



# CalGEM Public Health Rulemaking “Early Engagement” Process Highlights

*A glimpse at the ways in which the California Department of Conservation (DOC) engaged stakeholders and solicited feedback prior to and at the genesis of the COVID-19 pandemic.*

## Process Timeline Snapshot

### Early Formation (November – December 2019)

1. Identified, maintained, and continually updated list of stakeholders to engage
2. Reached out to each stakeholder to develop phases of outreach and identify concerns

### Proposed Process (January 2020)

3. Drafted engagement design including venue selection, language access components, and volunteer list
4. Iterated engagement design including budget, dates of engagement, and team roles

### Get Ready to Implement (January – February 2020)

5. Recruited speakers, developed meeting materials
6. Kept stakeholders informed via emails

### Implement – Pre-COVID (February – March 2020)

7. Held four in-person meetings between February and early March

### Executive Order N-33-20 (Stay-at-Home) issued as a result of the threat of COVID-19

### Implement – COVID-19 (March – June 2020)

8. Conducted three online town halls, survey, and anonymous polling

### Analysis of Comments (June)

9. Comments provided to subject matter experts for deliberation

### Post Process Evaluation (Mid-June on)

10. Post engagement documentation and evaluation



# Ensuring Access and Inclusivity at In Person Meetings

## Language Access

- Flyers advertising meetings were translated into 8 languages (tailored based on the county's 2nd and 3rd most spoken language)
- Some in-person meetings were conducted entirely in Spanish, with headsets provided to listen to real-time translation into English. All other workshops had Spanish language interpreters

## Document Clarity

- All meeting materials, handouts, and wall posters were graphically branded, highly-visual, and vetted by stakeholders to ensure clarity prior to use
- 34 common topics (identified by public comments made at previous government-led oil and gas meetings) were made into posters and hung at meetings in sensitivity to oil/gas meeting fatigue

## Accommodation

- Environmental justice partners in each region worked with DOC to choose meeting venues, dates, times, and customize outreach efforts to ensure a high meeting participant turn out
- Stakeholders, community leaders, and air district partners provided free food and children's activities; DOC staff ensured a welcoming room with multiple options to participate during the meeting, including verbally at the microphone and non-verbally using comment cards and hands-on activities

## Evaluation

- Questionnaires provided DOC feedback about pre-meeting material clarity, meeting ambience, process, and participants' confidence in future decision making as a result of the meeting
- DOC staff maintained transparency by periodically publishing on its website summaries of public comments submitted by stakeholders and meeting participants



## Engagement During the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic made the DOC creatively reinvent engagement efforts

### Town Halls and Virtual Surveys

- Three bilingual virtual town hall meetings were identified as a solution and vetted with stakeholders to ensure buy-in and smooth implementation
- Virtual town hall dates and times were vetted with stakeholder leaders to ensure significant conflicts were avoided

### Digital Survey and Polling

- A bilingual survey monkey enabled residents to contribute their voice at any time
- Anonymous and bilingual online instant polling initially used at in-person meetings opened on five more dates for public participation

### Enhanced Communication

- Revised branding was created to help inform the public of the new effort
- Stakeholder leaders took an active role and were in close communication with DOC facilitator, Sarah Rubin, to ensure strong registration turnout for each event

### Special Considerations

- Multi-family and multigenerational households were given extra time to speak and provide input during virtual town halls when more than one household member wanted to provide public comment
- Stakeholder leaders recommended registration-based virtual town halls so participants could note an affiliation (e.g., Community, Environmental, Industry, Labor, Public Health, Other/ Decline to State) to have 'voices' rotated during the public comment
- Phone in options were provided for all meetings in sensitivity to those who might have broadband access issues, no internet, or other connectivity challenges