

An Initial Review of the ICARP Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program

December 2023



Developed by the Center for Law, Energy, & the Environment
(CLEE) at UC Berkeley School of Law

Executive Summary

The state established the Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program to support statewide approaches to building climate resiliency in impacted communities.

The Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program (RRGP), established by the 2021 Budget Act, advances climate resilience in California by fostering collaboration in planning, project implementation, and capacity building. Administered by the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP) in the Governors' Office of Planning and Research (OPR), RRGp supports collaborative projects to address significant climate change risks, especially in vulnerable communities. The program also encourages applicants to identify the regions they serve based on shared natural and built environment systems and prioritize climate risks, ensuring a more inclusive response to climate risks. RRGp announced awardees for the first round of funding in December 2023.

ICARP contracted with the Center for Law, Energy & the Environment (CLEE) at UC Berkeley's School of Law to conduct an evaluation of RRGp. In accordance with RRGp's budget language, this evaluation reports on the first round of RRGp and makes recommendations to improve regional approaches to resilience. This memo summarizes this initial assessment, which focuses on program development, applications, and the outcomes of the first round of program awards.

Table ES1. RRGp Key Dates and Program Milestones

Key Dates	Program Milestones
September 2021	RRGP established by the Budget Act of 2021 (SB 170)
July 18th, 2022	Launch of the RRGp Engagement Process
June 13th, 2023	Release of RRGp Final Guidelines and Application
August 29th, 2023	RRGP Applications Deadline
December 21st, 2023	RRGP Awardees Announced

In its first round, over 780 organizations engaged in the development of the program. Ultimately, 83 organizations submitted applications for funding. Applications included 226 co-applicants and exceeded \$106 million in requested funding.

30 applicants submitted proposals for implementation projects, totaling \$76,395,881.49 in requested funding and 53 applicants submitted proposals for planning projects, totaling \$30,251,488.19 in requested funding. Proposals covered a wide range of climate risks, including wildfire, drought, extreme heat, and sea level rise.

ICARP recommended awards to sixteen projects in the first round of RRGP.

RRGP will fund ten planning projects and six implementation projects, representing regional partnerships from all nine California Climate Adaptation Regions. Four of the awarded projects will address climate resilience needs in multiple California Climate Adaptation Regions. RRGP exceeded both of its funding set-asides, which were intended to ensure that funding benefits vulnerable and disadvantaged communities, as well as California's Native American tribes. 87% of funding will support projects that directly benefit disadvantaged communities, and 65% of funding will support projects where at least one applicant is a Native American tribe.

The RRGP fills an important niche in the State's resilience funding landscape in its focus on collaborative, regional projects. However, the program encounters many of the same challenges that other State Grant programs experience, presenting an opportunity for coordinated improvement.

ICARP has played a pivotal role in supporting regional resiliency efforts across California. RRGP's emphasis on promoting multi-jurisdictional and multi-risk approaches to resilience planning, coupled with its support for both project implementation and planning phases, has begun to address the current gaps in the state's regional resilience efforts. The following recommendations address challenges and opportunities for the future development of RRGP and regional resilience planning more broadly, informed by the above analysis of program data and interviews with stakeholders.

Recommendations for Improving RRGP:

- **Continue developing a better understanding of and working to address regional disparities in engagement with RRGP.** To foster increased program engagement in inland regions of the State and in under-resourced communities, collaborate with local organizations and local governments to conduct additional engagement, such as listening sessions and in-person workshops in regions with lower levels of engagement.
- **Continue to provide technical assistance to support application accessibility.** Develop more targeted technical assistance resources for regions where program engagement is low, informed by engagement with eligible and prospective applicants in each region.
- **Continue to develop and implement monitoring and evaluation processes for award outcomes.** As the first round of awardees begin their projects in 2024, continue to monitor and evaluate project outcomes against resilience indicators, and report on project alignment with program and funding goals.

Recommendations for Improving Regional Resilience Planning Broadly:

- **Prioritize funding for multi-risk and multi-jurisdictional projects, which enables a more holistic and integrated approach to resilience.** The RRGP's multi-risk structure serves as a noteworthy example of innovative resilience planning, highlighting the need to encourage creative program structures that comprehensively address interconnected climate risks.
- **Synchronize program timelines and support all phases of project development from planning through implementation.** Develop coordinated efforts to fund resilience planning and project implementation across State grant programs. In addition, regional resilience planning can be further streamlined by refining tools for applicants navigating overlapping application processes.
- **Sustain ongoing funding for resilience grant programs, particularly for initiatives that support the planning to implementation pipeline.** Given the high demand for funding for regional resilience programs and the need to fund projects through to implementation, sustained support of programs will improve program quality and ensure planning projects result in implementable initiatives. Sustained funding can also enable staff to develop more targeted resources for prospective applicants and continue conducting meaningful community engagement.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Table of Contents	5
I. Introduction	6
II. Background	8
Planning for Climate Resilience	8
The State’s Role in Promoting Resilience	9
III. Regional Resilience Grant Program Funding and Program Activities to Date	14
Funding History	14
Program Design and Development	16
Applicant Eligibility & Requirements	18
Program Goals and Set Asides	18
IV. Assessment of the First Round of RRGP	20
Timeline and Stages of Engagement	20
Summary of Program Engagement	22
A Closer Look at Project Applications and Program Applicants	33
Program Support of Equity-Oriented Activities	35
V. Summary of Program Awards	37
VI. Improving Regional Climate Resiliency Planning	44
Recommendations for Future RRGP Development	44
Recommendations for Improving Regional Resiliency Planning	45
Endnotes	48

I. Introduction

Communities in California are already experiencing the effects of changing climate conditions, as demonstrated by the increased frequency and severity of extreme events and shifting climatic baselines.¹ The Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program (RRGP), administered by the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP) in the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR), is one element of the State’s strategy to strengthen community resilience to a changing climate. Established in 2021, RRGF funds the planning and implementation of projects that advance climate resilience via regional-scale approaches.

This memo provides an initial assessment of RRGF’s performance, focusing on program development, applications, and the first round of program awards. The memo is responsive to the 2020-21 budget language directing the OPR to report to the Legislature on RRGF’s grantees and make recommendations to improve the effectiveness of regional resiliency planning.²

As RRGF is a newly established program, OPR staff led an extensive program development process, including internal capacity development and staffing, alignment with complimentary State programs, and broad stakeholder outreach and engagement. This process included several stages of engagement to ensure the program meets community needs and provides opportunities that complement other resilience programs and funding availability. Figure 1 illustrates five distinct phases of the program lifecycle, described in further detail in [Section IV \(Timeline and Stages of Engagement\)](#).

A comprehensive program evaluation would assess the program’s full life cycle through to project outcomes. This would include the following:

- **Program Reach:** Assessing the program’s geographic reach, range of hazards addressed through proposed and awarded projects, and relationship to other funding programs.
- **Alignment with Program Goals:** Assessing program engagement with priority populations.

Figure 1. Regional Resilience Grant Program Lifecycle.



- **Program Accessibility:** Assessing the ability of diverse communities to access the program at all stages.
- **Project Outcomes:** Assessing the resilience benefits achieved by the funded projects.

Given the current timeline for RRGP, however, this memo focuses on the first three evaluation goals. Using a comprehensive set of qualitative and quantitative program data, the evaluation assesses program reach, alignment with program goals, and accessibility through the program development, application, and award phases. Understanding full project outcomes will require data collection and evaluation over a longer time frame.

II. Background

Planning for Climate Resilience

Climate adaptation and resilience, though interconnected, represent distinct concepts.

Climate adaptation involves taking specific measures or a series of actions aimed at preparing for physical climate-related risks. California has and continues to prepare for the impacts of a changing climate at state, regional, and local levels through research, strategic planning, educational and technical resources development, and targeted funding and investment. The Adaptation Clearinghouse, developed by the OPR in response to Senate Bill 246 (Wieckowski, 2015), is the State's consolidated searchable database of resources for local, regional, and statewide climate adaptation planning and decision-making.³

A series of adaptive steps contribute to **climate resilience**, which describes a state of readiness to face climate risks. Resilience is the capacity of any entity – an individual, a community, an organization, or a natural system – to prepare for disruptions, recover from shocks and stresses, and adapt and grow from a disruptive experience.⁴ Acknowledging that certain communities possess greater capacities to respond, recover, and adjust to the impacts of climate change, the State's endeavors in climate adaptation and resilience emphasize equity. These efforts, which include landscape- and regional-scale approaches, proactively address climate change with bold actions across all levels of government,

aiming for long-term outcomes such as minimizing risks to public health and safety, maximizing equity, ensuring the resilience of natural systems, and maintaining infrastructure functionality despite changing conditions.⁵

Why take a regional approach to resilience planning?

A regional approach to climate resilience planning has a proven track record of ensuring positive and equitable outcomes. A series of case studies compiled by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) highlight regional development organizations (RDOs) across the United States that recognize the importance of greater resilience to natural disasters and other economic disruptions.⁶ These case studies emphasize the importance of having a regional and interdisciplinary approach to climate resilience efforts. RDOs work towards building regional resilience by integrating regional planning efforts, prioritizing resilient investments, diversifying their economies, assessing economic vulnerabilities, and promoting green infrastructure and safe development.

RDOs such as California's Alliance of Regional Collaboratives for Climate Adaptation (ARCCA) have significantly impacted the development of regional climate adaptation and resilience. Local stakeholders established ARCCA in 2012, bringing together five regional collaboratives representing the Sacramento Valley, the San Francisco Bay

Area, the greater Los Angeles and San Diego regions, and the Sierra Nevada Mountains to facilitate information sharing and collaborate with state agencies on adaptation efforts.⁷ Today, the ARCCA network includes three additional regional collaboratives representing the North Coast, the Central Coast, and Inland Southern California. ARCCA and other organizations, such as the California Climate and Energy Collaborative and the California Resilience Partnership, have gained stakeholder support due to the demand for more effective collaboration across jurisdictional boundaries on regional climate impacts.

A regional approach allows communities to address the multifaceted challenges created by climate change that transcend political boundaries. Regional perspectives on resilience planning allow for a more holistic understanding of shared resources, interconnected systems, and common vulnerabilities. Coordinated planning at a regional level also promotes efficient resource allocation, consistency in implementation, and cross-sector collaboration. This can enable communities to adapt strategies to their unique circumstances while fostering early warning systems and enhancing emergency response capabilities. A regional approach ensures a more inclusive response to climate risks, considering the complexities of each region and maximizing the collective efforts of diverse stakeholders.

Despite consensus on the need for a regional approach to resilience planning, defining regions has historically posed a challenge largely due to the diverse and vast nature of the State's ecosystems and communities. California experiences a wide range of climate-related challenges, including wildfires, droughts, and rising sea levels, each affecting different regions uniquely. Competing

interests, economic considerations, and the dynamic nature of California's climate exacerbate the challenge of precisely delineating regions for targeted resilience efforts. The need to balance statewide strategies with the specific vulnerabilities and adaptation requirements of distinct areas, such as coastal regions, urban centers, and agricultural landscapes, has resulted in multiple regional definitions using different combinations of geographic, ecological, and socioeconomic factors.

California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment Report, for example, defined regions based on both climate data and geopolitical factors, resulting in nine distinct regions: Central Coast, Inland Deserts, Los Angeles Region, North Coast, Sacramento Valley, San Diego Region, San Francisco Bay Area, San Joaquin Valley, and Sierra Nevada.⁸ However, as the state's adaptation and resilience strategy has expanded in recent years, innovative approaches to regional definitions and collaboration have emerged in efforts to streamline effective regional governance on climate resilience.

The State's Role in Promoting Resilience

The State and the Legislature have an extensive history of promoting activities that facilitate climate resilience in California's communities, recently expanded through large-scale investments in adaptation in the state's 2021-2022 budget.⁹

Table 1. Key State Actions Facilitating Climate Adaptation and Resilience

Legislation	Year/s	Overview
California Climate Change Assessments, with updates required by SB 1320 (Stern, 2020) ¹⁰	2006, 2009, 2012, 2018, upcoming in 2024	California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment (2018) included technical and regional reports to support adaptation efforts at the local, regional, and state level, ¹¹ to be expanded further by the Fifth Assessment in 2024. ¹²
California Climate Adaptation Strategy, with updates required by AB 1482 (Gordon, 2016) ¹³	2009, 2014, 2018, 2022	The Climate Adaptation Strategy links the state's adaptation efforts to assess progress toward California's six climate resilience priorities. ¹⁴
California Adaptation Planning Guide	2012, 2020	The Adaptation Planning Guide provides adaptation planning resources to local, regional, and tribal governments. ¹⁵
Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP)	2015	ICARP, a program within OPR, manages regional and local climate adaptation grants, convenes a Technical Advisory Committee on climate adaptation, and maintains the Adaptation Clearinghouse resource for local governments. ¹⁶
2021-2022 State Budget	2021-2022	Significant investments across a suite of climate resilience priorities, including the founding of RRGP. ¹⁷

Foundations of California Adaptation Policy

The State has developed four comprehensive climate change assessments since 2006, identifying climate risks and policy solutions to promote resilience in California's communities. Later assessments have highlighted an increasing emphasis on adaptation: the Second Assessment (2009) identified long-term economic savings associated with investing in resilience,¹⁸ and the Fourth Assessment (2018) provided technical

reports to support adaptation at local, regional, and state levels.¹⁹ The Fifth Assessment, currently underway, will fill existing gaps in adaptation literature with a specific focus on equity considerations.²⁰

California's first Climate Adaptation Strategy was published in 2009, creating a statewide framework for progress on adaptation priorities across sectors and regions.²¹ The 2021 update to the Strategy identified six overarching resilience priorities and facilitated greater cross-agency planning.²² The State has also compiled an Adaptation Planning

Guide for local governments, first published in 2012 and updated in 2020.²³ The Guide is made available alongside other resources on the State’s Adaptation Clearinghouse database for local, regional, and tribal adaptation efforts.²⁴

In 2015, SB 246 (Wieckowski) established the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program (ICARP) at OPR to manage regional and local climate resilience strategies.²⁵ ICARP administers RRGP and several other climate adaptation grants. ICARP also convenes the Technical Advisory Council (TAC) on climate resilience.

2021-2022 State budget

The 2021-22 budget expanded the State’s resilience strategy through large-scale investments in climate adaptation, which included \$25 million for local, regional, and tribal government resilience planning, at least \$12,500,000 of which was designated specifically for the establishment of RRGP (Sec 16, Item 0650-101-0001).²⁶ Other elements of this package are outlined in Table 2.

