



## 2021 POLICY PLATFORM

TOGETHER Bay Area is a large and diverse membership-powered coalition of nonprofits, Indigenous Tribes, and public agencies all working for climate resilience and social equity. Our members work for healthy lands, people and communities in the 9 counties of the Bay Area plus Santa Cruz County.

Our 2021 Policy Platform outlines a broad and values-based policy framework to implement our coalition's mission to create a climate resilient, socially equitable Bay Area. This document guides the coalition in its policy and political leadership activities, as well as in its collaborations and partnerships. The 2021 Policy Platform was developed with leadership from our Policy Committee and Board of Directors, and input from our members.

### **Mission**

The TOGETHER Bay Area mission is to be the champion and regional voice of the resilient lands that are integral to a thriving Bay Area and all people who live here.

### **Vision**

The health of these lands is integral to a thriving Bay Area and the health of all of the people and communities in our 10-county region. We connect, convene, and catalyze action for a just and equitable society where we live in relationship with the lands that sustain us now and will sustain future generations. We include parks, public lands, working lands like farms, ranches, and forests, rural and urban lands, gardens, trails, open spaces, preserves, and other similar natural spaces.

### **Founding Principles**

Social equity and climate resilience serve as the founding principles of our work as we seek to transform how we live together in this region:

- *Social equity:* We are committed to creating a more just, equitable world, and are defining as a coalition how to advance this work. We focus our work on social equity at the nexus of land and climate change issues.
- *Climate resilience:* We are committed to achieving climate resilience for communities and lands, including urban, rural, public, private, and working lands. We use "resilience" to express our coalition's goals of a) preventing the loss and degradation of land and wildlife habitat; b) supporting ecological functioning; and c) connecting people to the land.

### **Contact**

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## POSITIONS

TOGETHER Bay Area's policy positions for healthy lands, people, and communities are evergreen and do not change year to year.

### **Position 1: All Lands Must Be Stewarded**

In the face of climate change, we need to take care of all lands: public, private, working, urban, and rural. Our definition of stewardship includes a wide range of activities that prevent destruction of the land, promote ecological function and resilience on the land, and connect people to the land. We recognize that there are many ways to have a relationship with the land, and that one way is not better than another.

### **Position 2: People and Communities Steward the Land**

We acknowledge that these are the ancestral lands of Indigenous People who live here today. We respect that Indigenous People are knowledgeable about land stewardship, and have demonstrated tremendous resiliency over the past 400+ years of colonization. Anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, class, age, gender, orientation, or physical ability, can participate in and contribute to the work of stewarding the land. Our coalition seeks to dismantle the barriers to equitable access to nature and participation in stewardship.

### **Position 3: One Bay, One California**

Collaboration and intersectionality drive our effort to find solutions. Building relationships, deepening our shared knowledge, and collaborating across sectors and issues, are critical to affecting change in our region. We are stronger together than we are apart, and we invest in relationships so that we can adapt to change.

### **Position 4: Transformational Change**

We seek transformational change, including supportive policies and dedicated funding, to address the fundamental crisis of our time – climate change. We do not focus on transactions, but rather systems change. We understand that climate threats, such as extreme heat and sea level rise, disproportionately impact communities already besieged by economic instability, systemic racism, and worsening public health indicators. We must act on climate change, for the sake of our communities, our natural world, and our collective future.

### **Position 5: Intersectional Solutions**

The problems our coalition seeks to address are multi-disciplinary and intersectional. We cannot look at environmental problems as separate from other issues that matter, such as poverty or systemic racism. We must work across geographies, nonprofits, agencies, and divisions to address the interconnected problems of the 21st century.

## 2021 PRIORITIES

TOGETHER Bay Area's policy priorities for 2021 are based on our core principals and positions. They will guide our work for the coming year, and they are not ranked.

