



DEPARTMENT OF PESTICIDE REGULATION 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 12536, 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 [Sustainable Pest Management Grants Program](#) (established with the 2026 Solicitation). Prior to the 2026 Solicitation, DPR funded grants through the [Alliance Grants Program](#) and the [Research Grants Program](#).

The PMAC is a formally designated decision-making state body. As stated in the [PMAC Charter](#), members are subject to specific, complex, legal requirements relating to conflicts of interest, public perception of bias, and open meeting act requirements in the performance of PMAC duties.

Important Terms and Definitions

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM): Food & Agr. Code, § 11401.7 defines IPM in statute as: “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.”
- Sustainable Pest Management (SPM): Food & Agr. Code, § 11412 defines SPM in statute as: “a holistic, whole system approach applicable to agricultural and other managed

ecosystems and urban and rural communities that builds on the concept of integrated pest management to include the wider context of the three sustainability pillars: human health and social equity; environmental protection; and economic vitality.”

- Quorum: a majority of voting PMAC members (half plus one of voting members) that must be present at all PMAC meetings to ensure the decisions and recommendations made at that meeting are valid. The requirement that a quorum must be present at all meetings is set by the [Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act](#). Note: Pursuant to the PMAC Charter, *Ex Officio* members of the Committee are counted towards determining the number necessary for quorum and whether quorum is present, thus a quorum is 16 of 30 PMAC members.
- [Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act \(Gov. Code, § 11120 et seq.\)](#): the law 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 Proposal 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 will screen grant Proposal Applications (“Proposal Applications”) to ensure that applicants meet all eligibility requirements. Proposal Applications that do not meet the eligibility requirements will not be further considered by DPR or the PMAC.

Eligible Proposal Applications are then independently reviewed by DPR and the PMAC. DPR staff within the scientific and/or research classifications will score Proposal Applications according to the criteria found in the **Scoring and Ranking Criteria** section of the Solicitation. Based on these scores, the Director and the Deputy Director of SPM will select a subset of Proposal Applications to be discussed during the public grant Proposal Application Review Meeting (“Review Meeting”). This subset shall consist of no more than 25 Proposal Applications. DPR staff will provide PMAC members with all eligible Proposal Applications, a summary of DPR staff scores, comments, ranking, and the subset list for discussion in advance of the Review Meeting.

PMAC members individually review Proposal Applications in advance of the Review Meeting. During the Review Meeting, the PMAC will rank Proposal Applications using a consensus-based process and according to the criteria found in the **Scoring and Ranking Criteria** section of the Solicitation, discussed further below. The PMAC then identifies and votes on a recommendation to the Director. After the meeting, DPR staff will provide both DPR and PMAC rankings and recommendations to the Director.

The Director considers these separate recommendations and makes the final grant awards and funding decisions.

The PMAC's Role in Grant Review

A PMAC member's primary role during the grant review cycle is reviewing Proposal Applications and ranking them at Review Meetings. DPR staff will develop a spreadsheet from the **Scoring and Ranking Criteria** section of the Solicitation and distribute it, along with the eligible Proposal Applications, to PMAC members.

Before the Review Meeting, PMAC members should individually evaluate the specifics of a project's quality relative to the criteria found in the **Scoring and Ranking Criteria** section of the Solicitation, noting merits and concerns about each project. 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 project 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 represent a broad view of IPM and SPM impact across California. PMAC members should balance the desire for broad, meaningful impact 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 Proposal Application Review Meetings

This Review Meeting takes place annually in March. It typically begins with opening comments and orientation information from the Chair (Director or the Director's Designee). DPR will then provide a high-level presentation of the Proposal Applications selected in the subset list and/or an overview of recent SPM Grants Program activities and funding. A quorum roll-call count is held before any review discussions and again prior to any decision-making actions; all disclosed conflicts of interest and recusals will be stated for the record at initial roll-call. Meetings are webcast to the public for viewing via the [California Environmental Protection Agency \(CalEPA\) Public Meeting Live Webcasts website](#).

A third-party facilitator leads the review discussions. Grant application review discussions begin

with the Proposal Applications identified on the subset list. The facilitator will provide a brief introduction of each Proposal Application before it is discussed individually, starting with the highest-scoring Proposal Application. Discussion is intended to focus on merits, concerns, and requested clarifications for each Proposal Application. Time will be reserved after discussion of the subset list for PMAC members to discuss additional Proposal Applications, or other topics, if they wish to do so. PMAC members should notify DPR in advance of any additional Proposal Applications to be discussed to ensure sufficient time is reserved.