Table 2. Climate Resilience Investments in the 2021-22 Budget²⁷

Section/Item	Amount	Allocation	Agency/Department
Section 15, Item 0650-001-0001	\$10,000,000	Climate adaptation and resilience planning grants under the Adaptation Planning Grants Program	OPR (ICARP)
Section 16, Item 0650-101-0001	\$25,000,000	Grants for local, regional, and tribal governments for climate resilience planning under RRGP	OPR (ICARP)
Section 13, Item 0555-102-0001	\$10,000,000	Adaptation planning by community-based organizations	California EPA
Section 45, Item 3540-001-0001	\$100,000,000	Near-term forest resilience and wildfire prevention	Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Section 45, Item 3540-001-0001	\$67,000,000	Long-term forest resilience and wildfire prevention	Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Section 59, Item 3790-001-0001	\$11,500,000	Addressing climate risks such as fire, floods, and sea level rise	Department of Parks and Recreation
Section 82, Item 3860-301-0001	\$197,000,000	Manage flood risk and improve climate resilience	Department of Water Resources

State's investment in regional approaches to adaptation and resilience

Spurred by the success of place-based investment programs and initiatives, the State has designated a growing amount of resilience funding to ground-up and cross-jurisdictional collaboration on adaptation. This has included the Regional Climate Collaboratives Program (2019), strengthening regional capacity to effectively plan and access funding for climate projects,²⁸ and the Community

Economic Resilience Fund (2021), supporting economic recovery and resilience following the COVID-19 pandemic.²⁹ Other regional programs have addressed specific climate risks: the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (2021) fosters fire resilience,³⁰ and the Coastal Conservancy's Climate Ready Program (2018) supports shoreline infrastructure resilience to sea level rise.³¹ ICARP administers two additional resilience grant programs: the Adaptation Planning Grant Program (2021) and the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program (2023).³²

Table 3. State Program Landscape Mapping: Regional Resilience

Program	Purpose	Scale	Award Amount	Grantor
Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program ³³	Strengthening self-defined regional resilience planning and implementation projects.	Regional (Self-defined)	\$150K - \$3M	OPR (ICARP)
Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program ³⁴	Supporting planning and implementation projects adapting to the impacts of extreme heat.	Local, Regional, and Tribal	\$100K - \$5M	OPR (ICARP)
Adaptation Planning Grant Program ³⁵	Fostering climate adaptation planning across California.	Local, Regional, and Tribal	\$150K - \$650K	OPR (ICARP)
Regional Climate Collaboratives Program ³⁶	Capacity building for under-resourced communities.	Local and Regional (Self-defined)	\$50K - \$1,750,000	Strategic Growth Council
Community Economic Resilience Fund ³⁷	Fostering a sustainable and climate-resilient economic recovery.	Local and Regional	\$5M	OPR, GO-Biz, and LWDA
Climate Ready Program/ Coastal Conservancy Grants ³⁸	Supporting the California coast's resilience to sea level rise.	Coastal (Local and Regional)	~\$200K - ~\$5M	Coastal Conservancy
Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program ³⁹	Funding fire-resilient infrastructure, communities, and landscapes.	Specified Regions	~\$1M - ~\$25M	Department of Conservation

However, a coordinated and strategic approach to regional resilience planning is still nascent. The table below outlines the landscape of comparable state programs, highlighting key similarities and differences as well as the niche occupied by RRGP.

Improving the effectiveness of regional collaboration on climate resilience

As highlighted in the 2021-22 budget, the State has prioritized improving the effectiveness of cross-jurisdictional partnerships in climate resilience. The State and local agencies have identified a clear need for regional cooperation on resilience activities, including adaptation planning, project development, and the implementation of long-term climate-resilient infrastructure due to the regional nature of climate impacts and evidenced demand for regional climate collaboratives (see [Section II: Why take a regional approach to resilience planning?](#)).

Multiple programs have been developed to address specific community needs around resilience activities. For example, the State's Adaptation Planning Grant Program (APGP) intends to support primarily local initiatives and will only fund planning projects. On the other hand, the Regional Regional Climate Collaboratives program (RCC) is intended to serve as a precursor to programs like RRGP by providing support for capacity building on a regional scale, but with a community of focus lense.

RRGP, in contrast to other programs that may support a combination of local, regional, and tribal initiatives, exclusively targets regional approaches to resilience planning and projects. RRGP also provides funding for planning and implementation projects across multiple climate risks. Finally, the program notably innovates in the area of improving regional effectiveness by allowing the self-definition of regions in the program application process. These characteristics of RRGP, in addition to others, are explored in further detail in [Section III: Program Design and Development](#).

III. Regional Resilience Grant Program Funding and Program Activities to Date

Created in the 2021 Budget Act, RRGP aligns directly with ICARP’s statutory mission to “develop a cohesive, equitable, and integrated response to the impacts of climate change by directly funding local, regional, and tribal resilience planning and implementation efforts across California.”

Funding History

The Budget Act of 2021⁴⁰ initially dedicated \$25 million to RRGP, with an anticipated \$125 million available through the 2022-2023 budget and \$100 million through the 2023-2024 budget. However, the Governor’s 2023-2024 budget proposal included reductions to select Climate, Natural Resources, and Environmental Programs, including RRGP,⁴¹ resulting in a total net reduction of \$150 million for RRGP.

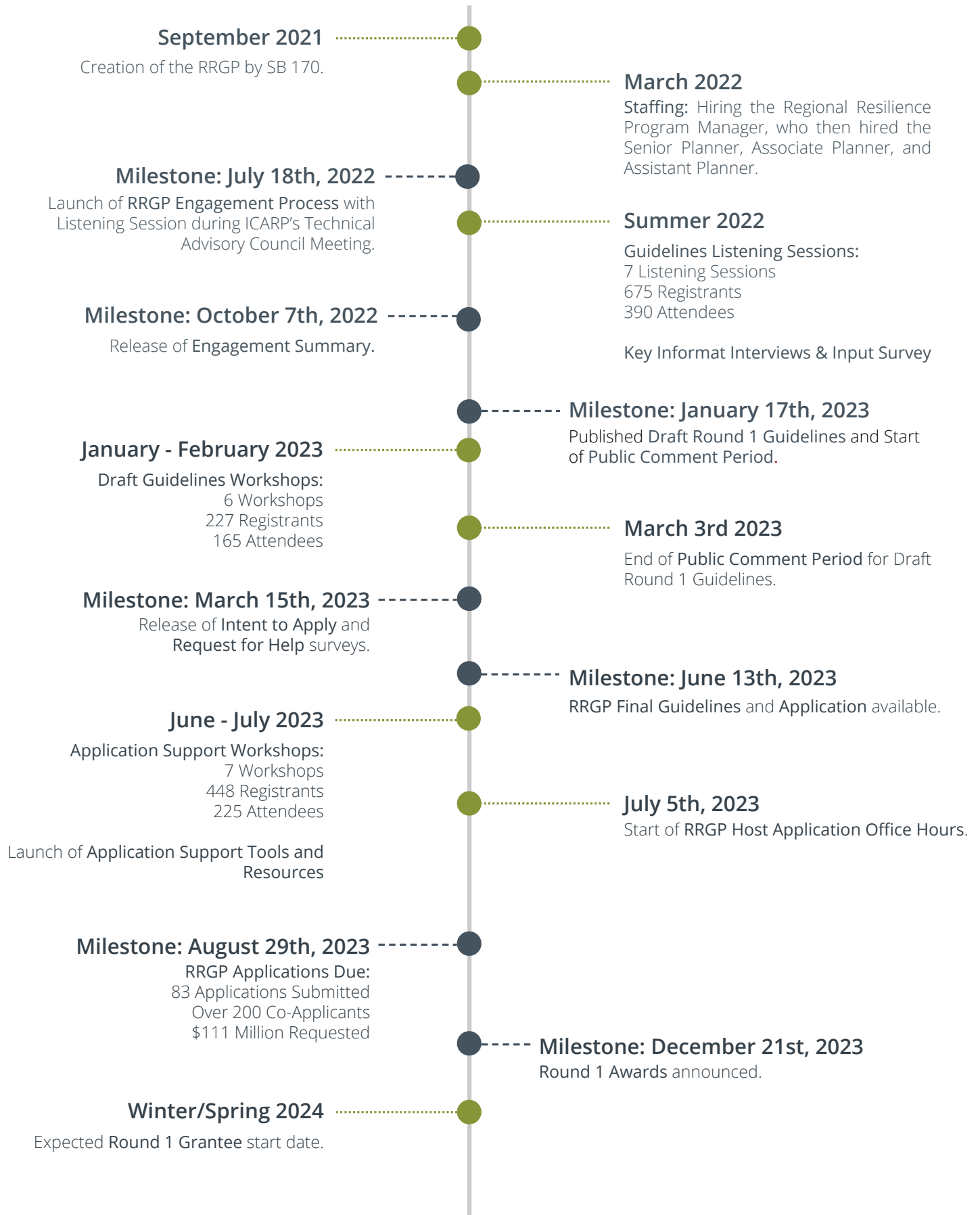
In 2023, renewed discussions around the California Climate Resilience Bond included the potential role of a bond in mitigating some of the impacts of the 2023 funding reductions, with several bills currently under consideration in the Legislature. Previously, both the Legislature and administration had proposed some form of a climate resilience bond during the 2019 legislative session and in the 2020 January budget proposal, respectively, but all bond concepts were suspended when the pandemic struck. The next year, the record surplus underlying the 2021 Budget Act’s General Fund support for RRGP and other climate investments had obviated the need for bond support for these programs at the time.⁴²

Table 4. Summary of initial, proposed, and anticipated available funding for RRGP.

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Total
Initial Funding (2021 Budget Act Appropriations)	\$25 million	\$125 million	\$100 million	\$250 million
Proposed Funding (Reflecting Reductions made in the 2023 Budget Act)	\$25 million	\$0	\$25 million	\$100 million*
Actual and Anticipated Funding	\$25 million	\$0	\$25 million	\$100 million*

*Includes \$50 million delayed for 2024-25; 2023-2024 California Spending Plan: Resources and Environmental Protection, Legislative Analyst’s Office (2023), available at <https://lao.ca.gov/Publications/Report/4807>.

RRGP Timeline and Milestones to Date



RRGP Timeline and Milestones

In June 2023, OPR issued the Notice of Funding Availability for RRGF, anticipating the availability of \$21.9 million for awards in the program's first round, with up to \$6 million available in planning grants and \$15.9 million available in implementation grants.⁴³ OPR anticipates an additional \$25 million will be available through the 2023-2024 budget, for a total of close to \$50 million to support multiple funding rounds.

Round 1 Project Funding

For Round 1 awards, planning grants range between \$150,000 - \$650,000, and implementation grants range between \$650,000 - \$3 million. The program administers awards competitively and by funding set-asides, the latter of which is covered in [Section IV: Program Support of Equity-Oriented Activities](#).

Program Design and Development

Staff collected community feedback and input on the design of RRGF through a series of public listening sessions, workshops, interviews, and online surveys conducted from June 2022 through March 2023, reflected in the Final Program Guidelines. Staff posed the following questions and received

input from over 398 individuals representing community-based organizations; advocacy groups; state, regional, and federal agencies; local governments; and California Native American tribes.

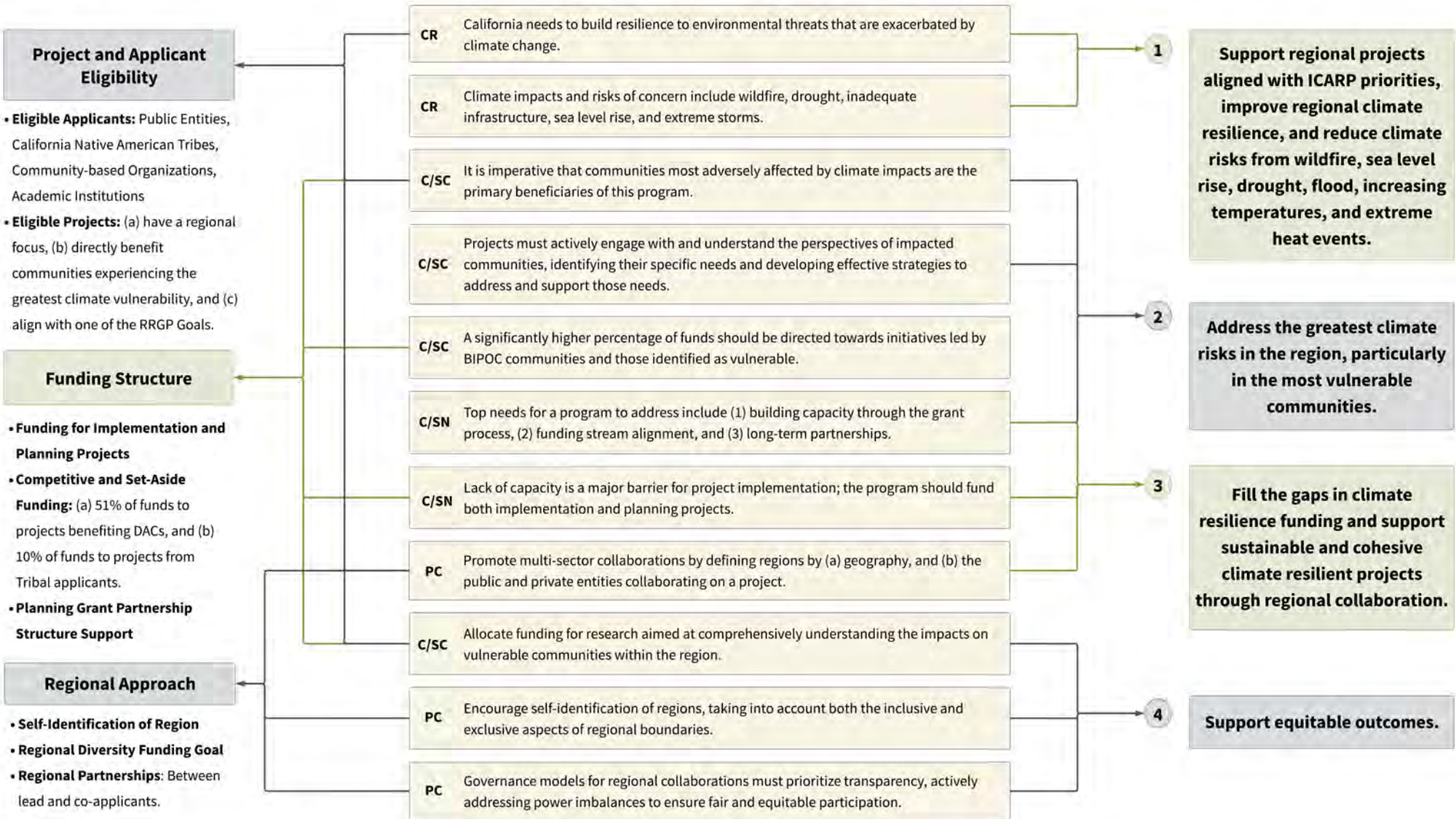
- How can RRGF define capacity building to fill gaps in climate resilience funding?
- How can this program define a region to accomplish regional-scale climate resilience solutions?
- What are the highest priority resilience concerns for your region overall?
- What are the existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? How can the grant program address these barriers?
- While this program may issue grants both competitively and on a formula basis, what should the program consider when evaluating the feasibility of funding set-asides (i.e., non-competitive grants)?

