

Community of Practice Charter

Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Block Grantees

Agreement Date: TBD
Most Recent Revision: TBD
Contact: TBD

Introduction

The purpose of this Charter is to guide and be a reference tool for members of the Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program (MLRP) community of practice (CoP). The Charter creates a shared vision for the CoP, expectations for member engagement, and provides a summary of planned and ongoing activities.

The audience for this Charter is primarily members of the MLRP CoP, although the Statewide Support Entity (SSE) and California Department of Conservation (DOC) benefit from information provided within. This is a living document that the CoP and the SSE (as conveners) should review and revise regularly.

What is a Community of Practice?

A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a common interest and interact often to learn from each other to advance their work. A CoP typically has three main characteristics: 1) a focus on a topic or subject that establishes the CoP's identity and distinguishes it from other groups, 2) frequent engagement of community members, and 3) a defined repertoire of resources and outputs. Participation in a CoP helps members to

- Receive guidance on short-term challenges and access to technical expertise
- Evaluate progress on selected strategies
- Be better able to manage grants and implement projects
- Build a professional network for keeping abreast of best practices in the field
- Have tangible results (e.g., improved skills) and intangible outcomes (e.g., innovation, relationships)

What is the MLRP Community of Practice?

The Budget Act of 2021 allocated the California Department of Conservation (DOC) \$50 million to fund groundwater sustainability projects that reduce groundwater use, repurpose irrigated agricultural land, and provide wildlife habitat. The Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program (MLRP) seeks to use this funding to increase regional capacity to repurpose agricultural land to reduce reliance on groundwater while providing community health, economic well being, water supply, habitat, renewable energy, and climate benefits.

In May 2022, [DOC awarded the first round of funding](#) to four block grantees: the California Marine Sanctuary Foundation, County of Madera, Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District, and Pixley Irrigation District Groundwater Sustainability Agency. Together, these grantees and their partners comprise the MLRP CoP, as specified in the grants with DOC. This CoP is a forum for these block grantees and their partners to learn together and from each other under a shared vision of strategic, inclusive, and multibenefit land repurposing. As MLRP block grantees are implementing the deliverables of their grant, they can share what works and what doesn't, learn from experts and regional partners on specific issues identified by members, and brainstorm creative solutions to problems as they arise.

Purpose Statement

Goal statement to be confirmed by CoP members before finalizing.

The goal of the MLRP CoP (i.e., the outcome that members hope to achieve as a result of this CoP) is to enable members to better understand which MLRP strategies are working, which are not, and why.

Peer learning exchanges through the CoP will facilitate sharing knowledge and experiences about successes and challenges, and foster collaboration to answer shared learning questions and create better practices that can improve the effectiveness of the MLRP. By doing so, grantees and partners will be able to more effectively implement multibenefit land repurposing projects that 1) are long-lasting, 2) serve a diversity of stakeholders, and 3) are strategically located to maximize benefit.

Envisioned Outcomes

In the Block Grantee Kickoff Meeting in September 2022, members shared what was most important to them about this collaboration. Specific outcomes (in no particular order) included:

- **Conduct effective outreach and engagement**
 - Recognizing that different communities will connect with different benefits of repurposing.
 - Supporting effective outreach and engagement, particularly of disadvantaged communities (DACs) (acknowledging the great diversity within and among DACs). Creating tailored messaging for different audiences.
 - Bridging relationships in new ways (for example, ag landowners and DACs).
- **Gain a deeper understanding of land repurposing strategies**
 - Creating a platform for archiving information and sharing resources, such as guidance on the Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan, and technology and tools needed to implement the grants.
 - Learning by doing and seeing projects on the ground (e.g., field trips, site tours, etc.).
 - Informing monitoring efforts to ensure that repurposing projects are aligned with MLRP goals and accomplishing what they are intended to achieve.
 - Better understanding socioeconomic impacts related to land retirement and repurposing.
- **Build relationships and share best practices**
 - Collaborating, and not competing, with other grantees - doing something bigger and better together.
 - Sharing best practices and comparing notes amongst grantees to understand what everyone is doing and thinking, and then learning from one another.
 - Empowering people to join the space and let them know their voice has an impact.

Membership & Expectations

Roles & Governance

The CoP is not a decision-making body. Therefore, voting procedures are unnecessary. CoP members may be asked to provide input on MLRP direction via discussion or informal temperature checks.

CoP roles are currently defined as follows.

- **Members: Block Grantees and Partners listed in [Appendix I](#).** Responsible for actively participating in CoP meetings and informal collaboration venues. May be asked to represent the MLRP in external communications.
- **Conveners: Statewide Support Entity (EDF, Self-Help Enterprises, Environmental Incentives).** Responsible for scheduling and facilitating CoP meetings, managing the online collaboration platform, providing tools and resources to members, and compiling learning questions from members.
- **Advisors: CA Department of Conservation.** Responsible for supporting grantees with MLRP implementation, including answering questions and providing resources. Outside experts may also be asked to serve as advisors on specific topics.
- **Additional CoP roles will be defined, as needed.**

CoP membership will likely change over time. New members may join the CoP if they are eligible. Eligible members include MLRP block grantees (current and future funding rounds) and their partners. Members may choose to leave the CoP, and should coordinate with the SSE and DOC to discuss the membership withdrawal process.

Participation Expectations

Additional membership expectations will be developed iteratively as identified by block grantees.

Value is maximized for all members through participation. Members are expected to participate in all CoP activities to the best of their abilities on a regular basis. Upon request to the SSE, engagement activities can be tailored to try and meet the needs and availability of members.