Once discussion of Proposal Applications has concluded, PMAC members will rank the Proposal Applications, keeping in mind the merits and concerns raised by other PMAC members during the discussion. DPR staff will then tabulate the rankings and present the results to the PMAC. The facilitator will then conduct a quorum roll count. Once a quorum has been confirmed, the facilitator will ask PMAC members to propose a recommendation to vote on, such as submitting the collective ranking results and all discussion to the Director, and a roll-call vote of PMAC members will be conducted.

General Overview of Other PMAC Meetings

PMAC debrief and brainstorming meetings take place annually in April. A third-party facilitator leads the PMAC in a debrief of the previous grants cycle and brainstorming session of priority topic areas for the upcoming Solicitation. This meeting is intended to provide the PMAC the opportunity to share how the current Solicitation cycle went and provide the PMAC the opportunity to give feedback on the next Solicitation cycle in terms of priority topic areas.

Project presentations from grantees are given at the PMAC meeting in August. These meetings typically involve three to six presentations. Each presentation will provide information about project goals, objectives, and results. The intent of this meeting is to provide an opportunity for PMAC members to learn more about the projects funded by DPR through prior Solicitations. Additional project presentations may be given at the April and November PMAC meetings.

PMAC meetings where DPR staff summarize the Proposal Applications received take place annually in November. During these meetings, DPR staff provide high-level demographics and light analysis of Proposal Applications. A third-party facilitator leads the PMAC in discussion focused on providing reflections on the information presented. The intent of this meeting is to provide an additional opportunity for PMAC to provide feedback.

Expectations for PMAC Members

PMAC members provide advice to DPR in selecting grants for funding and assist in identifying, facilitating, and promoting IPM and SPM 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. Failure to meet the following expectations may result in removal from the PMAC (Cal. Code Regs. Tit. 3, § 6256).

1. Every PMAC member will nominate one qualified alternate candidate from their organization/stakeholder category (an alternate can be affiliated with another organization within the PMAC member's category) to attend meetings in their absence when necessary due to a conflict of interest (COI) or scheduling conflict. Members will submit alternate candidate nominations to DPR along with supporting documentation, such as contact information and résumé/curriculum vitae, prior to formal appointment.
2. Alternates are expected to work with the primary member to ensure all membership responsibilities are fulfilled. If an alternate is to attend a meeting for which the primary member has reviewed grant Proposal Applications, they are expected to have independently reviewed the merits and concerns each Proposal Application so they can best represent their organization/stakeholder category during discussions and rankings.
3. PMAC members must ensure, to the maximum extent possible, that the member's role and participation in the proposal review process is not compromised by actions or circumstances that create conflicts of interest or potential public perception of bias related to any grant proposal(s). Examples of activities that could lead to COIs or public perception of bias include, but are not limited to:
 - Proposals submitted by the member's employer or department, where the member is an employee of the State, of a local agency, or of the UC, regardless of whether they are involved in the project or not.
 - Proposals a member advised on or helped develop.
 - Proposals that would provide funding to the member.
 - Proposals from a member's family.

A PMAC member who has a COI related to any Proposal Application will be required to fully recuse from all Proposal Application review and discussion, including meeting participation. Where a potential public perception of bias exists, or a noneconomic COI under common law, a member must partially recuse from Proposal Application review and discussion, which means abstaining from participating in ranking, discussing, or voting on the Proposal Application(s) from which the potential bias or noneconomic COI arises but not from the entire meeting. Only PMAC members that partially recuse are counted towards quorum.

When a PMAC member must recuse, that member's input to the committee's decision-making process is restricted and the committee is prevented from receiving the full benefit of the member's valued expert participation. In addition, recusals may negatively impact

our ability to achieve meeting quorum.

4. PMAC members must formally disclose to DPR any real or potential COI or public perception of bias circumstances related to any Proposal Applications. **Disclosure to DPR must occur as soon as possible so that DPR can support PMAC members in ensuring appropriate actions are taken relative to the disclosed circumstances.** Please review the [PMAC Charter](#) for further information regarding COI.

When a COI or public perception of bias circumstance exists related to a Proposal Application, the appropriate action will be full or partial member recusal as follows:

- a. When there is a COI, it is expected that the primary member will fully recuse from participation in the Proposal Application review and discussion, including participation in the review meeting; if eligible, the alternate member will serve in the place of the primary member. The primary member will not be counted toward quorum.
 - b. When there is a circumstance involving noneconomic COI, member bias, or potential public perception of bias regarding a specific proposal, the member is expected to partially recuse. In the case of partial recusal, the member may not rank, discuss, or vote on the specific Proposal Application(s) from which the noneconomic COI, bias, or potential bias arises, but is otherwise expected to participate in ranking, discussing, and voting on the rest of the Proposal Applications, including the final overall recommendation vote.
 - c. When a PMAC member is required to disclose a COI or recuse from participation in any way, it must appear in the PMAC's official meeting record, along with the reason for recusal.
 - d. If multiple members have COIs requiring full recusal such that quorum may not be met, DPR's Office of Legal Affairs must be consulted.
5. PMAC members should appropriately weigh the impacts of their participation in application proposals against their ability to meet their obligations as PMAC members to participate in Proposal Application review, discussion, recommendation and decision-making. PMAC members are discouraged from taking any actions which would create a COI, bias, or give the appearance of bias, causing them to have to fully or partially recuse themselves from Proposal Application review process (e.g., advising on or participating in the preparation of Proposal Application; staffing or performing any tasks on the scope of work of a Proposal Application).