The stakeholder input map on the following page illustrates how this feedback informed program design and goals.

RRGP Characteristics

Stakeholder Input

RRGP Goals



CR = Climate Resilience PC = Partnerships and Collaborations C/SC = Climate and Social Equity C/SN = Challenges & Support Needs

Applicant Eligibility & Requirements

To apply for the grant, eligible applicants must form regional partnerships involving two or more organizations working together to address their region's shared climate risks.

Eligible applicants include:

1. **California Native American tribes:** Federally and non-federally recognized Native American tribes that are included on the California tribal consultation contact list maintained by the California Native American Heritage Commission.
2. **Public Entities:** Cities, counties, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs), Regional Transportation Planning Agencies, Councils of Governments, Congestion Management Agencies, school districts, and special districts.
3. **Community-Based Organizations (CBOs):** 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic organizations, foundations, California tribal organizations, organizations with a history of representing tribal or vulnerable communities, and fiscally sponsored organizations.
4. **Academic Institutions:** Individual public California institutions of higher education.

Program Goals and Set Asides

Set-aside funding for RRGF is intended to support projects directly benefiting disadvantaged communities and projects for which at least one applicant is a California Native American tribe. RRGF designates two categories for set-aside funding: (1) set-asides for disadvantaged communities and (2) set-asides for California Native American Tribes. RRGF approaches the identification of disadvantaged and vulnerable communities by building on the definition adopted in ICARP's Guide to Defining Vulnerable Communities:⁴⁴

Climate vulnerability describes the degree to which natural, built, and human systems are at risk of exposure to climate change impacts. Vulnerable communities experience heightened risk and increased sensitivity to climate change and have less capacity and fewer resources to cope with, adapt to, or recover from climate impacts. These disproportionate effects are caused by physical (built and environmental), social, political, and/or economic factor(s), which are exacerbated by climate impacts. These factors include, but are not limited to, race, class, sexual orientation and identification, national origin, and income inequality.

Additionally, RRGF established two funding goals to ensure increased equity in funding distribution:⁴⁵

- 1. Regional Diversity:** RRGP intends to fund at least one planning and no more than one implementation project from each of the nine geographic regions defined by the California Climate Adaptation Strategy.
- 2. Planning Grant Partnership Structures:** Specific to planning grants, RRGP intends to support the establishment of at least one tribal and at least one rural regional partnership structure.

IV. Assessment of the First Round of RRGP

Assessment of the first round of RRGP draws on program data provided by ICARP CLEE. These data include information gathered from all program activities to date, as described below. The data are used to assess program activity and understand trends in program engagement, application, and award - including variations in activity by region, organization type, and other variables. In addition, these data are used to assess program performance relative to program goals and set-asides.

Timeline and Stages of Engagement

As introduced in Figure 1 (see [Section I](#)), RRGP contains five distinct ‘Program Lifecycle Phases.’

1. **Program Development:** This Phase includes the Legislature’s appropriation for RRGP, program staffing, and staff-led engagement in program design and guideline development, including public comment on draft guidelines.
2. **Request for Proposals:** Initiated by the release of the final Round 1 Program Guidelines and RRGP Application, this Phase includes prospective applicants’ engagement with the program via the Request for Help Survey and the Intent to Apply Survey.

3. **Application and Review:** This Phase includes applicant submission of complete applications and RRGP staff’s review and scoring of applications.
4. **Awards:** This Phase includes the awarding of selected grant applications.
5. **Project Implementation:** Project Implementation begins with the dispersal of funds to awardees and includes all project implementation activities, reporting activities, and evaluation of project outcomes.

The fifth phase—**Project Implementation**—will take place over the course of the awarded projects’ lifecycles and is outside of the scope of this initial program assessment (see Figure 2). As noted in the Introduction, assessing project outcomes is a key component of program evaluation and should take place over a longer timeframe that includes additional data collection and standardized metrics for evaluating outcomes. In this section, we provide an update on RRGP’s reach, process alignment with program goals, and program accessibility through the program development, application, and award phases of the program.

To evaluate the outcomes of the first four phases of the RRGP program lifecycle, we map six ‘Engagement Stages’ onto the aforementioned ‘Program Lifecycle Phases’ (see Figure 2). These Engagement Stages capture the various ways in which, along the lifecycle, (a) RRGP staff engaged

with stakeholders and prospective applicants and (b) applicants engaged with RRGP. The Engagement Stages are summarized below in Table 5, which includes a list of the data from each stage used in the analysis.

Figure 2. RRGP Program Lifecycle Phases and corresponding Engagement Stages, representing the scope of the initial assessment.

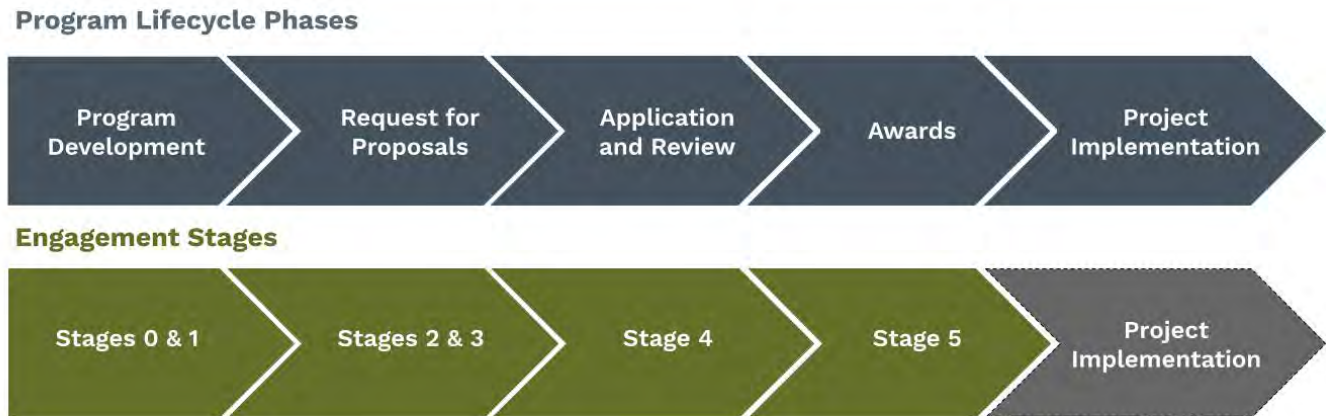


Table 5. RRGP engagement stages and relevant data.

Stage ID #	Stage Name	Engagement Types	Data Provided by ICARP Staff
0	Ongoing Engagement	Email, Listserv, Phone	All Engaged Organizations List*
1	Program Development and Feedback	ICARP TAC Meeting, Draft Guidelines Workshops, Listening Sessions, Stakeholder Interviews, Engagement Survey	Guidelines Workshops (Registration and Attendance Lists), Listening Sessions (Registration and Attendance Lists), All Engaged Organizations List
2	Application Intent	Request for Help Survey, Intent to Apply Survey**	Responses to (1) Request for Help Survey and (2) Intent to Apply Survey, All Engaged Organizations List
3	Application Process and Support	Application Support Workshops, Office Hours	Application Support Workshop (Registration and Attendance List), Office Hours Registrations, All Engaged Organizations List
4	Applications	Co-Applicants and Lead Applicants	Applicants and Co-Applicants List, Applications Spreadsheet, All Engaged Organizations List
5	Awardees	Awardees	Awarded Project List

* The All Engaged Organizations List is a complete list of all the organizations that engaged with RRGP over the program lifecycle, the activities they engaged in, and information on the organization (e.g., organization type, address, contact information). These data are helpful for discerning overall engagement across stages at the organizational level as opposed to the individual level.

** At this stage, prospective applicants had the opportunity to ask if their project was a good fit for RRGP or whether it would be better suited to a different OPR grant program.

Summary of Program Engagement

RRGP engaged over 780 organizations throughout the Program Lifecycle and across the different Engagement Stages. The level of program engagement varies by and within a stage. In addition, the data show variation in engagement by region, legislative district, and organization type. However, across all engagement stages, regional patterns generally mirror population such that the more populous regions represent a larger share of engaged organizations; this likely accounts for some of the variation in regional engagement but not all of it.

Ultimately, 83 organizations submitted applications that included 226 co-applicants.

Key Takeaways

- The number of distinct organizations engaged with RRGP was highest during **Stage 1: Program Development and Feedback** and lowest during **Stage 2: Application Intent** (see Figure 3).
 - **Regional Distribution:** Across all stages of engagement, organizations based in the San Francisco Bay Area region, followed closely by organizations from the Los Angeles region, appear in the highest numbers. The least engaged were the San Diego and Inland Desert regions (see Figure 4).
 - **Organization Type:** Local governments (cities, counties, towns, and special districts) made up the largest share of engaged organizations, with over 244 distinct local government entities engaging with the
- program. Nonprofit organizations comprised the next largest group of organization types, at 219 distinct organizations (see Figure 5).
- **Legislative District Representation:** Senate District 2 and Assembly District 2 accounted for the highest number of engaged organizations across all stages of engagement. Legislative districts in the North Coast, Inland North, Sierra Nevada, Sacramento Valley, and Central Coast regions had the greatest number of engaged organizations; these districts are also some of the State's largest but least densely populated regions (see Figure 6).

Figure 3. Program Engagement by Stage

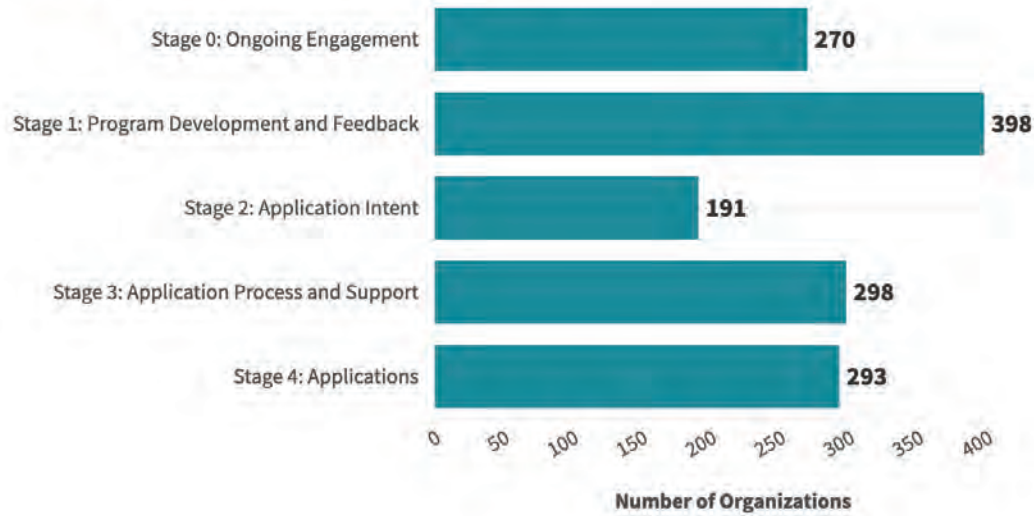


Figure 4. Program Engagement by Region

There was no regional affiliation data for 128 organizations.

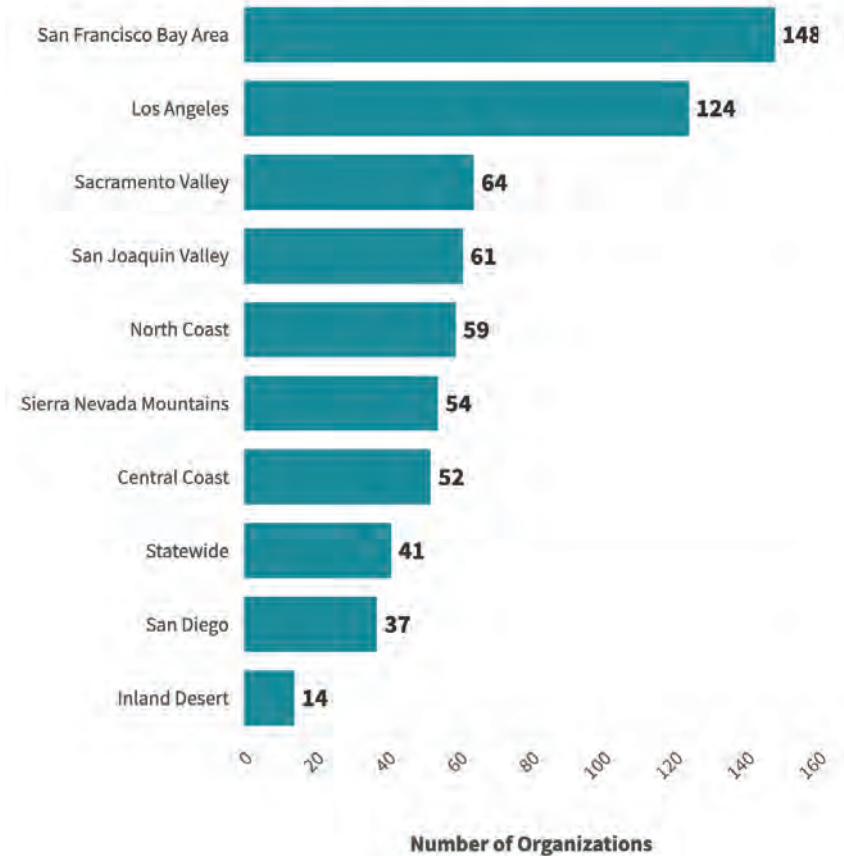


Figure 5. Program Engagement by Organization Type

One organization did not have data on organization type. 'Local Government Entity' includes counties, cities, towns, and special districts.

