

# **Northern California Environmental Justice Strategy Summit Concept Note**

**September 14, 2026, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.**  
**Santa Clara University, Williman Room, Benson Center**

## **Purpose**

With federal rollbacks and California's political transition on the horizon, a shared reflection on strategic environmental justice (EJ) engagement precedes action. A regional networking and meeting will bring together academics and community-based organizations from across Northern California to strengthen collaboration on issues.

## **Goals**

The goals of the summit are to understand the current landscape of EJ policy in the State, identify participants' current statewide priorities, with attention to differentiated regional and place-based circumstances, develop common strategies for the short- and medium-term, and generate opportunities for collaborative projects and community-based action. We intend to generate a space for (i) engaging with current CA environmental justice policy opportunities, challenges, and emerging priorities in the context of federal shifts; (ii) mapping areas for alliance building and gaps across participants; (iii) expanding opportunities for community-engaged research and teaching.

## **Participants and Format**

The summit is envisioned as a high-level opportunity for academics, representatives of community-based organizations, and policy leaders to strategize on EJ and environmental policy, research, and advocacy. We anticipate about 50 participants engaged in a mix of collective dialogue, a panel discussion on statewide EJ policy during times of transition, and thematic and place-based group work. A detailed agenda will be shared in advance. The organizing committee will select and invite participants, with the option of additional online participants for the panel discussion.

## **Organizing Committee Members**

Iris Stewart-Frey - Santa Clara University  
Chris Bacon - Santa Clara University  
Beth Rose Middleton - University of California, Davis  
Sibyl Diver - Stanford University  
Ayodele Thomas - Stanford University  
Katherine Cushing - San Jose State University  
Mijin Cha - University of California, Santa Cruz  
Rachel Morello Frosch - University of California, Berkeley  
Alice Kaswan - University of San Francisco  
Ned LeBlond - University of California, Santa Cruz