

2020 Advanced CEQA Workshop

Speakers

Oakland (2/20)

Curtis Alling, AICP, *Ascent Environmental*

With over 35 years of experience, Curtis is a recognized expert in CEQA and NEPA and a specialist in planning related to climate change, natural resources management, and outdoor recreation/trails. Trained in wildlife science and natural resources planning, his projects are very diverse, including urban or rural and public or private projects. Project specialties include Climate Action Plans, water resources, conservation planning, ecosystem restoration, renewable energy, hazardous materials, solid waste, flood control, community planning, regional and state parks, bicycle and hiking trails, rail transit, highways, and large-scale developments.

Al Herson, *The Sohagi Law Group, PLC*

Al is an environmental attorney and planner with over 30 years experience. He is a recognized authority on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and natural resources law. Mr. Herson serves as the firm's Sacramento presence, and advises public agencies on complex environmental and land use law matters, including CEQA, NEPA, SB 375 and climate change analysis, the Endangered Species Act, and wetlands permitting.

Tiffany Wright, JD, *Remy Moose Manley*

Ms. Wright represents public agencies and private applicants in a variety of land use and environmental law matters. She is experienced in handling all phases of the land use entitlement and permitting processes, including administrative approvals and litigation. Her practice covers the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State Planning and Zoning Law, the Subdivision Map Act, the Williamson Act, the California Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the federal Endangered Species Act, and the federal Clean Water Act provisions associated with wetlands permitting.

West Sacramento (2/27)

Gary Jakobs, AICP, *Ascent Environmental*

Gary applies his education in economics, environmental studies, and business to infuse pragmatic insights into environmental analysis. With 35 years of experience, he has a diverse background in environmental studies for projects throughout California and the western United

States. He is a CEQA and NEPA expert who develops practice methods, leads emerging analysis and policy trends, and helps his clients understand applicable regulations and case law. His expertise encompasses the federal and California endangered species acts and Clean Water Act and state requirements for regulation of wetlands and water quality regulations. Gary's project management experience includes multi-task, on-call environmental assignments for projects throughout California; large-scale development plans; in-fill urban development; wastewater treatment infrastructure; parks, open space and vegetation management programs; industrial and energy facilities; telecommunications installations; prisons; and airport expansions. As a way to give back to the profession, Gary has led the development of the Association of Environmental Professional's Advanced CEQA Workshop curriculum for several years.

Jim Moose, *Remy Moose Manley*

Mr. Moose joined the firm in 1986 as an associate, became a partner in 1990, and is now the senior partner in the firm. His practice focuses on land use, water, and environmental matters, with an emphasis on issues arising under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State Planning and Zoning Law, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act, the California Endangered Species Act, and other relevant land use and environmental statutes. He represents public agencies, project proponents, consulting firms, non-profit organizations, and individuals. He handles all phases of the land use entitlement process and permitting processes, including administrative approvals and litigation. Over the course of his career, he has also participated in drafting amendments to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines.

Along with his former partner Tina Thomas and Whit Manley (Of Counsel to RMM), Mr. Moose is co-author of Guide to the California Environmental Quality Act (11th ed. 2007, Solano Press Books).

Honey Walters, *Ascent Environmental*

Honey leads the firm's air quality, greenhouse gas (GHG)/climate change, and noise practices. She is an expert in air quality impact analysis and compliance, GHG assessments and climate change reduction planning, and noise impact analysis and mitigation. Honey's professional experience of over 13 years in the private and public sectors includes extensive computer modeling coupled with an advanced educational background in air pollution chemistry and climate change science (Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in Environmental Chemistry and Atmospheric Science). She has worked directly with numerous agencies including the California Air Resources Board, California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, and the Attorney General's office on the development of thresholds of significance, analytical methods, and reduction strategies. Honey has served as a delegate to China, meeting with various government agencies and universities to share knowledge of air quality issues, and is

currently the President of [Solar Cookers International](#) (a non-profit that focuses on assisting communities to harness the sun to benefit people and environments).

Eureka (2/28)

Patrick Angell, *Ascent Environmental*

Patrick Angell is a Senior Director at Ascent. He has 28 years of experience serving as a project director and manager and technical analyst for a variety of public and private development projects for CEQA and NEPA compliance. His experience includes establishing environmental review divisions for newly incorporated cities, coordinating and facilitating large-scale private and public projects (including general plans and code updates), and managed several large roadway and infrastructure projects. He is currently the chair for the AEP CEQA Portal and recently chaired the 2018 Northern California AEP Conference held in the City of Anderson. He serves as President for the AEP Superior Chapter, which includes northeastern California.