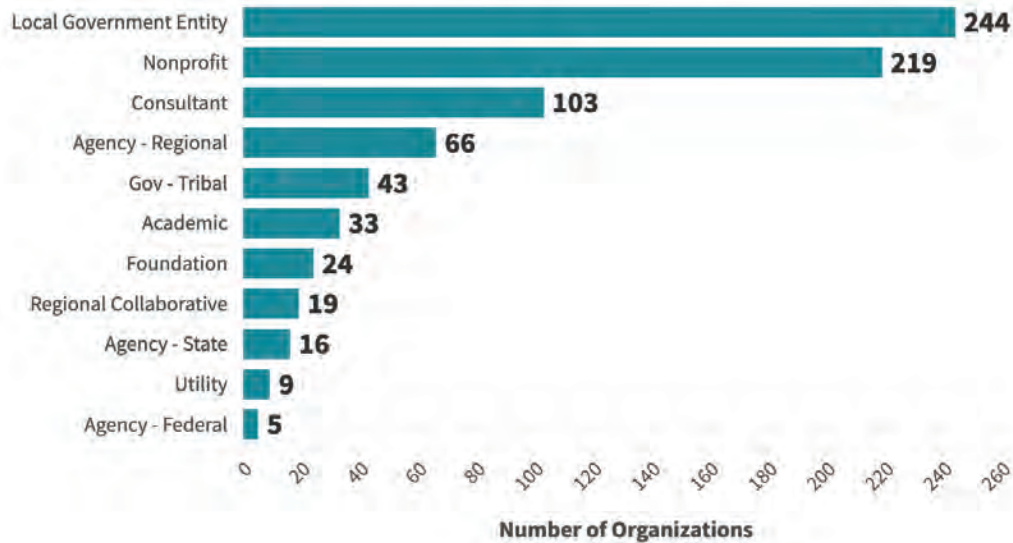
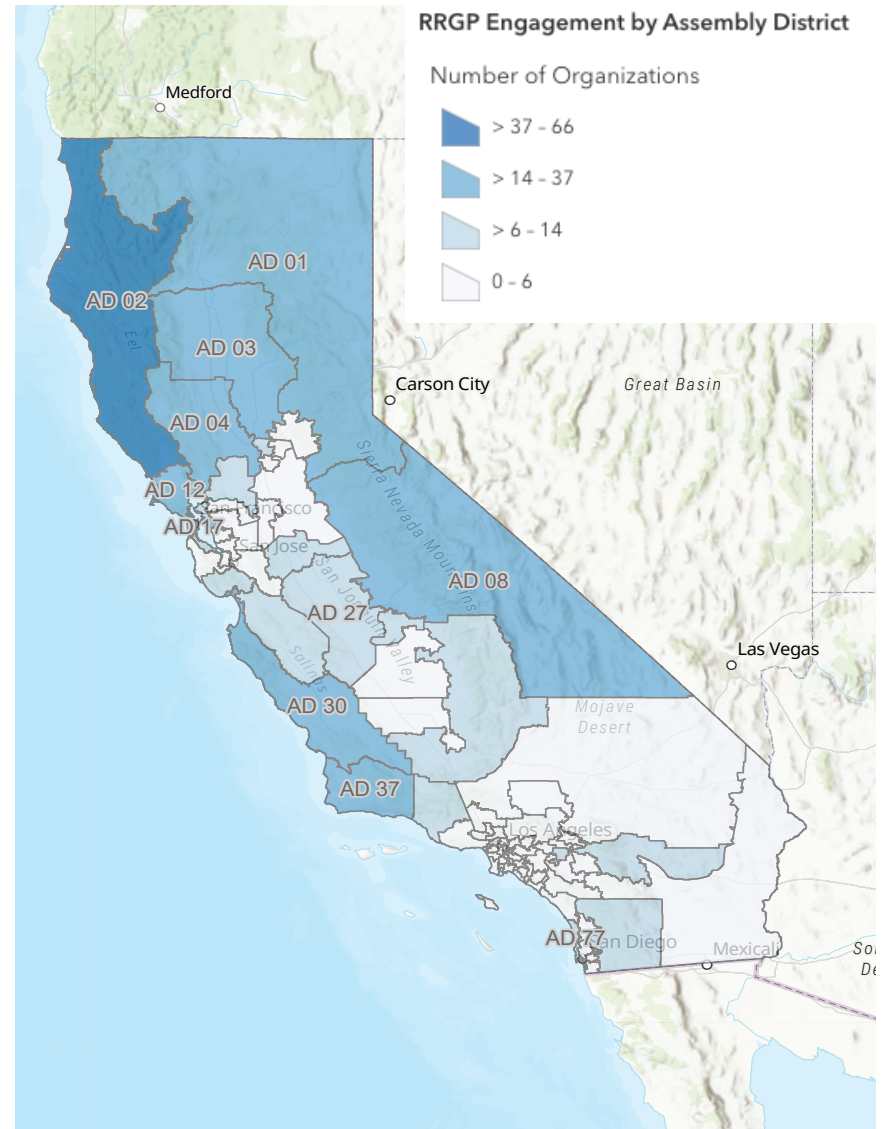
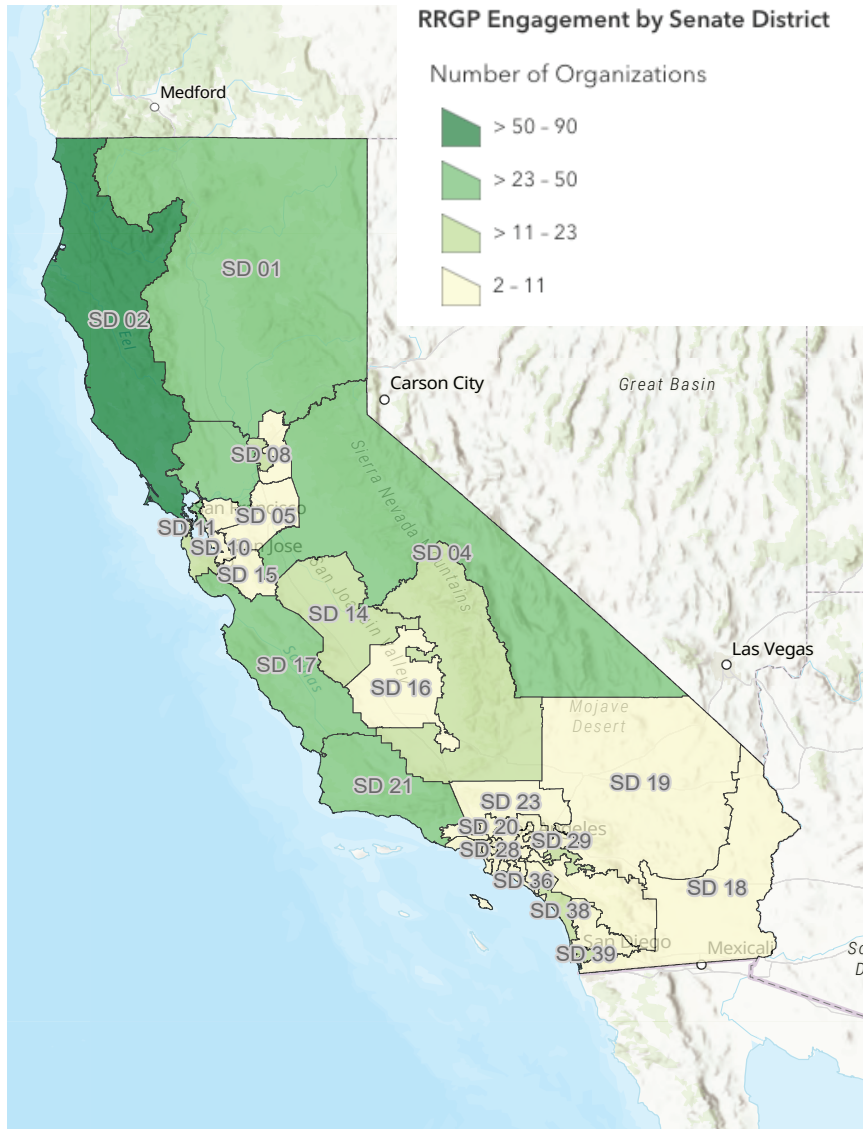


Figure 6. Number of Engaged Organizations by Senate and Assembly District.



Stage 0: Ongoing Engagement

The **Ongoing Engagement Stage** encompasses engagement with RRGPs through regular, ongoing outreach channels, including email, listservs, and phone calls. 541 individuals (representing at least 255 distinct organizations) subscribed to the Regional Resilience Grant Program Email Signup list; 401 of these individuals also subscribe to at least one other ICARP or OPR Constant Contact listserv.

The San Diego and Inland Desert regions saw only 15 and 8 engaged organizations, respectively (see Figure 7).

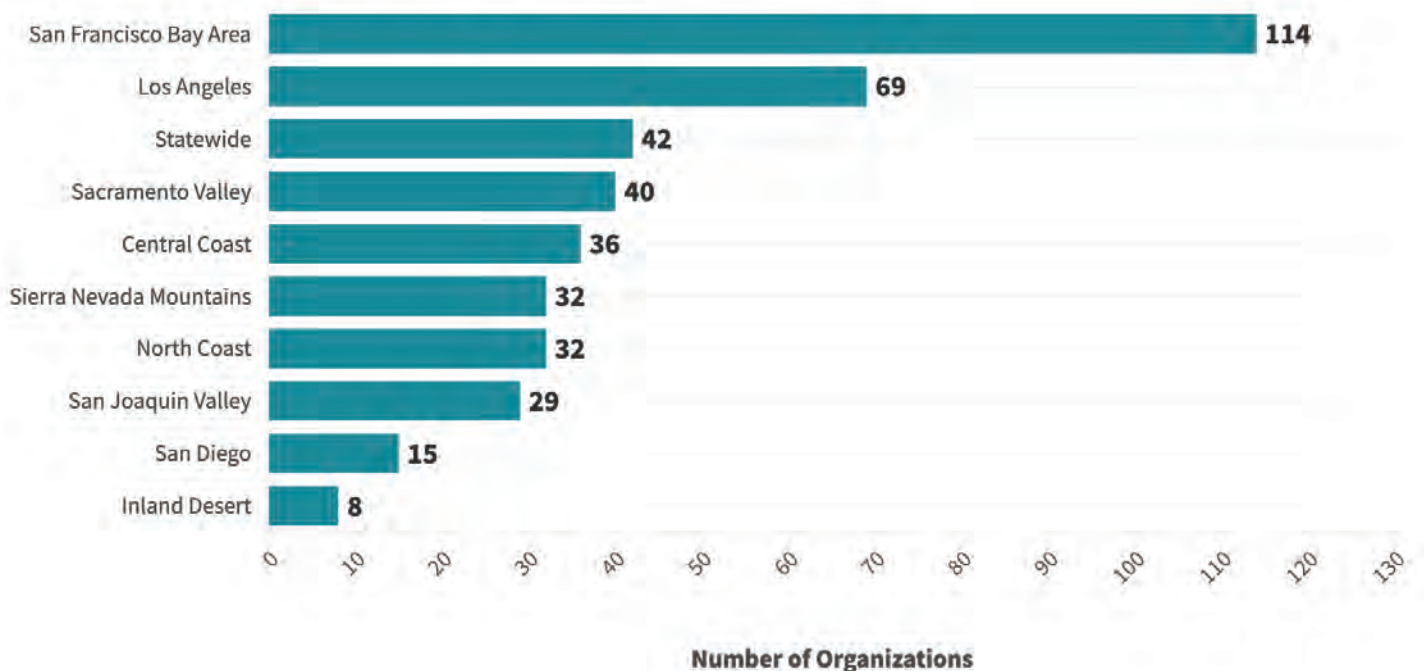
- Organization Type:** The largest organization type group was local government entities (166 organizations), followed by nonprofits (134) and consultants (106).

Key Takeaways

- Regional Distribution:** 114 organizations were from or represent communities in the San Francisco Bay Area region, nearly double the next largest regional group (69 organizations from the Los Angeles region).

Figure 7. Stage 0 Engagement by Region

There was no regional affiliation data for 132 organizations.



Stage 1: Program Development and Feedback

The **Program Development and Feedback Stage** offered California’s adaptation and resilience planning community the opportunity to have input on the development of RRGPs through listening sessions, participating in workshops to review the draft guidelines, stakeholder interviews, and an engagement and feedback survey. This stage had the largest impact on engagement, reaching almost 400 organizations.

Key Takeaways

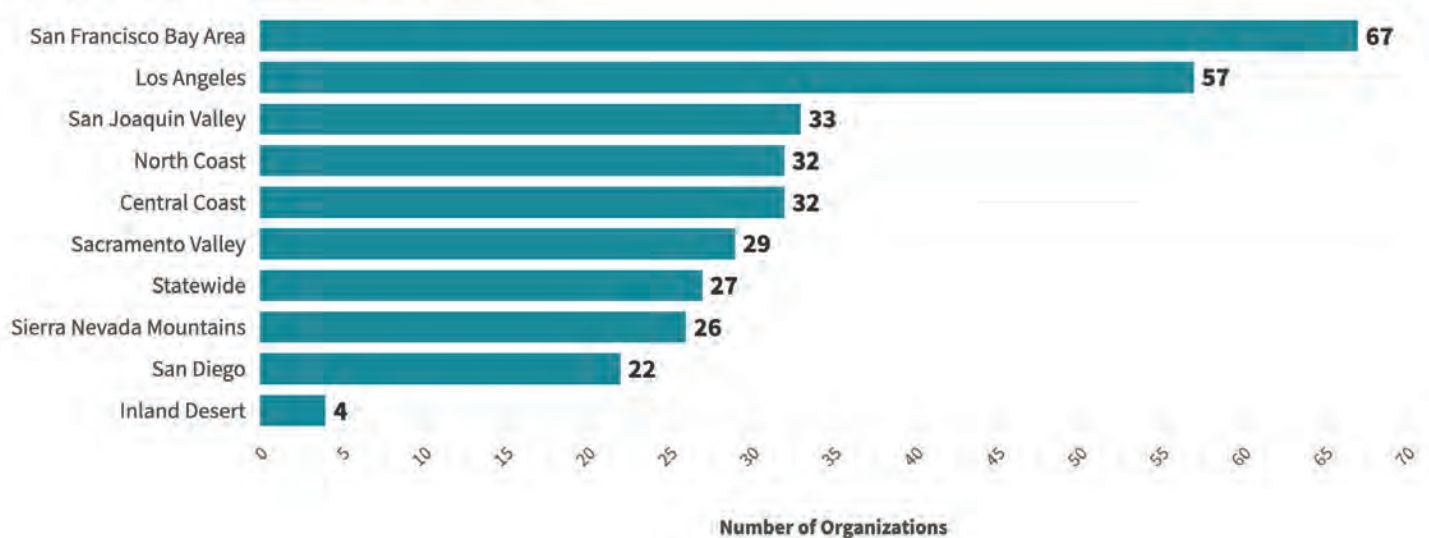
- **Listening Sessions:** Staff held eight Listening Sessions, including a preliminary listening session at the ICARP Technical Advisory Council meeting, which 390 people attended.
- **Draft Guideline Workshops:** Once Draft Program Guidelines were available for public comment, staff held six Draft Guideline Workshops, which 165 people attended.

Staff also allowed for feedback on the Draft Guidelines via a survey, which received responses representing the views of 11 organizations.

- **Regional Distribution:** Organizations based in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles regions participated in the highest numbers, while organizations based in the Inland Desert region were represented in the lowest number. However, the San Joaquin Valley, Central Coast, North Coast, Sierra Nevada Mountains, Sacramento Valley, and San Diego regions, as well as statewide organizations, were equally represented. RRGP staff held Listening Sessions and Draft Guidelines Workshops by region, which likely encouraged more robust and sustained engagement from typically underrepresented regions of the state (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Stage 1 Engagement by Region

There was not regional affiliation data for 69 organizations.



