

# Pest Management Advisory Committee (PMAC) Handbook

## PMAC's Role

The [Pest Management Advisory Committee \(PMAC\)](#) is a stakeholder committee established in 1992 pursuant to Food and Agricultural Code Section 12356 that is tasked with assisting the Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) in identifying, facilitating, and promoting environmentally sound pest management practices and pest management systems.

The primary responsibility of the PMAC is assisting DPR in evaluating and selecting grants to fund through DPR's Pest Management Grants Programs: the [Alliance Grants Program](#) and the [Research Grants Program](#).

## Important Terms and Definitions

- **Integrated Pest Management (IPM):** We follow the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources Statewide IPM Program definition for IPM which states: "IPM is an ecosystem-based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pests or their damage through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties. Pesticides are used only after monitoring indicates they are needed according to established guidelines, and treatments are made with the goal of removing only the target organism. Pest control materials are selected and applied in a manner that minimizes risks to human health, beneficial and nontarget organisms, and the environment."
- **Quorum:** a majority of voting PMAC members (13, excluding *ex officio* members of the PMAC) that must be present at meetings focused on grant application review or decision-making to ensure the decisions and recommendations made at that meeting are valid. Quorum procedures and requirements are set by the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.
- **Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act:** the law set forth in California Government Code sections 11120-11132 that requires State boards and commissions to publicly notice their meetings, prepare agendas, accept public testimony and conduct their meetings in public unless specifically authorized by the Act to meet in closed session. Note: typical PMAC meetings and proceedings are not authorized to be held in closed session and must be conducted in public.

## How Does DPR Conduct Grant Application Review?

Applicants must meet all of the Eligibility Requirements set forth in the Solicitation and be able to meet all of the Terms and Conditions appropriate to applicant status as either a University of California/California State University System (UC/CSUS) or non-UC/CSUS applicant. DPR staff will review Proposal Applications to ensure that applicants meet all the Eligibility Requirements. PMAC members will only receive eligible Proposal Applications.

Proposal Applications are reviewed and ranked by DPR staff and the PMAC. The PMAC will make grant funding recommendations to the Director via a consensus-based Proposal Application ranking process that occurs during a public meeting. DPR staff will also independently rank the Proposal Applications and provide a staff recommendation to the Director. Answers submitted in response to the Proposal Application questions will be considered by PMAC and DPR staff reviewers in determining their rankings of the Proposal Applications. PMAC reviewers and DPR staff will use the *Ranking Considerations for Reviewers* document from DPR when evaluating answers and justifying their rankings.

The Director considers these separate recommendations and makes the final project award and funding decisions. Applicants whose projects were not selected for funding are provided feedback after awards are announced.

## The PMAC's Role in Grant Review

A PMAC member's first role during the grant review cycle is reviewing and ranking Proposal Applications. A document titled *Ranking Considerations for Reviewers* from DPR will be provided along with the eligible Proposal Applications. PMAC members should expect to receive materials for review within one week of the close of the relevant solicitation period.

During review, PMAC members should evaluate the specifics of a project's quality relative to the *Ranking Considerations for Reviewers* document provided by DPR, noting merits and concerns about each project to justify their rankings. Example merits may include statements such as: "The project has a well-defined target audience that will benefit significantly from this work" or "The economic components of the various tactics that will be employed will be appropriately evaluated." Example concerns may include statements such as: "The experimental plan does not include enough replicates" or "The Alliance Team does not have strong experience conducting projects such as this one." It is important to note that PMAC members should evaluate each Proposal Application based on its own validity and fundability, not in the context of optimizing the spending of available DPR grant funds.

Collectively, PMAC membership is intended to provide a broad view of IPM impact across California. PMAC members should balance the desire for broad, meaningful impact need against project quality, which may at times mean recommending a slightly lower-ranked Proposal Application with a stronger potential impact across California over a higher-ranked Proposal Application with a lesser potential statewide impact. This priority-setting role is a strong component of the PMAC's chartered duties.

