

AEP 2026 State Conference



Sands to Shores

**Pathways to
Thriving Communities**

San Diego, CA: April 23-26, 2026
Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina



Panelist Biographies



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AEP California State Conference 2026



Panelist Biographies

A.

Panelist: Callie Amoaku, Senior Project Manager, RECON Environmental

Biography: Ms. Amoaku is a biologist with experience as a project manager and senior biologist; adept at leading complex ecological projects and mentoring teams. She has successfully managed a variety of projects from start to finish, collaborating with other technical groups, engineers, and agency staff. She manages and coordinates large baseline survey efforts; and prepares biological sections for EIRs, biological resources technical reports, resource management plans, biological assessments, low-effect habitat conservation plans, and survey reports. She also performs wildlife surveys, vegetation mapping, and jurisdictional delineations throughout California.

Panelist: Ted Anasis, Manager, Airport Planning, San Diego County Regional Airport Authority

Biography: Mr. Ted Anasis is a Manager of Airport Planning with the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority with 20+ years experience leading long-term airport master planning, facility planning and environmental review in compliance with CEQA, NEPA and the California Coastal Act for Airport projects. Mr. Anasis has led the master planning and environmental review for major airport facilities at San Diego International Airport including the 10-gate expansion of Terminal 2 (known as the Green Build) which opened in 2013; the first Rental Car Center which opened in 2016; and the Airport Development Plan which is presently constructing a new 30-gate Terminal 1 replacement, a new entry road, and a 5-story parking structure. As the Manager of Airport Planning, he has led the preparation of regional aviation activity forecasts for aircraft operations and passengers, as well as developed the facility requirements to meet the region's demand for air service. Mr. Anasis also serves as a volunteer at Torrey Pines State Reserve and serves on the Board of TURN Behavioral Health Services, a non-profit organization, and also serves on the Board of Directors for the North San Diego Business Chamber.

Panelist: Gilbert Anaya, Ph.D., Division Chief of the Environmental Management Div, US Section- International Boundary and Water Commission

Biography: Gilbert joined the USIBWC in 1999 and is currently the Division Chief of the Environmental Management Division, working on various environmental and water issues along the United States-Mexico border. He serves on binational technical teams dealing with water resources, sanitation, environment, and is currently working on water quality and sanitation issues in the Tijuana River basin and is a part of the expansion project team for the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant. He has a Bachelor of Science and Ph.D. from the University of Texas at El Paso, and a Master of Science from the University of Texas at San Antonio and served in the United States Army.

Moderator/ Panelist: Patrick Angell, Principal, Ascent

Biography: Patrick Angell is a principal at Ascent. He has more than 30 years of experience serving as a project director and manager and technical analyst for a variety of projects. Patrick specializes in environmental and urban land use planning and has performed tasks for projects such as water and wastewater facilities, energy facilities, flood control, residential subdivisions, mixed-use urban developments, general plans, and redevelopment plans. His experience includes establishing environmental review divisions for cities, coordinating and facilitating large-scale private and public projects. He has also been involved in the preparation of several joint CEQA and NEPA documents and technical studies. Pat is currently the AEP Superior California Chapter Director and Chair of the AEP CEQA Portal.

Moderator: Lindsay Anshen, M.A., Senior Principal Environmental Planner, Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

Biography: Lindsay has 19 years of consulting experience and has managed numerous small and large-scale projects throughout North America from feasibility studies to permitting and compliance through pre- construction, construction, and operations and maintenance. She has experience leading environmental reviews and permitting for waterborne trash removal projects in California, as well as facilitating multi-party stakeholder meetings focused on key interests, issue identification, and options for mutual gain.

B.

Panelist: Jasmine Bakker, Senior Biologist, Artemis Environmental

Biography: Ms. Bakker has 20 years of environmental consulting experience in Southern California that includes 10 years of supporting City of San Diego Stormwater Department channel maintenance and mitigation projects. Jasmine has a bachelor's degree in Ecology and Systematic Biology from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Her support on the Otay Reed and Hollister Quarry mitigation sites has spanned their identification as potential mitigation sites, planning and design, permitting, and providing biological oversight during implementation.

Moderator: Ian Barnes, PE, Principal, Fehr & Peers

Biography: Ian Barnes is a Principal in Fehr & Peers's Walnut Creek office, who also serves as Senior Market Leader for Northern California. His enthusiasm for transportation and improving communities has led to extensive experience in transportation planning/engineering projects covering a broad spectrum of project types, including infrastructure and land use projects in the wildfire-urban interface in critical locations like the Oakland-Berkeley Hills and Wine Country. Ian is recognized as an international leader in Evacuation Analysis planning, and a national leader in Evacuation Analysis for CEQA and NEPA purposes. Ian has a long history of completing infrastructure studies for large scale transportation projects in California, including for the Bay Bridge, I-80 Eastshore Freeway, I-880 Nimitz Freeway, SR 84 Dumbarton Bridge and I-580 Richmond-San Rafael Bridge corridors. Ian completed the first VMT mitigation bank and exchange project in Northern California (for CCTA) and completed the first Caltrans CEQA analysis that specifically considered induced VMT analysis for a freeway widening project (I-680 in Alameda County).

Moderator: John Bellas, CEQA Technical Director, Michael Baker International

Biography: John Bellas is Michael Baker International's CEQA Technical Director for the Los Angeles area. With more than 25 years of experience, he has managed the preparation of numerous CEQA and NEPA documents for a wide range of projects, including urban infill projects, greenfield and brownfield development projects, schools and colleges, parks and recreational facilities, renewable energy projects, land use plans and programs, and various capital improvement projects. In addition, John regularly provides strategic CEQA guidance to a variety of agencies in California, frequently conducts peer reviews of CEQA documents, and is an experienced CEQA instructor.

Panelist: Kelsey Bennett, Director, Environmental and Sustainability Planning, Rincon Consultants Inc.

Biography: Kelsey Bennett serves as Director of Environmental and Sustainability Planning at Rincon Consultants and offers a unique vision for the future of CEQA GHG assessment at the convergence of quality climate action planning and defensible environmental impact analysis. Specifically, her climate experience includes climate analyses (contribution to climate change as well as climate change vulnerability) as part of CEQA/NEPA impact assessment; policy development via climate action/adaptation plan and general plan policies to reduce GHG emissions and mitigate climate change impacts; and development of locally appropriate CEQA GHG thresholds and guidance for jurisdictions. Kelsey's overarching focus is the intersection of environment, sustainability, and policy to help the largest swaths of society gain access to healthy and safe communities and achieve our collective planning vision of a resilient California.

Panelist: Darbi Berry, Director, The San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative

Biography: Darbi has been supporting SDRCC's programs since 2019 and specializes in building partnerships, climate resilience and capacity building; she manages the organization's operations, programming, fundraising and strategic vision. Through SDRCC, Darbi leads work that supports regional work on projects implementing climate adaptation, coastal resilience, energy efficiency, and organizational management. Beyond her role as Director, Darbi is an Adjunct Professor for the Public Health Department at San Diego State University and serves as the current Board Chair for the California Resilience Partnership and serves on the executive committee for the Alliance of Regional Collaboratives for Climate Adaptation. She received her B.S. in Environmental Science and Policy from the University of South Florida and her M.S. in Environmental and Ocean Sciences from the University of San Diego.

Panelist: Anna Bettis, MSUS, PMP, Senior Climate Planner, San Diego Association of Governments

Biography: Anna Bettis is a Senior Climate Planner in the Planning Department at SANDAG. She has over 10 years of experience in climate adaptation and mitigation, including program planning and monitoring, development of strategic partnerships and communication, grant writing, strategic planning, and contract management across the public, nonprofit, academic, and philanthropic sectors. Notably, she led the development of a nationally recognized, award-winning climate adaptation and equity program and an economic assessment of urban heat that inspired the introduction of federal legislation. She previously served as the U.S. spokesperson for nature-based climate adaptation solutions for the world's largest conservation organization and as a Commissioner on the Environmental Quality and Sustainability Commission for the City of Phoenix. In her role at SANDAG, Ms. Bettis led the first-ever San Diego Regional Climate Action Plan. She manages a team of planners and coordinates with local, regional, and state agencies to advance the development, implementation, and monitoring of climate adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Moderator: Asha Bleier, AICP, Practice Director Planning & Urban Design, Dudek

Biography: Asha Bleier is a principal planner with 20 years of experience managing complex planning and development projects throughout California. She leads Dudek's Planning and Urban Design practice, with expertise in general plans, community plans, master plans, corridor/transit-oriented development, resilience planning, and design guidelines. Asha's background in design, development, and sustainability informs her policy recommendations. She excels at managing large teams, developing creative strategies, and facilitating stakeholder dialogue.

Moderator/ Panelist: Poonam Boparai, Principal, Ascent Environmental, Inc.

Biography: Poonam Boparai is a principal at Ascent Environmental and the firm's San Diego office director. She has over 18 years of experience in the public and private sectors conducting climate action planning for local and regional agencies and special districts. With an educational background in Environmental Engineering with a focus on climate science, she applies her expertise to develop effective climate mitigation and adaptation solutions grounded in data and science and informed by community needs and a focus on equitable outcomes. Poonam has in-depth knowledge of the planning and environmental landscape and has helped multiple clients navigate the dynamic framework in climate action planning.

Panelist: Victoria Boyd, B, Permitting Project Manager, AES

Biography: Victoria Boyd has 12 years of experience in environmental planning and permitting. Her background in environmental analysis within a variety of fields has allowed her to successfully work on projects complying with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), throughout California. Over the last 4 years, Victoria has focused on clean energy development including, solar with battery energy storage, anaerobic digestion, and standalone battery energy storage. Due to the growing need for battery energy storage and increased awareness of its importance, Victoria has spent quite a bit of time overcoming various hurdles in the deployment of this technology, gaining valuable insights in the process. Key lessons learned have included the importance of initiating early discussions with regulatory authorities and the public about safety, maintaining frequent communication with key stakeholders and project supporters, producing technology-agnostic technical reports, and drafting environmental compliance documents with the appropriate level of detail, among other insights.

Moderator: Kelly Bray, Principal Land Use and Climate Planner, Dudek

Biography: Ms. Bray is a Principal Land Use and Climate Planner with Dudek. She has 16 years of diverse professional land use experience, specializing in climate, sustainability and environmental planning during which she has helped shape the policies and outcomes within multiple communities across California. Her focus is to help communities fund and plan projects to manage risk and build resilience to the effects of climate change. She earned a M.S.P. in Urban & Regional Planning from Florida State University, and a B.S. in Environmental Science & Policy from the University of South Florida.

Moderator: Anastasia Brewster, Senior Planner, City of San Diego Stormwater Department

Biography: Ms. Brewster has over 20 years of project management experience in urban planning and community development. Anastasia has a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Pomona College. For the past four years, she has served as a Senior Planner with the City of San Diego's Stormwater Department where she has served as a project manager of wetland restoration sites as compensatory mitigation for the City's channel maintenance program.

Moderator/ Panelist: Bob Brown, Senior Project Manager, SHN

Biography: Bob has been in the "far north" coastal part of California for 40 years working as both a contract municipal planner and environmental consultant, which involved practicing CEQA on both sides of the counter. He is a Board Member with the AEP San Francisco Chapter and has taught the CEQA/NEPA course at Cal Poly Humboldt (Humboldt State University) for 18 years where he continues to have the opportunity to teach "CEQA done right" to his future regulators.

Panelist: Kirsten Burrowes, Project Manager, Ascent

Biography: Kirsten Burrowes is an environmental planner and project manager with over 10 years of experience in environmental consulting, specializing in CEQA and NEPA compliance. She brings a strong background in project management, environmental review, and resource permitting for a wide range of public and private projects across California and Nevada. She served as the Project Manager for the Licensing of Commercial Cannabis Cultivation in Mendocino County Project EIR and the subsequent preparation of over 500 addendums for individual cannabis projects in Mendocino County.

C.

Panelist: Christopher Calfee, Senior Staff Counsel for CEQA and Land Use, Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation

Biography: Christopher Calfee is Senior Staff Counsel for CEQA and Land Use at the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation. He previously served as Special Counsel to the Secretary of the California Natural Resources from 2022 to 2026, after serving as Agency's Deputy Secretary and General Counsel since 2017. Before joining the Natural Resources Agency, he was Senior Counsel in the Governor's Office of Planning and Research where he advised the Governor and Cabinet on legislative and regulatory matters involving land use and environmental law, focusing on state and local government responses to climate change. He has also served as the lead attorney overseeing revisions to the regulations implementing California's Environmental Quality Act. Prior to joining state service, Mr. Calfee represented both local governments and private applicants in matters involving the California Environmental Quality Act and related environmental and planning laws in association with the law firm of Remy Moose & Manley LLP, and later with Best Best & Krieger LLP.