Stage 2: Application Intent

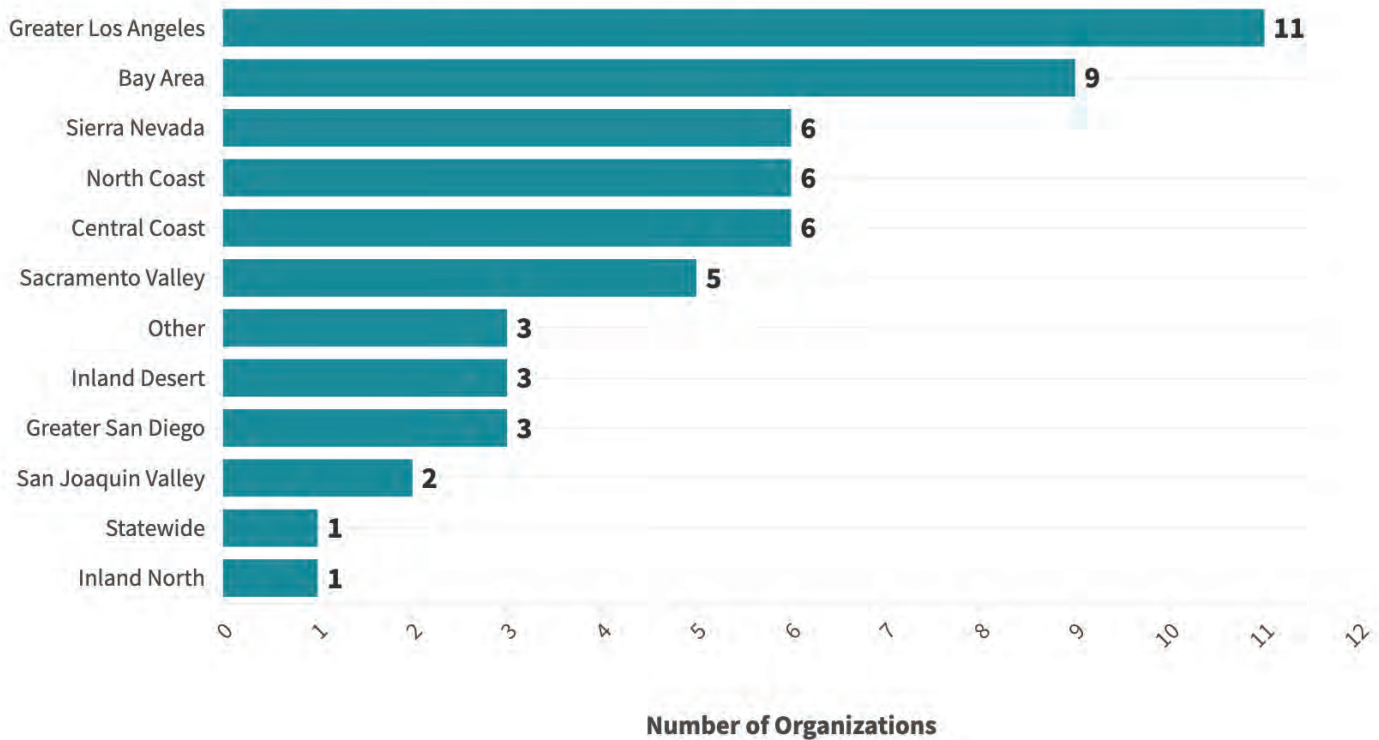
During the **Application Intent Stage**, prospective applicants submitted responses to the Intent to Apply Survey and the Request for Help Survey.

Key Takeaways: Request for Help Survey

The *Request for Help Survey*, which received 41 responses (from 40 distinct organizations), asked prospective applicants to submit questions they had about the program, their projects, or related programs. Applicants were also encouraged to ask RRGP staff for technical assistance or help with specific application components.

- **Regional Distribution:**⁴⁶ The majority of responses to the *Request for Help Survey* came from organizations in the Los Angeles region, the San Francisco Bay Area region, and the Central Coast region (see Figure 9).
- **Organization Type:** Most *Request for Help Survey* respondents were public entities; very few were academic institutions or Tribes.
- **Prospective Applicant Questions:** Most of the questions submitted in the *Request for Help Survey* were about project eligibility or fit for RRGP, application support, and project development.

Figure 9. Request for Help Survey Respondents by Region



Key Takeaways: Intent to Apply Survey

The *Intent to Apply Survey*, which received 176 responses (from 164 distinct lead-applicant organizations), asked lead applicants to provide information about the project they intend to apply for RRGF funding to support. The total estimated funding request through the *Intent to Apply Survey* was \$196,934,150.30 (see Table 6 below).

- **Regional Distribution:** Organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area region, the Los Angeles region, and the North Coast region submitted the majority of responses to the *Intent to Apply Survey*. 37 survey responses listed multiple regions on their applications (see Figure 10).
- **Organization Type:** Most survey respondents were public entities or community-based organizations; like the *Request for Help Survey*, very few responses were from academic institutions or Tribes.
- **Climate Risks:** *Intent to Apply* projects covered a wide range of climate risks, with the largest number of projects addressing extreme heat and the fewest addressing sea level rise (see Figure 11). 150 projects address multiple climate risks. Projects that address “other” climate risks also cover a wide range of potential climate impacts and policy issue areas, including but not limited to:
 - public health (including physical, mental, and emotional health),
 - climate equity and justice concerns (including the impacts of displacement),
 - extreme weather conditions,
 - air quality and pollution, and
 - energy resilience and reliability.
- **Technical Assistance Requests:** The top requested type of technical assistance was help navigating grant programs. Respondents who selected “other” requested assistance related to large-scale funding, navigating relationships with State agencies, and project phasing.

Table 6. Intent to Apply Survey responses and total estimated funding needed by project type.

	Number of Intent to Apply Survey Responses	Total Estimated Funding Request
Planning Projects	105	\$57,452,261.00
Implementation Projects	71	\$139,481,889.30

Figure 10. Intent to Apply Survey Respondents by Region

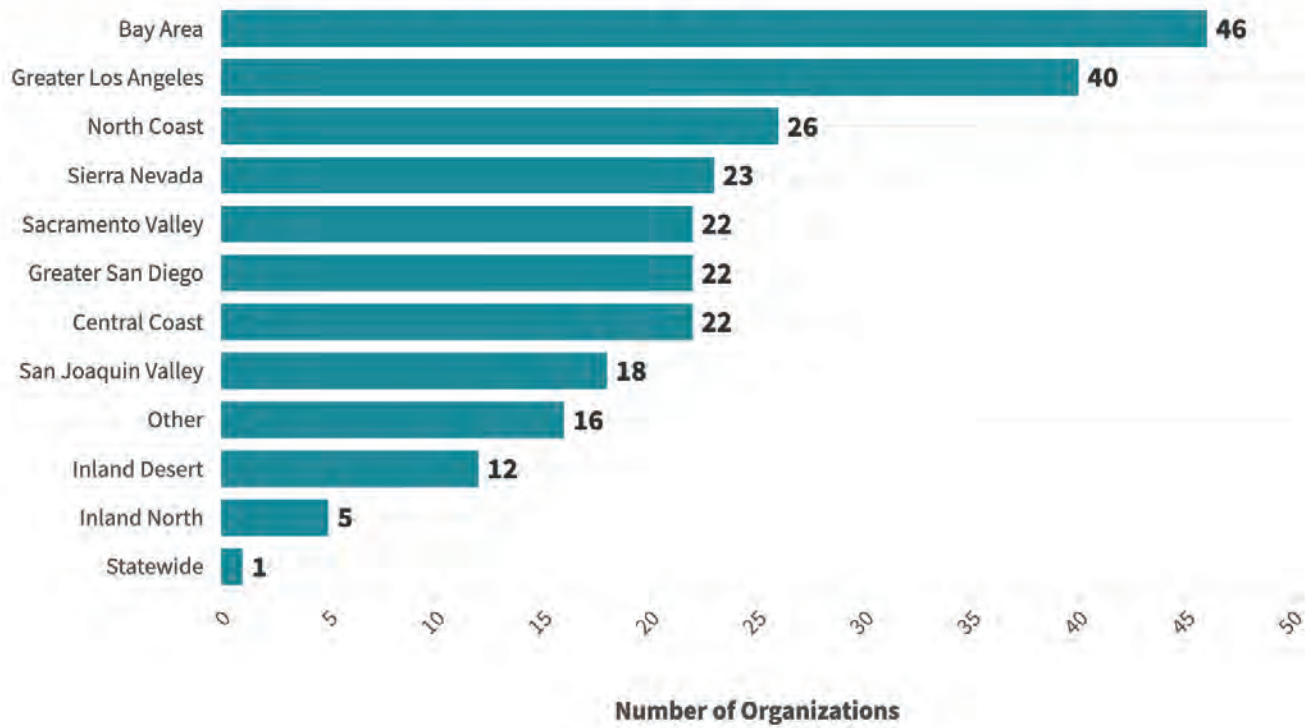
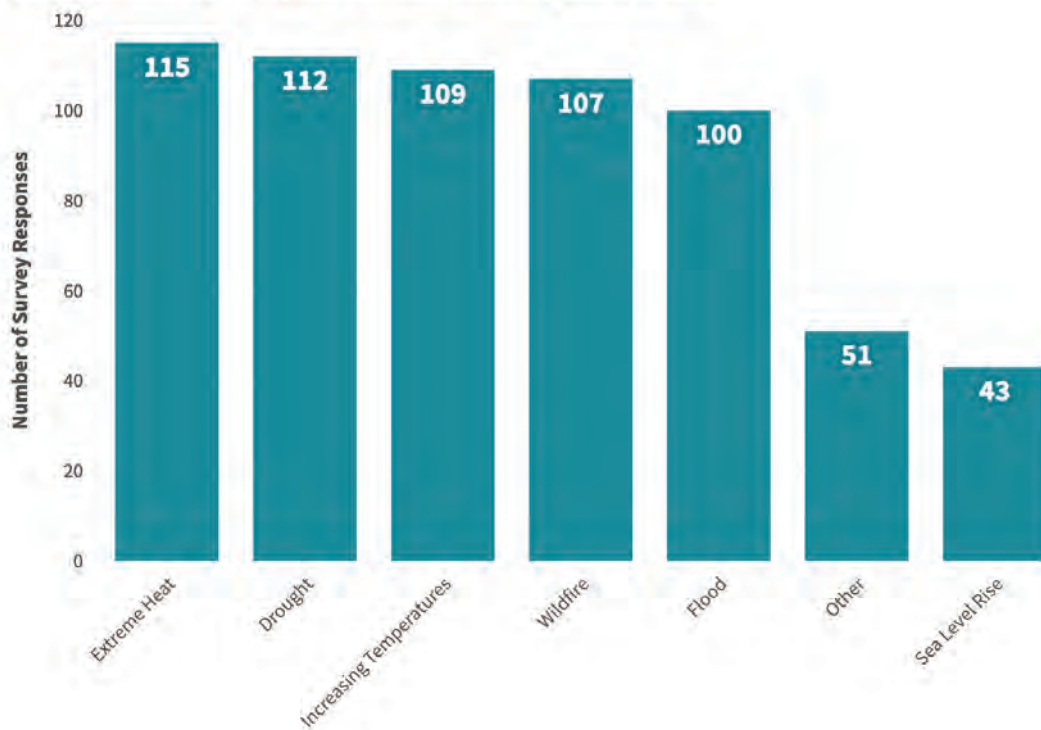


Figure 11. Intent to Apply Survey Responses by Climate Risk



Data from the **Application Intent Stage** provide some insight into program demand. Out of the 176 responses to the *Intent to Apply Survey*, 115 (65%) indicated that they had already applied for, planned to apply for, or are considering applying for other state funding programs to support their project in

addition to RRGF. Table 7 summarizes the number of survey responses that selected each funding program as an alternative or additional funding source.

Table 7. Alternative or additional state funding programs listed in the Intent to Apply Survey responses.

Program Name	Program Administrator	Number of Survey Response References
Community Resilience Centers Grant Program (CRC)	Strategic Growth Council	38
Adaptation Planning Grant Program	Office of Planning and Research	35
Regional Climate Collaboratives	Strategic Growth Council	27
Transforming Climate Communities	Strategic Growth Council	23
California Department of Fish and Wildlife Grant Programs	California Department of Fish and Wildlife	14
Forest Health Grants	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection	13
Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program	California Department of Water Resources	8
Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program	California Department of Conservation	7
Local Coastal Program Grants	California Coastal Commission	6
Tribal Research Grant Program	Office of Planning and Research	2

Stage 3: Application Process and Support

The **Application Process and Support Stage** offered prospective applicants an opportunity to seek support with RRGF application through Application Support Workshops and Office Hours. 298 organizations engaged at this stage.

- **Office Hours:** Staff also held thirteen office hour sessions for which applicants could register to discuss specific topics related to their project application; 70 people attended office hours (see Figure 13).

Key Takeaways

- **Application Support Workshops:** Staff held seven workshops attended by 225 people, representing at least 188 distinct organizations. 51 organizations attended multiple workshops.
- **Regional Distribution:**⁴⁷ The largest number of organizations that attended a workshop were based in or represent communities in the Los Angeles region (37 organizations), the Bay Area region (28 organizations), the North Coast region (21 organizations), and the San Joaquin Valley region (20 organizations) (see Figure 12).
- **Organization Type:** The largest share of organizations that attended application support workshops were local government entities (82 organizations), followed by nonprofit or community-based organizations (46 organizations).

