

Natural and Working Lands Resolution
AB 32 Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (EJAC)

For Discussion and Motion to Approve at the October 16, 2025, EJAC Public Meeting

Whereas, meaningful climate action requires the immediate cessation of fossil fuel consumption to forestall the worst impacts of climate change, and also requires additional measures to sequester historic carbon emissions to mitigate ongoing ecological consequences driven by those emissions;

Whereas, research confirms that restoring the natural ability of forests, soils and water systems to effectively and efficiently absorb and store carbon is an effective strategy for continuously addressing climate change;

Whereas, carbon sequestration derived from urban and community forestry also provides life saving public health interventions in California's cities and towns;

Whereas, shifting management practices on just a fraction of the State's private forestlands alone could absorb an additional 300 million metric tons of CO₂ within the next decade;

Whereas, significant investment in forest management and targeted fuels reduction—including through the State's home hardening and wildlife biodiversity corridors programs—will reduce wildfire risks and protect California communities;

Whereas, indigenous communities have practiced sustainable land stewardship for millennia, forming the foundation for California's ecological restoration efforts that promote natural systems, preserve biodiversity, and advance the State's long-term conservation and planning goals;

Whereas, organic and climate-beneficial agriculture, along with farmland conservation, can sequester carbon, reduce the use of fossil fuel-based pesticides, and improve environmental and public health outcomes in agricultural communities; while mitigating massive warming emissions resulting from vital reductions in the use of the fossil fuels-based pesticides that have historically polluted our communities will strengthen agricultural communities;

Whereas engineered solutions fail to deliver real, verifiable emissions reductions and instead enable polluters to delay making necessary pollution cuts. These "solutions"—such as trading and offsets—allow continued greenhouse gas emissions, enrich major polluters, and undermine efforts to address climate change;

Whereas the State's carbon targets can only be achieved by immediate investment at scale across all land types in the Natural and Working Lands scenario to delay these investments imperils our State's Climate Resilience Capacity and our communities.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that:

1. That CARB continues to recognize California's natural and working lands—including forests, wetlands, agricultural lands, rangelands, and urban green spaces—as essential to the State's climate strategy, public health, biodiversity, and economic vitality;
2. That CARB affirms the urgent need for large-scale investment in natural and working lands to maximize their carbon sequestration potential, reduce wildfire risks, and restore ecosystems;
3. That CARB adopt and fully fund the Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan;
4. That CARB prioritizes State investment in nature-based climate solutions by sequencing Scoping Plan measures accordingly—delaying planned investments in engineered solutions until proven nature-based strategies have been fully implemented across California.