### **Promote Active, Effective Land Stewardship at the Landscape Scale**

A paradigm shift is needed to move California from a legacy of fire suppression to strategic, scaled action to adapt to and manage *wildfire* for the benefit of people, nature, and our future. Land protection and stewardship must focus on the preservation of *biodiversity*, for the benefit of our food systems, plant and animal species, and for the preservation of our cultures and humanity. We must improve permitting and funding efficiencies at the state level in order to effectively and ecologically restore habitat and steward natural resources. *Cross-jurisdictional, landscape-scale* ecological restoration and stewardship require strong partnerships and collaborative data management systems to support conservation and stewardship goals.

### **Promote Sustainable, Equitable Human Connection to Nature**

Bay Area residents and visitors experience connection to nature through urban gardens, pocket parks, large national and state park units, open space, trails, and regional parks and preserves. We need investment at all scales to ensure that there is equitable access for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of all communities, especially under-resourced, Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities.

### **Support Resilient Agricultural Systems & Working Lands**

Resilient agricultural systems and working lands are essential to a healthy region. Bay Area agricultural lands sustain human communities, contribute to carbon sequestration, help to fight climate change, provide habitat for wildlife, and employ nearly 85 percent of all working lands employees in the region.

### **Advocate for Essential Public Lands for Multiple Benefits**

Urban, rural, natural and working lands are more important than ever in the context of COVID-19 and climate change given the multiple benefits they provide. Land managers face jurisdictional complexity, insufficient resources, and challenges in keeping staff and the public safe, even as they work to provide essential services like fuels management and to keep nature accessible for all Californians.

### **Integrate Climate Adaptation & Economic Recovery**

We can build a green and just path to economic stability together while addressing the defining crisis of our time by prioritizing the needs of vulnerable and chronically under-resourced communities, and focusing on the state's climate change goals. Our coalition's Bay Area Green Stimulus Opportunities report demonstrates a compelling opportunity to sustain and create jobs, while building regional economies that support climate resilience and address long-standing socio-economic injustices.

## MEMBERS

The following nonprofits, Indigenous Tribes and public agencies are members as of January 12, 2021. For the most updated list, see [www.TogetherBayArea.org/Members](http://www.TogetherBayArea.org/Members)

- Alameda County Resource Conservation District
- Amah Mutsun Land Trust
- Bay Area Ridge Trail Council
- Brown Girl Surf
- Bull Valley Agricultural Center
- California Academy of Sciences
- California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC)
- California Mountain Biking Coalition
- Claremont Canyon Conservancy
- Coastside Land Trust
- David R. Brower, Ronald V. Dellums Institute for Sustainable Policy Studies
- East Bay Municipal Utility District
- East Bay Regional Park District
- East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservancy
- Friends of Five Creeks
- Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
- Grassroots Ecology
- Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful
- Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation
- Land Trust of Santa Cruz County
- LandPaths
- Marin Conservation League
- Marin Agricultural Land Trust
- Marin County Parks
- Marin County Bicycle Coalition
- Marin Municipal Water District
- Marin Open Space Trust
- Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
- Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz
- Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area
- Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District
- National Park Service – Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front NHP\*
- Oakland Parks and Recreation Foundation
- Paula Lane Action Network (PLAN)
- Peninsula Open Space Trust
- Pie Ranch
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
- River Otter Ecology Project
- San Francisco Bay Trail
- San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
- San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department
- San Mateo County Parks
- San Mateo County Parks Foundation
- San Mateo Resource Conservation District
- Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department
- Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority
- Santa Cruz County, Parks, Open Space & Cultural Services
- Save Mount Diablo
- Save the Redwoods League
- Sempervirens Fund
- Solano Land Trust
- Sonoma County Ag + Open Space
- Sonoma County Regional Parks
- Sonoma Land Trust
- Sonoma Water
- Student Conservation Association (SCA)
- Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE)
- The California Urban Streams Partnership
- The Field Semester
- Tri-Valley Conservancy
- Urban Bird Foundation
- Valley Water
- YES Nature to Neighborhoods
- Youth Outside

\*Members not involved in our advocacy efforts