Figure 12. Application Support Workshop Attendees by Region

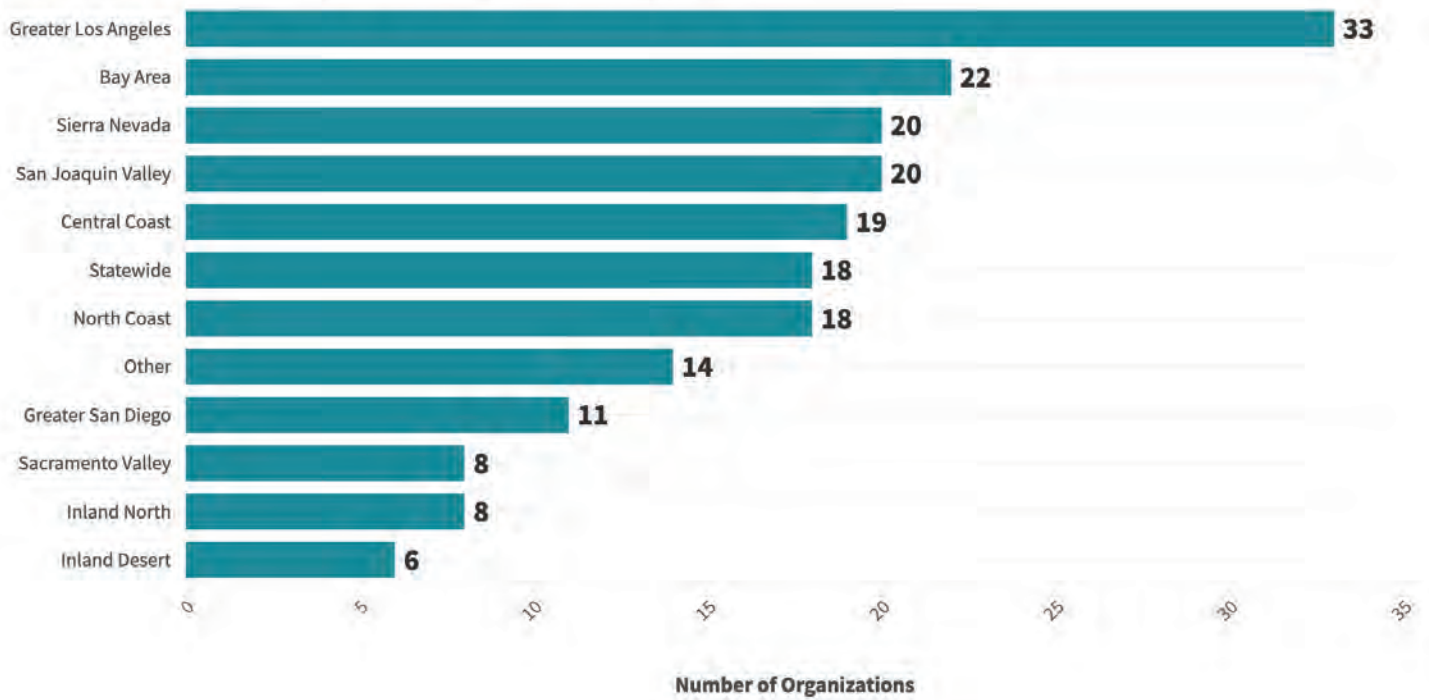
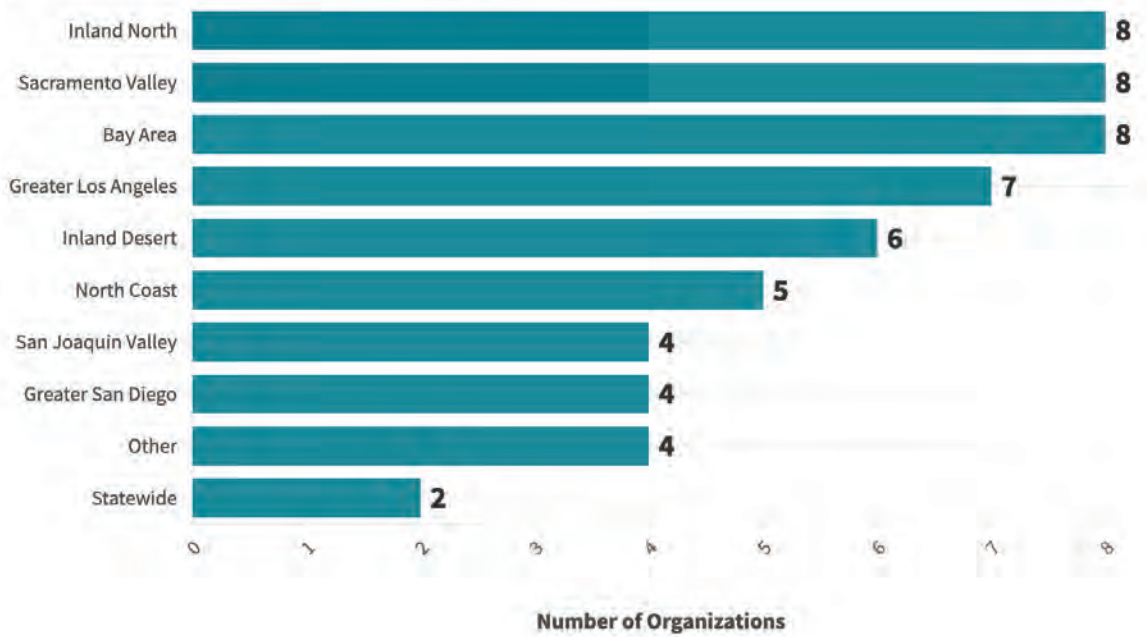


Figure 13. Office Hour Attendees by Region



A Closer Look at Project Applications and Program Applicants

Project Applications

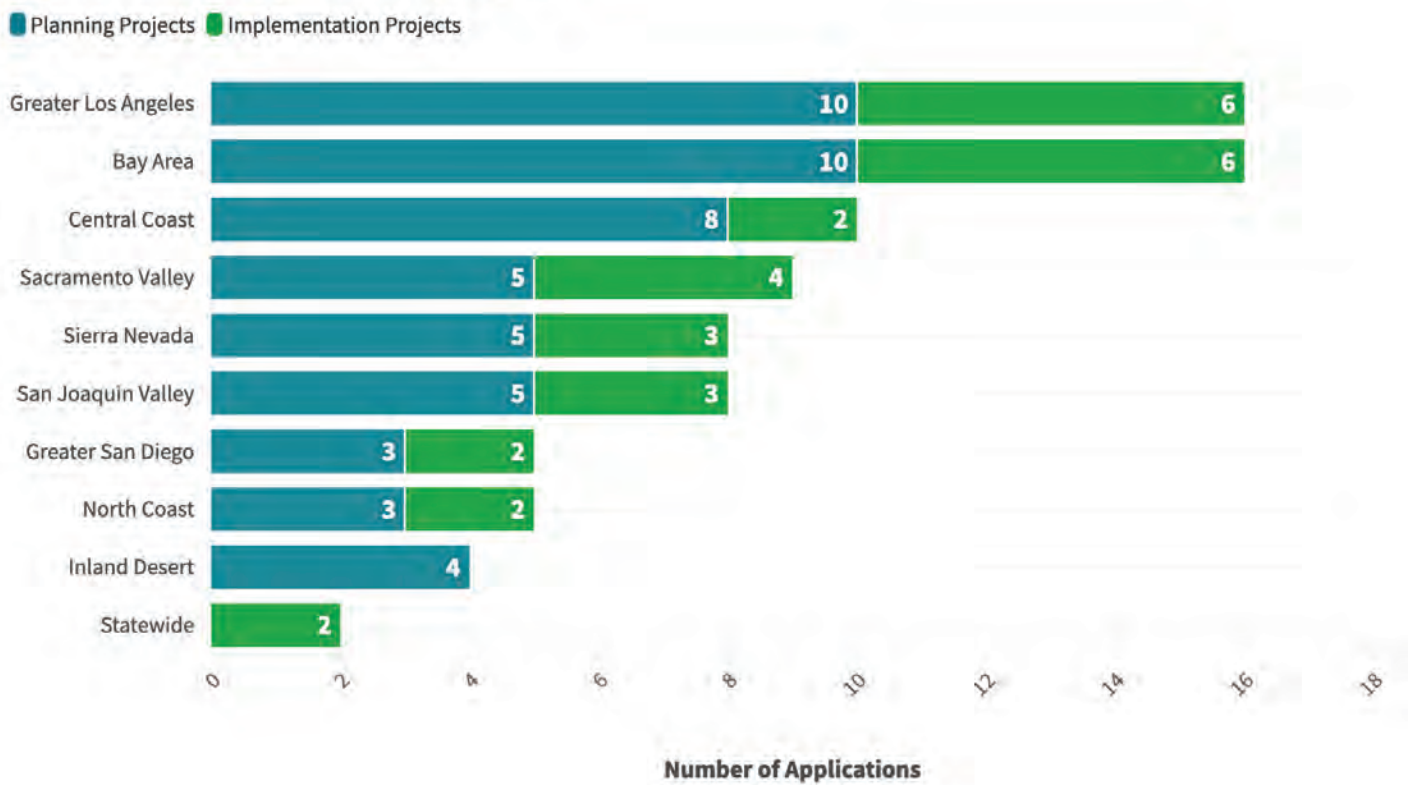
During Stage 4, RRGP received 83 applications requesting \$106,647,369.68 in funding. Requested funds were distributed between planning and implementation project applications:

- **30 applications for implementation projects** (36% of applications), totaling \$76,395,881.49 in requested funding
- **53 applications for planning projects** (64% of applications), totaling \$30,251,488.19 in requested funding

Regional Coverage

The RRGP application asked applicants to self-describe the region and regional-scale partnerships that their project would support. However, the Final Program Guidelines Funding Goals aim for awarded projects to reflect Regional Diversity and will evaluate diversity using the California Climate Adaptation Strategy Regions.⁴⁸ Figure 14 summarizes the number of applications by region; projects could support more than one California Climate Adaptation Strategy Region, though these ‘secondary’ regions are not captured in Figure 14.

Figure 14. RRGP Applications by Region



Applicants and Co-Applicants

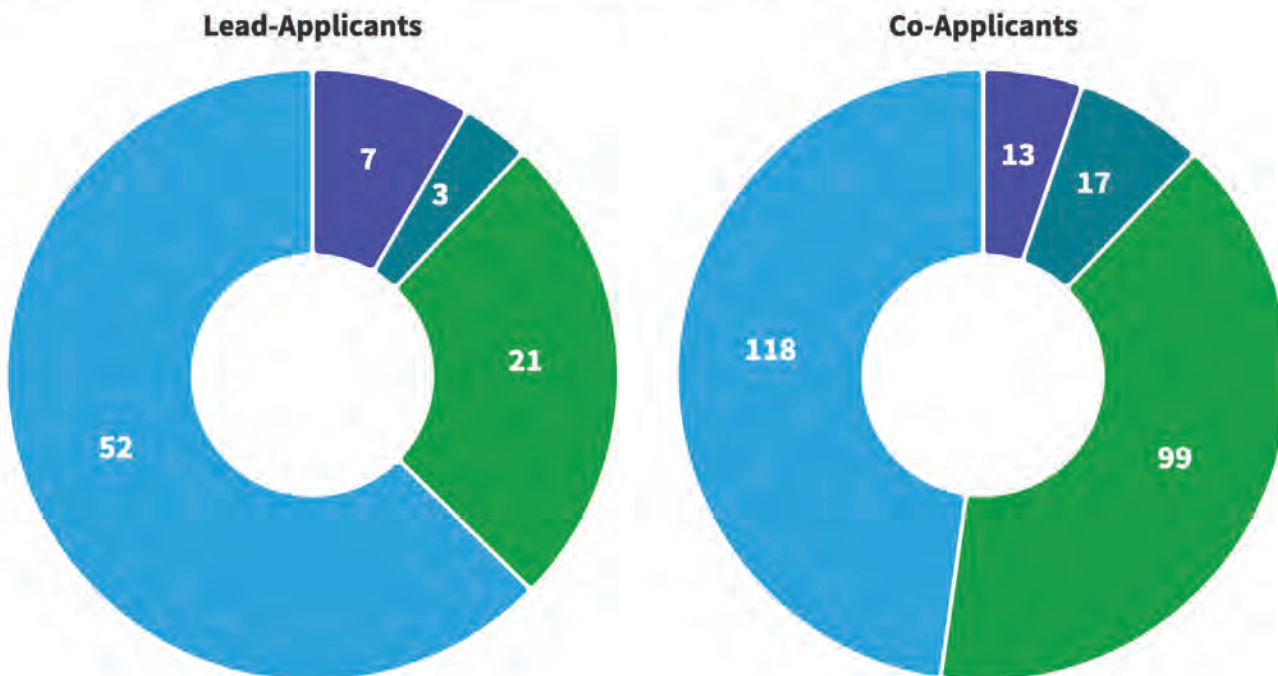
293 organizations engaged with RRGP as either lead applicants or co-applicants. 15 of these organizations were both lead applicants and co-applicants on different project applications.

Public entities, including local governments and regional agencies or collaboratives, are the most common lead applicants, followed by community-

based organizations or nonprofits. Project co-applicants are more varied in organization type than lead applicants (see Figure 15). Over 60% of lead applicants were public entities, while only 47% of co-applicants were public entities. Community-based organizations made up a larger share of co-applicants (40% as opposed to 25%), as did Tribal Governments or affiliated tribal organizations (7% as opposed to 3%).

Figure 15. Number of Lead and Co-Applicants by Type

■ Academic Institution
 ■ California Native American Tribe
 ■ Community-based Organization
 ■ Public Entity



Program Support of Equity-Oriented Activities

RRGP administers grants competitively but also includes a funding set-asides to ensure the equitable distribution of funds in alignment with ICARP's vision and principles.⁴⁹

Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) Funding

RRGP Program Guidelines note that at least 51% of grant funds will be allocated to projects that directly benefit DACs. In order for the application to qualify for the DAC set-aside, it must demonstrate:

1. DACs make up at least 51% of the project applicants' combined jurisdiction by Census tracts or population.
2. The project directly benefits DACs.

Applicants were encouraged to use several tools and definitions to identify DACs in their region and demonstrate eligibility:

- Defined as disadvantaged by the California Environmental Protection Agency, CalEPA (see the CalEPA's Disadvantaged Communities Map); or
- Census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or with median household incomes at or below the threshold

designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development's, HUD's, list of income limits adopted pursuant to Section 50093 of the California Health and Safety Code; or

- Census tracts with a median household income less than 80% of the statewide average.

California Native American Tribes

RRGP Program Guidelines identify that at least 10% of grant funds will support projects with at least one applicant that is a California Native American tribe.

Priority Community Engagement with RRGF

Out of 83 project applications, 43 qualify for the DAC set-aside funding (52%). There are minor differences in regional coverage for DAC-eligible projects compared to all projects. Most applications are still from applicants or benefit communities in the Los Angeles region; however, the Bay Area represents a much smaller share of DAC-Eligible projects (2%) than all projects (19%). Notably, the San Joaquin Valley region was more represented (19% of DAC-eligible projects, compared to 10% of all projects), as was the North Coast region, the Sierra Nevada region, and the Inland Desert region. Other shifts in regional distribution include lower representation from San Diego and Central Coast organizations.

Lead Applicants of DAC-Eligible Projects

The 43 organizations that were lead applications on DAC-eligible projects did not differ substantially in their engagement at other Program Engagement Stages from lead applicants whose projects were not DAC-eligible:

- 33-37% subscribe to a Listserv
- 20-30% attended a Listening Session *
- 12-20% attended a Draft Guidelines Workshop **
- 92-93% submitted an *Intent to Apply Survey* *
 - 82 of the 176 (47%) proposed projects may have qualified for the DAC set-aside based on the language used to describe communities served in the “Project Description” column.
- 25-28% participated in an Application Workshop

* *Non-DAC Applicants were higher*; ** *DAC-Applicants were higher*.