Panelist: Deandra Cass, Manager, Environmental Permitting AZ, CA, CO, NM, Clearway

Biography: Biographical Info: Deandra Cass is an Environmental Permitting Manager at Clearway Energy, and has over a decade of experience leading discretionary land use and environmental permitting for renewable energy projects across the U.S. Southwest. Deandra guides wind, solar, and battery projects through complex local, state, and federal processes, including CEQA and NEPA compliance, to design projects that both comply with regulations

and fit within the local landscape. Her experience includes utility-scale BESS projects throughout California in San Bernardino, San Diego, Fresno, Riverside, Kern, and Solano counties. Deandra holds a degree in Environmental Policy Analysis and Planning from UC Davis.

Panelist: Brian Calvert, Vice President, Transportation, ICF

Biography: Brian is the Lead for ICF's Southern California Transportation Practice with 30+ years delivering California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance services and 23 years focused almost exclusively on delivering CEQA and NEPA documentation for transportation infrastructure projects in California. He has delivered and/or managed the delivery of environmental compliance documentation for more than 150 transportation projects in California.

Panelist: Marie Campbell, Principal and CEO, Environmental Protection Specialist, Sapphos Environmental

Biography: Marie is principal and owner of Sapphos Environmental, Inc, a minority- and woman-owned small business enterprise. She serves as an elected at-large board member for the National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP) and the California Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP), where she serves as liaison to the NAEP and is a founder and integral member of the AEP People & Culture Committee. She is an environmental compliance specialist with more than 35 years of experience in managing public- and private-sector projects that require strategic planning, environmental compliance documentation, and resource management. She is recognized by the Los Angeles Bar Association as an expert on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). She has extensive experience with environmental compliance documentation for capital improvement projects for transportation, energy, recreation, health care, and water. She has served as a strategic environmental advisor on complex joint environmental impact statements and environmental impact reports for projects. She is currently highly engaged in the California High-speed Rail Project, the largest infrastructure project in the Nation.

Panelist: Julia Chase, Chief Resilience Officer, City of San Diego

Biography: Julia Chase is a climate resilience leader with more than a decade of experience advancing adaptation, conservation, and sustainability initiatives. She currently serves as Chief Resilience Officer and Program Manager for the City of San Diego, where she directs the City's climate resilience and conservation work program. In this role, she has overseen the development of San Diego's Coastal Resilience Master Plan, secured over \$2 million in grant funding for climate adaptation projects, and led citywide strategies to address extreme heat, sea level rise, and habitat conservation. Julia has managed the integration of climate risk and adaptation strategies into long-range planning, capital improvement programs, and infrastructure design standards ensuring that resilience is embedded across city operations. Prior to her current role, Julia worked in both the public and private sector, supporting climate planning at the local, state, and federal level, including risk assessments, climate action and adaptation plans, and energy resilience planning. Julia received her Bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Villanova University and Master's degree in environmental science from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Panelist: Tiffany Clark, Principal Archeologist, SWCA

Biography: Tiffany Clark, Ph.D., is a Principal Archaeologist at SWCA Environmental Consultants. She has more than 30 years of experience in cultural resources management in California and Arizona. Tiffany has directed numerous cultural resources studies in support of public infrastructure, transportation, renewable energy, and private land development projects. She has extensive experience with regulatory compliance issues and has worked with numerous local, state, and federal agencies on projects that require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Sections 106 and 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Tiffany is a member of the Register of Professional Archaeologists and meets the Secretary of Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards in Archaeology.

Panelist: Emilie Colwell, Senior Project Manager, T&B Planning, Inc.

Biography: Emilie Colwell prepares and manages CEQA compliance documents for residential, industrial, commercial, and institutional projects. She also is an experienced development services manager, assisting project applicants with entitlements and post-entitlement approvals. She is a member of the Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP), served as 2025 Chair of the Building Industry Association (BIA) of San Diego County Young Leaders (Y|Gen) Council, and was named Consultant of the Year by the BIA of San Diego County in 2023.

Moderator: Florentina Craciun, Associate, LSA Associates

Biography: Florentina Craciun, is an urban planner with over 15 years of experience working on environmental compliance projects. In her current position with the LSA Associates she works on implementing CEQA for a variety of lead agencies and private clients, which include both development as well as infrastructure improvements. Florentina currently works on projects that include new housing and commercial development, adaptive reuse of historic buildings and public works projects. Florentina received her MA of Urban Planning at UCLA with an emphasis on environmental planning. Since graduating Florentina is working on aligning her grad student ideals with planning practice. During this journey Florentina works on making environmental planning more tangible by teaching CEQA courses, mentoring junior staff, and bringing her passion for streamlining to all of her employers. Florentina's ultimate goal is to ensure that her practice is rooted in the principles of environmental justice, planning and economic equity. She envisions a world where environmental planning will be a key tool for can-do and not can't do. After working on those goals as a consultant for AECOM and Michael Baker, she joined the public sector where she worked at the City of San Francisco as environmental planner, prior to joining LSA. Florentina is also involved with the American Planning Association, Northern Section where she is currently serving as the Conference Co-Chair for the 2025 APA CA Conference in Monterey. In her 10 years on the Board, she's served in a variety of roles from Membership Director to Awards Co-Director. She hopes that the breadth of experience she is accumulating will allow her to always fight for a more just community, society, and world.

D.

Panelist: Shannon Davis, Director of Architectural History, ASM Affiliates

Biography: Ms. Davis has more than 25 years of experience in the field of historic preservation. As Director of Architectural History at ASM, Ms. Davis has documented and evaluated numerous historical resources throughout California and the west in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations including CEQA, NEPA, and NHPA. Her experience includes local, state, and national evaluations and nominations; historic context statements; design-review; assessment of effects and impacts; HABS, HAER, and HALS documentation; Mills Act applications and reviews; planning, treatment, maintenance, and interpretation plans; and public outreach and interpretation. Ms. Davis earned her M.A. in Historic Preservation/American Studies from George Washington University, where she wrote her master's thesis on the architectural history of drive-in theaters, and a B.A. in American History from the University of Southern California. Before joining ASM in 2010, Ms. Davis was a Historian at the National Register of Historic Places for eight years. She also has experience working for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the HABS/HAER/HALS program, the American Battlefield Protection Program, and the National Park Service History Program, as Chair of a local preservation advocacy group, and as one of the founders of the Recent Past Preservation Network.

Panelist: Liza Debies, Associate Principal, PlaceWorks

Biography: Liza has more than 10 years of experience in managing and preparing CEQA documents, including EIRs, IS/MNDs, addenda, streamlining checklists, and categorical exemptions. As an Associate Principal, she assists clients with understanding the appropriate CEQA pathway and navigating complex regulatory issues, including how to evaluate topics with subjective thresholds. With a deep understanding of the environmental review process, she has expertise in aesthetics, land use and planning and compatibility, transportation, cumulative impacts, and alternatives analysis. Her attention to detail and organizational skills help her communicate effectively and find solutions to challenging problems. She has a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies from Pitzer College.

Panelist: Theresa Dickerson, Environmental Planning Director, WSP

Biography: Ms. Dickerson is a Project Manager, environmental practice leader, and subject matter expert for WSP with over three decades of experience preparing environmental documentation compliant with CEQA and NEPA. She has managed over \$3 million in environmental services and provided advisory services for major metropolitan cities, counties, transit agencies, and DOTs. Her experience covers a diverse range of projects for local and state agencies including complex transportation and site development projects. Theresa is well versed in environmental planning, analysis, and compliance, and has conducted presentations before agency officials and members of the public. Theresa is a general practitioner, as well as subject matter expert and is responsible for preparing technical documentation, purpose and need statements, and alternatives descriptions. There's expertise covers project management and delivery, public policy evaluation, project feasibility studies, public comment management, environmental documentation, and mitigation monitoring programs. She is also an industry mentor, having participated in educational forums at local colleges, industry mentor/mentee programs, and field study programs for the UC system.

Panelist: Kelsey Dix, Land Use/Environmental Planner III, County of San Diego

Biography: Kelsey Dix is Land Use/Environmental Planner III with the County of San Diego Department of Public Works (DPW); she has been employed at the County for over 3 years and works on various types of infrastructure projects and programs, including bridges, water quality improvement and green streets projects, and maintenance projects such as replacing and repairing ADA ramps, asphalt overlay, and culverts. She is the current lead of the County's RGP-53, a permit that allows County staff to annually remove sediment from over 1,000 facilities of culverts, flood control channels, and ditches. She previously worked as consultant adjunct staff in both the County's Department of Parks and Recreation and Planning & Development Services, which has allowed her to understand the environmental process through different lens. Kelsey's background is in biology, with a specialization in botany, which gives her a rare perspective on ecosystems throughout the county and anthropogenic influence on the natural world. She balances protecting San Diego's high biodiversity and investing in the public good and safety. She is a current AEP Agency member.

Panelist: Konnie Dobrevá, JD, VP of Environmental Planning, EPD Solutions, Inc.

Biography: Konnie Dobrevá is Vice President of Environmental Planning at Environment | Planning | Development Solutions, Inc. Konnie holds a B.A. in Environmental Analysis & Design, Minor in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of California, Irvine and a Juris Doctor from Pepperdine University School of Law. Konnie's more than 20 years of public and private sector planning and legal experience have made her an expert in entitlements, environmental and policy planning, a keen analyst and an effective writer of environmental documents. She has managed and prepared environmental documents for a diverse range of projects and clients: small-scale residential and large planned communities, commercial office, industrial, mixed-use, and schools. Konnie has been a planner with the City of Lake Forest and a planning consultant for the cities of Irvine, Anaheim, and Rancho Santa Margarita. In law school, Konnie specialized in alternative dispute resolution and was also a full-time extern for the Honorable Warren J. Ferguson, 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. Konnie's diverse planning and legal experience provides her with a unique understanding of planning and zoning law, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). She is frequent lecturer on CEQA for the Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP) CEQA Workshop series. Konnie is a longtime AEP member and currently serves as the organization's Executive Vice President.

Moderator: Joanne Dramko, AICP, CARB GHG Verifier, Environmental Planning Discipline Leader, HELIX Environmental Planning

Biography: Joanne Dramko (she/her) is the Contract Manager for HELIX's UC San Diego as-needed environmental consulting services contract and has worked on campus projects since 2008. She serves as HELIX's Environmental Planning Discipline Leader and Principal Technical Specialist in the areas of Air Quality, Greenhouse Gases, and Noise. She has 25 years of experience managing environmental documents under CEQA and NEPA, including extensive experience with UC San Diego projects. Ms. Dramko was Principal-In-Charge for the Update to the 2018 LRDP SEIR.

E.

Panelist: Tim Erney, Senior Principal Planner, Kittleson & Associates, Inc.

Biography: Tim Erney is a Senior Principal with Kittleson & Associates, Inc., where he leads complex transportation planning and engineering projects throughout California. With more than 25 years of experience, he has managed CEQA and NEPA transportation analyses, circulation and access studies, freeway and roadway operations, multi-modal systems planning, transportation demand management programs, and pedestrian and bicycle reviews. His diversity of planning, engineering and design projects, in conjunction with his experience in both technical analysis and client-facing leadership, preparing him to deliver innovative and practical transportation solutions in challenging contexts. Tim is widely recognized for his ability to translate technical analyses such as Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and Level of Service (LOS) into plain language for decision-makers and the public. His work emphasizes clarity, accessibility, and trust-building, helping planners and agencies respond effectively to community concerns while maintaining defensible environmental documents. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Boston University, a Master of Science in Transportation and Highway Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley College of Engineering, and a Master of Science in City and Regional Planning from UC Berkeley's College of Environmental Design.

Panelist: Chief Esparza, Human Connection Strategist, Association of Environmental Professionals (staff)

Biography: Chief comes to AEP as a believer in the power of stories to nurture empathy and build connections across people of different heritages, cultures, and communities. "What happens when we ask broad groups of people to tell first-person stories about common human experiences and concepts? Any time we focus on our humanity first and foremost, we get deeper, more complete stories of culture and identity. That's how we create onramps to empathy and bridges to human connection." With this background in the social determinants of identity and cultural humility in the workplace, he has brought his expertise to industries including nonprofit, software, construction, consumer finance, and now to the world of environmental professionals. And as a self-described 'nerd,' Chief is an unabashed fan of Star Trek, Star Wars, Marvel, and Lord of the Rings (just to name a few of his favorites).

F.

Panelist: Amanda Fagan, Ventura County Transportation Commission, Ventura County Transportation Commission

Biography: Ms. Fagan has served as the Director of Planning and Sustainability for the Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) since 2019, where she oversees four program areas including Regional Transportation Planning, Airport Land Use Commission, Motorist Aid Services, and the Santa Paula Branch Line railroad. Ms. Fagan leads efforts to reinvigorate the process to complete the Santa Paula Branch Line Trail, a planned 32-mile Class I bicycle and pedestrian trail from Ventura to Piru through the Santa Clara River Valley / SR-126 corridor, a rails-with-trails project. Prior to joining VCTC, Amanda served as the Community Planning Liaison Officer for Naval Base Ventura County and as a Project Manager for the Department of Defense Office of Economic Adjustment. Amanda holds a master's degree in resources policy and behavior from the School of Natural Resources and Environment at the University of Michigan, and a bachelor's degree in political science and sociology from Tulane University.

