**Secretary Speaker Series**

**Women as Agents of Change: Improving Access, Equity, and Inclusion in California**

**Panelist Bios and Links**

**March 26, 2024**

**Secretary Speaker Series:**

<https://resources.ca.gov/About-Us/Secretary-Speaker-Series>

**California Natural Resources Agency Secretary Wade Crowfoot**

<https://resources.ca.gov/About-Us/Secretary-Crowfoot>

Celebrate Women’s History Month with us! <https://resources.ca.gov/womenshistorymonth>

**Larissa Estes, DrPH Executive Director for the Racial Equity Commission**

California’s Racial Equity Commission: <https://racialequity.opr.ca.gov/>

Dr. Estes Bio - <https://racialequity.opr.ca.gov/commission-bio/>

# **[Executive Order N-16-22](C:\\Users\\Jared.Wong\\AppData\\Local\\Microsoft\\Windows\\INetCache\\Content.Outlook\\8TDQFXET\\Executive Order N-16-22https:\\www.gov.ca.gov\\wp-content\\uploads\\2022\\09\\9.13.22-EO-N-16-22-Equity.pdf)**

[https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/9.13.22-EO-N-16-22-Equity.pdf](C:\\Users\\Jared.Wong\\AppData\\Local\\Microsoft\\Windows\\INetCache\\Content.Outlook\\8TDQFXET\\Executive Order N-16-22https:\\www.gov.ca.gov\\wp-content\\uploads\\2022\\09\\9.13.22-EO-N-16-22-Equity.pdf)

Larissa Estes, DrPH serves as the Executive Director of the Racial Equity Commission established through Executive Order 16-22. She has over 20 years of experience in allied health, healthcare, and public health with a focus on community and equity. Prior to joining the State of California, Dr. Estes served as the Executive Director of ALL IN Alameda County, a county-wide initiative established by the late Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan to address issues of poverty including basic needs, quality education, and economic opportunity that leads to self-sufficiency. Throughout her career she has served as a key author of several publications on women’s health, accountable communities for health, medical high utilization, and mental health and wellbeing. She is interested in integrating evidence-informed strategies into policy and practice across sectors that fortify equity and impact community wellbeing.

**Noemí Otilia Osuna Gallardo, California Energy Commission Commissioner**

[**https://www.energy.ca.gov/**](https://www.energy.ca.gov/)

Commissioner Gallardo Bio: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/about/commissioners/noemi-otilia-osuna-gallardo>

Noemí Gallardo is serving her first term on the California Energy Commission. She was appointed by Governor Gavin Newsom in February 2023 to serve as the CEC’s attorney member. She is the first Latina appointed as a CEC commissioner.

**Maria Ellis, Deputy Director for Broadband, California Public Utilities Commission**

California Public Utilities Commission - <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/>

Deputy Director Ellis Bio: Maria Isabel Ellis serves as Deputy Director for Broadband at the California Public Utilities Commission. She is a proud first generation Colombian-American that recently returned to California after spending over 15 years on Oregon. While there, she served in a variety of policy roles spanning economic development and transportation, including as chief deputy director for Business Oregon (Oregon’s GoBiz) where she led equity, strategy, and communications; as executive director of the Pacific Northwest International Trade Association and director of Federal Affairs at the Portland Business Alliance; and economic equity manager at the Oregon Department of Transportation. In her current role, Maria oversees roughly $5 billion in last-mile broadband grant programs with an eye towards advancing digital equity and access across the state, helping to digitally connect those that need it most in California.

**State of California Middle-Mile Broadband Initiative -** [**https://middle-mile-broadband-initiative.cdt.ca.gov/**](https://middle-mile-broadband-initiative.cdt.ca.gov/)

Loan Loss Reserve Fund - <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/industries-and-topics/internet-and-phone/broadband-implementation-for-california/loan-loss-reserve-fund>

**Serena Ortega, CAL FIRE/CNRA Deputy Director Equal Employment Opportunity Program**

CAL FIRE: <https://www.fire.ca.gov/>

Deputy Director Ortega Bio: <https://www.fire.ca.gov/about/executive-staff/profile-list/serena-ortega>

**Leslie L Hartzell, PhD, Chief Cultural Resources Division, California State Parks**

[**https://www.parks.ca.gov/**](https://www.parks.ca.gov/)

Dr. Hartzell Bio:

Leslie L Hartzell received her PhD in Anthropology (Archaeology) from UC Davis in 1992. She has worked with Indigenous communities in western North America, Australia and Hawaii. For over a decade, she led a multidisciplinary team of researchers, interpreters, curators, and exhibit designers heading up the Museum & Interpretation Section at California State Parks Northern Service Center. In this role, the team delivered new or updated museum exhibits throughout the state and created public experiences for interpretive trails, multimedia museum exhibits, and educational programming.

Most recently, Leslie is leading the Reexamining Our Past Initiative team, which received $50M in legislative support for three projects to address Tribal Lands Acknowledgements, African American History and Engagement, and Cultural Arts in Parks as the Cultural Resources Division Chief and Department Preservation Officer and Tribal Liaison since 2014.

**Re-examining Our Past Initiative:** <https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=30464>

African American History and Engagement/Black Miners Bar: <https://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/29247/files/Staff%20Report%20-%20Item%208%20-%20Leslie%20Hartzell%20-%20Black%20Miners%20Bar%20Update.pdf>

California Advisory Committee on Geographic Names/AB2022: <https://cacgn.ca.gov/>

California African American Museum (CAAM): <https://caamuseum.org/>

Meet Susan D. Anderson, CAAM’ History Curator: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqnPqso3-IY>