California Native American Tribes

There were 20 Tribal applicants to RRG, including 17 co-applicants and three lead applicants. Tribal applicants were the most concentrated in the Los Angeles region (5), the North Coast region (5), and the Sierra Nevada region (4). All three Tribal lead applicants submitted a response to the *Intent to Apply Survey* (Engagement Stage 2), and two lead applicants and three co-applicants attended the Application Workshops (Engagement Stage 3).

V. Summary of Program Awards

The first round of RRGP [designated 16 awardees](#), spanning ten planning projects and six implementation projects and totaling \$21.7 million in funding (see Figure 16). RRGP is funding at least one project from each California Climate Adaptation Region, as shown in Figure 17. Thirteen of the 16 awardees qualify for the DAC set-aside funding, and nine qualify for the Tribal set-aside funding (see Figure 19). 87% of distributed funds will support DAC set-aside eligible projects, and 65% will support Tribal set-aside eligible projects (see Figure 20), exceeding RRGP’s funding goals for supporting disadvantaged and Tribal communities.

The full list of awardees is shown in Table 8 and summarized in further detail below.

Figure 16. RRGP Awardees by Project Type

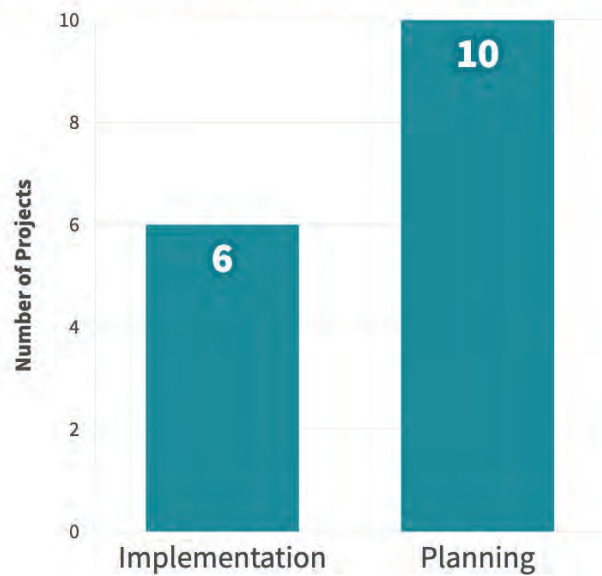


Figure 17. RRGP Awardees by Primary Region

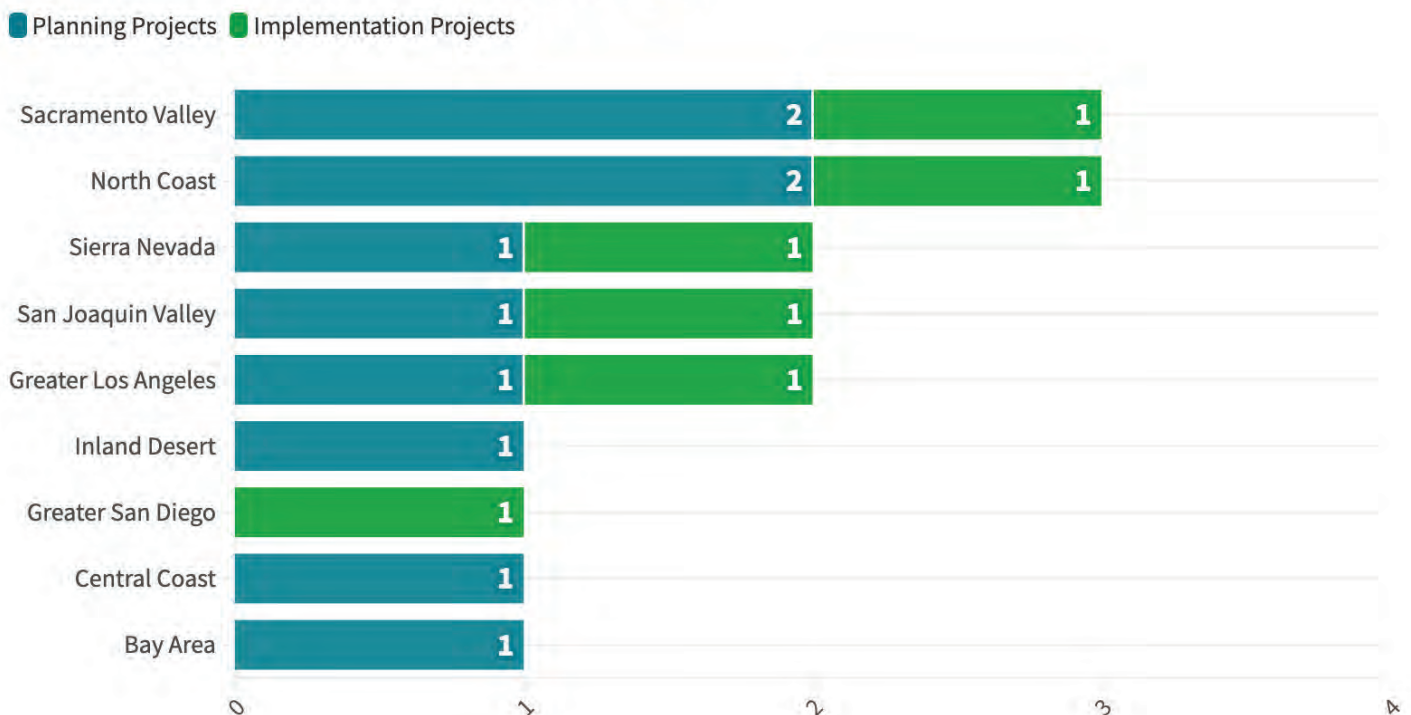


Figure 18. RRGP Awardees by Climate Risk

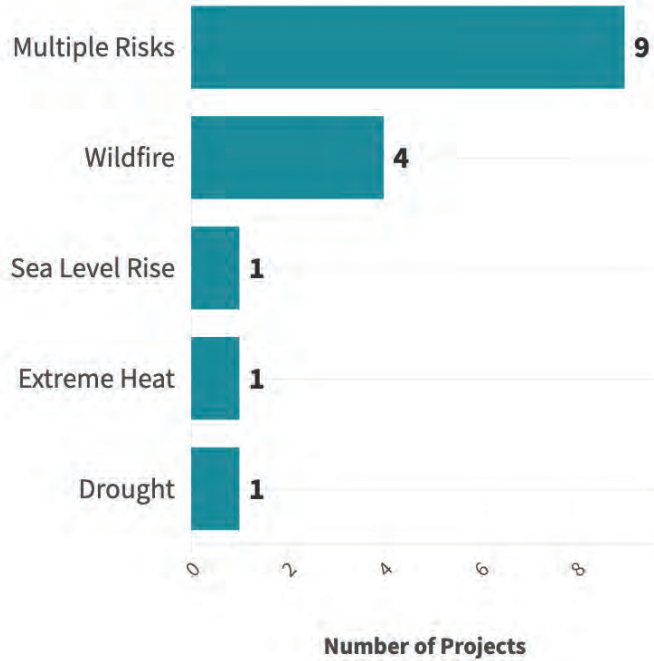


Figure 19. RRGP Awardees by Funding Set-Asides

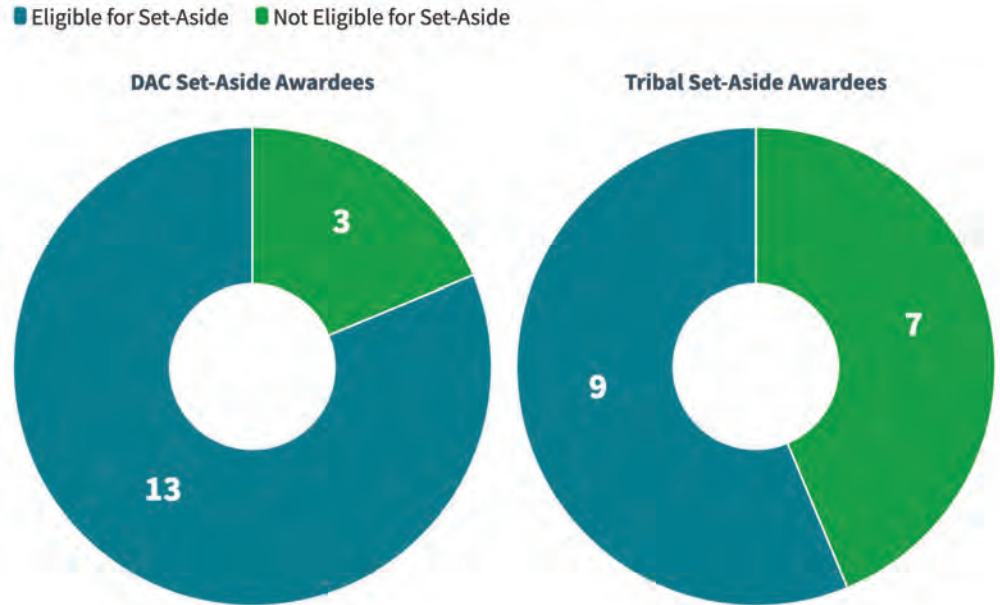


Figure 20. RRGP Fund Distribution by Funding Set-Asides

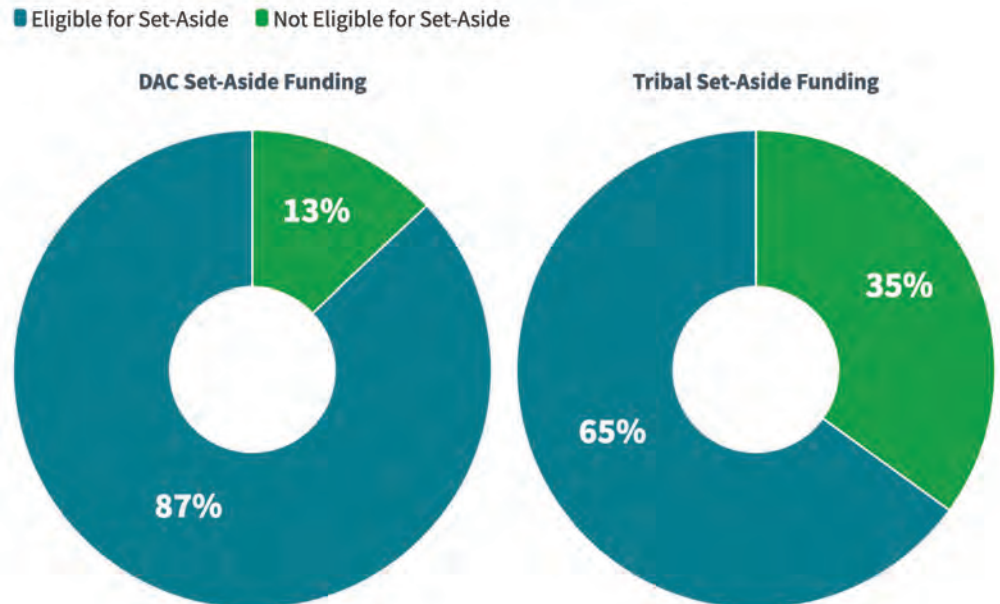


Table 8. RRGP Round 1 Program Awards.

Project	Project Type	Region/s	Funding Amount
Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma Tribal Resilience Initiative on Air Quality and Drought	Planning	North Coast	\$657,415
North Coast Regional Climate Resilience Plan	Planning	North Coast, Bay Area, Sierra Nevada	\$650,000
Paradise Regional Wildfire Resilience Implementation Plan	Planning	Sacramento Valley, Sierra Nevada	\$570,533
Santa Ana River Watershed Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan	Planning	Greater Los Angeles, Inland Desert	\$644,190
Yolo County Regional Resilience Collaborative	Planning	Sacramento Valley	\$598,420
Monterey Bay Adaptation and Resilience Implementation and Funding Roadmap	Planning	Central Coast	\$649,335
Coachella Valley Regional Water Resilience Plan	Planning	Inland Desert	\$649,335
Solano Bayshore Resiliency Project	Planning	Bay Area	\$601,113
Climate Resiliency through Regional Water Recharge in the San Joaquin Valley	Planning	San Joaquin Valley, Sierra Nevada	\$568,888
Building Climate Resilience in the Central Sierra Region	Planning	Sierra Nevada	\$650,000
Regional Cohesive Fire Strategy for Evacuation Preparedness and Wildfire Resilience	Implementation	Greater San Diego	\$1,588,838
Los Angeles Regional Collaborative: Heat Education, Ambassadors, and Training (LARC-HEAT)	Implementation	Greater Los Angeles	\$2,999,999
Energy-Resilient Fire Services in High-Threat Communities	Implementation	North Coast	\$3,000,000
Cultural Fire & Land Stewardship for Wildfire & Climate Resilience	Implementation	Sierra Nevada, Bay Area	\$2,989,995
Le Grand Community Water Program	Implementation	San Joaquin Valley	\$3,000,000
Ķó:dom Hÿbísín (“Land Stewardship”)	Implementation	Sacramento Valley, Sierra Nevada	\$1,931,410

Planning Projects

1. Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma Tribal Resilience Initiative on Air Quality and Drought

North Coast - \$657,415

Lead: Public Health Institute

Partners: Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians, Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians, Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians

Summary: The MLS-TRIAD Project will address the shared concerns of Tribes and farmworkers about drought, air quality, and climate change through equitable planning, developing monitoring networks, evaluating water quality, and tracking outcomes for continual improvement.

2. North Coast Regional Climate Resilience Plan

North Coast, Bay Area, Sierra Nevada - \$650,000

Lead: County of Humboldt/North Coast Resource Partnership

Partners: Watershed Research and Training Center, Sonoma Water

Summary: The North Coast Regional Climate Resilience Plan Project will prioritize vulnerable communities while addressing multiple climate risks, forge diverse partnerships for an actionable vision, and strengthen community capacity through planning, data integration, and stakeholder engagement.

3. Paradise Regional Wildfire Resilience Implementation Plan

Sacramento Valley, Sierra Nevada - \$570,533

Lead: Paradise Recreation and Park District

Partners: Town of Paradise, Rural Community Assistance Corporation, Camp Fire Collaborative

Summary: The Paradise Regional Wildfire Resilience Implementation Plan will build from previous modeling work to develop an implementation plan, including appropriate regional governance structures and cost-benefit analyses, to build regional wildfire buffer zones.

4. Santa Ana River Watershed Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan

Greater Los Angeles, Inland Desert - \$644,190

Lead: Santa Ana River Watershed Project Authority

Partners: The Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, Inland Southern California Climate Collaborative

Summary: The Santa Ana River Watershed Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan Project will address climate risks such as drought, wildfire, and flooding, develop multi-benefit strategies that benefit the entire watershed, and provide resources to pursue implementation funding.

5. Yolo County Regional Resilience Collaborative

Sacramento Valley - \$598,420

Lead: County of Yolo

Partners: Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, City of Davis, City of Woodland, University of California, Davis, Cool Davis, Valley Vision, Inc.