Panelist: Mindy Fogg, Principal Planner, City of Carpinteria

Biography: Mindy Fogg is the current President of AEP and is also a Principal Planner with the City of Carpinteria. She has over 25 years of experience as a Land Use/Environmental Planner and CEQA Practitioner in both the private and public sectors. She is currently leading the Long-Range Planning Section in the Carpinteria Community Development Department.

Panelist: Kristy Forburger, BS, Program Manager, City of San Diego

Biography: Kristy Forburger is a Program Manager with the City of San Diego's Engineering & Capital Projects Department, overseeing Environmental and Permitting Support. With 20 years of experience in city government, she has managed some of San Diego's most complex land-use and environmental projects, including sensitive development approvals and programmatic initiatives under the Multiple Species Conservation Program and Vernal Pool Habitat Conservation Plan. Kristy serves as a liaison to stakeholders, resource agencies, and project teams, ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal regulations while facilitating consensus and streamlining processes. She guides multi-disciplinary teams through complex permitting and environmental review processes, balancing regulatory compliance with practical project outcomes. Passionate about environmental stewardship, Kristy combines deep technical knowledge, strategic planning expertise, and collaborative leadership to navigate the regulatory landscape and advance sustainable infrastructure and development projects in San Diego.

G.

Panelist: Mari Galloway, California Program Director, Wildlands Network

Biography: As California Program Director, Mari leads initiatives to enhance wildlife connectivity and protect core habitats statewide. With policy expertise and a deep passion for California's ecology, she strategically connects partners, resources, and information for data-driven ecosystem efforts. Mari's work coordinating wildlife crossings, advancing research, and collaborating with diverse stakeholders informs policy solutions and addresses systemic barriers. She holds a BS in environmental science from Cal Poly Humboldt and a law degree from the University of Oregon.

Panelist: Claudia Garcia, Assistant Director of Community Development, City of Vacaville

Biography: Claudia Garcia is an urban planner with 12 years of experience in community planning and environmental planning with expertise in city/urban planning principles and CEQA regulations. She currently serves as the Assistant Director of Community Development at the City of Vacaville, where she helps to oversee the planning and building divisions. In her spare time, she serves as a Director-at-Large for the AEP State Board, East Bay Regional Activity Coordinator for the CA APA Northern Section, and volunteers for the Trails for Richmond Action Committee.

Panelist: Rebecca Garwood, Environmental Program Manager, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Biography: Rebecca has been an Environmental Program Manager for the CDFW's Coastal Habitat Conservation Program with staff in Del Norte, Humboldt and Mendocino Counties. In 2019, Rebecca spent two years with the California Department of Food and Agriculture's CalCannabis Division helping create and implement their cultivator compliance program. In her current role with CDFW, Rebecca's team issues Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreements to cultivators and assists Law Enforcement with actions against illegal cultivation and associated environmental crimes along the North Coast.

Panelist: Gail Getz, LUEG Program Manager, County of San Diego

Biography: Gail Getz is the Program Manager for the Environmental Services Unit at the County of San Diego Department of Public Works. Gail is a seasoned professional with 19 years of experience managing the environmental process for infrastructure projects with two of those years leading the team of environmental planners in the Environmental Services Unit. Gail is passionate about witnessing the successful completion of projects for the communities of San Diego County and has dedicated her career to balancing the need for development with the need for protecting the environment. She has a track record of delivering high-quality environmental support for complex and controversial projects, ensuring they are completed to the satisfaction of both internal and external stakeholders. Gail is proficient in environmental laws, regulations, permitting, construction monitoring, and mitigation projects, as well as recently honing newfound expertise in sustainability and climate strategy. Gail and the Environmental Services Unit team are active Agency members with AEP.

Panelist: David Gibson, Executive Officer, San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board

Biography: David has 39 years of cumulative professional experience working on water quality. He graduated from SDSU in 1989 (BS in Biology). He has worked as an Entomologist and Watershed Biologist for the City of San Diego, founded the San Diego Stream Team in 1998, and joined the San Diego Water Board in 2000 as an Environmental Scientist. He worked at the Water Board in stormwater, enforcement, monitoring and assessment, financial assistance, Basin Planning, wastewater treatment and recycling, and wetlands restoration and protection. He was appointed Executive Officer by the San Diego Water Board in November 2009.

Panelist: Pierre Glaze, Senior Air Quality and Climate Change Specialist, ICF

Biography: Pierre Glaze is a senior air quality and climate change specialist with approximately 7 years of experience. He has extensive experience in research, preparation, and analysis consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for a variety of environmental planning projects involving redevelopment, infrastructure, residential, mixed use, institutional, and commercial uses. His expertise includes air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) impact analyzes; climate action planning, and health risk assessments (HRAs).

Panelist: Matt Goynes, Principal, Fehr & Peers

Biography: Matt Goynes is a Principal with Fehr & Peers, specializing in projects at the nexus of climate, land use, and transportation planning. With over 15 years of experience leading transportation analyses for general plans, climate action plans, and CEQA studies of all sizes, Matt applies the latest research and data-driven approaches to help jurisdictions craft defensible environmental documents and ambitious carbon reduction strategies. He earned his civil engineering degree from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and became a licensed professional engineer before taking an unexpected detour into the world of improv. What started as a single class for fun evolved into Matt leading internal improv training for Fehr & Peers staff, helping planners and engineers become more confident communicators, better public speakers, and more agile collaborators.

Moderator/ Panelist: Nancy Graham, City of San Diego

Biography: Nancy Graham is a Program Manager with the City of San Diego's Engineering & Capital Projects Department, where she oversees CEQA compliance, entitlements, and permitting for major infrastructure projects. She leads a team of planners who review technical reports, develop programmatic environmental documents, and identify opportunities to streamline CEQA review through tiering and innovative approaches. Nancy has worked in both the public and private sectors, managing environmental impact reports, community planning, complex entitlements, stormwater compliance, and GIS. She is passionate about balancing effective mitigation with practical implementation, ensuring that infrastructure projects meet legal requirements while supporting resilient, well-designed communities. Nancy brings a deep understanding of environmental regulations, strategic planning, and project delivery in complex regulatory contexts.

H.

Moderator: Emma Haines, Associate, PlaceWorks

Biography: Emma Haines is an Environmental Planner at PlaceWorks with four years of experience navigating CEQA and NEPA compliance for projects ranging from residential and commercial developments to school modernization and General Plan updates. She has prepared a variety of CEQA documents, including initial studies, categorical exemptions, mitigated negative declarations, and EIRs, and has prepared CE's for NEPA review. She serves as a Director-at-Large for the AEP State Board, supporting student outreach and membership. Emma earned her bachelor's degree from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo in Environmental Management and Protection.

Panelist: Sarah Halterman, Climate Action Planning Manager, Dudek

Biography: Sarah Halterman (she/her) is a climate action planning manager with over a decade of experience in carbon science and climate action planning. She specializes in integrating carbon storage and sequestration analyses into climate strategies, drawing from her background in field research, technical modeling, and cross-sector collaboration. Sarah has led award-winning climate initiatives, contributed to peer-reviewed carbon cycle research, and currently serves on the AEP climate change committee providing insight on sequestration-related planning. Her work bridges science and policy to support innovative, jurisdiction-specific climate planning approaches.

Panelist: Brian Harrington, Director, Physical and Environmental Planning, University of California, Office of the President

Biography: Brian Harrington is the Director of Physical and Environmental Planning for the University of California's central, administrative Office of the President in Oakland. He supports all UC campuses and locations with long range planning, regulatory permitting, and CEQA compliance for major capital projects and real estate transactions across the UC system. Over the last ten years with UC, Brian has helped guide eight UC campuses through successful updates to their LRDPs and accompanying EIRs.

Panelist: Shannon Hatcher, Air Pollution Specialist, California Air Resources Board

Biography: Shannon Hatcher is an air pollution specialist with the California Air Resources Board (CARB). An area of Shannon's focus at CARB is strengthening local and regional land use planning to further State climate goals, as well as reviewing land use development and transportation projects for consistency with state Climate goals. Prior to joining CARB, Shannon worked almost 20 years as an environmental consultant overseeing and performing greenhouse gas, criteria pollutant, and health risk environmental impact analyses pursuant to CEQA and NEPA.

Moderator: Michael Hendrix, Principal/Owner, Michael Hendrix Consulting

Biography: Michael Hendrix is one of California's leading climate change and air quality scientists. He is the recipient of the AEP "Professional Achievement Award." AEP specifically recognized that his commitment to balancing the need for industrial, commercial and residential development projects in California with the need for climate resiliency, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and air pollution is evident through his dedication to resiliency planning, air quality and greenhouse gas emissions evaluations and mitigation that significantly reduce potential risks, greenhouse gases and air pollution generated by the expansion of these markets, Mr. Hendrix is the current Chairperson for the AEP Climate Change Committee. In that capacity, he provides leadership within AEP on the issue of climate change risks, adaptation, resiliency, and analysis of greenhouse gas emissions.

Panelist: Katie Hentrich, Climate Action Plan Administrator, City of Carlsbad

Biography: Katie Hentrich (she/her) is the Climate Action Plan Administrator for the City of Carlsbad, where she oversees implementation, monitoring, and updates to the city's Climate Action Plan. She also oversees other climate-related efforts at the city, like the Carlsbad Green Business Program and climate adaptation projects. A native San Diegan, Katie serves on the board of the San Diego Regional Climate Collaborative, the California Green Business Network, and Cleantech San Diego.

Panelist: Paul Herrmann, PE, Senior Associate, Fehr & Peers

Biography: Paul is part of Fehr & Peers Major Infrastructure Working Group that focuses on developing best practices related to infrastructure analysis in CEQA. In his fourteen years of experience in transportation engineering and transportation planning at Fehr & Peers, he has led a significant number of transportation impact analyses for EIRs, MNDs and Neg Decs, including most recently induced VMT analysis and mitigation for freeway projects in Southern California. He has led a wide variety of projects including traffic studies, infrastructure projects, travel demand forecasting, and long-range development plans throughout Southern California.

Panelist: Andrew Holtz, Land Use / Environmental Planner, County of San Diego Planning & Development Services
Biography: Biographical Info: Andrew Holtz is a Land Use and Environmental Planner with the County of San Diego Planning and Development Services (PDS). He has worked for PDS for 6 years starting in permit processing and is now a part of the Project Planning Division as a project manager for all forms of discretionary permits and noise reviews. He provides an agency perspective on processing discretionary permits and unique challenges projects may face within Unincorporated San Diego County.

Panelist: Bonnie Hulkower, Field Environmental Officer, Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Biography: Bonnie is an experienced environmental planner with nearly 14 years at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, where she leads NEPA and environmental compliance reviews for multifamily and community development projects. She has developed sustainability and climate resilience initiatives, including drought response programs and pilot projects for energy efficiency and renewable energy in HUD-assisted housing. Bonnie is skilled in policy development, interagency collaboration, and training professionals on environmental compliance and sustainability best practices.

I.

J.

K.

Panelist: Lauren Kahal Lievers, Principal Environmental Planner, UC San Diego Campus Planning
Biography: Lauren Kahal Lievers (she/her) is a Principal Environmental Planner at UC San Diego's Campus Planning office where she leads the CEQA process for long-range planning efforts as well as individual campus and medical center development projects. She has 13 years of experience in environmental planning across both the public and private sectors. In over eight years with UC San Diego, she has worked on the La Jolla and Hillcrest Campus LRDP EIRs, the Update to the 2018 LRDP SEIR, and numerous Addenda.

Name: John Karamitsos, Retired

Biography: John retired from the County of Santa Barbara with 29 years of experience (25 years in the Planning and Development Department as a Land Use/Environmental Planner and CEQA Practitioner, and four years with the Public Works Department's Project Clean Water). He currently serves as a Part-Time Lecturer in the Natural Resources Management and Environmental Sciences Department at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

Panelist: Jennifer Kazmer, B.A, M.S, Chief of Long Range Planning, County of San Diego
Biography: Jennifer Kazmer holds a B.A. in Geography from UC Berkeley and a Master's in International Agricultural Development from UC Davis. She is a land use and environmental planner with more than 20 years of experience in both public agencies and private consulting. As the County of San Diego's Chief of Long Range Planning, Jennifer leads the County through matters of CEQA compliance, land use planning, entitlement processing, and project management for complex development proposals and long-range planning efforts. Fun Facts: Jennifer enjoys hot yoga and paddleboarding and is a mom of three kids, ranging from 6 to 16.

Panelist: Jennifer Kelley, Senior Associate, PlaceWorks
Biography: Jennifer Kelley is a seasoned environmental professional with over a decade of experience leading CEQA and NEPA analyses for complex programmatic, development and infrastructure projects. Jennifer has managed CEs, MNDs, and EIRs pursuant to CEQA for mixed-use, infill development projects from the proposal stage through entitlement. Jennifer has also managed numerous CEs and EAs pursuant to NEPA for community development projects for jurisdictions, under the Direction of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Jen-

nifer earned a bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, and a master's degree in City Planning from Boston University. Jennifer is also serving her second term as Administrative Officer for the California Association of Environmental Professionals Los Angeles Board.

