spent down the CDFA TAP budget in year 1 and are heavily relying on Zero Foodprint's match to make TAPs whole. We've also found that the 15% admin is the bare minimum we need to adequately maintain the program while meeting CDFA's reporting and invoicing requirements, so pulling from those funds will not lead to a better run program.
 - Lillian Power: Asked the question above live and elaborated that they received about \$8 million in requests for applications. In addition to the points described, recommend reviewing application procedures for the administrative burden they have heard from applicants. Also, finalizing invoicing, reporting, and verifications SOPs prior to posting the RGA. There have been struggles with this. Also, want to recommend the opportunities in expanding project impacts by using cost share funds from private entities. We are available to discuss more on this.

- Anonymous: I like the requirement to host a demo field day and provide a small number of case studies, but i do feel like that requirement provides an advantage during review for large organizations who already excel at this sort of outreach and education. It feels like small orgs that don't have a wide network established may inherently be less attractive to accomplish that task.
- Anonymous: Previously, 25% of the block grant was required to be provided to SDFRs, as defined by Farmer Equity Act of 2017. Given the language included in the climate bond of 40% to be allocated to vulnerable populations and disadvantaged communities, is this SDFR target going to be maintained or altered at all?
 - Carolyn Cook: The bond includes language under the allocations to HSP and SWEEP that socially disadvantaged farmers are a priority. Will continue to encourage block grants to support these projects through early technical assistance.
- Jameson Meyst: What about mulch blower truck service?
 - Dana Yount: The idea is this would be for compost and mulch practices mentioned. Consistent with compost practice we would want the cap to cover materials, transport, and spreading.
- Brian Kolodji: Question around 2022 Scoping Plan. CARB's published goals in the 2022 Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality shown on (page 96 on Table 2.3) is predominantly achieved by Carbon Dioxide Removal (more than 50% at 75 MMTCO₂e/Y) includes Natural and Working Lands Carbon Sequestration, which includes carbon dioxide sequestration such as researched and practiced world wide as FACE. Yet, still as yet there is no method promoted by CARB to calculate sequestration using this decades proven and accepted science and technology proven to double crop yields and save irrigation water. USDA has proposed methods to measure bio-sequestration using FACE and other carbon dioxide enrichment practices. Why isn't CDFA promoting these methods to calculate carbon capture with agriculture with yield and water saving benefits?
 - Director Mata: This isn't a commercially available technology we will be implementing at this time.
- Anthony Myint – question asked live: Cost-sharing model: Our organization has already collected and awarded over \$2 million from businesses and donors in CA. So far none of these private sector dollars have mingled with HSP dollars and none of the impacts have been logged towards statewide targets. But we would love to accelerate private sector funding of HSP-style projects, as well as private sector funding of actual HSP projects, by way of a formal cost share mechanism within the block grant program. Years ago Zero Foodprint began a collaboration with Karen Ross and CDFA, as well as CARB and other agencies around mobilizing private sector funds. But to date, CDFA has not meaningfully engaged. Whereas California has a few tens of millions of dollars per year for

our 41 million acres of working lands, the UK just approved budgets and public-private collaborations with a total of ~\$4 BILLION per year for their 40 million acres. So the need and opportunity is clear, and we must aim for over 100 times our current rate of our resource re-allocation. We all know the state budget does not have an extra \$4 billion. But in fact 1% from tourism and restaurant revenues would generate about \$4 billion. Even 0.1%, so a nickel from a \$50 purchase would create \$40 million per year—more than the entire HSP budget. We are facing unprecedented environmental and federal challenges, and we cannot fail to act just because there is not a precedent for this kind of private sector funding. We are standing by to go as urgently as the state's engagement allows.

- Carolyn Cook: The HSP team has recently spoken with you on that topic, and we are happy to talk more on it. The BGRs can already include a match – are we missing something in your question?
- Anthony Myint: If there was a mechanism where a private match could free up some of the budget, but there is no benefit right now for putting additional projects on the ground.
- Carolyn Cook: Let's discuss this more separately.
- Anonymous: Compost delivery and spreading costs can be a burden and high out of pocket expense for some smaller producer.
- Anonymous: Since each BGR can retain 20% of funds for Admin & TA costs — doesn't lowering the maximum award from \$5 million to \$4 million with the goal of awarding more BGRs, effectively reduce the amount of funding that goes directly to growers?
 - Director Mata: No, this should be the same
- Amanda Appel: Have any previous BGRs tied their outcomes to a climate action plan?
 - Carolyn Cook: I don't know the answer to this, referred to Healthy Soils Team to look into.
- Anonymous: On the topic of the compost — how would a BGR address budget discrepancies if invoice reimbursement or bulk purchases resulted in differences from original amount awarded?
 - Dana Yount: These practices will follow the standard the 3-year implementation and the fuel costs and transportation costs changing. We are exploring a potential increase in the coming years, or for that BGR to hold funding to allow for the increase over the years. This would apply to other practices that rely on transportation.
- Anonymous: I fully support increasing TA and Admin. support. It's important to recognize that verification requirements are the same for small producers and large producers. The rate based on percentage does not fully cover the TA and Admin costs, especially when providing TA for smaller producers.

- Brian Pimentel: Is there any consideration in raising the indirect rate to a higher percentage than 25%? This amount can only be charged to time spent on administrative and teaching tasks, not the entire grant. RCDs and non-profits rely on indirect costs to maintain their operations.
 - Carolyn Cook: Still sorting through bond language requirements and want to be more flexible than maybe we have in the past. Applying indirect costs to on-farm projects may be unclear.
 - Elena Bischak: Is it possible to require BGRs to post demonstration field days to the California Farm Demonstration Network?
 - Tawny Mata: This is not a requirement.
 - Anonymous: Carolyn, Your comment has been repeatedly disproven based on references provided to CDFA. Carbon Dioxide Enrichment of crops, including FACE, after having been researched for decades by USDA and USDA including one 17 year by USDA study, has been practiced successfully worldwide in commercial greenhouses, and without greenhouses in orchards for decades, showing dramatic yield and water savings benefits.
 - Director Mata: We are not funding practices in greenhouses at this time
 - Ritta Martin: Funding decrease from \$5M to \$4M may not make CDFA's job easier. Think the two-phase application process will be advantageous to put funds towards applicants that can cover a lot of areas.
 - General Public Comment:
 - Brian Kolodji: Appreciate the email response and hoping to talk about direct air capture. Asking if we can make these meetings start at 10 due to train schedule that does not get in Sacramento until 9:30.

- **12:30 pm Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn by Jeff Dlott, Seconded by Member Redmond. Meeting adjourned at 1:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted by: DY

Note taker, OARS Environmental Scientists, California Department of Food and Agriculture