Julie Alvis
Deputy Assistant Secretary | California Natural Resources Agency
Julie Alvis serves as Deputy Assistant Secretary with the California Natural Resources Agency, the state agency responsible for managing California’s natural, cultural, and historical resources. She is responsible for the fiscal oversight of over $21 billion in funding that is administered by 22 departments and conservancies for a wide variety of resources-related programs. Julie serves as key staff to the California Strategic Growth Council, and led the development of the Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program, which seeks to avoid increases in greenhouse gas emissions by protecting California’s farms and ranchlands from conversion to urban uses. She serves on behalf of the Secretary for Resources on the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, the San Joaquin River Conservancy, and other committees, and was recently appointed to the Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel. Prior to joining the Natural Resources Agency in 2008, Julie served as board liaison to the California Bay-Delta Authority, as an analyst working on watershed management issues, and as an editor for various publishing firms. She is a graduate of the University of California at Davis, and is a long-time resident of Placer County.

Adam Chambers
Scientist | USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Dr. Adam Chambers is a Scientist at USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and is based in Portland, Oregon. He is a leader and member of NRCS’s Energy and Environmental Markets Team where he focuses on environmental markets and conservation finance to enable more voluntary conservation practice implementation. Over the past two decades Dr. Chambers’ project work has focused on the applied sciences and reducing atmospheric pollutants (air pollutants and greenhouse gases). He is currently working to implement conservation measures on managed agricultural lands that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance carbon sequestration, providing an emerging carbon market opportunity for US landowners and agricultural producers. Adam received his Doctorate from the Technical University of Vienna (Austria), Master of Environmental Management from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, and his B.Sc. from Murray State University in Kentucky.

Edie Chang
Deputy Executive Officer | California Air Resources Board
Edie Chang was appointed as a Deputy Executive Officer at the California Air Resources Board in the spring of 2013. She is responsible for development and implementation of California’s plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions including the AB 32 Scoping Plan, the cap-and-trade regulation, and the low carbon fuel standard. She also oversees strategies to reduce emissions from freight transport, the air toxics program, fuels regulations, and stationary source programs. In Edie’s 20 year career with the Air Resources Board.
Edie received a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California, Berkeley, and an M.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California, Irvine. She is a registered Mechanical Engineer in the State of California.

Kari Cohen  
Director of the Conservation Innovations Team | USDA NRCS  
Kari Cohen is the Director of the Conservation Innovations Team at USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). In this position, he provides strategic and operational leadership for the agency’s environmental markets and conservation finance activities (including development of the COMET greenhouse gas tool), and also oversees the Conservation Innovation Grants program. Cohen has served over 14 years with NRCS, including stints managing the Conservation Innovation Grants program, coordinating agency Chesapeake Bay watershed activities, serving as NRCS’s Legislative Affairs Director, and serving as a senior advisor to the Under Secretary and Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment at USDA.

Sherwood Darington  
Ag Land Trust of Monterey County  
Sherwood Darington is a fourth generation native son of California, born and raised in Monterey County. Graduated from local Salinas public schools and Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo with a double major in agriculture. Retired after a 36-year career in appraising agricultural properties. Currently manages the Ag Land Trust of Monterey County. Has represented the public on LAFCO of Monterey County during the last 17 years.

Louise Jackson  
Emerita Professor and Cooperative Extension Specialist | UC Davis  
Louise Jackson is a recently retired Emerita Professor and Cooperative Extension Specialist in the Department of Land, Air, and Water Resources at the University of California Davis. She received a PhD in Botany from the University of Washington, and a B.A. in Biology from University of California Santa Cruz. She has a strong interest the role of biodiversity in agricultural systems and working landscapes. Louise is an ecologist whose expertise is in plant-soil-ecosystem functions in croplands and grasslands. Her research spans gene to landscape levels and includes work on soil microbial carbon and nitrogen cycling, mycorrhizae, soil food webs, and analysis of biodiversity and ecosystem functions across landscapes. She has been involved in several projects dealing with climate change issues for California agriculture, related to both greenhouse gas emissions reduction and adaptation to global warming.

