

**- CAL POLY CAREER SERVICES -  
Emerging Markets Series**

**EMERGING ENVIRONMENTAL CAREERS IN THE LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

**Panelist Bios**

**Emma Chow – District Conservationist,  
USDA– Natural Resources Conservation Service**

Emma Chow has been with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) since 2009. As District Conservationist in Santa Barbara County, Emma works to deliver natural resources conservation services and financial assistance to farmers and ranchers through a collaborative and non-regulatory approach. The NRCS is a federal agency of the US Department of Agriculture focused on “Helping People Help the Land” through voluntary conservation implementation on private farms, ranches, and non-industrial forest land. A proud Cal Poly grad, she received her B.S. in Environmental Management and Protection with minors in Sustainable Environments and City and Regional Planning.

**Jennifer Moonjian – Senior Specialist, Advanced & Complex Mitigation  
California Department of Transportation (CalTrans)**

As an Advanced and Complex Mitigation Senior Specialist for Caltrans, Jennifer develops mitigation for transportation projects that have impacts to the natural environment. I work with biologists, planners, engineers, land owners, government agencies and non-profits to identify and implement mitigation. Jennifer is a two-time alumna from Cal Poly, receiving both her Master’s and Bachelor’s degrees in Biology. Now Jennifer works to support the mission of Caltrans to provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California’s economy and livability.

**Kate Ballantyne – Deputy Director, County of SLO Public Works**

Kate has been with the County since 2003, filling various roles in the Department including Environmental Resource Specialist and Environmental Division Manager, where she specialized in archaeology, regulatory permitting, and Endangered Species Act compliance. The environmental division is responsible for project development, environmental review (CEQA/NEPA), regulatory permitting, and mitigation monitoring for public infrastructure projects. Kate currently oversees the Public Works Utilities, Water Resources, Environmental, and Stormwater Divisions. Prior to working at the County she worked in private environmental consulting. She holds a B.S. in Soil Science from Cal Poly SLO and an M.A. in Archaeology from UC Santa Barbara.

**Bob Hill – Interim Deputy Director, Office of Sustainability  
City of San Luis Obispo**

In this role, Bob has had the opportunity to establish and oversee the City’s new Office of Sustainability that includes climate action, natural resources, creeks and watersheds, and community partnership programs. After earning a Bachelor of Arts in Politics from UC Santa Cruz, Bob earned a Master’s degree in City and Regional Planning from Cal Poly SLO. Bob’s role is one of many that helps the City achieve its overarching mission of a dynamic community embracing its future while respecting its past with core values of civility, sustainability, diversity, inclusivity, regionalism, partnership, and resiliency.

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**Ways To Get Involved On Campus  
CLUBS**

- Association of Environmental Professionals
- Environmental Science Club
- Wildlife Club
- Zero Waste Club
- Engineers for a Sustainable World
- Center for Sustainability – sustainability.calpoly.edu
- Eco Reps and Green Campus Team
- Cal Poly Surfrider

**ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & COURSES**

Visit [suscat.calpoly.edu](http://suscat.calpoly.edu)

For more resources & links, visit Career Services Emerging Markets Webpage at [careerservices.calpoly.edu/explore-services/emerging-markets](http://careerservices.calpoly.edu/explore-services/emerging-markets)

**Possible Networking Questions**

1. How do you recommend getting experience in your field as a student? What skills and knowledge would be helpful to have?
2. What did you expect working in this field to look like and how does your reality differ from your expectations?
3. Looking back to when you were a student, what advice would you give yourself starting this journey? Would you do anything differently?
4. In your opinion, what are current trends and needs facing your specific industry?
5. I'm really interested in the sustainability field but I'm also really interested in \_\_\_\_\_. Do you know of any way those two worlds connect?

**\*\*Use this time intentionally to be genuine with your questions! What do you *really* want to know? If you think of questions for a specific panelist during the panel discussion, write them here:**

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