

**Santa Barbara County**  
**Regional Conservation Strategy**  
**Consensus Decision Making**

A consensus decision making process involves good faith attempts by the participants to reach agreement on each issue, with due regard given to each participant's position, objectives, and needs (legal and regulatory, environmental, political, constituent-driven, etc.). The process includes gathering information, respectful discussion, consideration of differing viewpoints, refining and modifying proposals and language, and attempting to develop innovative approaches to the issues.

Consensus is reached when the decision is acceptable to all members. Members of the group must feel they have been given a chance to express their views and that there has been an honest effort by the group to accommodate their viewpoints in the decision. Ideally, consensus is unanimous agreement. If unanimity cannot be accomplished, consensus can be reached through all participants indicating that the outcome is not ideal but they can live with it, with some potentially doing so reluctantly.

Where consensus cannot be reached on a specific issue, the dissenting participants may prepare minority reports for presentation to the Committee in a prompt and timely manner after the issue has been considered by the committee. Minority reports shall be submitted to the committee and shall be included in the public record.

In the event that consensus is reached on the overall regional conservation strategy, all committee participants agree that they will actively support the decision of the committee and help implement that decision. As such, committee members agree that they will neither covertly nor overtly attempt to block or obstruct the decision of the committee.