## General Overview of PMAC Grant Application Review Meetings

PMAC grant application review meetings typically begin with introductions, opening comments from the Chair (DPR's Director), and orientation information. Additionally, a presentation may be given with an overview of recent Grants Program activities and funding. A quorum roll-call count is held before grant application review discussions and prior to any decision-making actions. Meetings will be webcast to the public for viewing via the CalEPA website (<https://video.calepa.ca.gov>).

A third party facilitator leads the grant application review discussions. Grant application review discussions begin with a presentation of the Proposal Applications to be discussed. DPR staff calculate average rankings and standard deviation for each of the Proposal Applications using submitted pre-meeting rankings from PMAC members, this information is shared with PMAC members at the start of the discussion portion of the meeting. Prior to any in-depth discussion of individual projects, the facilitator will ask if PMAC members wish to omit any low-ranking Proposal Applications from the discussion, thereby identifying them as "un-fundable" by PMAC. If there is not complete consensus to omit a Proposal Application, the Proposal Application will be included in the discussion. Each grant application is then discussed individually, starting with the highest-ranking Proposal Application. Discussion is intended to focus on merits, concerns, and requested clarifications for each Proposal Application.

Once all Proposal Applications have been discussed, PMAC members re-rank the Proposal Applications, keeping in mind the pros and cons raised by other PMAC members during the discussion. When results of the re-ranking have been tabulated by DPR staff and presented to the PMAC, PMAC members perform a roll-call vote on submitting the collective re-ranking results as a final recommendation to provide to the Director.

## Expectations for PMAC Members

PMAC members assist DPR in selecting grants for funding and identifying, facilitating, and promoting IPM practices and systems that are designed to minimize risk to public health and the environment. In fulfilling this role, PMAC members are expected to represent California stakeholders for the stakeholder category they are appointed to and do the following:

1. PMAC members are expected to review Proposal Applications for the Alliance Grants Program and the Research Grants Program and submit their completed reviews by the relevant deadline. If a PMAC member is unable to review the Proposal Applications, they must contact DPR staff as soon as possible.

Please understand there is a significant amount of preparation performed by DPR staff and the facilitator to consolidate PMAC member reviews and organize the meeting's discussion. Delays in returning your reviews, or not completing your reviews at all, affects other PMAC members and undermines the integrity of the PMAC meeting process.

2. Every PMAC member will nominate a qualified Alternate candidate from their organization/stakeholder category (an alternate can be affiliated with another organization within the PMAC representative's category) to attend meetings in their absence as necessary. Members will submit Alternate candidate nominations to DPR along with supporting documentation, such as contact information and a *résumé/curriculum vitae*.

Alternates are expected to work with the Primary member to ensure all membership responsibilities are fulfilled.

3. PMAC members must make a reasonable effort to attend quarterly PMAC meetings. If a PMAC member is unable to attend, they must contact DPR staff as soon as possible to let them know they will be absent and if their Alternate will be serving in their place.

Member attendance helps ensure that quorum is met, ensures representation of organizational and public interests, and demonstrates respect for the committee's time. Excessive absences, and lack of communication with DPR regarding absences, may lead to the dismissal of a PMAC member at the Chair's discretion.

4. PMAC members are expected to fully participate for the entirety of scheduled quarterly PMAC meetings. If a PMAC member needs to leave a meeting early, notice must be made to DPR staff as soon as possible, preferably in advance of scheduled meetings. Absences can result in lack of quorum necessary to conduct business or carry out votes.

Inappropriate behavior during meetings, such as engaging in sidebar conversations, disappearing from the meeting, being disrespectful to other members, or not actively participating in the discussion (i.e. multitasking) may be grounds for removal from the PMAC.

5. PMAC members must submit a re-ranking of the grant applications following discussions.

However, if a PMAC member was unable to review and rank applications prior to the meeting due to extenuating circumstances, they may not submit re-rankings in meetings, but may still participate in the discussions and the final recommendation vote.

6. In accordance with the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, PMAC meetings are open to the public and are on the public record. As such, any PMAC meeting, including meetings held through the use of direct communication, personal intermediaries, or technical devices, must be conducted in public.

