



California Public Utilities Commission
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PRESS RELEASE

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CPUC Strengthens Tribal Consultation and Expands Opportunities for Tribal Participation in Utility Land Transfers

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 17, 2026 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today approved revisions to its Tribal Consultation Policy and Tribal Land Transfer Policy (TLTP), strengthening engagement with California Native American tribes and providing a clearer, more informed process to implement the TLTP.

Expanding Tribal Opportunities in Utility Land Transfers

The revised TLTP expands its application to proposed dispositions of surplus property by investor-owned utilities covered by the policy. This change will increase the number of utility properties for which tribes receive notice and an opportunity to express interest in acquiring property.

Under the revised policy, investor-owned utilities must request a list of tribal contacts from the CPUC's [Office of the Tribal Advisor](#) when undertaking covered property dispositions. The policy also requires utilities to provide tribes that express interest in acquiring a property additional important information that will enable tribes to better evaluate whether to move forward with pursuing an acquisition or land transfer.

“The revised Tribal Land Transfer Policy provides tribes a clearer process and more information to make decisions as to whether to pursue a transfer of land that is subject to the policy,” said CPUC Commissioner Darcie L. Houck, who is assigned to the proceeding. “These changes are an important step toward enabling tribes to acquire lands in their ancestral territory.”

To help tribes identify utility service areas that may overlap with their self-identified ancestral lands, the CPUC's Office of the Tribal Advisor will publish a map of county boundaries overlaid with the service territories of investor-owned utilities.

"This decision represents an important step in strengthening the CPUC's government-to-government relationship with tribes," said CPUC President John Reynolds. "It recognizes the enduring connection between tribes and their ancestral lands and helps ensure the connection is meaningfully considered."

Improving Tribal Consultation Across the CPUC

The revised Tribal Consultation Policy establishes specific responsibilities for CPUC staff, including the CPUC's Office of the Tribal Advisor and designated Division tribal liaisons. These responsibilities are intended to facilitate consistent and effective engagement with tribes throughout the CPUC's work. The policy directs the Office of the Tribal Advisor to conduct quarterly Tribal Information Forums open to all California Native American Tribes, and to periodically review the Tribal Consultation Policy and recommend modifications when appropriate to ensure the policy is updated and evolving to meet the needs of tribes and the comply with California state policy.

"Our decision establishes clearer responsibilities for CPUC staff, including our Office of the Tribal Advisor, to promote early, often, and meaningful tribal engagement," said Commissioner Houck. "These policy updates strengthen our consultation practices, improve access to information, and create more consistent opportunities for tribes to engage with the CPUC and investor-owned utilities on matters within our jurisdiction."

"Consultation is most meaningful when it becomes part of how an institution operates every day; not simply a box to check at the end of a process," said Commissioner Christine Harada. "These policies create clearer responsibilities, more consistent engagement, and stronger channels for tribes to participate in the decisions that affect their communities. They also give us a more durable framework for addressing land, infrastructure, energization, and other issues where the CPUC's work intersects directly with tribal governments."

Beginning in the first quarter of 2027, the CPUC's Office of the Tribal Advisor will convene quarterly Tribal Information Forums, inviting all California tribes to participate in information exchange

concerning issues within the CPUC's jurisdiction that are important to tribes. The forums will provide a regular opportunity for tribes and CPUC representatives to share information, identify issues, and improve communication regarding matters before the CPUC.

More Information

- [Proposal Approved](#)
- [Docket Card](#)
- [CPUC Tribal Consultation Policy Webpage](#)
- [CPUC Tribal Land Transfer Policy Webpage](#)

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