

State of California Air Resources Board

Board Item Summary

Item # 25-3-2: Public Meeting to Hear an Informational Update on Natural and Working Lands and Nature-Based Strategies

Staff Recommendation:

This is an informational item only; no Board action is necessary.

Discussion:

The Board approved 2022 Scoping Plan Update identifies a path to achieving carbon neutrality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 and includes increasing the pace and scale of nature-based strategies over the coming decades to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from lands and increase carbon sequestration in California's lands. This informational item will present an update on staff's efforts to implement the nature-based strategies recommendations of the 2022 Scoping Plan Update as well as an update on other complementary nature-based climate work.

California's Natural and Working Lands store thousands of million metric tons of carbon in their soil and vegetation. These lands are currently estimated to be a source of carbon according to the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) 2018 Natural and Working Lands Carbon Inventory. Further, the 2022 Scoping Plan Update found that these lands are likely to continue to be a source of emissions under higher temperatures, more extreme droughts, and changes in precipitation. In natural and working lands, unmitigated losses of carbon stock are often a result of catastrophic wildfire, drought induced vegetation die off, crop failures, poor land management activities, or other natural disasters that harm both communities and the environment itself. However, the 2022 Scoping Plan Update also found that these harms, and the loss of carbon itself, can significantly be diminished through an accelerated use of nature-based solutions, or environmentally beneficial land management practices. The nature-based strategies program in CARB collaborates with agencies and stakeholders across California to monitor the state and change of all lands and provide the scientific and policy support needed to accelerate climate action in this sector, not only to help mitigate climate change, but also for the betterment of society and nature itself.

Summary and Impacts:

Not applicable. This is an informational item only and doesn't suggest any regulatory changes that would have an economic or environmental impact.