It is important to note that comments regarding grant proposals that are sent to DPR after a PMAC grant proposal review meeting has concluded are not part of the public record and therefore cannot be considered as part of PMAC's recommendation.

7. PMAC members must not rank, discuss, or vote on any of the grant applications considered during a PMAC meeting if the PMAC member has a conflict of interest (COI) with any of the Proposal Applications. If a PMAC member is required to disclose a COI or recuse themselves from participation, it must appear in the PMAC's official record. If there is an identified COI, the Alternate is expected to serve in the place of the Primary member, unless both the Alternate and the Primary have COIs with that meeting's Proposal Applications.

Please review the PMAC charter for further information regarding COI. If you may have a potential COI, please contact DPR staff as soon as possible.

8. PMAC members will provide DPR staff with updated contact information in a timely fashion.

This ensures that members receive communications from DPR without delay.

9. If a PMAC member's organizational affiliation changes, or they no longer have a basis for representing their assigned stakeholder category, or if there is a need to resign from the committee, they are expected to notify DPR staff as soon as possible.

Please note that a change in affiliation may make a current member inappropriate for a given PMAC stakeholder representation category. In order for DPR to ensure full stakeholder membership and meet Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act quorum requirements, timely communication of member organizational and stakeholder representation status changes is essential.

## Expectations For DPR

1. DPR will send all email communications to PMAC members from the [dprpmgrants@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:dprpmgrants@cdpr.ca.gov) email address.
2. DPR will respond to communications from PMAC members as soon as possible and will notify members if replies are expected to take longer than usual.
3. DPR will send out a proposed meeting schedule and Outlook calendar invites near the end of the current year for the following year's meeting.
4. DPR will send grant Proposal Application review materials to PMAC members in a timely fashion (within one week of the close of the relevant solicitation period), to provide members with ample time for review.
5. DPR will email PMAC members agendas for upcoming meetings as soon as they are finalized and will send updated agendas containing digital connection information (when applicable) no less than two days prior to scheduled meetings.
6. DPR will email PMAC members a packet of documents containing compiled grant Proposal Application review scores, a copy of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, and relevant Powerpoint presentations prior to scheduled grant proposal review meetings.
7. DPR will notify PMAC members of the Director's final grant funding decisions at the meeting following a grant Proposal Application review meeting.

## DPR Contact Roster

General PMAC Inquiries: [dprpmgrants@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:dprpmgrants@cdpr.ca.gov)

PMAC Coordinator – Matt Fossen, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)  
[Matt.Fossen@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:Matt.Fossen@cdpr.ca.gov)

PMAC Administrative Coordinator – Rodney Jones, Associate Governmental Program Analyst  
[Rodney.Jones@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:Rodney.Jones@cdpr.ca.gov)

Research Grants Program Lead – Jordan Weibel, Environmental Scientist  
[Jordan.Weibel@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:Jordan.Weibel@cdpr.ca.gov)

Alliance Grants Program Lead – Tory Vizenor, Environmental Scientist  
[Tory.Vizenor@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:Tory.Vizenor@cdpr.ca.gov)

Grants Program Manager – John Gerlach, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory)  
[John.Gerlach@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:John.Gerlach@cdpr.ca.gov)

Agricultural Pest Management Unit Program Manager – Leslie Talpasanu, Environmental Program Manager I

[Leslie.Talpasanu@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:Leslie.Talpasanu@cdpr.ca.gov)

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Branch Chief – Aimee Norman, Environmental Program Manager II

[Aimee.Norman@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:Aimee.Norman@cdpr.ca.gov)

Assistant Director – Ken Everett

[Ken.Everett@cdpr.ca.gov](mailto:Ken.Everett@cdpr.ca.gov)

## Links

PMAC Charter: <https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/dept/pmac/charter.pdf>

PMAC Roster: <https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/docs/dept/pmac/pmacroster.pdf>

DPR Pest Management Grants Programs: <https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/dprgrants.htm>

Handy Guide to Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act:

[https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/publications/bagleykeene2004\\_ada.pdf](https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/publications/bagleykeene2004_ada.pdf)