



CALERBA'S TOP 10 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CDFW ON MITIGATION/CONSERVATION BANKING

1. TRAIN STAFF TO IMPLEMENT A "YES" SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED MINDSET TOWARDS BANK REVIEWS.

Mitigation credits are required to support infrastructure development. Credits represent the environmentally preferable landscape-scale offset that reduces permitting timelines by 50%. Staff culture should facilitate bank approvals by identifying solutions to progress reviews forward and trusting in the risk reduction measures required of all banks as assurance that potential issues will be addressed as needed.

2. ESTABLISH INTERNAL PERFORMANCE METRICS AND TRACKING PROTOCOLS.

Similar to USACE's approach to measuring District success on both permit issuance and bank approvals, CDFW should develop a culture of measuring success by the number of bank projects advanced and approved.

3. PRIORITIZE STAFFING AND TRAINING RESOURCES FOR THE BANKING PROGRAM.

Mandatory training will help staff understand the diversity of the banking program's critical elements, and how to discern what is essential to efficiently get banks to approval.

4. LEVERAGE CONSISTENCY DETERMINATIONS TO LIMIT CDFW REVIEW SCOPE.

CDFW historically used Consistency Determinations and concurrence letters to rely on the decisions of other resource regulatory agencies. CDFW should return to relying on these concurrences and further eliminate redundancies by internally coordinating to avoid iterative comment rounds on a single document.

5. TRAIN STAFF TO EVALUATE THE PROSPECTUS AS A CONCEPT DOCUMENT.

Prospectus review should stick to the template checklist and timelines, and only address fatal flaw and core project elements. Detailed questions can be vetted, but their resolution should be left to the bank instrument.

6. PROVIDE SPONSORS WITH EARLY FEEDBACK ON PROPERTY VIABILITY.

Proactive feedback is essential to bank sponsors securing ecologically viable sites. CDFW should provide review within the Fish and Game Code legislative timelines to get more projects into the system.

7. IMPLEMENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND TOOLS TO CLEAR THE QUEUE BACKLOG.

Even with new staff and improvements in the overall system, several CDFW regions have a queue of projects estimated as years still required to review and approve. Review should be expedited and streamlined to fast-track approvals of the backlog of mitigation banks.

8. CLARIFY THE HABITAT MANAGEMENT LANDS PACKAGE REVIEW PROCESS.

CDFW has expert staff at HQ to review property title and survey information. Duplicate review by untrained regional staff is not warranted and often results in confusing communications with bank sponsors. Efficiencies in all CDFW regions could be realized through consistency in the lands package review processes.

9. STOP "UNDERGROUND" REGULATIONS.

New process changes, guidance, and templates are regularly rolled out without input from the regulated community. A formal process for public engagement should be implemented, and projects currently in the queue should be grandfathered in with policy in place at the time for entering the queue.

10. ENGAGE THE INDUSTRY EARLY ON IN ANY UPDATES TO PROGRAM POLICIES AND RESOURCES.

Regular engagement between Bank Sponsors and CDFW leadership, including the Office of General Counsel, can improve the development of new policies/practices that are feasible and early action on emerging issues.