Bob Brown, AICP, *SHN*

Bob Brown, AICP is the Planning Principal for SHN. Bob has been practicing CEQA for the last 35 years. He provides municipal planning services to rural jurisdictions, permitting for a wide range of private clients (industrial, housing, energy, resource utilization, restoration, etc.) and environmental impact assessments to everyone in between. Bob has taught the CEQA/NEPA class at Humboldt State University for the past thirteen years. Bob has been a speaker at AEP state conferences and CEQA workshops. Bob is currently serving on the San Francisco Chapter AEP Board as the North Coast Vice President of Programs.

Karin Lilienbecker, *ICF*

Karin Lilienbecker is an environmental planner and program manager at ICF, working primarily in Eureka and Redding. In her 27 years of consulting experience, she has prepared CEQA and NEPA documents for military, transmission line, wind energy, subsea cable, highway, rail and transit projects. She led the environmental document (EIR/EIS) and permitting for the California high-speed rail section near Fresno, the first one in the nation to go to construction. Currently, she manages ICF's environmental on-call contract and environmental work for Last Chance Grade, both for Caltrans District 1 in Eureka.

Sabrina Teller, *Remy Moose Manley*

Sabrina Teller is a partner in Remy Moose Manley, LLP, a Sacramento firm with a statewide practice focusing on CEQA, NEPA and land use law. She has 19 years of experience representing agencies, developers and citizens groups through environmental review, administrative entitlement and writ litigation all the way up to the state Supreme Court. Her experience includes a wide range of projects from local housing developments to statewide programs,

including most recently the California Board of Forestry's California Vegetation Management Program, which covers the state's goal of treating vegetation fuels to reduce wildfire risks on 250,000 acres around the state annually. She also currently represents Humboldt County in litigation challenging the County's adoption of zoning regulations to conform to the General Plan.

San Luis Obispo (2/28)

TBD

Los Angeles (3/2)

TBD

Santa Barbara (3/3)

TBD

Santa Rosa (3/3)

TBD

Jurupa Valley (3/4)

John Bellas, *Michael Baker International*

John has been an environmental planner with Michael Baker International/PMC (now a part of Michael Baker) for almost 6 years. Prior to his current role, John served as Deputy Director of Planning Services for Willdan for over 11 years, and prior to that he served as an environmental scientist for Orth-Rodgers & Associates for nearly 3 years. John was a primary contributor for the Westlake Village Community Park/Triunfo YMCA Supplemental EIR. John earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Resource Management from Penn State University. In all, John has over 18 years of experience with CEQA.

Heidi Rous, *ESA*

As a principal associate, Heidi partners with clients and project teams throughout California to provide comprehensive permitting, compliance, and planning services specializing in air quality, climate change adaptation, health risk assessments (HRAs), and acoustical analysis.

Heidi brings more than 25 years of experience performing and managing emissions inventories; air quality, greenhouse gas, and noise impact assessments; and off-site consequence analyses for industrial clients (oil and gas, manufacturing, water and energy), the transportation sector (airports, ports, roadways, rail), and development projects (residential, institutional, mixed/use). She is highly skilled in quantifying, modeling, and mitigating emissions from stationary and mobile sources. Heidi is adept at the design and permitting of air pollution control devices, including Best Available Control Technology (BACT) determinations, emission credit (ERC and RECLAIM) assistance, permit negotiation, and other compliance services.

Heidi holds a Bachelor of Science in physics from the California State Polytechnic University at Pomona. She is a Certified Permitting Professional (CPP) registered with the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

Charity Schiller, *Best Best & Krieger*

Charity Schiller helps public and private clients negotiate the maze of laws that apply to infrastructure and private development projects, so that those projects can be entitled and built. Specifically, Charity assists clients with all aspects of the California Environmental Quality Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and related environmental laws. She has extensive experience with the preparation and adoption of environmental impact reports, environmental impact statements, negative declarations, addenda, exemptions and other environmental documents. Charity is also an experienced litigator, successfully defending her clients before administrative boards and trial and appellate courts throughout California.

San Diego (3/5)

Poonam Boparai, *Ascent Environmental*

Poonam Boparai is an Ascent principal and the firm's San Diego office director. She has over 12 years of experience in the public and private sectors conducting air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) analyses and climate action planning. She possesses a unique skill set that combines technical expertise with a keen understanding of planning and environmental policy. She has successfully applied her expertise in assisting agencies such as the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego Unified Port District, and County of San Diego with air quality and climate change policy development, analysis methodologies, GHG reduction strategies, and development of GHG thresholds of significance. A long-time resident of San Diego, Poonam has in-depth knowledge of the local planning and environmental landscape and has helped multiple clients navigate the dynamic regulatory framework in CEQA and climate action planning.

