



## AGREEMENT-FOCUSED FACILITATION & MEDIATION

Conflict in the public policy arena is inevitable. We live in a highly diverse society where varied interests clash over different policy approaches. How we choose to resolve our disputes is by no means a foregone conclusion. Traditionally, parties look to the courts, the legislature or the press to gain advantage and make their case. At CONCUR, we believe that carefully structured dialogues - mediated or facilitated by skilled third-party neutrals - frequently offer a more effective and durable method to resolve conflicts and build consensus around controversial and often technically complex public policy issues. Agreement-focused facilitation and mediation is our core service.

When stepping into new projects, CONCUR works closely with our clients and the affected parties to gauge the issues and determine the best approach for building agreement. For example: Are the parties needing to reach full consensus, or is it sufficient to build broad support? Does agreement need to be made around a single alternative, or is it preferable to craft a range of options to be considered by high-level decision makers? What are the strategies for making agreements binding?

CONCUR is committed to designing and executing collaborative approaches that build consensus around solutions to controversial environmental, land use and economic development issues. Our nearly 20-year practice spans a broad range of issues, from environmental planning and marine resource protection, to public finance and water resource management. CONCUR's approach emphasizes the cross-cutting components essential to effective stakeholder and agency collaboration, yet embeds the flexibility required in a one-size-does-not-fit-all world. CONCUR scales its facilitation and mediation teams to the complexity of the case.

CONCUR builds upon its other services as we carry out our work in agreement-focused facilitation and mediation. Components of CONCUR's agreement-focused facilitation and mediation services include:

**Situation/Conflict Assessments** to determine whether and under what conditions a dispute would benefit from facilitation or mediation and to understand the complex interests and positions of affected stakeholders.

**Meeting Facilitation and Meeting Management** to assist organizations in effective presentation of technical and scientific information, clearly frame issues for discussion, synthesize key points at regular intervals and move a group toward resolution.

**Strategic Planning** to evaluate the issues under discussion and custom-design processes that foster informed deliberations and build common ground.

**Joint Fact-finding Processes** to help parties pool scientific information to increase technical certainty, save time and money and avoid unnecessary duplication of information.

**Groundrules and Meeting Agendas** to bring clear structure to negotiated processes to reinforce respectful interaction and motivate efficient progress.

**Key Outcomes Memoranda** to succinctly record key points of discussion, agreements, next steps, and assignments.

**Training Services** to help our clients build more effective environmental negotiation techniques.

**Agreement Drafting and Ratification** to ensure the acceptance and implementation of group decisions.

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## Selected Projects

**Take Reduction Teams.** CONCUR is facilitating two different East Coast stakeholder groups focused on reducing incidental bycatch of Harbor Porpoise and Atlantic Large Whale. CONCUR's work focuses on (1) conducting initial stakeholder assessments, (2) convening both in-person and teleconference meetings among fishermen, conservationists, academics, researchers and various government agencies, and (3) summarizing emerging agreement. CONCUR's work with the National Marine Fisheries Service on this effort strives to identify consensus-supported approaches that can reduce bycatch to sustainable levels.

**Guadalupe River Flood Control Project Collaborative.** CONCUR designed and executed a multi-year collaborative discussion among stakeholders and federal, state and local officials to resolve Endangered Species Act-driven legal challenges to a proposed flood control project on San Jose's lower Guadalupe River. Our work resulted in a broadly supported mitigation plan that resolved outstanding legal challenges and an agreement, which included a ground breaking 100-year adaptive management plan to guide long-term implementation.

**California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative, Central Coast.** CONCUR facilitated the work of the Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (CCRSG) – an intensive seven-month collaborative effort that resulted in the successful development of alternative networks of marine protected areas (MPAs). Marine constituencies represented in the project included recreational angling and diving, commercial fishing, ports and harbors, conservation, business, and other government agencies with marine protected area responsibilities.

**Santa Clara County Water Resources Protection Collaborative.** CONCUR facilitated a multi-party, multi-year collaborative effort to improve land use planning and stream protection in Silicon Valley. The project brought together representatives of 15 city governments, Santa Clara County, the local water district and state water quality regulators, as well as a wide variety of environmental, business, and community interests. This resulted in agreement on a new institutional arrangements for managing stream resources in the County. This project earned two public awards in recognition of the groundbreaking collaborative process: the "Escaping the Constraints Award" from the Public Officials for Environmental Reform, and the "Theodore Roosevelt Environmental Award for Excellence in Natural Resources Management" from the Association of California Water Agencies.

For a complete list of projects please visit our website at [www.concurinc.com](http://www.concurinc.com)

## About CONCUR, Inc.

CONCUR, Inc. provides services in agreement focused mediation and facilitation, joint fact-finding, conflict assessment, environmental policy analysis, strategic planning, and environmental mediation training. Our staff has a unique dual expertise in both the process and substance of environmental decision-making. We are rigorously trained in the art and science of negotiation and dispute resolution, as well as in environmental planning and policy analysis. This dual expertise is the foundation of CONCUR's philosophy: to integrate different disciplines that strengthen our problem-solving capability so that we can provide clients the highest quality professional services.

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