

Agricultural Working Group November 18, 2011 Meeting Notes

HST Section: Fresno to Bakersfield and Fresno to Merced

Meeting Date: November 18, 2011

Location: [REDACTED]

Purpose: To help the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) address key issues raised by the agricultural community.

Participants: John Diener, Chairman (via telephone Shannon Mueller, Fresno County University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE); Gerald Higginbotham, Fresno and Madera County UCCE; Tim Niswander, Kings County Agricultural Commissioner; Louie Guerra, Fresno County Agricultural Commissioner's office (via telephone); Darren Rose, Public Affairs Outreach Team (Mike Villines office)

CHSRA: Jeff Abercrombie, Central Valley Program Manager

URS: Cheryl Lehn, Public Outreach, URS

Prepared by: Cheryl Lehn

Action Items

1. Send a list of questions that the agricultural community is asking the CHSRA to the AWG. Abercrombie will send a copy of the industry letter used at the July 2011 Ag hearing.
2. Send out all final meeting notes to the Ag Working Group (AWG).
3. Investigate having a file site (and password protect) with all information for the AWG (meeting notes, agendas, handouts, supplemental materials, white papers).
4. The AWG recommended adding a public AWG page to the CHSRA website.

Decisions

1. Tim Niswander and Louie Guerra will work on the white paper regarding fumigant buffer zones for the Central Valley.
2. White papers will be submitted to the CHSRA by the AWG (i.e. not a CHSRA product).

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3. White papers will be peer reviewed by an appropriate organization based on the paper's subject proposed impact to a particular industry or group.
4. When submitting white papers to an agricultural organization or group for peer review, the paper will be accompanied by a cover letter to the organization from the AWG.
5. All white papers will contain:
 - a. Problem statement
 - b. Salient Points
 - c. Research papers or other studies
 - d. Excerpts from the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/EIS)
 - e. Conclusions (or recommendations as, if appropriate)

Discussion of Issues

The AWG discussed the internal review process for meeting notes:

1. Process being used to determine final meetings notes:
 - a. Draft meeting notes sent to Jeff Abercrombie and John Diener for review.
 - b. Draft meeting notes sent to the AWG for review.
 - c. Draft meeting notes sent for internal Independent Technical Review (ITR).
 - d. Draft meeting notes sent for external ITR.
2. The AWG to will provide research-based information to the CHSRA using the following guidelines.
 - a. Research-based information should be left intact.
 - b. White paper shall reference any document/s used to develop content.
 - c. Determine if there will be an impact on the issue provided and what the mitigation recommendation will be to the CHSRA by the AWG.
3. The CHSRA will respond to requests governed by the Public Information Act regarding the AWG in the following manner.
 - a. The AWG will release agendas and an attendee list.
 - b. The AWG will release minutes once they have been through an independent technical review.
4. AWG has ownership of the white papers.
 - a. White paper should answer agricultural industry questions.
 - b. White paper could reference EIR/S document.

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- c. AWG experts may invite colleagues to help with response to questions.
 - d. White papers will be submitted to the CHSRA by the AWG.
5. Determine how white papers will be peer reviewed.
- a. Have a dairy organization peer review the information regarding the HST impact on dairies; have an almond association peer review the information regarding the HST impact on bees and pollination, etc.
 - b. There will be a cover letter to the agricultural organization/group asking for peer review of the white paper. This letter will contain the names of individuals in the AWG.