In addition, in order prevent the appearance of being pre-decisional or lobbying outside of a public meeting in violation of the [Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act](#), PMAC members should refrain from expressing support for specific Proposal Applications (in verbal

communications or through letters of support) until the March Review Meeting or November PMAC meeting.

Expressions of support in advance of a public meeting may require the PMAC member to partially recuse themselves from participation in the Proposal Application process. Additional information on prohibited communications is provided in the [DPR Advisory Committees Guidance on Bagley-Keene, Public Records Act, and Conflict of Interest Legal Requirements](#) memorandum.

6. PMAC members are expected to review all eligible Proposal Applications sent by DPR in advance and are expected to be prepared to discuss the Proposal Applications on the subset list during the Review Meeting. PMAC members should notify DPR, at least one month in advance of the Review Meeting, of any additional Proposal Applications they wish to discuss at the Review Meeting to ensure sufficient time is reserved.
7. PMAC members must make a reasonable effort to attend quarterly PMAC meetings. If a PMAC member is unable to attend, they must provide notice of their intended absence and whether their alternate will be serving in their place to DPR as soon as possible.

Member attendance ensures that quorum is met, ensures representation of organizational and public interests, and demonstrates respect for the Committee's time. Excessive absences and/or lack of communication with DPR regarding absences, may lead to the dismissal of a PMAC member at the Chair's discretion. (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 3, § 6256, subd. (b).)

8. PMAC members are expected to fully participate for the entirety of all PMAC meetings to support collective discussion and decision-making and to ensure that the PMAC has the quorum necessary to conduct business or carry out votes.

If a PMAC member needs to leave a meeting early, notice must be given to DPR staff as soon as possible, preferably in advance of scheduled meetings. If a member arrives to a decision-making meeting late or must temporarily leave a meeting with the intent to return before the meeting ends, and the absence results in the member missing more than 1/3 of the Proposal Application discussions¹, the member will become ineligible to participate in voting and ranking processes for that meeting. Further, such absences are to be avoided because they can result in the meeting losing the quorum necessary to continue to conduct business or carry out votes.

¹ The number of proposals that constitute 1/3 of the total shall be rounded down to the nearest whole number. For example, a member may miss up to eight proposal discussions in a meeting with 25 total proposals before becoming ineligible for voting or ranking.

9. The PMAC member who answers to the roll call record when any PMAC meeting is first convened, whether a primary member or alternate, will be the sole decision-making and representing member for that organization for the entirety of that meeting. No member substitution or change in member attendance is allowed after roll call. Therefore, if the primary member establishes attendance in roll call, the member's alternate may not act in any official representative or decision-making capacity—or act as an intermediary to relay information from the meeting—for any portion of that meeting. This includes situations where the primary member must leave early or be absent for a temporary period of time. As such, if a primary member cannot participate fully in a PMAC meeting and wishes for their organization/stakeholder category to participate fully in the decision-making process, their alternate must answer to the initial roll call vote and attend the entire meeting in the primary member's place.
10. PMAC members must submit a ranking of the Proposal Applications, following discussions, during the March Review Meeting, unless they are ineligible to rank due to missing more than 1/3 of the Proposal Application discussions or have fully recused.
11. In accordance with the [Bagley Keene Open Meeting Act \(Act\)](#), PMAC meetings are open to the public and are on the public record. As such, any meeting or communication amongst a quorum of PMAC members where PMAC matters which are not purely procedural in nature are discussed must be conducted during a public meeting.

The Act expressly prohibits the use of direct communication, personal intermediaries, or technological devices that are employed by a majority of the members of the state body to develop a collective concurrence as to action to be taken on an item by the members of the state body outside of an open meeting. (§ 11122.5(b).) This includes “serial meetings” which are a series of communications, each of which involves less than a quorum of the legislative body, but which taken as a whole, involves a majority of the body's members (e.g., Person A reaches out to a quorum of the members of the PMAC or their representatives on an individual basis to discuss an agenda item or a specific application—courts have found this to constitute a meeting).