Geetika Joshi  
Senior Environmental Scientist Supervisor – Incentive Programs | California Department of Food and Agriculture  
Geetika Joshi received Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Microbiology in New Delhi, India.
Subsequently, she received a PhD in Soils and Biogeochemistry from UC Davis. She was then a post-doctoral researcher at the UC Davis Center for Regional Change, where she worked to identify barriers to community engagement for academic researchers and strategies to communicate scientific data to grassroots communities. Ms. Joshi joined CDFA in 2014 and have since been working on various Climate Smart Agriculture incentive programs in the Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation.

Teresa Lang
Senior Policy Manager | Climate Action Reserve

Teresa Lang is a Senior Policy Manager at the Climate Action Reserve, the premier carbon offset registry for the North American carbon market. As Senior Policy Manager, Teresa manages the development of new emissions reduction project protocols, while also assisting with maintenance and implementation of existing protocols, both for the voluntary and compliance offset markets. Teresa specializes in the Reserve’s agricultural protocols and is currently managing the Reserve’s expansion of its Nitrogen Management Project Protocol, as well as the adaptation of agricultural protocols (five total) for use in Ontario and Quebec’s offset programs in Canada. Teresa also currently serves on the Board of Directors for Paso Pacífico, a non-profit focused on ecosystem conservation in Central America, where she was also worked immediately prior to joining the Reserve. Teresa also previously worked for the Clinton Global Initiative, where she helped corporate and nonprofit industry leaders develop new climate change and energy projects. Teresa completed her Master’s degree in International Affairs at Columbia University, concentrating in Environmental Policy Studies, and earned her Bachelor’s degree in Political Economy from the University of California at Berkeley.

Arjun Patney
Policy Director | American Carbon Registry

Arjun Patney, Policy Director of the American Carbon Registry, engages with regulators and legislators in California and other jurisdictions to help ensure that market-based climate change mitigation programs address the full range of emissions reduction opportunities. Patney’s 20+ years of experience in the environmental field spans technical, policy and business spheres. Practical sustainability solutions have been the common thread of his work in the U.S. and Asia, whether he was negotiating carbon credit deals, implementing environmental management systems, engineering spill controls, or helping foreign clean tech companies enter Asian markets. Patney previously established the U.S. carbon trading desk at the multinational corporation Cargill and subsequently worked with USAID to advance international forest carbon markets. He received a B.S. in civil engineering from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, an M.S. in environmental management and policy from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and an MBA from Columbia Business School.

Keith Paustian
Professor | Department of Soil and Crop Sciences

Keith Paustian is Professor in the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences and Senior Research Scientist at the Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory at Colorado State University. A major focus of his work involves modeling, field measurement and development of assessment tools for soil carbon
sequestration and greenhouse gas emissions from soils. He has published over 240 journal articles and book chapters. Current research activities include development of the inventory methodology used to estimate US soil C and N2O emissions that are reported annually by EPA to the UNFCCC; development of a web-based tool (COMET-Farm™) for estimating on-farm greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and carbon sequestration used by USDA (http://cometfarm.nrel.colostate.edu/) and project-scale systems for GHG assessment of sustainable land management projects in developing countries. He also serves as project director for the Bioenergy Alliance Network of the Rockies (BANR - http://banr.nrel.colostate.edu/) which is a consortium of universities, industry and the US Forest Service, researching the potential for sustainable bioenergy production from beetle-kill trees and forest residues. Since 1995 he’s served as a Lead Author and Coordinating Lead Author for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Greenhouse Gas Inventory Taskforce and has served on numerous other national and international committees involving climate and carbon cycle research. He is a Fellow of the Soil Science Society of America and 2015 recipient of the Soil Science Society of America Outstanding Research Award.

Debbie Reed  
Executive Director | Coalition on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases

