

Technical Working Group Workshop (Webinar) on Local Greenhouse Gas Offsets

April 30, 2020

Transcript of Webinar Chat

14:44:33 From Andy Pendoley: Everyone, feel free to provide comments and questions through this chat box.

14:55:20 From Russ Cunningham: Please speak more to why offsets can only provide for emissions reductions beyond what is minimally required.

14:55:45 From Rajinder Sahota: Or, is the intent for CEQA offsets to align with the state level compliance offset criteria?

14:57:25 From Andy Pendoley: Russ and Rajinder.... thanks for the questions. Our team will respond a little later in the webinar.

15:07:10 From Robert Lee: Just a correction on the current slide showing, the first bullet should be the Climate Action Reserve, not The Climate Registry

15:07:46 From Brendan Reed: The Airport Authority established a carbon offset program - The Good Traveler - that has been expanded to 17 airports in the US. The Airport itself has used the program to offset its residual emissions, and our passengers have also used the program to offset their individual emissions from travel. www.thegoodtraveler.org

15:12:29 From Rajinder Sahota: This is Rajinder and I oversee several of the State's climate programs at CA ARB, including the cap and trade program. I would note that additionality can be defined by different factors: action beyond mandated action, action that is not common practice, and action that is solely motivated by financial incentives from offsets. The State only used the factors of beyond mandated action and beyond common practice. Financial additionality is very difficult to define and assess. Our program was sued because plaintiffs believed we did not match the "international" criteria for offsets. We prevailed in the lawsuit. I do believe that local jurisdictions have more flexibility in defining what a "CEQA offset" would need to look like.

15:14:12 From Ashley Rosia-Tremonti: The City of San Diego is in the process of updating the 2015 Climate Action Plan. This project will aim to align with more recent guidance and policies from the State as well as the UN's SDG's, update with best available data, and establish actions and goals beyond the current 2035 goal year. We are looking at the scope of possibilities for achieving additional GHG emissions reductions, building off of the 17 identified in our current CAP. Offsets are currently a consideration for achieving a portion of those additional reductions, though we are still in the process of gathering information as well as community input.

15:25:47 From Rajinder Sahota: For the State's compliance offset program, we only have about a half a dozen project types that can be considered offset types. That is because we regulate so much that there aren't many other project types because they would not be additional. If CEQA mitigation were structured not structured the same way as the State's program, it opens up more project types for which financial incentives could flow to voluntary actions to reduce or sequester GHG emissions.

15:26:22 From Russ Cunningham: Yes! Thanks!

County of San Diego

15:32:24 From Rajinder Sahota: The project types the State is exploring are really in the natural and working lands space. With a bleak outlook for state level incentive funds to support action in those landscapes, offsets (or CEQA related mitigation) have an opportunity to direct funds to those efforts.

15:32:28 From Andy Pendoley: Everyone, what do you believe are the greatest opportunities for regional mitigation offset banks? Barriers and challenges?

15:42:38 From Rajinder Sahota: It's worth noting the infrastructure to administer an offset program at the State level. With half a dozen project protocols, we have 9 staff, the registry system to track offsets and their trading cost several million dollars. We also oversee the entire program which means accreditation and auditing of all verifiers and audits of projects across the US, not just within state.

15:45:47 From Brendan Reed: Has the County's team looked at the Climate Action Reserve's "Climate Forward" program, which has been developed to address many of the highlighted barriers and to specifically align with CEQA mitigation standards etc.?

15:51:07 From Russ Cunningham: How about maritime emissions? To what extent are these emissions measured and regulated?

15:55:41 From Rachel Stern: Maritime emissions are included in the Port's inventory and cruise and cargo ship emissions are regulated by the state

15:57 From Rajinder Sahota to Rachel Stern: Hi- just a bit of clarity, the state does not have jurisdiction over GHGs for maritime sources. That is all federal. We can do somethings within our 3mile boundary, but that's it.

15:58 From Rachel Stern to Rajinder Sahota: right...by regulated - I mean have shore power requirements while at berth.

15:58:34 From Robert Lee: This is Rob, Program Director for the Climate Action Reserve - our Climate Forward program has been mentioned a few times here as an option, and I'd be happy to answer any questions about that program. The program was designed to be consistent with CEQA requirements, and it has already been used for CEQA compliance by the Newhall Ranch development that was highlighted earlier.

16:15:21 From Robert Lee: One option to address a number of the challenges that have been highlighted regarding building a regional mitigation offset bank would be to authorize an existing registry program (or multiple registry programs) with established credit tracking capabilities and accreditation programs, then layering additional eligibility requirements on top of those existing programs to recognize specific credits for use within a regional mitigation bank. This is the model that the CORSIA program John mentioned earlier is using.

16:24:36 From Lydia Van Note: lydiav@sdfoundation.org