

Natural and Working Lands Ad-Hoc Working Group Meeting Summary

January 17, 2023 | 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Join Via Zoom: <https://yolocounty.zoom.us/j/88644201187>

In Attendance:

Kristen Wraithwall, Yolo County

Julia Olsen, Yolo County

Gretchen James, CivicSpark

Kate Reza, Yolo County RCD

Heather Nichols, Yolo County RCD

Andrew Kim, YCCAC Member

Pelayo Alvarez, YCCAC Member

Sarah Morgan, YCCAC Member

Mica Bennett, YCCAC Member

1. Staff Updates

a. Updates on Stipends

- i. The preferred mode of stipends would be for people to fill out a vending agreement, for those who this would not work for there has been approval to give out Visa Gift Cards. Further updates will available at the 23rd Commission meeting.
- ii. County Staff are exploring if stipends can be retroactive to when we received Board of Supervisors approval (going into effect December meetings)

2. Report Back on Working Group Recruitment/Outreach

a. A reminder was made that the working group decided on additional targeted recruitment including members from four key groups:

- i. Conventional large-scale farms;
- ii. Small scale farms;
- iii. The ranching community; and
- iv. Someone from an organization who can speak to farmworker issues related to climate change.

- b. It was stated that the Farm Bureau would like to weigh in on an outreach strategy in the works. This week the Farm Bureau will be occupied but they would like to weigh in on who will take the additional working group seats.
- c. RCD Staff have developed draft interview questions and are putting together strategies for one-on-one interviews and surveys.
- d. **Action Item:** County Staff to share interview questions with the Working Group
- e. A representative of both large-scale and small-scale farming met with RCD Staff yesterday to get more information on the Natural and Working Lands Working Group. The representative expressed interest but has not confirmed whether they will join due to current participation on four other boards. They additionally confirmed that later in the afternoon would be ideal for meeting times.
- f. New members will have to be patient and willing to sit through hour-long discussions and meetings.
- g. The Working Group should discuss whether meeting every other month would be more convenient for members.
- h. A question was asked to clarify the role that the Farm Bureau will play in the Working Group.
 - i. RCD has not yet had the chance to sit down and talk with the Farm Bureau, but they have stated that they want to be involved in outreach efforts. Heather followed up that she will ask for clarification on their expectations.
 - ii. Interviews and surveys could be good opportunities to take advice from the Farm Bureau while allowing the working group to maintain decision-making authority.
- i. While getting input from the Farm Bureau is important, it is a priority to hit the marks of targeted categories chosen by the Working Group
- j. Focus groups, such as a Farm Bureau focus group, was recommended to generate ideas and discussion.
- k. The working group is excited to see the interview questions and agendas for focus groups and future meetings. It is easier for people to provide feedback than to come up with original ideas. High quality engagement and high quantity engagement are different but both valuable.

3. **Discuss Roles of Working Group vs. Dudek**

- a. Review Dudek's proposed scope of work with respect to Natural and Working Lands
 - i. The Working Group is intending to facilitate roundtables.
 - ii. The Working Group would like to engage in conversation with Dudek about the division of roles.

- iii. A suggestion was made to have Dudek do some sort of segmentation of farmer groups to determine possible engagement strategies.
 - 1. The segmentation of the ag community on a farmer-by-farmer basis is not currently within Dudek's SOW. County staff will be responsible for collecting data and sharing information with Dudek. Dudek is responsible for doing the legwork of creating materials and strategies while the Working Group serves as a conduit to review, finalize, and share information.
- iv. In order to achieve some of the KPIs listed on the Roles and Responsibilities document, someone will have to do the logistical work of who outreach will be targeted toward. Dudek could conduct technical analysis based on their previous ag work, and then the Working Group determine which strategies are feasibly replicable by Yolo County.
- v. Dudek's previous ag work and existing ag work can guide Yolo's actions. RCD has outlined a large amount of work on the SOW with a small budget. A question was asked if the RCD SOW is realistic for RCD's current capacity.
 - 1. RCD's existing relationships give a major advantage with outreach. She stated that she views the Working Group as opportunity to ground-test implementation with the community.
- vi. Recommendation made that strategies should focus on how to get farmers to adopt carbon sequestration strategies rather than just listing sequestration opportunities. Why farmers have not already adopted such sequestration strategies should be explored.
- vii. A question was asked if the Farm Bureau or other organizations would have demographic information on the farm community.
 - 1. Other organizations can provide this information. The Farm Bureau might be the best option, but the Ag Commission Office should also be able to provide information on farm sizes.
- viii. Sequestration is necessary but cannot solve climate problems.
- ix. Agriculture cannot be relied upon for climate adaptation efforts.
- x. **High-Level Roles SUMMARY:**
 - 1. DUDEK to start by providing a list of strategies based on what is known to sequester carbon/what is effective
 - 2. NWL WG to discuss and prioritize based on expertise/regional knowledge
 - 3. DUDEK to draft materials for outreach streams based on needs (ie. what information do they need input on from the ag community?)
 - 4. NWL WG to review and finalize outreach materials (ensure tone/focus is appropriate for community's needs)

5. NWL WG/RCD to be the face of outreach/engagement
6. DUDEK to be responsible for synthesizing info collected from surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.

- b. Discuss roles for Interviews/Presentations/Roundtable Discussions and content development (*tabled for next meeting*)
- c. Core group meeting with Dudek before full Working Group kicks off (*tabled for next meeting*)

4. Discuss Plans for Transition to Full Working Group

- a. Full working group expected to meet in late February/early March
- b. Time, Location, and Frequency TBD
 - i. It would be useful to have one more of these core group meetings before transitioning to the full working group. Afternoon meeting times would work better for the farming community.
 - ii. County staff suggested aiming for monthly meetings. Since the Working Group will be considered a Brown Act body, no material reviews or conversation would be allowed to happen virtually.
 - iii. A comment was made that longer meeting times could allow for more materials to be reviewed.
 - iv. Working Group members said that Tuesdays and Thursdays are difficult for afternoon availability.
 1. One Working Group member cannot do Thursdays Jan-May.
 2. One Working Group member cannot do Tuesdays or every second Thursday of the month.
 3. County Staff said that Tuesday afternoons would be difficult.
 4. One Working Group member said that Fridays would be ideal.