

# **Invitation for Public Comment**

## **Establishment of Framework for Public-Private Engagement on Healthy Soils**

### **Introduction**

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) and California Air Resources Board are announcing a series of stakeholder workshops on the development of a framework for public-private engagement on investing in healthy soils. CDFA and CARB are looking to engage interested parties to provide early feedback as a framework for engagement is developed. Staff from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will also participate in the workshop.

CDFA's Healthy Soils Program provides financial incentives to Californian growers and ranchers to implement conservation management practices that sequester carbon, reduce atmospheric greenhouse gases, and improve soil health. The Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel (EFA SAP), which advises the Healthy Soils Program, has received several proposals to expand this program with the support of partners in the private sector.

The framework developed during these stakeholder workshops will act as a roadmap for organizations who have already expressed interest in partnering with the state to invest in healthy agricultural soils as well as organizations who may be interested in doing so in the future.

### **Goals**

#### **1. Identify state verification, quantification, and coordination requirements**

Define which verification and quantification elements of the existing programs are necessary for programs that engage with the state and which can be relaxed for private partners.

#### **2. Identify the needs of non-governmental organizations investing in healthy soils**

Describe the ways in which state agencies can assist non-governmental organizations interested in developing a program that invests in healthy agricultural soils. Some examples could include alignment on eligible practices, tools for quantifying sequestered emissions, or co-branding.

#### **3. Develop a framework for public-private engagement**

Create a framework for private organizations to collaborate with the state to implement healthy soils grant programs. The framework should include a collaboration / communication strategy and easy to follow engagement parameters for our partners.

### **Opportunity for Public Comment**

In order to fulfill the outlined above, CDFA and CARB invite stakeholders to participate in a series of webinars to provide input and help develop the framework that will be reviewed by CDFA's Science Advisory Panel. CDFA requests feedback on the following questions:

- What value can CDFA offer to private sector efforts? What type of engagement would you expect from CDFA?
- What requirements are needed from the state to collaborate with CDFA?
- What coordination is needed to ensure funds are allocated efficiently and fairly (e.g. the same project is not funded twice)?
- How should this coordination occur (logistics and communication framework)?

**Comments should be submitted by e-mail to [cdfa.oefi@cdfa.ca.gov](mailto:cdfa.oefi@cdfa.ca.gov) by 5:00 pm PT, August 21, 2020.**