The CoP meets approximately monthly through March 2026. Monthly meetings will be mostly virtual and facilitated by the SSE. Meetings can be either closed-session or open to guest speakers (such as Implementation Partners) on specific topics of interest. Some meetings may take the form of a field trip to see on-the-ground examples of topics covered (e.g., visiting a groundwater recharge basin with wildlife benefits). Members should expect to spend 1-4 hours each month reviewing products and participating in meetings. Members are expected to participate to the fullest extent possible during monthly meetings. Best practices for meeting participation include keeping video on as much as possible, muting yourself unless speaking, and minimizing multitasking (e.g., checking your email) during meetings.

In addition to monthly meetings, an annual Pause and Reflect Meeting will provide an opportunity for in-person learning, candid assessment of progress towards MLRP goals, relationship building, and informal networking. It will also likely include a site visit. The first Pause and Reflect Meeting meeting will be scheduled for Fall 2023.

Lastly, the CoP uses an online collaboration site for informal knowledge management. Members use the site to get information about upcoming meetings, share and gain access to relevant resources, and pose questions and ideas via virtual discussions/chats. The site includes a [Monthly Meeting Syllabus](#) that organizes priority topics for monthly and annual meetings, based on CoP member interest. Members will be asked to contribute materials and resources to the online space periodically.

Convener Commitments

The SSE assists with program reporting and other external communications about the MLRP, and provides technical assistance and facilitation necessary to meet the MLRP goals. The SSE will schedule and facilitate CoP meetings, and provide follow-up materials to block grantees in a timely manner. The SSE will manage the online collaboration platform and provide tools and resources to members. Lastly, the SSE will compile learning questions from members and support the CoP in navigating towards shared learning goals.

Group Norms

All MLRP CoP members agree to adhere to the following ground rules and norms, in meetings and in all forms of communication with conveners and other grantees.

- Communicate openly, honestly, and respectfully
- Challenge and test assumptions
- Be respectful of each other's time
- Jointly design next steps
- Assume good intentions
- Choose to trust
- Share the "microphone"
- Step forward and step back to allow for balanced discussion
- Additional ground rules TBD

Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made in shaping the CoP activities and engagements. The goal is to clearly set expectations for what is possible and realistic.

- Visual or spatial methods for learning (e.g., infographics, maps, and visual guides) are incorporated to the extent possible, as at least 90% of CoP members are visual/spatial learners. Kinesthetic (such as trainings or mentor pairs) and linguistic (such as reading, discussion boards) styles should also be incorporated, as those learning styles also rank very high among members.
- Much of the collaboration among members will likely be virtual, given time and space constraints. Members have limited time and resources to dedicate to traveling to meetings and events, and the collaboration tools available to the CoP can compensate for the lack of in-person engagement.

Resources & Work Plan

[Monthly Meeting Syllabus](#)

[Collaboration Space](#)

Appendix I. CoP Member List

MLRP CoP members, through participation, gain access to shared resources, collaborate on creative solutions to challenges, and participate in virtual and in-person learning activities. The following table provides a list of active CoP members, and should be kept updated as membership changes over time.

Membership list to be confirmed with grantees

Member Name	Member Affiliation	Member Name	Member Affiliation
Lower Salinas Valley Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Strategy and Phase 1 Project Development			
Danielle Brown	California Marine Sanctuary Foundation	Robert Mazurek	California Marine Sanctuary Foundation
Donna Meyers	Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Agency (GSA)	Ross Clark	Central Coast Wetlands Group
Jenny Balmagia	Central Coast Wetlands Group	Susan Robinson	Greater Monterey County Integrated Regional Water Management Program
Kevin O'Connor	Central Coast Wetlands Group		
Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Grant Application for the Kaweah Subbasin			
Aaron Fukuda	Mid-Kaweah GSA	Mark Larsen	Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District
Diana Zegarra	Greater Kaweah GSA	Mike Hagman	East Kaweah GSA
Eric Osterling	Greater Kaweah GSA	Shane Smith	Kaweah Delta Water Conservation District
Logan Robertson	Sequoia Riverlands Trust		
SGMA Agricultural Land Repurposing Program			
Amy Siliznoff	Madera Chowchilla RCD	Jeannie Habben	Madera County
Charlotte Mitchell	California Farmland Trust	Noah Lopez	Madera Ag Water Association
Christina Beckstead	Madera Farm Bureau	Stephanie Anagnoson	County of Madera
Jack Rice	Madera Ag Water Association		
Tule Subbasin Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program			
Abigail Hart	The Nature Conservancy	Marissa Carpenter	Six33 Solutions

Amer Hussain	Geosyntec	Mark Greenall	Pixley Irrigation District GSA
Angel Santiago Fernandez Bou	University of California, Merced	Reyn Akiona	Six33 Solutions
Armando Ortiz	Self-Help Enterprises	Rodd Kelsey	The Nature Conservancy
Deanna Jackson	Tri County Water Authority	Rogelio Caudillo	Eastern Tule GSA
Eric Limas	Pixley Irrigation District GSA	Samantha Arthur	Audubon
Gabe Gaeta	Six33 Solutions	Sue Ruiz	Self-Help Enterprises
Humberto Flores Landeros	University of California, Merced	Thomas Harmon	University of California, Merced
Jeff Powers	Sequoia Riverlands Trust	Vicky Espinoza	The Nature Conservancy
Kathy Wood McLaughlin	Tule Land and Water Conservation Trust and TKM Consulting		