Panelist: Hannah Kornfeld, Climate Practice Leader, Ascent

Biography: Hannah Kornfeld is the Climate Practice Leader at Ascent, where she manages and leads the company's climate action and adaptation planning efforts while building a team of dedicated changemakers and problem solvers. She is focused on meaningful climate action and equitable advancement of clean energy solutions, working to advance Ascent's ability to assist local agencies with their most challenging climate change projects. Hannah specializes in decarbonization strategy development, policy analysis and prioritization, carbon sequestration analyses, and crafting meaningful community engagement activities. As a self-described clean energy nerd, she delves into the complexities of ever-evolving California climate regulation to help craft feasible and ambitious solutions for clients.

Moderator: Eli Krispi, Senior Associate, Climate Action and Resilience, PlaceWorks

Biography: Eli works on planning projects to reduce environmental impacts, increase resiliency to a changing climate, and address equity and justice issues. As a planning and sustainability professional, he draws on experience implementing sustainable policies, a science-based education focused on the nexus of the built environment and the natural world, and a data-driven analytical approach to problem solving. Eli's work includes climate action and adaptation plans, public safety and hazard plans, and environmental justice and resilience strategies, along with comprehensive planning efforts.

L.

Panelist: Masha Landau, Land Use/Environmental Planner III, County of San Diego

Biography: Masha Landau is a Land Use/Environmental Planner III with the County of San Diego, Department of Public Works (DPW), Environmental Services Unit (ESU). Masha has been with the County for nearly 14 years and with DPW ESU for six. She provides environmental review and support for the County's public infrastructure projects originating from the DPW Capital Improvement Program, County Airports, Flood Control, Wastewater Management, as well as supporting the Department of Environmental Health and Quality. Masha is responsible for CEQA and NEPA environmental review, document preparation, and support for projects from inception to mitigation completion. Masha's experience has afforded her an understanding of CEQA, exposure to a wider range of best practices for avoidance of environmental impacts, practice working with external partners and resource agencies, in addition to an array of other experiences. Masha's educational background is in public administration and political science, supplementing her CEQA and NEPA work with the understanding of regulatory context and navigation of public agency processes and requirements. Together with her DPW Environmental Services Unit team, Masha is an active Agency AEP member.

Panelist: Eric Lardy, AICP, Principal Planner and City Planner, City of Carlsbad

Biography: Eric has worked for public agencies for about 20 years, 16 working for the County of San Diego with his last position as Chief, Advance Planning, and the past 4.5 year as Principal Planner and City Planner, for the City of Carlsbad. He has worked on a multitude of projects for the region, such as General Plans, Community Plans, Ordinance development, and Environmental Impact Reports. In these roles he has also engaged with a broad variety of industry, community and environmental stakeholders and has presented to Planning Commissions, Board of Supervisors, and City Council throughout this career. Eric also serves as the vice-chair of the City of San Diego's Resiliency Advisory Board.

Panelist: Cheryl Laskowski, Principal/Owner, Cheryl Laskowski Consulting

Biography: As the Policy Manger for California Climate Investments, Cheryl led the development of Funding Guide-lines, Investment Plan, and multiple Annual Reports. As a consultant, Cheryl raised millions of dollars in revenue to develop climate and energy action plans across Southern California. Cheryl developed tools for local governments to understand and track their GHG emissions, develop policies to reduce emissions, and develop compliance (CEQA) documents.

Moderator: Susan Lee, Senior Executive Vice President, Aspen Environmental Group

Biography: Susan Lee is the Senior Executive Vice President in Aspen's San Francisco office. She has over 40 years of experience and has been at Aspen for 30 years. Her expertise is in management of environmental assessment and permit evaluation for major energy and infrastructure projects (transmission lines and substations, pipelines, and electricity generation facilities) under both the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. She has managed the analysis of several large solar energy projects and she coordinates Aspen's support to solar developers applying to construct utility-scale projects on County or federal lands. Susan has also managed assessment of seawater desalination projects in northern and southern California. She has a BA Degree from Oberlin College and a MS Degree from Stanford University.

Panelist: Mike Leech, Vice President, Technology Services Practice Leader, Environmental Science Associates

Biography: Mike Leech brings over 20 years of experience advancing the use of data, geospatial technologies, and emerging digital tools to support environmental planning and compliance at scale. As ESA's Technology Services Practice Leader, he directs multidisciplinary teams developing innovative, field-to-database solutions that integrate GIS, mobile data collection, advanced analytics, and real-time reporting to meet regulatory and operational needs. Mike is also the co-lead for ESA's firmwide Innovation program and has helped shape and implement the company's technology strategy, including key artificial intelligence (AI) initiatives. His expertise lies in building practical, scalable systems that reduce turnaround times, ensure data integrity, and foster innovation in environmental practice. Mike's leadership combines a strong foundation in environmental data governance, regulatory compliance, and large-scale program management with a forward-looking focus on how AI and other emerging technologies can transform the industry.

Panelist: Wendy Loeffler, MA, Senior Project Manager, RECON Environmental

Biography: Ms. Loeffler serves as an environmental program manager in biology, having almost 30 years of experience conducting environmental impact analyses for sensitive biological resources in accordance with CEQA and NEPA on a wide variety of projects throughout southern California. She manages and conducts general biological assessments, biological constraints analyses, vegetation mapping, and restoration/mitigation implementation and monitoring in a variety of habitats in southern California. She conducts focused surveys for the presence of sensitive floral and faunal species and is authorized by USFWS to conduct focused surveys for Quino checkerspot butterfly, coastal California gnatcatcher, and vernal pool branchiopods. Ms. Loeffler also holds a permit to conduct focused surveys for the Crotch's bumblebee. Ms. Loeffler has also prepared large scale resource management plans, coordinated environmental permits, managed compliance monitoring for a wide variety of projects, and conducted stakeholder/regulatory agency meetings.

Panelist: Alan Loomis, Principal, PlaceWorks

Biography: Alan Loomis is an urban designer, planner and educator practicing in the Los Angeles area. Presently he is Principal of Urban Design at PlaceWorks, based in the firm's Los Angeles office. He is responsible for growing PlaceWorks' urban design practice in the Los Angeles region and plays a key role in high-profile design projects throughout California, including our Objective Design Standards practice. From 2017 to 2020 Alan was the City Urban Designer for Santa Monica. In this role, he was the City's lead for Promenade 3.0 a strategic design plan to re-vision the iconic Third Street Promenade. Alan is a frequent commentator and tour guide on Los Angeles urbanism and history. He has served on juries for APA Awards, the LA Lights the Way street light design competition, and on interview panels to select new planners, urban designers and architects for the Cities of Los Angeles, Pasadena,

Santa Monica, and Santa Ana, among others. From 2014-2022 he served on the Pasadena Design Commission, and 2019-2022 on the Board of Advisors to the Woodbury University School of Architecture, where he previously taught for ten years. He received a bachelor's degree in Religious Studies/Theology from University of Detroit, Mercy and a master's degree in Architecture from Southern California Institute of Architecture.

Panelist: Merri Lopez-Keifer, Executive Director, Center for Indigenous Law and Justice, UC Berkeley School of

Biography: Merri Lopez-Keifer is the Executive Director of the Center for Indigenous Law and Justice at UC Berkeley School of Law and a citizen of the Lipay Nation of Santa Ysabel. She brings over two decades of experience in tribal law, environmental justice, and government-to-government consultation. Prior to joining Berkeley Law, Merri served as Tribal Affairs Secretary and Tribal Liaison at the California Department of Justice, where she led statewide efforts to strengthen tribal consultation practices and protect cultural resources. Her work focused on shaping inclusive environmental policies that reflect the needs and rights of California Native American tribes. Merri has extensive experience in both litigation and policy development and is a respected leader in advancing respectful engagement between public agencies and tribal governments. At the Center for Indigenous Law and Justice, she leads policy initiatives, training programs, and legal advocacy in support of Indigenous legal empowerment and environmental stewardship.

Moderator: Cailin Lyons, MLA, SCP from CDFW, Director of Biology, RECON Environmental

Biography: Ms. Lyons serves as Director of RECON's biology group. She leads a team of biologists and environmental scientists to ensure successful completion of both public and private projects. Ms. Lyons has extensive experience in the implementation of Natural Communities Conservation Plans (NCCPs) throughout southern California and has served as a technical reviewer for multiple jurisdictions to ensure compliance with the state and federal Endangered Species Acts. With this experience, she ensures that regulatory requirements related to biological resources are considered during the initial phases of project planning. She also has extensive experience in the preparation and implementation of natural resources management plans, and has served as the biological lead on many of RECON's preserve management contracts. Throughout her career, she has led numerous field surveys for special-status resources including coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, western burrowing owl, rare plants, vernal pools and other sensitive resources.

M.

Panelist: Makela Mangrich, MS, Senior Project Manager, RECON Environmental

Biography: Ms. Mangrich manages and prepares biological resources technical reports for special-status plant and wildlife species, sensitive natural communities, and wetlands/waters of the state and U.S. in support of CEQA and NEPA documents. She authors biological assessments and habitat conservation plans in accordance with Section 7 and Section 10 of the ESA. Additionally, she coordinates with agency staff and has a strong understanding of federal and state regulations and reporting requirements for species and habitat impact analysis. Her project experience includes managing large-scale biological inventories, mitigation monitoring, construction monitoring, and environmental document preparation, including EIRs, proponent's environmental assessments (PEAs), and EAs for many clients in government, private development, and the energy and infrastructure sectors.

Panelist: Meredith McCarthy, Director of Operations, Heal the Bay

Biography: Meredith has overseen Heal the Bay's beach cleanup programs for over 20 years, inspiring hundreds of thousands of Angelenos to remove over 2 million pounds of trash from our local beaches. As a master scuba diver trainer, she has seen firsthand what putting too much in, taking too much out, and ignoring the edge of the ocean has done to our coastal systems. She remains committed to Heal the Bay's mission of protecting the health of this precious resource and the 11 million people who benefit from it.

Panelist: Bri McWhorter, Founder and CEO, Activate to Captivate

Biography: Bri McWhorter is the Founder and CEO of Activate to Captivate, where she teaches communication techniques from an actor's point of view. She specializes in public speaking, presentation skills, scientific communications, interview skills, and interpersonal communications. Bri has worked with a variety of organizations including top universities around the country, Fortune 500 companies, government organizations including the NIH and the Army's Special Forces, and numerous scientific foundations. She is the creator of W.A.V.E.Â®, a program where she teaches speakers how to overcome nerves, use body language effectively, and engage their voice to tell a compelling narrative. She coaches speakers for large pitch competitions, keynote lectures, and TEDx talks. She has an MFA in Acting from University of California, Irvine and a BA in Theater and Performance Studies from University of California, Berkeley. Bri enjoys helping people distill complex information into captivating stories.

Panelist: Nick Meisinger, Project Manager, WSP

Biography: Mr. Meisinger is a Project Manager, environmental planner, and permitting specialist for WSP with over a decade of experience preparing environmental documentation compliant with CEQA and NEPA. He has led dozens of agency and public meetings for a variety of CEQA projects, including early outreach meetings with cooperating agencies and other engaged stakeholders, public scoping meetings, and public hearings. Mr. Meisinger has also supported public outreach efforts for a variety of NEPA-compliant documents in support of the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, Department of the Interior, including the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service. In this capacity, he has led or assisted with multiple nationwide, multi-state, and statewide public noticing efforts. For example, Mr. Meisinger recently supported the statewide public outreach and noticing efforts for Hazard Removal and Vegetation Management Project led by the BLM California State Office in Sacramento, CA. This effort included multiple rounds of engagement with BLM local offices and hundreds of local jurisdictions, and interested stakeholders throughout California. Nick holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Science from UC Santa Barbara.

Moderator: Heidi Mekkelson, Senior Managing Director, ICF

Biography: Heidi Mekkelson is a Senior Managing Director with ICF's Environment and Planning Division. She has 22 years of experience in the preparation and management of environmental analysis documentation pursuant to CEQA and NEPA. She has successfully managed environmental documentation for a diverse range of projects including urban infill developments, renewable energy facilities, programmatic plans, climate action plans, and habitat conservation plans. She has been an invited speaker at several AEP workshops and conferences and is an instructor for UC Davis continuing and professional education courses related to CEQA. Before she was a consultant, Heidi was a high-school and community theater actor, dabbling in everything from Shakespeare to musical theater to local TV commercials.

Panelist: Emma Moan, Associate Planner, City of San Diego Stormwater Department

Biography: Ms. Moan has 4 years of professional planning experience at the City of San Diego with the Stormwater Department. Emma has a bachelor's degree in marine biology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. She is an Associate Planner that manages compensatory wetland mitigation projects south of the I-8 freeway in San Diego for the Stormwater Department. Management of these projects includes designing, permitting, contracting, implementing, and maintaining.

