

TO: Green Empowerment Zone Governing Board

FROM: Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia, GEZ Chair
Assemblymember Lori Wilson, GEZ Deputy Chair
Chuck Leonard, UA Local 342, GEZ Deputy Chair

DATE: March 10, 2026

SUBJECT: Recommendation to Appoint Shoshanna Wechsler to a vacant Environmental Justice/Environment seat on the GEZ Governing Board.

The Green Empowerment Zone (GEZ) enabling legislation was amended in 2025 to provide for the appointment of “seven (7) directors who live or work in the Green Empowerment Zone representing environmental or environmental justice organizations or interests, who shall be selected by the board.”

On December 3, 2025, the Green Empowerment Zone staff (Contra Costa’s Department of Conservation and Development) issued a public press release announcing the open recruitment for Seven (7) Environmental/Environmental Justice Seats on the Governing Board. This announcement was publicized throughout the Green Empowerment Zone in Contra Costa and Solano counties. The initial recruitment period was open through January 9, 2026. The application deadline was later extended through January 30, 2026.

16 applications were received by the January 30, 2026 deadline. The Governing Board appointed seven (7) individuals to the Board at its last meeting. One of the appointees, Erika Siao from Communities for a Better Environment (CBE), who works in the Richmond area, has subsequently resigned due to work commitments.

In order to replace Erika Siao with another individual who works or lives in the West Contra Costa County area, the Board recommends that Shoshanna Wechsler (Kensington) be appointed to replace Erika Siao. Ms. Wechsler is an active leader in the Sunflower Alliance, which has worked extensively on refinery issues, including in the Richmond area. She works closely with both Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) and Asian Pacific Environmental Network (APEN), is a member of the Sierra Club Bay Area Energy Committee, and serves as Chair of the Contra Costa Sustainability Commission. Her application is attached.