Andrea Contreras Rosati, Vanst

Andrea Contreras Rosati is a San Diego attorney specializing in land use and real estate law. For more than 25 years, Ms. Rosati has worked with real estate developers, property owners, and municipalities on entitlement work, property acquisition, redevelopment, commercial leasing and loan transactions. She is also an expert in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Before joining Vanst, Ms. Rosati served as Vice President and In-House Counsel for Sunroad Enterprises where she advised and counseled executive team members on real estate and land use matters. She assisted in obtaining project entitlements from local agencies in addition to acquiring and disposing property. Ms. Rosati also reviewed and prepared company-related contracts, leases, loan documents, non-disclosure agreements, and exclusive negotiating agreements.

Before her tenure at Sunroad Enterprises, Ms. Rosati served as Deputy City Attorney in land use for the City of San Diego for seven years. In that position, she advised the San Diego Planning Commission, the San Diego Development Services Department and represented the City in CEQA and other land use litigation.

Ms. Rosati earned a law degree from American University Washington College of Law, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in public policy from Stanford University.

Darin Neufeld, AICP, County of San Diego

Darin has over 14 years of professional experience in the public and private sectors as an environmental planner, project manager, and manager of the County's current planning division. Darin is Chief of Departmental Operations for the County of San Diego Planning & Development Services. Prior to becoming Chief, he was the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Manager in the County of San Diego Planning & Development Services Department. He manages the Planning & Development Services Department, Project Planning Division through discretionary review, including CEQA compliance. The Project Planning Department reviews all private development and associated Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, and all other types of CEQA documents. Darin is responsible for CEQA legislation and coordination with County Counsel on all CEQA issues in the unincorporated County of San Diego. Darin served on the Association of Environmental Professionals San Diego Chapter Board and on the San Diego Section of the American Planning Association Board.

Bob Stark, AICP, Michael Baker International

Bob Stark is an Associate Vice President at Michael Baker International, a leading planning and engineering consultancy with local offices in Carlsbad and San Diego. He has 22 years of experience in the preparation and management of environmental review documents pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). His expertise in guiding high profile and controversial development projects through the rigors of state and federal environmental review and permitting processes has made him a

trusted advisor to public agencies throughout California. His broad base of knowledge ranges from air quality, noise, and traffic analysis to renewable energy and habitat restoration. Mr. Stark has served as an expert witness for the City of San Diego on CEQA matters and created the curriculum for the UCSD Extension CEQA course which he has instructed since 2008. Mr. Stark has a B.A. in Urban Studies and Planning from UCSD, a Master of City and Regional Planning from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

Suzanne Varco, *Varco & Rosenbaum Environmental Law Group LLP*

Suzanne Varco is the managing partner of Varco & Rosenbaum Environmental Law Group LLP (formerly Opper & Varco LLP). She has a private law practice concentrating in areas of Brownfields' redevelopment, real estate transactions involving contaminated sites, hazardous waste clean-up and compliance, CEQA litigation, and environmental review and litigation. Ms. Varco has extensive experience working with local, state and federal regulatory agencies. Her firm caters to the need of large and small business entities, individuals, and governmental agencies. Ms. Varco is a member of the State Bar of California, Environmental Law Section; the San Diego County Bar Association, Environmental and Land Use Law section; is past president of the San Diego Environmental Professionals; and is the past chair of the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health Site Assessment and Mitigation Steering Committee. Ms. Varco received a B.A. degree with majors in English and economics from Whitman College and a J.D. degree from the University of San Diego School of Law.

Irvine (3/6)

Konnie Dobрева, JD, *Environment | Planning | Development Solutions, Inc.*

Konnie's more than 19 years of public and private sector planning and legal experience have made her a keen strategist and an effective writer of CEQA documents. She has prepared environmental documents for a diverse range of projects: small-scale residential and large planned communities, commercial office, industrial, mixed-use and general plans. Konnie holds a juris doctorate degree from Pepperdine University School of Law, where she specialized in alternative dispute resolution. Konnie has been an assistant planner with the City of Lake Forest and a planning consultant for the cities of Irvine, Anaheim, and Rancho Santa Margarita. Konnie is the Administrative Vice President of the Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP) and prior to that, she served 13 terms on the Orange County Chapter board.

Cecilia Gallardo-Daly, *City of San Clemente*

Cecilia is the Community Development Director at the City of San Clemente.