Moderator: Nicole Morse, Esq. , Principal, T&B Planning, Inc.

Biography: Nicole Morse is an owner/partner of T&B Planning, Inc., serves as the firm's COO, and has 25 years of experience managing CEQA compliance projects for public and private sector clients. Her background as an attorney and environmental compliance planner makes her an expert in legal strategy for CEQA and NEPA documents. She reviews documents and associated technical reports for compliance with CEQA and numerous other regulatory requirements. Nicole has a Juris Doctorate, Concentration in Business School, and a B.S. degree in Applied Ecology, and is a member of the California Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP).

N.

Panelist: Jennifer Nakamura, CNU-A, Planning Director

Biography: Jennifer Nakamura has served in various capacities in the Planning Department at the City of Rancho Cucamonga for the last 20 years and currently serves as Planning Director. She has developed a reputation for skilled project management and policy analysis, consistently delivering results on time and within budget. In her current role she regularly navigates complex issues to help the community in its transition from an exclusively suburban community to develop a compact, walkable urban core. Accomplishments include leadership and project management for the updated, multiple award-winning general plan (PlanRC), a compliant housing element, EIR, Climate Action Plan as well as a comprehensive Development Code Update to implement the goals and vision of PlanRC. Jennifer holds a bachelor's degree in Geography from Cal State Fullerton with post graduate study at Cal State Long Beach. Jennifer is an Accredited Congress for the New Urbanism professional (CNU-A) and sits on the League of California Cities Environmental Quality policy committee.

Panelist: Fernando Nieto, Program Chief, Office of Cannabis Management, County of Los Angeles

Biography: Fernando Nieto serves as Program Chief for the County of Los Angeles Department of Consumer and Business Affairs' Office of Cannabis Management (OCM), where he leads strategic initiatives to advance the County's equitable and responsible cannabis regulatory framework. In this role, Fernando oversees program development, stakeholder engagement, and policy implementation aimed at fostering a fair, transparent, and sustainable cannabis industry in Los Angeles County. With extensive experience in public administration, Fernando has been instrumental in shaping programs that promote social equity, community health, and economic development. He works closely with community partners, industry stakeholders, and local jurisdictions to ensure policies reflect the County's commitment to equity and public safety while supporting responsible business growth.

O.

Panelist: Brock Ortega, Principal and Senior Wildlife Ecologist, Dudek

Biography: Brock Ortega has 34 years of experience as a wildlife biologist, specializing in wildlife connectivity, endangered species permitting and management, mitigation monitoring, wildlife biology, ecological assessment, environmental impact assessment, habitat remediation, and project management. He has conducted over 40,000 hours of wildlife surveys and is a recognized surveyor for various rare species. Brock also serves as president elect for the Western Section of The Wildlife Society.

Panelist: Victor Ortiz, CARB GHG Verifier, Principal Air Quality & Climate Change Specialist, HELIX Environmental Planning

Biography: Victor Ortiz is a Principal Air Quality and Climate Change Specialist with HELIX Environmental Planning. He is an accredited CARB GHG Verifier with nearly 20 years experience preparing air quality and GHG analyses, health risk assessments, Climate Action Plan compliance assessments, and guidance on feasible reductions. He has prepared and reviewed numerous air quality and GHG impact assessments that document air pollutant emissions and concentrations related to various educational, public infrastructure, and private development projects throughout California. Mr. Ortiz has served as a technical specialist on several UC San Diego projects since 2014 and served as Principal Technical Specialist for the Update to the 2018 LRDP SEIR.

Moderator/ Panelist: Ed Othmer, PE, CPESC, CPSWQ, QSP/D ToR, QISP ToR, ENV SP, Vice President, Stantec

Biography: Ed Othmer, PE, CPESC, CPSWQ, QSP/D ToR, QISP ToR, ENV SP is Vice President, North America Wet Weather Sector for Stantec and has more than 30 years of engineering experience as a stormwater practitioner. Ed is a registered civil engineer in California and maintains a variety of other certifications. Ed received his Master's in Civil Engineering from Tufts University. During the past 10 years, Ed has focused his expertise helping clients develop ways to capture and use stormwater and urban runoff as a resource, and apply an asset management approach to their stormwater program. Ed teaches stormwater classes for many organizations including the UCSD Extension Program. Ed also serves as the Past President and Board Member of the Industrial Environmental Association, Past Chair of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce Sustainability & Industry Committee, a San Diego State University Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering Faculty Advisory Board Member, and Friends of the Los Angeles River Board Member.

P.

Panelist: Lance Park, Senior Associate, PlaceWorks

Biography: Lance Park has nearly a decade of experience as an air quality and energy specialist preparing CEQA analyses for individual land use development projects and long-range planning documents. He has prepared extensive emissions modeling and calculations consistent with various California air quality management district (AQMD) methodologies, including but not limited to, the Bay Area Air District, South Coast AQMD, San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, and Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD. At PlaceWorks, Lance functions as a leading expert in air quality, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, health risk, and energy CEQA analyses. Lance is 40-hour HAZWOPER certified, is currently attaining his Certified Energy Analyst accreditation through the California Association of Building Energy Consultants. He has a bachelor's degree in International Relations from California State University, Chico and a master's degree in International Environmental Policy from Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey.

Panelist: Mike Parker, AICP, Principal, Ascent Environmental, Inc.

Biography: Mike is a CEQA and NEPA project director and principal in charge of Ascent's Berkeley office drawing from 21 years of environmental planning and urban planning experience. Mike is currently leading Ascent's AI Collaborative, AI Policy Team, and M365 Copilot Pilot Program. His diverse project experience includes residential, mixed-use, and industrial development projects, general plans, large-scale specific plans, open space projects, educational facilities, and major criminal justice facilities. Mike was formerly a planner at the City of Sacramento and therefore understands behind-the-counter municipal processes. This understanding helps Mike to coordinate seamlessly with city staff and to more accurately forecast city staff needs, including internal review and schedule needs. He is the co-chair of the annual Continuing Legal Education (CLE) CEQA Conference in San Francisco, and he also serves on the board of the Sacramento Valley Section of the American Planning Association.

Panelist: Andy Pendoley, MA, CEO + Founder, Pendoley Strategies + Communications

Biography: Andy's passion is designing and leading efforts that harness the collective wisdom, experiences, and creativity of a team or community to create impactful change and results. His approach emphasizes hands-on, interactive, and powerful collaborations that are grounded in data and research and shared vision among participants. He is an experienced meeting facilitator and communicator who works with planners to design and deliver clear and impactful presentations and engage the public and decision-makers in moving towards balanced resolutions and outcomes. Andy's approach to public hearings focuses on respecting the rules of order while finding opportunities for creative deliberations, discussions, and sometimes even some fun.

Panelist: Ali Pezeshkpour, AICP, Executive Director, City of Santa Ana Planning and Building Agency

Biography: Ali Pezeshkpour serves as the Executive Director of the Planning and Building Agency for the City of Santa Ana and is member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). He has been working for Santa Ana since February 2011 where he oversees sections and efforts in long-range and advance planning, development processing, public counter, historic preservation and urban design, neighborhood initiatives, environmental justice efforts, and cannabis programs. His environmental experiences include environmental impact reports of various sub-types, mitigated negative declarations, complex exemptions, and various addenda, including a successful addendum to a 1983 EIR. In addition to working for the City, Ali serves as a part-time adjunct professor for the Rancho Santiago Community College District where he has taught courses on urban planning and ordinance writing to aspiring code enforcement professionals. Prior professional positions include those with the cities of Sacramento and Colton, and with Mintier Harnish Planning Consultants. Ali holds bachelor's degrees in Community & Regional Development and French from UC Davis and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from UC Irvine. When he is not planning, he enjoys playing the piano, writing Wikipedia articles, traveling and camping, and cooking.

Panelist: Paul Philley, Transportation and Climate Change Program Manager, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

Biography: Paul Philley is a transportation emissions program manager at Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD. He leads the District's development of climate change policy, GHG Thresholds, and Best Management Practices.

Moderator: Brianna Pilkinton, Senior Principal Business Center Operations Leader, Stantec

Biography: Based locally in San Diego, Brianna is driven to find creative solutions for complex problems for her clients across North America. She proudly supports major energy clients navigating the energy transition and decarbonization efforts. In her current role with Stantec, she is the Environmental Services Operations Leader responsible for overseeing both bottom line and top line growth for Southern California and Hawaii and is also Stantec's Account Manager for Sempra. Over the past two decades, she has led multidisciplinary teams through environmental assessment, permitting, and compliance across energy, oil and gas, transportation, community development, and technology sectors. She specializes in California Environmental Quality Act and National Environmental Policy Act implementation, managing risks and seeking innovative, cost-effective solutions. Brianna is dedicated to equity and advancing women in STEM careers. She has organized events promoting women's careers across our industry and serves as a mentor. She volunteers for organizations like AWWEE, AEP, and WTS San Diego County, and the San Diego County Regional Chamber of Commerce. Brianna is honored to have received the Engineering News Record (ENRs) California Top Young Professionals Award in 2019 and San Diego Metro Magazine's 40 under 40 Award in 2018. In her spare time, Brianna has united her professional interests with fulfilling creative pursuits by founding a modern dance company locally in San Diego that is devoted to the intersection between nature and the human experience.

Panelist: Chelsea Polevy, M.S, B.S, Associate Biologist, RECON Environmental

Biography: Chelsea Polevy earned her M.S in Natural Resources with a focus in Wildlife from Cal Poly Humboldt and her B.S in Environmental Science from the University of Massachusetts. She is a biologist with RECON Environmental, Inc., bringing 8 years of experience helping protect native plants and wildlife across southern California. Chelsea has conducted surveys for threatened and endangered species, monitored construction sites for environmental compliance, and supported habitat restoration through invasive species management. Chelsea passionate about finding creative, practical solutions that balance conservation goals with project needs. Fun Facts: Chelsea enjoys exploring California's trails as an avid hiker and amateur nature photographer and is always on the lookout for the perfect wildflower shot.

Panelist: Kevin Pounce, Licensing Program Director, California Department of Cannabis Control

Biography: Kevin has been a Senior Environmental Scientist with the Department of Cannabis Control since 2017. He has helped build the environmental evaluation component of the licensing system and lead the effort for coordinating local and state environmental compliance efforts for licensing.

Panelist: June Powells-Mays, J.D., Supervising Deputy, Sacramento Office of County Counsel

Biography: June Powells-Mays has been a Supervising Deputy in the Sacramento Office of County Counsel since 1999. She provides general legal counsel to the County, its officers, and related constituent local governmental entities and oversees the provision of legal services by other attorneys. June currently advises the County's Board of Supervisors and Planning Department on Land Use matters. During her career, she has advised the County's Community Development Department, and their Zoning Code Enforcement and Building Permits and Inspection Divisions as well as numerous other County departments, boards, committees and commissions. She also trains County employees and constituent entities on legal mandates, ethics, and sunshine laws. She currently sits on the Board of Directors of a non-profit organization dedicated to mentoring and empowering girls of color and often serves as a motivational speaker in the greater Sacramento area and beyond.

Moderator: Carrie Purcell, BA, Deputy Director, City of San Diego

Biography: Carrie Purcell has over 20 years of experience with the City of San Diego's Engineering & Capital Projects Department, where she has held leadership roles including Interim Deputy Director and Assistant Deputy Director. She brings extensive expertise in CEQA, environmental permitting, and regulatory compliance, with a track record of guiding complex capital projects through environmental review and permitting. Carrie spearheaded the department's first Memorandum of Understanding with the Planning Department, enabling CEQA determinations for capital improvement projects. Her background spans environmental and permit support, preliminary engineering, access law compliance, and quality assurance, along with management of survey, materials testing, and project controls teams. Carrie's breadth of technical knowledge and management experience provides valuable insight into navigating CEQA for major infrastructure projects.

Q.

R.

Moderator: Lara Rachowicz, PhD, Ecological Resilience Director, Ascent

Biography: Lara Rachowicz is an ecologist with more than 20 years of environmental planning and compliance experience throughout California. As the director of Ascent's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Sector, she leads interdisciplinary teams in developing environmental impact reports and regulatory strategies that support landscape-scale vegetation management and fuel reduction. Lara served as the lead biologist for the CalVTP Program EIR and continues to guide public agencies in preparing CalVTP project-specific analyses and navigating innovative compliance pathways. Her expertise lies in designing defensible, efficient approaches to CEQA and related regulatory processes that accelerate the pace and scale of forest health, fire fuel management, and resilience projects statewide.