Summary: The Yolo County Regional Resilience Collaborative Project will build the region's first collaborative structure and engage vulnerable communities to identify shared climate priorities, establish a governance structure, and develop a funding strategy.

6. Monterey Bay Adaptation and Resilience Implementation and Funding Roadmap

Central Coast - \$649,335

Lead: City of Watsonville

Partners: City of Santa Cruz, CivicWell, Ecology Action, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, Regeneración of Pajaro Valley

Summary: The Monterey Bay Adaptation and Resilience Implementation and Funding Roadmap Project will develop funding and implementation plans for priority adaptation goals, particularly addressing underserved and vulnerable communities.

7. Coachella Valley Regional Water Resilience Plan

Inland Desert - \$649,335

Lead: Coachella Valley Water District

Partners: Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, Pueblo Unido Community Development Corporation

Summary: The Coachella Valley Regional Water Resilience Plan Project will address structural barriers to clean water access, prepare for droughts, improve infrastructure resilience, and align regional plans and state water management objectives.

8. Solano Bayshore Resiliency Project

Bay Area - \$601,113

Lead: Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District

Partners: City of Suisun City, Greenbelt Alliance, Solano Resource Conservation District

Summary: The Solano Bayshore Resiliency Project will involve diverse stakeholders to create a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Analysis and Action Plan, emphasizing nature-based solutions and community engagement to address climate hazards that affect vulnerable communities.

9. Climate Resiliency through Regional Water Recharge in the San Joaquin Valley

San Joaquin Valley - \$568,888

Lead: California State University, Fresno Foundation - California Water Institute

Partners: Self-Help Enterprises, North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency, Madera County Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Summary: The Climate Resiliency through Regional Water Recharge in the San Joaquin Valley Project will address drought and flooding by planning for sustainable use of surface and groundwater, educating rural communities, and establishing a collaborative response team for effective floodwater management, ensuring vulnerable communities are prioritized.

10. Building Climate Resilience in the Central Sierra Region

Sierra Nevada - \$650,000

Lead: County of Nevada

Partners: Town of Truckee, Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe, Truckee Tahoe Airport District, Truckee Donner Public Utility District, Sierra Business Council

Summary: The Building Climate Resilience in the Central Sierra Region Project will develop a climate collaborative and create a Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan that embeds indigenous knowledge, prioritizes vulnerable populations, and enhances regional readiness for multiple climate risks.

Implementation Projects

1. Regional Cohesive Fire Strategy for Evacuation Preparedness and Wildfire Resilience

Greater San Diego - \$1,588,838

Lead: County of San Diego

Partners: City of San Diego, Fire Safe Council of San Diego County

Summary: The Regional Cohesive Fire Strategy for Evacuation Preparedness and Wildfire Resilience Project will address wildfire hazards for high-risk communities by educating residents, maintaining defensible space, and safeguarding evacuation routes.

2. Los Angeles Regional Collaborative: Heat Education, Ambassadors, and Training (LARC-HEAT)

Greater Los Angeles - \$2,999,999

Lead: University of California, Los Angeles/Los Angeles Regional Collaborative

Partners: Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Rising Communities, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Summary: The LARC-HEAT Project will address extreme heat by implementing a comprehensive Heat Ambassador initiative to educate and protect heat-vulnerable communities.

3. Energy-Resilient Fire Services in High-Threat Communities

North Coast - \$3,000,000

Lead: Redwood Coast Energy Authority

Partners: Yurok Tribe Fire Department, Karuk Tribe Department of Natural Resources, Hoopa Fire Department, Blue Lake Volunteer Fire Department, Fruitland Volunteer Fire Company, Orick Volunteer Fire Department, Orleans Volunteer Fire Department, Petrolia Volunteer Fire Department, Honeydew Volunteer Fire Department, Schatz Energy Research Center

Summary: The Energy-Resilient Fire Services in High-Threat Communities Project will install energy-resilience infrastructure for fire stations in high-risk areas, ensuring continuous emergency response in remote and vulnerable communities.

4. Cultural Fire & Land Stewardship for Wildfire & Climate Resilience

Sierra Nevada, Bay Area - \$2,989,995

Lead: Tamien Nation

Partner: North Fork Mono Tribe

Summary: The Cultural Fire & Land Stewardship for Wildfire & Climate Resilience Project will form stewardship crews, conduct vegetation management, and raise awareness to restore indigenous practices and enhance wildfire protection on ancestral lands in a way that serves tribal entities in vulnerable areas.

5. Le Grand Community Water Program

San Joaquin Valley - \$3,000,000

Lead: Le Grand Athlone Water District

Partners: Le Grand Community Services District, Socio-Environmental Education Network (SEEN)

Summary: The Le Grand Community Water Program Project will address drought and flood risks through sustainable groundwater management practices that benefit vulnerable communities including new well construction, irrigation canal connections, and community education programs.

6. Kó:dom Hỳbísín (“Land Stewardship”)

Sacramento Valley, Sierra Nevada - \$1,931,410

Lead: Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria

Partners: Berry Creek Rancheria of Tyme Maidu Indians of California, California State University Chico, Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve

Summary: The Kó:dom Hỳbísín (“Land Stewardship”) Project will address wildfire, extreme heat, and drought hazards by employing a land stewardship crew to treat 300 acres using cultural fire, reducing fuel loads, and cultivating climate-resilient vegetation.

VI. Improving Regional Climate Resiliency Planning

The following recommendations address challenges and opportunities for the future development of RRGP, informed by an analysis of program data and interviews with stakeholders. These contribute to a wider discussion of ICARP's considerations in improving regional climate resiliency planning as directed by the Budget Act of 2021.⁵⁰

Recommendations for Future RRGP Development

Limitations in applicant capacity to pursue RRGP grants pose the primary barrier to an equitable, comprehensive, and effective resilience strategy. The following points highlight a few of ICARP's essential capacity-building areas facilitating equitable distribution of RRGP funding.

Continue to better understand and address disparities in engagement with RRGP

In its first round of funding, RRGP met its regional funding goals. However, assessment of the engagement over the course of program development shows disparities in engagement between inland and coastal regions of the State. While some of this regional pattern can be explained by population (i.e., more densely populated regions will likely have a larger number of organizations working on resilience topics),

other factors, such as resource availability or viable project partnerships, may also influence this disparity. It is important to continue identifying the key drivers of regional disparities to better design engagement opportunities.

While ICARP has strongly emphasized accessibility in RRGP's development, a challenge persists in facilitating greater engagement in inland regions and vulnerable communities. ICARP can undertake the following actions to better understand and address these disparities:

- Partner with local organizations and/or local governments to conduct regular series of regional workshops in regions with lower levels of engagement.
- Consider establishing regional goals for program funding.
- Consider refining the definitions of DAC to increase inclusivity toward rural communities.
- Engage in ongoing, consistent, and meaningful collaboration and capacity building with federally recognized Tribes and EJ-focused organizations.
- Continue to engage in regular monitoring and evaluation of program engagement, especially in communities most in need of resilience support.
- Continue to provide technical assistance to support application accessibility

- Technical assistance in the application process is a crucial aspect of facilitating greater equity in program access. ICARP can undertake the following actions in providing technical support to applicants:
- Establish greater technical assistance resources in regions where program engagement is low.
- Ensure technical assistance providers have a strong understanding of local and regional context, goals, and needs.
- Consider supporting applicants in navigating application processes between multiple ICARP resilience grant programs.

Continue to develop and implement monitoring and evaluation processes for award outcomes

As the first round of awardees begin their projects in 2024, monitoring and evaluation of project outcomes will provide valuable data for future program development. We recommend ICARP continue its reporting efforts to include project evaluation against resilience outcomes. This is expected to contribute valuable insights into the impacts of state investment and further opportunities for strengthening effective and strategic resilience planning.

Recommendations for Improving Regional Resiliency Planning

ICARP has played a leading role in supporting regional resiliency efforts across California. As directed by the Budget Act of 2021, the following recommendations identify key learnings from RRGP in improving the State's strategy for regional resilience.

Continue to encourage multi-jurisdictional and multi-risk projects

Climate risks and impacts are not jurisdictionally bound. Feedback on RRGP has highlighted the essential role of regional collaboration in building climate resilience, echoing long-term stakeholder demand for regional collaboratives such as ARCCA. However, a coordinated approach to regional resilience planning is still nascent, and engagement with innovative governance structures for cross-jurisdictional collaboration should continue to be a priority. RRGP importantly contributes to this by not only facilitating multi-jurisdictional collaboration, but notably encouraging the self-definition of project regions.

Funding multi-risk projects also allows for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to resilience, enabling communities to prepare for and respond to a range of climate impacts simultaneously. RRGP's multi-risk structure provides an example of innovative resilience planning, and creative program structures that comprehensively address interconnected climate risks should continue to be encouraged.

Continue to effectively support the life cycle of resilience projects

Supporting pre-implementation capacity building is crucial to building sustainable community resilience. Investment over the life cycle of resilience projects increases equity and accessibility outcomes as well as facilitates long-term funding stability for applicants.

As the State develops its regional climate resilience strategy and its portfolio of funding programs, it is important to align program timelines to minimize demands on applicants and support all phases of project development from planning through implementation. In addition, regional resilience planning can be further streamlined by developing navigation tools for often overlapping application processes. The timeline in Figure 21 (next page) illustrates the

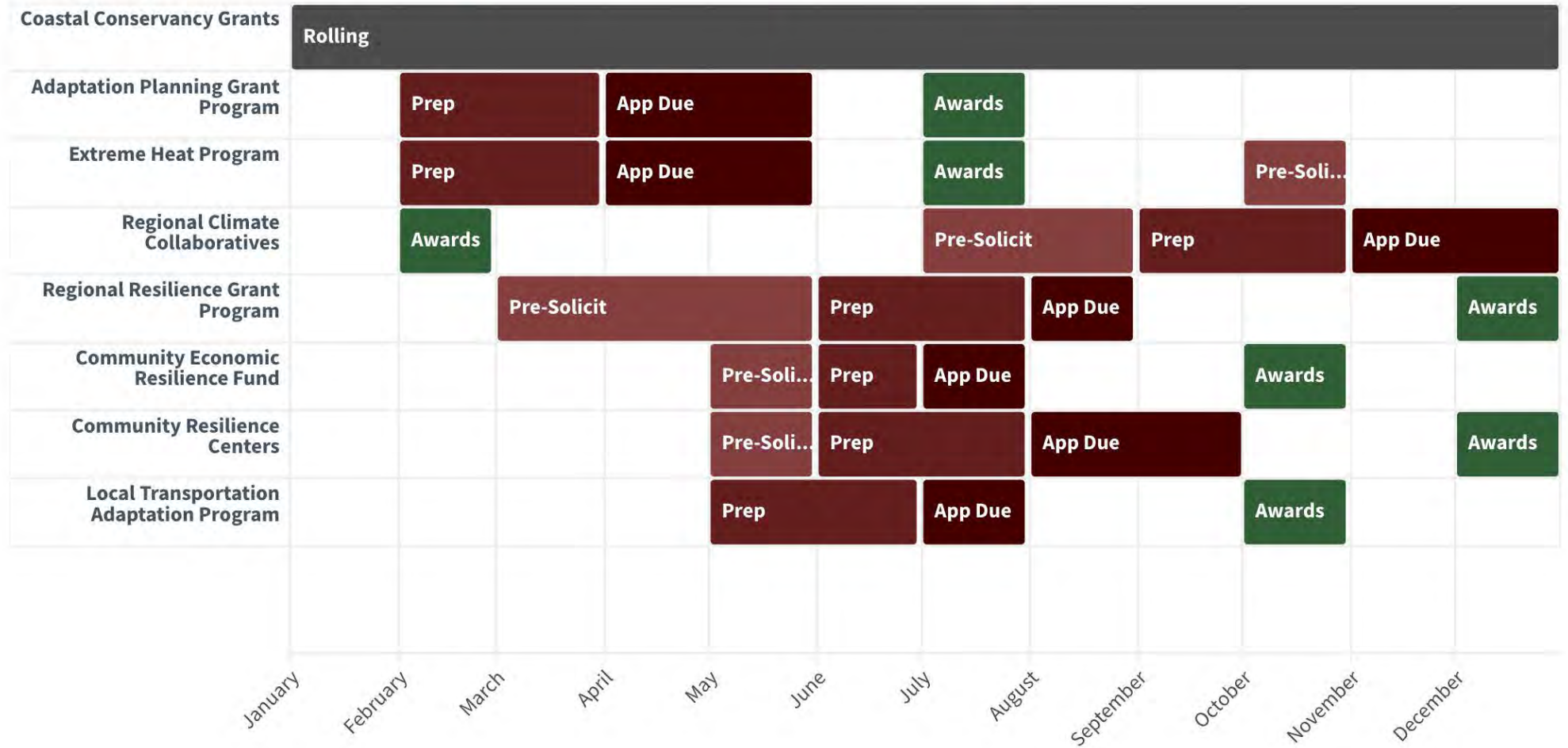
expected applicant capacity required to apply for comparable state grants in the current calendar year (programs included on this timeline are outlined in Table 3 ([Section II: State's investment in regional approaches to adaptation and resilience](#))).*

The three application timeline periods—Pre-Solicitation Activities, Application Prep, and Application Due—generally require increasing amounts of time and capacity from applicants. As shown in Figure 21, under current calendars, there is a concentration of activities that require a high level of engagement and work by applicants between April and October, with multiple application deadlines in July and August.

* The timeline does not include the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program.

Figure 21. State Grant Application Timelines

Rolling
 Pre-Solicitation Activities
 Application Preparation
 Application Due
 Awards



The benefits of life cycle funding are most effectively realized when grants for different stages of project life cycles do not have to compete for limited applicant resources. To address capacity challenges for applicants, ICARP can work with other state agencies to:

- Maintain resources to assist applicants with navigating grant programs.
- Establish shared program standards and timelines across resilience grant programs to support a more transparent and streamlined grant application process.

RRGP's funding of both planning and implementation offers a holistic approach that streamlines the project application process and builds resilience in California's communities.

Because of the long timeline for planning and implementing resilience projects, sustainable and certain funding sources are important. This sustainable funding could be bolstered through the passage of the California Climate Resilience Bond. Varying funding allocations by year poses challenges to sustainable capacity building for both applicants and staff. While the surplus underlying the 2021 Budget Act obviated the need for additional bond support, a new bond measure would provide additional funding stability and a long-term pillar of resilience planning and strategy.

RRGP fills a current gap in the State's regional resilience efforts, notably differentiated by its multi-jurisdictional, multi-risk, and comprehensive life cycle structure. While this memo identifies opportunities for improvement in RRGPs development, the State's regional resilience strategy is strongly informed by the program and encouraged to prioritize its key components.

Endnotes

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