

Cutting Green Tape for Tribal Stewardship

December 16, 2025 Webinar Takeaways

Need to know:

- State Cutting Green Tape pathways for streamlining permitting for restoration projects typically are only available on lands under state jurisdiction. These pathways are not available for the tribal and federal permits typically required on tribal trust lands and federal lands.
- Tribes should be aware that using state funding for restoration projects may trigger state environmental review or permitting processes—regardless of whether restoration projects take place on federal, trust, or fee lands. CEQA compliance may also be needed even if no permitting is necessary. Utilizing Cutting Green Tape permit streamlining pathways can help tribes streamline these permitting processes.

Tribal restoration practitioners shared some lessons learned and best practices identified while implementing restoration projects and Cutting Green Tape:

- **Build flexibility into your project.** Site conditions can be radically different than expected. It helps to be specific in grant applications and in communications with permitting agencies about what you are intending to do.
 - **Tip:** If possible, give yourself flexibility by providing expected ranges in the number of species you expect to find, rather than singular numbers.
- **Maintain regular communication with agency staff.** Ensure that your regulatory agency staff are kept in the loop about progress on your project—whether it's going as expected or not.
 - **Tip:** Keep it simple, communicate frequently with staff by phone and email. Invite agency staff to participate in your project and regular site visits.
- **Ensure you have adequate staff capacity and qualified staff.**
 - **Tip:** If you don't have adequate capacity or qualified staff to support the project, write this capacity into your grant applications, and use grant funding to hire staff or contractors.
- **Be prepared with plans and data.** During the permitting process, regulatory agency staff may request species or other data related to your project site.
 - **Tip:** If you do not have this data ready and anticipate needing additional resources to prepare it, write that into your grant plans.

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- **Tip:** The [California Natural Diversity Database](#) (CNDDB) is an inventory of the status and locations of rare plants and animals in California and may be helpful in gathering some needed data.
- **Utilize amendment processes.** Once you get into the project, you may find opportunities to improve the project. You can work with regulatory agency staff to complete amendments, as needed, to add or update project features.
- **Plan for long-term project maintenance.** Project permits and exemptions can and should extend beyond the length of your project grant. Longer permits or exemptions will allow you to continue doing the needed maintenance and survey work to ensure project success, without needing to go through additional permitting processes right away.
- **Utilize state contacts and relationships.** If you don't know where to begin in reaching out to a regulatory agency, reach out to existing state contacts to find contacts.
 - **Tip:** If you receive a grant from one department, your grant manager may be able to assist you in identifying contacts at other departments that manage the permitting processes you will be navigating.
 - **Tip:** Check out the [CNRA Tribal Liaison Points of Contact webpage](#) for up-to-date tribal liaison contact information at CNRA departments.

Web resources shared during the webinar:

- Accelerating Restoration Tools
 - Find more tools from Accelerating Restoration here: <https://acceleratingrestoration.org/>
 - Essential permitting guide <https://acceleratingrestoration.org/essential-guide/>
 - Pathways by Agency/Authority <https://acceleratingrestoration.org/find-permits/by-agency/>
 - Accelerating Restoration's eligibility and tips document for using the Restoration Management Permit (RMP): <https://acceleratingrestoration.org/permits/restoration-management-permit/>

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- RMP overview page: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Cutting-Green-Tape/RMP>
- Contact information for Sustainable Conservation's Accelerating Restoration project team for a free consult:
<https://acceleratingrestoration.org/about-us/contact-us/>
- Sign up for the Accelerating Restoration email newsletter:
<https://acceleratingrestoration.org/resources/subscribe/>
- Yurok Tribe: Scott River Restoration
 - Learn more about the Scott River Restoration project partnership here: [Scott River Restoration Project Brings Together CalTrout, Yurok Tribe, & Farmer's Ditch Company...](#)
 - More details on the Scott River Restoration project and a great resource from Accelerating Restoration:
<https://suscon.org/blog/2025/12/rru-scott-river/>
- Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribes: Intertribal Ecocultural Restoration Crew and Land Guardianship Program
 - You can read the SERP concurrence for the Intertribal Ecocultural Restoration Crew and Land Guardianship Program here
<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=233350&inline>
[e](#)
- CDFW Resources
 - [California Natural Diversity Database](#)
 - More information about the CEQA Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP)
<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Cutting-Green-Tape/SERP>
- CALFIRE Resources
 - CALFIRE Deputy Director for Tribal Affairs: [Helen Lopez | CAL FIRE](#)
- California Water Boards Resources
 - California Water Boards contact:
stateboard401@waterboards.ca.gov