Moderator: Travis Randel, Deputy City Manager, Development Services, City of San Jacinto

Biography: Travis Randel serves as the Deputy City Manager, Development Services for the City of San Jacinto, where he oversees a wide range of development services including the Community Development (Planning, Building & Safety, and Code Enforcement) and Public Utilities (Parks, Streets, Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater) Departments. This unique combination of responsibilities gives him a comprehensive perspective on how land use, infrastructure, and environmental review intersect to shape community outcomes. He has more than 20 years of professional experience in municipal planning and administration, with a strong technical foundation in land use entitlement, CEQA environmental review, and public engagement. Travis spent over 12 years as a Planner with the City of Riverside, where he worked extensively in current planning and public information services. For the

past eight years, he has led the City of San Jacinto's Community Development and Public Utilities Departments, first as Community Development Director and now as Deputy City Manager, overseeing complex development projects, General Plan implementation, and major infrastructure programs. Travis holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences from the University of California, Riverside and a Master of Public Administration from California Baptist University. This combination of technical training and executive leadership informs his approach to integrating CEQA analysis with infrastructure planning, effective communication, and decision-making support. He also serves as Treasurer for the Inland Empire Chapter of the AEP, where he helps support programming and professional development for practitioners across the region. As moderator, he brings both depth and breadth of experience to the session, highlighting how planners, consultants, and environmental professionals can frame CEQA findings in plain language, engage diverse communities constructively, and keep projects moving forward while balancing technical, political, and community realities.

Panelist: Jen Reed, Air Quality Services Manager, Dudek

Biography: Jennifer Reed leads Dudek's air quality services team and has over 19 years experience in air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, health risk assessment, energy analyses, and climate action and adaptation planning. She has been responsible for the management and technical leadership of numerous CEQA and NEPA analyses in support of a diverse range of public and private developments, and continues to be on the forefront of evolving science, emissions modeling programs, regulatory framework, case law, and planning best practices. Ms. Reed is an active member in AEP's Climate Change Committee and has demonstrated success in relaying technical concepts in a way that is easy to understand.

Panelist: Amy Restelli, Transportation Engineer, Kimley-Horn

Biography: Amy Restelli is a consultant at Kimley-Horn with 14 years of experience of transportation planning and engineering, delivering multimodal mobility solutions across California. Her work spans active transportation plans, corridor studies, safety initiatives, and traffic studies with a focus on equitable access and community-driven outcomes. Amy has served as project manager for a wide range of efforts including most recently the City of San Marcos Active Transportation Plan and Street Design Manual, San Vicente Comprehensive Corridor Management Plan, UCSD Hopkins Cycle Track Design, and Midway Rising Redevelopment Study transportation services. Amy has also served on the board of Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) for the past 8 years since moving to San Diego.

Panelist: Heather Riley, Partner, Allen Matkins Leck Gamble Mallory & Natsis LLP

Biography: Heather Riley's reputation as a go-to land use and environmental attorney trusted by both developers and public agencies hinges on two essential qualities: her attention to detail in solving complex project planning puzzles and her knowledge of the California Environmental Quality Act's (CEQA) strict regulations and processes. For commercial and residential developers and real estate firms with multi-state endeavors looking to get discretionary projects approved, Heather's successful track record covers all angles. From the initial acquisition to the oversight of land use documentation and entitlement approvals, she makes sure that the project files contain evidence to support the agency's determination. If a third party files a project or CEQA challenge, Heather has all the tools and skills necessary to vigorously defend her clients positions in litigation. She regularly takes cases through to final judicial hearings in trial and appellate courts. Having worked with the City of San Diego on various land use and regulatory updates, Heather is a reliable development resource for local leaders and agencies. Heather's clients appreciate her critical ability to translate the technical aspects of their projects into language that can be understood by a non-technical audience, for example, decision makers, citizens, and judges. She maintains excellent working relationships with agency professionals and consultants throughout Southern California and conducts cordial and productive interactions with opposing lawyers and environmental groups many of whom she knows and has successfully negotiated with time and again.

Moderator: Holly Roberson, Shareholder, Kronick Moskowitz Tiedemann & Girard

Biography: Holly Roberson is a Shareholder at Kronick Moskowitz Tiedemann & Girard, where she represents government entities including Native American tribes, state agencies, cities, counties, and special districts on matters involving tribal law, natural resources, water law, and environmental compliance. Her practice focuses on CEQA, NEPA, land use, climate change, renewable energy, and tribal cultural resource protection. Holly brings specialized expertise in AB 52 consultation, NAGPRA/CalNAGPRA compliance, and collaborative approaches to complex regulatory challenges. She regularly provides technical assistance and training to public agencies, tribal governments, and the private sector. Prior to joining Kronick, Holly served as Land Use Counsel at the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), where she led major initiatives including updates to the CEQA Guidelines, the General Plan Guidelines, and implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). She previously worked at a national AmLaw 100 firm and a boutique environmental law firm, and brings a balanced, solutions-oriented approach to high-stakes legal matters.

Panelist: Christine Rothman, AICP, Development Project Manager III, City of San Diego Stormwater Department

Biography: Ms. Rothman has over 30 years of professional experience in urban planning with 10 years focused on stormwater infrastructure and mitigation. Christine has a Bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture and a Master's degree in City & Regional Planning. She supervises the team that finds, designs, permits, implements, and maintains compensatory wetland mitigation under the Municipal Waterways Maintenance Plan for the City of San Diego Stormwater Department.

Panelist: Andrea Ruiz Esquide, Deputy City Attorney, San Francisco City Attorney's Office

Biography: Andrea Ruiz Esquide is a Deputy City Attorney with the San Francisco City Attorney's Office, where she has served since 2007. She advises city agencies and departments including the Planning Department, Transportation Agency, and Historic Preservation Commission on CEQA, NEPA, air quality, greenhouse gas regulation, and cultural resources law, and frequently represents the City in related litigation. Andrea serves on the Executive Committee of the California Lawyers Association's Environmental Law Section and has contributed to CEQA reform efforts through the Planning & Conservation League's CEQA 2.0 initiative. She holds a J.D. from Berkeley Law and a Ph.D. in Latin American History from Columbia University. Andrea brings a deep understanding of environmental review and regulatory frameworks, and is committed to helping public agencies implement thoughtful, legally sound, and equitable planning processes.

S.

Moderator: Diane Sandman, SVP, Consulting Division President, Harris & Associates

Biography: Diane Sandman exemplifies dynamic leadership in her role as Division President of Consulting at Harris & Associates. With a proven track record of inspiring teams and delivering innovative solutions, Diane is instrumental in guiding Harris' Consulting division to address the complex challenges faced by communities today. Throughout her career, Diane has excelled as a specialist in the environmental sciences. She has focused on planning, permitting and compliance and developed a specialty in the preparation of complex documents in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Her professional experience includes over 18 years of coordination with local, state and federal agencies on public- and private-sector projects that cover the entire spectrum of infrastructure. Among her proudest professional accomplishments, she helped a team complete the County of San Diego's General Plan Update and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in only three years. Diane was the project manager for the Program EIR and read every word of the 1,200-page document several times. The project earned an Outstanding Environmental Analysis Document Award from the Association of Environmental Professionals. Her commitment to sound environmental strategy extends beyond her project responsibilities. In her spare time, she's the instructor for the Environmental Assessment Practices course at the University of San Diego, where she teaches students about NEPA, CEQA and the many careers in her field. She finds it especially rewarding to teach a class she once took at her alma mater.

Moderator: Shanti Santulli, MS, PWS, Regulatory Permitting Director, RECON Environmental

Biography: Ms. Santulli serves as RECON's regulatory permitting director and specializes in aquatic resources permitting, aquatic resources delineations and assessments, and regulatory agency coordination. Ms. Santulli has extensive public and private sector experience with preparing and reviewing aquatic resource delineation reports and regulatory permitting application packages, including 10 years of experience as a regulatory project manager and team lead with the USACE Regulatory Division. She is considered a regional expert on federal, state, and local aquatic resource regulations and has routinely led regulatory presentations and trainings on behalf of the USACE and as a consultant. Ms. Santulli's in depth understanding of aquatic resource regulations, standards, and procedures, network of regulatory specialists and technical experts, and relationships with federal and state regulators set her apart from others in the field.

Panelist: Cody T. Sargeant, Associate Land Use Attorney

Biography: Cody is a Natural Resources and Land Use Attorney at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck. He helps clients navigate the regulatory hurdles and complex legal issues that come with real estate and land use projects, adding valuable municipal experience and deep sense of business lifecycles to his natural resources practice. His experience includes assisting developers, businesses, property owners and other private parties in all stages of development. Cody's work includes guiding clients on several state and federal land use and environmental laws, including the California Environmental Quality Act, the California Coastal Act, the Subdivision Map Act and the California Public Records Act. He has worked on a variety of complex housing, mixed-use development and commercial projects throughout California. Prior to joining the firm, Cody practiced business and real estate law at a Santa Barbara law firm, and previously practiced land use law at a large international law firm. While in law school, Cody served as a judicial extern to the Honorable Sandra S. Ikuta of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit and worked as a legal intern with the Long Beach City Attorney's Office. He now serves as a board member for the Housing Trust Fund of Santa Barbara County.

Moderator: Gina Sawaya, Lead Planner, WSP

Biography: Ms. Sawaya is an environmental/planning consultant for WSP with eight years of professional experience in planning and communications. She specializes in public and stakeholder outreach, environmental planning, and impact assessment. She has spent her career communicating planning, science, and policy to a broad range of special interest and user groups. Ms. Sawaya has strong experience in stakeholder and public outreach, working with community organizations, and coordinating robust public outreach programs aimed at communicating the details of a project and fostering feedback from the public. Ms. Sawaya also has experience in developing strategic communications and graphic designs to environmentally-focused companies like non-profits and government agencies, managing social media, developing curriculum, and grant writing. During her work on local planning projects, Ms. Sawaya has led dozens of stakeholder and public workshops and analyzed feedback from thousands of respondents. Ms. Sawaya achieved a Bachelor of Science from the College of William and Mary in Biology and Environmental Science.

Panelist: Cody Schaaf, Habitat Restoration Ecologist, Dudek

Biography: Mr. Schaaf is a San Diego based habitat restoration ecologist at Dudek with six years of environmental consulting experience. He specializes in botanical surveys, habitat restoration monitoring, vegetation mapping, and preparing biological reports and restoration plans across central and southern California and western Arizona. He is a habitat restoration ecologist for the City of San Diego's Beyer Advanced Permittee-Responsible Wetland Mitigation Site along the Otay River, where he has supported planning, design, and permitting since 2024.

Panelist: Brian Schuster, Director Air Quality, Climate, Acoustics, ESA

Biography: Brian has over 15 years of project management and technical air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) experience. He has developed, planned, and implemented Climate Action Plans (CAPs) for public and private agencies throughout California. He has authored more than 30 environmental impact reports in compliance with CEQA and NEPA guidelines. In his CAP work, Brian designs comprehensive GHG emissions inventories, evaluates GHG emission reductions from a wide variety of measures, authors planning documents, and engages stakeholders through outreach. As Project Manager, Brian led CAP projects for the counties of San Bernardino, Sonoma, Marin, and Los Angeles, and for the City of Ontario. Brian also has experience conducting pollutant dispersion modeling using AERMOD and CALINE and has prepared many health risk assessments for complex development projects. He has extensive emissions modeling experience using CalEEMod, EMFAC, OFFROAD, WARM, and ClearPath (Brian is on the SEEC technical advisory committee). He has also designed a number of interactive excel models for clients, including GHG inventorying tools, a lifecycle GHG waste tool, a health risk assessment screening tool, GHG reduction measure planning tools, and GHG reduction measure implementation tracking tools.

Panelist: Tammy L. Seale, Principal, Climate Action & Resiliency Services, PlaceWorks

Biography: Tammy L. Seale is a Principal at PlaceWorks where she leads the firm's Climate Action and Resiliency Practice. She is an environmental planner with over 30 years of experience in sustainability and climate action planning. Tammy collaborates with communities throughout California to prepare General Plans and climate action plans. Tammy is a co-author with Michael Boswell and Adrienne Greve of *Climate Action Planning: A Guide to Creating Low-Carbon, Resilient Communities* (2019), a guidebook that provides resources, best practices, and tools to address climate change mitigation and adaptation in the local planning process.

Panelist: Nick Segovia, Environmental Acoustician, Dudek

Biography: Nick Segovia is an Environmental Acoustician II at Dudek with two years of specialized experience in acoustics. He has successfully completed numerous noise technical analyses for a variety of projects, adhering to the Appendix G guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). His expertise in environmental acoustics has significantly benefited projects such as battery energy storage system (BESS) projects, solar projects, multi-family and affordable housing developments, mixed-use projects, educational facilities, municipal specific and general plan updates, and water/wastewater projects. Nick is also highly skilled in conducting field baseline outdoor ambient sound pressure level (SPL) surveys across various regions in the United States, including the Pacific, Southwest, Midwest, and Central areas.