Debbie is the Executive Director of the Coalition on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (C-AGG), a multi-stakeholder forum focused on incentivizing agricultural opportunities to reduce greenhouse gases emissions and enhance sustainability. She is also President and Director of DRD Associates LLC, a consulting firm dedicated to strategic and policy support for natural resource conservation and sustainable agriculture and ecosystem service policies, programs, and opportunities for the agricultural sector. Debbie’s work focuses on strategies and solutions for agricultural mitigation of greenhouse gases and agricultural sustainability that mutually benefit the agricultural sector and society. Debbie previously worked at the White House Council on Environmental Quality as the Director of Legislative Affairs and Agricultural Policy, White House Climate Change Task Force; and in the U.S. Senate, as a Senior Staff on natural resource and agricultural issues for U.S. Senator Bob Kerrey of Nebraska. She worked in numerous leadership roles at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as a special assistant to the Deputy Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics, and a special assistant to the Administrator of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS). Her work at USDA included serving on multiple bi-national commissions on agricultural science and technology; and as the USDA Executive Secretariat for multiple versions of the US Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Prior to that, Debbie worked for the Washington, DC government as a consultant for the Women, Infants, and Children’s (WIC) Supplemental Feeding Program; and for various non-profit organizations dedicated to promoting human nutrition research, policies and programs in support of human health. She has graduate degrees in human nutrition, chemistry, and communications.

Karen Ross  
Secretary of Agriculture | California Department of Food and Agriculture

Karen Ross was appointed Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture on January 12, 2011, by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. Secretary Ross has deep leadership experience in
agricultural issues nationally, internationally, and here in California. Prior to joining CDFA, Secretary Ross was chief of staff for U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, a position she accepted in 2009. Prior to that appointment, she served as President of the California Association of Winegrape Growers from 1996-2009, and as Vice-President of the Agricultural Council of California from 1989-1996. Before moving to California, Secretary Ross served as Director of Government Relations for the Nebraska Rural Electric Association and as Field Representative for U.S. Senator Edward Zorinsky. During Secretary Ross’ tenure, the Department has focused on core functions to protect and promote California agriculture in a time of significant budget reductions, and it has emphasized change-management to position the agency to more effectively and efficiently serve its stakeholders in meeting the challenges of the 21st Century.

Edward Thompson, Jr.
California Director | American Farmland Trust
Since 2003, Edward Thompson, Jr. has been California state director of American Farmland Trust, the nation’s leading agricultural resource conservation organization. Ed helped start AFT in 1980 as its first general counsel and since then has served the organization in various other capacities, including national policy director and senior vice president. During his tenure at AFT, Thompson has been a creative leader in nearly every aspect of farmland preservation, from negotiating real estate transactions and local land use planning to designing state conservation easement programs and drafting federal agricultural legislation. His experience also includes legal positions with groups as diverse as the Environmental Defense Fund and the National Association of Counties. As a volunteer, he has served on a town planning commission, as chair of the Agricultural Preservation Board of Montgomery County, Maryland, one of the nation’s leaders in farmland preservation, and in California on the board of the Planning and Conservation League. Thompson has been directly engaged in farmland preservation in California since 1995 when he authored Alternatives for Future Urban Growth in California’s Central Valley: The Bottom Line for Agriculture and Taxpayers. More recently, he has spearheaded innovative policy initiatives like California Agricultural Vision, the San Joaquin Valley Greenprint and the Sustainable Agricultural Conservation Program. Thompson holds a B.A. in government from Cornell University and a J.D. from George Washington University Law School. An avid fly fisherman, golfer and gardener, Ed and his wife Ann live in Sebastopol, California.

Casey Walsh Cady
Senior Environmental Scientist | CA Department of Food and Agriculture
Casey Walsh Cady is a Senior Environmental Scientist with the California Department of Food and Agriculture’s Office of Environmental Farming and Innovation where she works on environmental issues and sustainable agriculture. She currently works on dairy air quality, water quality and energy issues and she helped lead the development of CDFA’s Dairy Digester Research and Development team and was a key staff member on the California/Federal Dairy Digester Task Force. She is involved with numerous outreach and educational events, conferences, and as well as working with other agencies and advisory committees. She has a Masters Degree from UC Davis and a Bachelors of Science from University of Massachusetts-Amherst.
Sheldon Zakreski
Director of Asset Management | The Climate Trust
Sheldon Zakreski has been with The Climate Trust since March 2008. He has twenty years of environmental markets and policy experience. Sheldon oversees and guides the expansion of The Climate Trust’s offset project portfolio and acquisition programs portfolio. In this role, Sheldon is responsible for managing The Trust’s $40 million offset project portfolio and advising on policies and trends that affect carbon markets. Sheldon has a M.A. in economics from the University of Victoria (British Columbia). He earned a B.A. in economics from the University of Saskatchewan.