

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
September 3, 2020

To: Members of the Coastal Conservancy

From: Sam Schuchat, Executive Officer
Amy Hutzal, Deputy Executive Officer

CC: Oversight Legislators

Re: Adoption of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Guidelines

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adoption of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Guidelines.

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: [Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion \(JEDI\) Guidelines](#)
- Exhibit 2: [JEDI Guidelines in Action](#)
- Exhibit 3: [Public Comments on Draft JEDI Guidelines](#)
- Exhibit 4: [Public JEDI Guidelines Workshop Notes](#)

RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31000 et seq. of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby adopts the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Guidelines attached to the accompanying staff recommendation as Exhibit 1.”

SUMMARY:

Coastal Conservancy staff began the process of developing JEDI Guidelines in January of 2019. The JEDI Guidelines are intended to provide an overarching framework for the ongoing work of Conservancy staff through a public-facing document adopted by the Conservancy board. Exhibit

2, State Coastal Conservancy JEDI Guidelines in Action, summarizes ongoing and potential future actions that the Conservancy staff and board has undertaken or can undertake to implement the JEDI Guidelines. Conservancy Staff will add to this list of actions and it will evolve over time. The JEDI Guidelines and Guidelines in Action are meant to serve as a reference for the board and staff; they are not intended to be a binding statement of Agency policy, and as such are not subject to the California Administrative Procedure Act.

Since January of 2019, the Conservancy has solicited input from individuals and organizations engaged in equity and environmental justice work, community-based organizing, and/or serving frontline, under-resourced, and/or indigenous people in California, particularly those with some experience or interest in the work of the Coastal Conservancy.

Staff conducted an online survey on the intersection of the Conservancy's work and environmental justice in early 2019 and received over 330 responses. Staff then drafted a "strawperson" JEDI Guidelines and, with the assistance of consultants, conducted five focus groups in the fall of 2019 (one in the Bay Area, one in Los Angeles, one in San Diego, one in Sacramento with a focus on parks advocates, and one via webinar focused on environmental justice advocates). Staff also notified all 161 tribes within our jurisdiction of the intent to develop JEDI Guidelines.

Following the focus groups and one-on-one meetings with interested tribal representatives, staff revised the Draft JEDI Guidelines and posted for a public comment period of approximately three months. The Conservancy received written public comments, attached as Exhibit 3. The Conservancy board discussed development of the JEDI Guidelines at the March 14, October 17, and December 19, 2019 board meetings, and took part in a public workshop at the February 2, 2020 board meeting (public workshop notes attached as Exhibit 4).

The Draft JEDI Guidelines were revised to address comments received at the public workshop and during the public comment period.

The Guidelines will be implemented in a manner consistent with the Conservancy's controlling statutes. They are not intended to limit the exercise of discretion by the Board or Conservancy Staff in carrying out the work of the Conservancy.

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a "project" consists of an action that can cause either a direct physical change or a reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment; and that is an activity directly undertaken or funded by a public agency, or an activity that involves the issuance of a permit or other entitlement. (Public Resources Code Section 21065). The CEQA Guidelines further define the term "project" and confirm that it does not include administrative activities of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. (14 Cal Code Regs. Section 15378(b)(5)). Adoption of the Coastal Conservancy's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Guidelines is an administrative activity that does not have the potential to cause a physical change to the environment. Accordingly, adoption of the Coastal Conservancy's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Guidelines does not constitute a project for purposes of CEQA.