Susan Hori, Esq., *Manatt, Phelps & Phillips*

Susan Hori's practice focuses on obtaining land use and zoning entitlements and regulatory permits for real estate development projects and the resolution of environmental issues affecting real property. Her clients include landowners, financial institutions, developers and builders in the residential, retail, hotel/resort, and commercial and industrial development industries. Susan represents clients on issues involving state and federal regulations, including the CEQA, NEPA, the California Coastal Act, Section 404 permitting under the Clean Water Act, National Historic Preservation Act compliance and Endangered Species Act permitting. Susan is recognized as a "distinguished land use practitioner" by Chambers and Partners, has been listed in The Best Lawyers in America since 2005, and has been named a Top 25 "Land Use Leader" by the Daily Journal.

Alisha Winterswyk, *Best Best & Krieger*

Alisha Winterswyk is the current Membership Chair for the Orange County Chapter of AEP, and she has served in nearly every position on the board over the past decade. Alisha's practice centers on advising public and private clients on an array of state and federal environmental laws, with a specific focus on the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. A partner in the Best Best & Krieger LLP's Environmental Law & Natural Resources practice group, Alisha regularly counsels clients on the substantive and procedural mandates of CEQA/NEPA. When her clients face legal challenges to their decisions or projects, Alisha successfully and zealously defends those clients in court. A trusted land use advisor, Alisha is regularly called upon to assist public and private clients with navigating the land entitlement process. With an eye toward environmentally responsible development, Alisha has advised her clients on myriad annexations, development agreements, general plan updates and amendments, specific plan adoption and amendments, coastal development permits, and various subdivisions.

San Jose (3/6)

Chris Bersbach, *Rincon Consultants*

Chris has worked with Rincon Consultants since 2008, providing environmental services to public and private sector clients including CEQA and NEPA documentation, and air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and noise technical analysis and modeling. I'm particularly interested in climate change policy, alternative energy projects, local land use and conservation planning, and open space preservation.

Kristi Black, JD, *Ascent Environmental*

Kristi Black is a project manager with Ascent Environmental. She has focused her career on managing and contributing to documentation to support CEQA and NEPA compliance for energy development and infrastructure projects, such as electric transmission, natural gas,

renewable energy, telecommunications, and road and bridge projects. Kristi works closely with agency representatives to define project scopes and to streamline permitting efforts, and offers a thorough understanding of the state and federal regulatory environment in California.

Laura Harris, *Remy Moose Manley*

Ms. Harris joined the firm in 2006 and is a senior associate in the firm. Her practice focuses on land use and environmental law. Ms. Harris handles all phases of the land use entitlement and permitting processes, including administrative approvals and litigation. Ms. Harris's practice covers the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the State Planning and Zoning Law, the Cortese-Knox-Hertberg Local Government Reorganization Act, air and water quality, natural resources, endangered species, wetlands and related matters.

Fresno (3/11)

Poonam Boparai, *Ascent Environmental*

Poonam Boparai is an Ascent principal and the firm's San Diego office director. She has over 12 years of experience in the public and private sectors conducting air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) analyses and climate action planning. She possesses a unique skill set that combines technical expertise with a keen understanding of planning and environmental policy. She has successfully applied her expertise in assisting agencies such as the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), San Diego Unified Port District, and County of San Diego with air quality and climate change policy development, analysis methodologies, GHG reduction strategies, and development of GHG thresholds of significance. A long-time resident of San Diego, Poonam has in-depth knowledge of the local planning and environmental landscape and has helped multiple clients navigate the dynamic regulatory framework in CEQA and climate action planning.

Sydney Coatsworth, *AICP, Ascent Environmental*

Sydney is a principal and vice president of Ascent Environmental, Inc., an environmental, planning, and natural resources consultancy in Sacramento. She has over 30 years of experience in environmental planning, environmental analysis, and public outreach programs for a wide variety of projects. Her practice spans the gamut, and includes projects related to water resources, wastewater treatment, affordable housing, transportation, urban development, natural resources management, and environmental policy and regulation. She is an expert in environmental compliance under CEQA, NEPA, and Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) laws and regulations and has overseen the preparation of hundreds of environmental documents. Sydney is an environmental educator and regular speaker on a

variety of topics, including CEQA and NEPA practice for UC Davis Extension, AEP, APA, and client agencies.

John P. Kinsey, *Wanger Jones Helsley PC*

John P. Kinsey is a Shareholder of the law firm of Wanger Jones Helsley PC. Mr. Kinsey's practice includes civil litigation in both state and federal courts, including complex land use, real estate, and environmental matters. His practice also includes all aspects of land use and environmental law, including litigation, counseling, and regulatory services. He also has experience in water law, federal Indian law, governmental ethics, and representing public agencies.