In order to avoid the potential for a “serial meeting” to occur, DPR recommends that PMAC members engage judiciously with one another outside of a public meeting and refrain from discussing any item of business within the subject matter of the PMAC. Systematic communications through which a quorum of the body acquires information or engages in debate, discussion, lobbying, or any other aspect of the deliberative process, either among themselves or between board members and the staff may violate² the Act. Additionally,

²The Act provides for remedies and penalties in situations where violations have allegedly occurred. Depending on the particular circumstances, the decision of the body may be overturned (Gov. Code § 11130.3), violations may be

comments regarding Proposal Applications sent to DPR after the Review Meeting has adjourned cannot be considered as part of PMAC's recommendation, as it would violate the Act.

12. Until further notice, all PMAC meetings will be held via teleconferencing to maximize both member attendance and the opportunity for public participation. DPR will also host a physical meeting location to provide members of the public a place to hear, observe, and participate in each meeting.

To minimize the logistical and technological challenges related to facilitating member and public participation in a hybrid meeting, it is requested that all PMAC members attend via teleconference, in lieu of the physical meeting location, unless they are unable to meet teleconferencing requirements described below.

All PMAC members must meet the following requirements to comply with the Act's rules for teleconferencing:

- a. All members must be visible on camera for the duration of the meeting when joining by teleconference unless a circumstance authorized under the Act arises,
- b. All members who join by teleconference and must go off camera at any point during the meeting must announce for the record that they are doing so, and must state the authorized circumstance causing the member to not appear on camera,
- c. All members intending to join the meeting by teleconference are asked to notify DPR seven days in advance so that this intent can be posted on DPR's website in advance of the meeting as required.

Members joining by teleconference do not need to disclose their teleconference location or make it accessible to the public.

13. PMAC members are expected to act appropriately during meetings. Inappropriate behavior, including but not limited to, engaging in sidebar conversations, disappearing from the meeting, being disrespectful to other members, and not actively participating in the discussion (i.e., multitasking) may be grounds for removal from the PMAC.
14. PMAC members are expected to provide DPR staff with updated contact information in a timely fashion. This ensures that members receive communications from DPR without delay.
15. PMAC members are expected to notify DPR staff as soon as possible if their organizational

stopped or prevented (Gov. Code § 11130), costs and fees may be awarded (Gov. Code § 11130.5), and in certain situations, there may be criminal misdemeanor penalties imposed as well. (Gov. Code § 11130.7.)

affiliation changes, if they no longer have a basis for representing their assigned stakeholder category, or if there is a need to resign from the committee.

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 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 PMAC@cdpr.ca.gov email address.
2. DPR will respond to communications from PMAC members within two business days 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 schedule.
4. DPR will send all Proposal Application materials to PMAC members as soon as the eligibility screening has been completed and will provide members with ample time for review. DPR will provide PMAC members with all eligible Proposal Applications, a summary of DPR staff scores, comments, ranking, and the subset list for discussion approximately six weeks prior to the Review Meeting.
5. DPR will support PMAC members in determining the proper actions that must be taken regarding real or perceived COIs or public perception of bias a member may have tied to Proposal Applications being reviewed by the PMAC.
6. 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. For Review Meetings, the agenda will include the Proposal Applications to be discussed, including additional Proposal Applications that PMAC members have requested DPR add for discussion, if any.
7. DPR will provide the Director with the PMAC's rankings and recommendations following the Review Meeting.
8. DPR will notify PMAC members of the Director's final grant award and funding decisions following the review meeting.

DPR Contact Roster

General PMAC Inquiries: PMAC@cdpr.ca.gov

PMAC Lead – Matt Fossen, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)
Matt.Fossen@cdpr.ca.gov

PMAC Meeting Coordinator – Rachel Grisso, Analyst II
Rachel.Grisso@cdpr.ca.gov

SPM Grants Program Lead – Jordan Weibel, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)
Jordan.Weibel@cdpr.ca.gov

SPM Grants Program Supervisor – Jose Brambila, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory)
Jose.Brambila@cdpr.ca.gov

SPM Grants Program Manager – Tory Vizenor, Environmental Program Manager I
Tory.Vizenor@cdpr.ca.gov

IPM Branch Chief – Martine Boswell, Environmental Program Manager II
Martine.Boswell@cdpr.ca.gov

Deputy Director of Sustainable Pest Management – Sapna Thottathil
Sapna.Thottathil@cdpr.ca.gov

Links

PMAC Charter, Member Listing, and Handbook:
<https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/report/pmac-charter-member-listing-and-handbook/>

DPR's SPM Grants Program:
<https://www.cdpr.ca.gov/spm-grants/spm-grants-program/>

Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act Guide 2026:
<https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/bk-open-meeting-act-guide-2026.pdf>

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