Panelist: Elizabeth Shearer-Nguyen, Program Manager, City of San Diego, Development Services Department

Biography: Elizabeth Shearer-Nguyen is a high-energy Program Manager in the Development Services Department for the City of San Diego, where she's the go-to expert overseeing Environmental Analysis, Mitigation Monitoring, Reporting, and Landscape Sections. With 26 years of CEQA experience under her belt, Elizabeth has been the mastermind behind environmental documents for countless public and private development projects, all while making sure San Diego grows responsibly and sustainably, of course! She's got a reputation for being a bit of a perfectionist, but let's be honest that obsessive attention to detail is her secret weapon when it comes to crafting environmental documents. Sure, she drives developers, consultants, and attorneys a little nuts along the way, but deep down, they all know she's the real MVP. Reliable, trustworthy, and when it's all said and done, the environmental document she delivers is as rock-solid as they come. When she's not busy ensuring that the City's projects are on track, Elizabeth is embracing her new life as a proud "empty-nester," having successfully launched two sons into the world. To fill the space (and the puppy-sized hole in her heart), she's now raising an adorable, energetic puppy, Friday, who's bringing all the joy and a little chaos back into the mix!

Panelist: Casey Shorrock, J.D., Attorney, Somach Simmons & Dunn

Biography: Casey Shorrock is an attorney at Somach Simmons & Dunn specializing in environmental and land use law, particularly CEQA, NEPA, natural resource management, and entitlements. With a decades-long background in environmental consulting and planning working with agencies at all levels of government prior to attending law school, Casey offers a holistic perspective, integrating legal strategies with practical insights. Casey counsels clients on all aspects of statutory and regulatory compliance under federal, state, and local environmental and land use laws and then represents their interests in litigation. Casey has been selected for inclusion in Northern California Super Lawyers as a Rising Star for the last three years and guest lectures on CEQA litigation at the University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law, where she graduated with distinction as an Anthony M. Kennedy Fellow and a Stauffer Charitable Trust Research Fellow.

Panelist: Shane Silsby, M.Sc., CEO & Founder, Silsby Strategic Advisors

Biography: Shane Silsby has 25 years of experience influencing strategic planning, public policy, organizational development, and the delivery of major infrastructure projects. His expansive career includes executive leadership roles in the private sector and with government agencies across the country, including his last public sector post as the Director of Orange County Public Works. He is also the Program Manager for the City of Seal Beach- San Gabriel River Trash Mitigation Initiative. As the current CEO of Silsby Strategic Advisors, he is now focused on helping public agencies develop creative solutions to complex challenges, including strategies around federal funding acquisition and implementation. Mr. Silsby holds a bachelor's and master's degree in civil engineering from Michigan State University, is a current member of the American Public Works Association national government affairs committee, and is author of the book *Managing for Meteors: Preparing Local Government Leaders Before the Impact*.

Panelist: Stephanie Smith, B.A, J.D, Partner, Grid Legal

Biography: Stephanie Smith graduated cum laude from Pepperdine School of Law and has a B.A from the University of Washington- Seattle in international studies. She is an attorney specializing in land use and CEQA matters at Grid Legal. Stephanie represents both public and private clients, handling a wide range of CEQA and land use matters. Prior to founding Grid Legal, Stephanie was a Senior Deputy Counsel at the County of San Diego where she advised the Planning and Development Services and Parks departments on CEQA, land use, and regulatory matters. Before serving at the County, Stephanie was an Associate at DLA Piper in Los Angeles. Fun Fact: Stephanie grew up on a farm in Saskatchewan, Canada where the temperatures could drop below -40 degrees. Her firm's name, Grid Legal, pays homage to her farming roots, where the land is organized in a series of grids with a network of roads spaced one mile apart.

Panelist: Charlene So, P.E., Principal, Urban Crossroads, Inc.

Biography: Charlene So P.E., has worked in transportation planning and traffic engineering since 2002 and prepares traffic studies for complex project types to support CEQA compliance. Since earning her degree in Civil Engineering from the University of California, Irvine, Ms. So has developed a wide range of expertise in transportation planning and traffic impact analyses. She is a registered professional traffic engineer in the State of California, an experienced project manager, and leads the Urban Crossroads, Inc. traffic group. Her analysis techniques using the Highway Capacity Manual and software tools such as SYNCHRO, SimTraffic, and HCS lead to thorough and defensible conclusions for projects with dynamic baselines and project descriptions.

Moderator: Lori Spar, B.A, JD, LLM, Director, CEQA Group, RECON Environmental

Biography: Lori Spar holds a B.A from Binghamton University, J.D from Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, and an LL.M from University of San Diego. She is a CEQA practitioner with over 20 years of experience, enjoying a career which has spanned County of San Diego Environmental Planner, attorney practicing environmental and land use law, and private consultant. As RECON's CEQA Director, she brings a broad history of experience in project management, environmental planning and analysis, and environmental litigation, allowing her to provide valuable insights on land

use requirements and procedures. Lori's experience emphasized the writing of complex documents, strategizing the management of controversial and high-profile CEQA projects, and guiding clients (both private and public) through the review and planning process with a keen awareness of community concerns. Fun Facts: Lori was raised in New York City where she visits regularly. She enjoys the company of her family which includes two teenage daughters and a one-year-old Australian Shepard named Maple.

Moderator: Kristen Stoner, B.A., Senior Project Manager/ CEQA Specialist, Dudek

Biography: Kristen Stoner is an environmental planner with more than 25 years experience in California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance. She has successfully managed and coordinated the CEQA processes for a diverse range of complex public and private developments throughout California, many of which have involved intense public controversy. Ms. Stoner's expertise includes coordination and management of CEQA document preparation for a variety of project types, including planned communities, area and specific plans, commercial and residential developments, energy projects, state agency developments, solid waste and hazardous materials management projects, resource management projects, recreation projects, and various other land management projects.

Panelist: Vida Strong, Executive Vice President, Aspen Environmental Group

Biography: Vida Strong has extensive experience in environmental engineering and project management, with an emphasis in the application of CEQA and NEPA in analysis, permitting, and resultant mitigation monitoring of controversial development projects. She has worked with developers and agencies in the design of industrial projects that meet the objectives of the developer while minimizing environmental impacts. She has also been involved in the management and preparation of environmental documents for numerous industrial projects, requiring the critical application of alternatives development and screening criteria, knowledge of a broad range of issue areas, and extensive local, State, and federal agency coordination. In addition, she has managed the mitigation monitoring, compliance, and reporting programs for dozens of industrial projects on behalf of the permitting agencies and developers, which provides her with working hand knowledge of the infield application of mitigation requirements while considering construction needs. Vida has a BS in Engineering and a Master of Urban Planning.

Moderator: Mark Storm, INCE Bd. Cert, Acoustic Services Manager, Dudek

Biography: Mark Storm is a senior acoustician with 34 years experience as a noise control engineer specializing in environmental noise assessment, mechanical systems noise control, and architectural acoustics. Mark evaluates noise and vibration impacts from residential, manufacturing, industrial (e.g., mining, fossil-fueled and renewable power generation, energy storage, electrical transmission, and natural gas transmission), municipal, educational, commercial, and mixed-use facilities upon sensitive human and wildlife receptors. Mark has authored or managed many California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)/National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) noise technical studies and sections of environmental documents. He has also handled noise for several client Applications for Certification (AFC) brought before the California Energy Commission (CEC). Mark is an Institute of Noise Control Engineering (INCE) Board Certified Member, a listed CEQA Consultant for Noise for San Diego County, the technical activities chair for Community Noise at INCE-USA, and is a member of the AEP Noise and Vibration Committee.

Moderator: Rachel Struglia, AICP; PhD, CEQA/NEPA Senior Project Manager, Dudek

Biography: Rachel Struglia, PhD, AICP is a project manager with 27 years experience preparing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)/National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents for public and private clients. Rachel is experienced in managing CEQA documents for large infrastructure and development projects and loves large complex programmatic EIRs for facility master plans, infrastructure plans and long-range development plans. She has prepared CEQA documents for General Plans, Specific Plans, as well as infill, residential, commercial, industrial, and university and K-12 school EIR projects. Rachel has led Dudek's CEQA practice in Orange County for the past 13 years.

T.

Panelist: Sabrina Teller, Partner, Remy Moose Manley, LLP

Biography: Sabrina Teller is a managing partner in Remy Moose Manley, LLP, where she has practiced since 2001. She regularly advises local and state agencies and private applicants across the state in all phases of the administrative review process, writ litigation, and appeals. Sabrina's practice includes the California Environmental Quality Act, the State Planning and Zoning Law, the Subdivision Map Act, the California Coastal Act, the California Endangered Species Act, the California Water Code provisions relating to water supplies for development, the National Environmental Policy Act, the federal Endangered Species Act, and the federal Clean Water Act provisions associated with wetlands permitting. She partnered with Ascent in the development of the CalVTP Program EIR and advises clients on regulatory compliance for wildfire resilience. She regularly teaches land use and environmental law continuing education classes and seminars for her client agencies and professional organizations such as the Association of Environmental Professionals and Law Seminars International.

Panelist: Hannah Thomas, Senior Planner, County of Santa Barbara

Biography: Ms. Thomas is a Senior Planner for the County of Santa Barbara Planning and Development Department-Long Range Planning Division. She has six years of experience in the planning field, working in the private sector and local government. She specializes in climate adaptation pathways, wildfire and hazards communications, urban planning, CEQA, and public education and outreach. She is the project manager of the County's ongoing Safety Element Update, which includes an Evacuation Traffic Modeling Study, Climate Change Adaptation Plan, and coastal resilience projects. Previously, Ms. Thomas managed the County's Housing Element Update Program Environmental Impact Report, during which she led outreach and communications with the public and various stakeholders. Ms. Thomas serves as Chair of the Santa Barbara County Regional Climate Collaborative Sea Level Rise Subcommittee, Co-chair of Training for the Santa Barbara County Emergency Public Information Communicators, and as a representative on the County's Public Information Team. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Santa Barbara in Environmental Studies and Professional Writing and a Master of Science from Erasmus University's Institute of Housing and Urban Development in Urban Planning, Climate Adaptation, and Community Resilience.

Panelist: Antonia Toledo, MCRP, Interim Chief of Environmental, Caltrans District 8

Biography: Experienced Principal Planner with a demonstrated history of working in the civil engineering industry. Skilled in Land Development, Urban Planning, Proposal Writing, Environmental Consulting, and Contract Management. Strong community and social services professional with a MS focused in City & Regional Planning from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

Panelist: Vanessa Toscano, Principal Planner, HELIX Environmental Planning

Biography: Vanessa Toscano (she/her) is a Principal Planner and Group Manager at HELIX Environmental Planning. She is on the Southern California Environmental Planning Group management team and has 17 years of experience overseeing the environmental review process for a wide range of projects, focusing on academic/educational, infrastructure, transportation, and private development projects. Ms. Toscano has been managing and supporting numerous projects for UC San Diego since 2008 and served as Project Manager for the Update to the 2018 LRDP SEIR.

Panelist: Amanda Tropiano, Principal, De Novo Planning Group

Biography: Amanda Tropiano is a Principal with De Novo Planning Group and leads the firm's Southern California practice. She has managed a wide range of land use and environmental planning projects for public and private sector clients, including General Plans, specific plans, corridor plans, strategic plans, sustainability programs, visioning efforts, transit-oriented development plans, zoning documents, outreach programs, and CEQA projects. Amanda is also an IAP2-trained public outreach practitioner and has completed advanced project management training with

PSMJ. She is widely recognized for her collaborative and creative approach to planning, ensuring projects not only meet but exceed client and community expectations. A skilled facilitator and public speaker, Amanda thrives in working with members of the public, stakeholders, and elected and appointed officials to build understanding, navigate challenges, and craft strategies that bring planning and environmental goals to life. Amanda holds a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of California, Irvine and dual Bachelor's degrees in Urban Studies and Planning and Political Science: Comparative Politics from the University of California, San Diego. She also completed a study abroad program at the University of Sussex.

Moderator: Meaghan Truman, Associate Environmental Planner III, EPD Solutions, Inc

Biography: Meaghan Truman is an Associate Environmental Planner III at EPD Solutions, Inc. Meaghan specializes in the management and preparation of various CEQA documents including EIRs, IS/MNDs, Addenda, and Exemptions. Meaghan has prepared documents for a variety of project types, from infill residential development to transit-oriented specific plans. Meaghan currently sits on the OC AEP Board of Directors and is a panelist for the AEP CEQA Essentials Workshop in Orange County.

Panelist: Melanie Tylke, AICP, Project Manager, County of San Diego

Biography: Melanie Tylke is a Project Manager with the County of San Diego Department of General Services (DGS), having worked at the County for over 11 years on projects for clients including the Sheriff Department, Animal Services, Health and Human Services Agency, Parks & Recreation, Libraries and more. She leads the environmental documentation and compliance for DGS projects and has also served as a land use/environmental planner for both the Department of Parks & Recreation and Planning & Development Services affording her years of experience in environmental streamlining for County projects. Melanie's background is in urban planning and sociology, which lends to her unique understanding of the built environment and how people interact within those spaces. She is a certified planner from the American Institute of Certified Planners of the American Planning Association and has been an active AEP member for over a decade.

U.

V.

Panelist: Michael Vigliotta, City Attorney, City of Huntington Beach

Biography: As the City Attorney for the City of Huntington Beach, Mr. Vigliotta advises the City Council and City Administration on land use, CEQA compliance, and other related matters, including for dynamic project types such as the Pacific Airshow that occurs annually over the Pacific Ocean. Mr. Vigliotta focuses exclusively on municipal law, advising and litigating general municipal law issues such as the Political Reform Act, Brown Act and Public Records Act. Mr. Vigliotta is admitted to practice law in California and before the United States District Court for the Central District of California, and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal. He is a graduate of the Chapman University School of Law (J.D.), and Gannon University (B.A., Political Science).

Panelist: Stephen Velyvis, Partner, Burke, Williams & Sorensen, LLP

Biography: Steve Velyvis is a well-respected land use and environmental law attorney with over 24 years of expertise advising and representing public agency and private clients in administrative proceedings and before state and federal trial and appellate courts. Steve has extensive advisory and litigation experience with and works daily on projects addressing complex legal issues spanning CEQA, NEPA, the Federal Power Act, and the California Coastal Act, as well as the state and federal legal and regulatory frameworks governing clean water, clean air, endangered species and electricity generation and transmission. He also routinely represents clients in land use and planning-related matters and advises on CEQA compliance issues in eminent domain matters. While Steve has extensive advisory and litigation experience with a multitude of environmental laws, he is most experienced with CEQA, having represented parties on all three sides of the CEQA equation, successfully representing municipal and public agency clients, project applicants, and project opponents.

W.

Panelist: Rich Walter, Vice President, ICF

Biography: Rich Walter has 30 years of experience in environmental planning, compliance strategy, permitting, and mitigation development and implementation. He serves as project director/environmental lead for environmental planning for large-scale infrastructure projects for public agencies and private clients. He has worked with a wide variety of federal agencies on NEPA compliance including FRA, FTA, FAA, NPS, BLM, USACE, USFWS, and FERC. Rich has also led ICF's California Municipal Climate Action Planning practice since 2006 which has developed climate action plans, greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories for hundreds of communities across the U.S., general plan policies for climate change, cost-benefit analyses of emission reduction strategies, climate adaptation studies (including sea level rise), as well as numerous California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents addressing GHG emissions and adaptation.

Panelist: Andrew Walters, Senior Environmental Planner, Cultural Resource, Caltrans District 11

Biography: Andrew is a senior environmental scientist and planner with over 18 years of experience at Caltrans, specializing in NEPA, CEQA, and historic preservation compliance. He has led interdisciplinary teams in preparing and reviewing environmental documents for transportation projects, with expertise in Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, DOT Section 4(f), and other federal and state regulations. Andrew's work bridges technical analysis, regulatory compliance, and project management, supporting sustainable and legally compliant transportation development across California.

Panelist: Michael Weber, B.Sc., Senior Principal, Business Center Practice Leader, Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

Biography: Michael has 26 years of environmental consulting experience with an emphasis on regulatory permitting for complex coastal zone projects subject to multi-agency jurisdictions and substantial community input. Michael's experience includes feasibility studies, stakeholder engagement, permitting, and environmental review for water-borne trash removal projects in numerous southern California coastal rivers and creeks.

Panelist: Morgan Weintraub, B.A., Associate Project Manager, RECON Environmental

Biography: Morgan Weintraub earned a B.A. in Environmental Studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz, where she explored various environmental fields before pursuing a career in environmental planning. She is an environmental planner and project manager at RECON Environmental, Inc., with over 11 years of experience preparing and managing CEQA compliance documents for both public and private development projects. She has broad experience in writing environmental impact reports, initial studies, mitigated negative declarations, addendums, and exemptions for a variety of development projects. Fun Facts: Morgan enjoys hiking, yoga, and spending time outdoors.

Panelist: Lisa Westwood, Vice President and Director of Cultural Resources, ECORP Consulting, Inc.

Biography: Lisa Westwood is Vice President and Director of Cultural Resources at ECORP Consulting, Inc., where she brings nearly 30 years of experience in archaeology and cultural resources management. A Registered Professional Archaeologist, Lisa leads interdisciplinary teams across California and advises on complex AB 52 tribal consultation efforts and compliance with CEQA, Section 106, and related regulations. She is the current President-Elect of the Register of Professional Archaeologists and has authored or co-authored more than 300 technical reports and publications. Her expertise spans prehistoric and historical archaeology, cultural resource law, and regulatory strategy. Lisa frequently trains agency staff and consultants on best practices for tribal consultation and cultural resource compliance. She holds advanced degrees in Anthropology and has taught at California State University, Chico. Lisa is known for her collaborative, practical approach to resolving cultural resources issues in the field and at the planning table.

Name: Sarah Wickman, Associate Planner, Planwest Partners Inc

Biography: Sarah Wickman (she/her/siya) is an environmental professional with over eight years of experience specializing in ocean and coastal resource management, community engagement, and environmental planning. She has recently contributed to projects for the Humboldt Bay Harbor Recreation and Conservation District, including planning for the Humboldt Bay Offshore Wind Terminal, and has been involved in regional sea level rise studies, environmental impact reports, and municipal service reviews. Her background also includes facilitating coastal resource management in the Philippines as a Peace Corps Volunteer and advancing regional stewardship initiatives as a research intern with The Nature Conservancy. Outside of work Sarah enjoys taking her cat Tako for walks, dancing Zumba, practicing yoga, and paddle boarding.

Panelist: Alisha Wiinterswyk, Partner, Best Best & Krieger LLP

Biography: Alisha Winterswyk'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. Throughout her career, Alisha has reviewed and/or drafted hundreds of CEQA-related documents. Alisha served as an adjunct law professor at Whittier Law School where she taught California environmental law. Alisha has guest lectured at several other Southern California universities on environmental and land use matters. Alisha frequently speaks on CEQA and land use issues at professional conferences, seminars and continuing legal education events. Over the past several years, she has contributed as a panelist to several AEP essential and advanced CEQA workshops. Each year Alisha coaches or advises a team of law students who participate in the California Lawyers Association's Annual Environmental Negotiations Competition. Alisha is an advisor and former secretary to the California Lawyers Association Environmental Law Section Executive Committee, and the past director and president of the Orange County Association of Environmental Professionals. She also serves on BBK's Culture & Community Committee.

Panelist: Andrea Williams, Branch Chief, Environmental Stewardship and Management, Caltrans

Biography: Andrea Williams serves as Branch Chief for Environmental Stewardship and Management in the Office of Natural Resources Management at Caltrans, where she leads statewide efforts to integrate ecological stewardship with transportation safety and resilience. She oversees programs that balance regulatory compliance with innovation, advancing vegetation management strategies that reduce wildfire risk while protecting sensitive habitats and resources. With extensive experience in environmental policy, interagency collaboration, and implementation of programmatic permitting tools, Andrea has been at the forefront of California's shift toward landscape-scale approaches to wildfire resilience. Her leadership has helped position Caltrans as a key partner in developing regulatory efficiencies that meet both urgent public safety needs and long-term environmental goals.

Panelist: Ricky Williams, AICP, LUEG Program Manager, County of San Diego

Biography: Ricky Williams (he/him) is the Program Manager for the Regional Decarbonization Framework with the County of San Diego's Office of Sustainability and Environmental Justice. As the Office's lens for climate action, the Regional Decarbonization Framework promotes public and private interests working together to move the entire San Diego region to reach zero carbon emissions. Ricky's work bridges grassroots leadership and institutional change, advancing a more just, inclusive, and sustainable future. Central to his work is uplifting local voices through community-centered engagement models where residents co-design sustainability and environmental justice projects that guide funding opportunities and support from local governments. He also leads efforts to foster regional collaboration to achieve decarbonization goals including co-administration of the San Diego Regional Energy Network bringing critical funding to support electrification and energy efficiency projects, and other government-to-government coordination to unify regionwide actions.

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Panelist: Ben Zdeba, Planning Manager, City of Newport Beach

Biography: Ben is currently the Planning Manager and Zoning Administrator for the City of Newport Beach where he has served the complex coastal community for over 15 years. During this time he has had the opportunity to work on a variety of current and advanced planning projects, from evaluating the keeping of urban chickens and recreational horses to implementing progressive commercial parking standards and beyond. His more recent efforts have focused on successfully bringing the City's 6th Cycle Housing Element to compliance with State law and overseeing its implementation through a Citywide rezoning for housing opportunities, while also leading the more comprehensive update of the City's 2006 General Plan, including its Natural Resources and Recreation Elements.

Panelist: Tracy Zinn, AICP, Principal, T&B Planning, Inc.

Biography: Tracy Zinn serves as the President and CEO of T&B Planning, Inc., with offices in Irvine and San Diego. She has over 32 years of experience in land use planning and CEQA compliance. Ms. Zinn often leads CEQA compliance strategy and document preparation for projects that are complex, large, and controversial. She holds a B.S. degree in Urban and Regional Planning, is certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and is a member of the California Association of Environmental Professionals (AEP), American Planning Association (APA), and the Commercial Real Estate Development Association, Inland Empire Chapter Board of Directors and Legislative Affairs Committee.

Other moderators and panelists (biography not shown here):

Moderator: Kristine Cai, Principal/Director of Mobility, Northern/Central CA, LSA Associates

Moderator: Allison Chan, Sr. Environmental Project Manager, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission

Moderator: Tracey D'Aoust Roberts, Deputy District Director-Environmental, Caltrans District 11

Moderator: Vivian Kha, Placeworks

Moderator: Corinne Lytle Bonine, AES Clean Energy

Moderator: Emily Mastrelli, Natural Resources Director, Harris & Associates

Moderator: Clint Meyer, HDR Engineering, Inc.

Moderator: Ben Stewart, PE, Managing Consultant, Water, Stantec

Moderator: Joan Valle, Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

Moderator: Vanessa Villanueva, Senior Environmental Planner, Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Panelist: Jerry Aguirre, Senior Flood Control Planner, Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

Panelist: Katie Basinski, San Diego Gas & Electric

Panelist: Carly Beck, Senior Env. Scientist Supervisor, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Panelist: Kristin Blackson, Blackson and Associates

Panelist: Margaret Bornyasz, Senior Flood Control Planner, Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

Panelist: Karina Cantero-Angel, Design Manager (Civil Engineer), Caltrans District 11

Panelist: Kevin Clark, SDNHM

Panelist: Amber Collins, Transportation Planning Division Manager, Mark Thomas

Panelist: Jessica Coria, Director of Air Quality/Climate Change, LSA Associates

Panelist: Maryanne Cronin, Zoning Administration Officer, Planning Bureau, Community Development Department

Panelist: Eli Davidian, AICP, Principal Environmental Planner, Environmental Science Associates (ESA)

Panelist: Amardeep Dhanju, Senior Associate, Aspen Environmental Group

Panelist: Ethan Elkind, Climate Program Director, UC Berkeley Law Center for Law, Energy, and the Environment

Panelist: Katie Flahive, Sr. Natural Resource Planner, Ascent

Panelist: Jennifer Guenther, Esq., Legal Counsel, Rincon Consultants, Inc.

Panelist: Bill Halligan, Esq., Harris and Associates

Panelist: Luke Henningsen, Coastal Planner II, California Coastal Commission

Panelist: Allan Kosup, Chief Deputy, Caltrans

Panelist: Darcy Kremin, AICP, Senior Principal Planner, ESA

Panelist: Ted Lamm, Associate Director, UC Berkeley Law's Center for Law Energy and Environment

Panelist: Karen Lancelle, Planner IV, Environmental Science Associates (ESA)

Panelist: Robert LeMoine, Southern California Edison

Panelist: Phil Lizzi, City of San Diego

Panelist: Shay Lynn Harrison, Environmental Program Manager, Caltrans District 11

Panelist: Jim Mace, Lead, Orange & Riverside Counties Team, US Army Corps of Engineers

Panelist: Alan Monji, Environmental Scientist, RWQCB

Panelist: Julie Moore, Principal Environmental Planner, San Francisco Planning Department

Panelist: Annika Nabors, Environmental Scientist, Caltrans District 11

Panelist: Alisha Pena, Senior Planner, City of San Diego

Panelist: Kasia Poleszczuk, Principal Planner, Tulare County Association of Governments

Panelist: Josh Reese, Design Manager (Senior Transportation Engineer), Caltrans

Panelist: Lauren Rhodes, Environmental Supervisor, Environmental Management Division, Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works

Panelist: Kimberly Ruddins, AICP, Asst. Planning Director, City of Ontario

Panelist: Leila Talebi, HDR Engineering, Inc.

Panelist: Mark Teague, Placeworks

Panelist: Holly Torpey, Senior GIS Specialist/Developer, LSA Associates

Panelist: Matthew Voss, Senior Environmental Scientist, Caltrans

Panelist: Alexis White, Senior Planner, City of San Diego

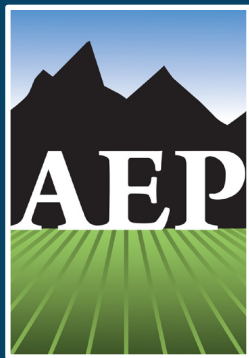
Panelist: Austin Williams, Regulatory Project Manager, USACE



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