



ICARP

INTEGRATED CLIMATE ADAPTATION & RESILIENCY PROGRAM

Technical Advisory Council

Item 7: Regional Resilience Grant Program Update

March 29, 2024

Overview

The **ICARP Regional Resilience Planning Grant Program (RRGP)** helps fill local, regional, and tribal needs and supports a pipeline of regional scale climate resilient projects, by providing communities the funding needed to identify climate resilience priorities, build capacity, and implement projects in response to the greatest climate risks in a region. While the impacts of climate change are not confined to jurisdictional boundaries, RRGF is designed to support collaborative projects that align with the scale of climate impacts.

The Regional Resilience Grant Program has invested **\$21.7 million** in planning and implementation projects led by partnerships made up of local, regional, tribal governments, non-profits, and academic institutions. RRGF supports regions in advancing resilience through **planning and project implementation**. The program focuses on addressing a range of climate-related challenges, including wildfires, sea-level rise, droughts, floods, and extreme heat events. RRGF supports projects or actions that address the greatest climate risks in the region, particularly in the most vulnerable communities.

Planning grants will engage their communities in studying and determining how to address climate risks in their region, while implementation grants will fund physical projects and programs that directly protect communities from climate impacts.

Key Priorities

RRGF centers around the following priorities:

- Support regional projects aligned with ICARP priorities that improve regional climate resilience and reduce climate risks from wildfire, sea level rise, drought, flood, increasing temperatures, and extreme heat events.
- Support projects or actions that address the greatest climate risks in the region, particularly in the most vulnerable communities.
- Address gaps in climate resilience funding by supporting sustainable and cohesive climate-resilience projects.
- Support equitable outcomes.

Outcomes

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 in requested funding and 53 applicants submitted proposals for planning projects, totaling \$30,251,488 in requested funding. Proposals covered a wide range of climate risks, including wildfire, drought, extreme heat, and sea level rise.

Following a robust review process supported by 32 interagency partners across 18 state agencies, the Regional Resilience Grant Program announced \$21.7 million in awards on December 21, 2023. \$6.2 million in awards will support 10 Planning projects and \$15.5 million will support 6 Implementation projects.

Awarded partnerships met the program's goal to include projects 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. 86% of Round 1 funding is going to regional partnerships involving California Native American tribes and/or partnerships serving predominantly Disadvantaged Communities, greatly exceeding RRGP's funding goal to allocate at least 51% of funds to projects that benefit disadvantaged communities and 10% to projects that have a California Native American Tribe co-applicant.

Program Recommendations

Third-party evaluation of the RRGP program and overall policy landscape by the Center for Law, Energy & the Environment (CLEE) at UC Berkeley's School of Law resulted in the following 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.

Discussion Questions

- What kinds of updates should Staff provide to the Council on grantee activities, and how often?
- Is there interest from the Council to have more touchpoints, like briefings and site visits, with grantees to better understand regional resilience planning and implementation needs?

Appendix A: Grantee Information

Implementation Grant Awardees

Regional Cohesive Fire Strategy for Evacuation Preparedness and Wildfire Resilience

The project focuses on addressing wildfire hazards by educating residents, maintaining defensible spaces, and safeguarding evacuation routes for high-risk communities.

- Greater San Diego - \$1,588,838
- Lead: County of San Diego
- Partners: City of San Diego, Fire Safe Council of San Diego County

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

This project aims to combat extreme heat through a comprehensive Heat Ambassador initiative, focusing on educating and protecting heat-vulnerable communities.

- Greater Los Angeles – \$2,999,999
- Lead: University of California, Los Angeles/Los Angeles Regional Collaborative
- Partners: Fernandño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, Rising Communities, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Energy-Resilient Fire Services in High-Threat Communities

The project will install energy-resilience infrastructure for fire stations in high-risk areas, ensuring continuous emergency response in remote and vulnerable 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, and others

Cultural Fire & Land Stewardship for Wildfire & Climate Resilience

The project aims to restore indigenous practices and enhance wildfire protection on ancestral lands by forming stewardship crews, conducting vegetation management, and raising awareness.

- Sierra Nevada, Bay Area - \$2,989,995
- Lead: Tamien Nation
- Partner: North Fork Mono Tribe

Le Grand Community Water Program

Addressing drought and flood risks, the project implements sustainable groundwater management practices, including new well construction, irrigation canal connections, and community education programs.

- San Joaquin Valley - \$3,000,000
- Lead: Le Grand Athlone Water District

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

Kó:dom Hýbísín (“Land Stewardship”)

The project addresses wildfire, extreme heat, and drought hazards through land stewardship, using cultural fire to reduce fuel loads and cultivate climate-resilient vegetation.

- 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

Planning Grant Awardees

Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma Tribal Resilience Initiative on Air Quality and Drought (MLS-TRIAD)

This project addresses drought, air quality, and climate change concerns through equitable planning, monitoring networks, water quality evaluation, and continuous improvement tracking.

- 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

North Coast Regional Climate Resilience Plan

Prioritizing vulnerable communities, this project focuses on addressing multiple climate risks, forging diverse partnerships, and strengthening community capacity through planning, data integration, and stakeholder engagement.

- North Coast, Bay Area, Sierra Nevada - \$650,000
- Lead: County of Humboldt/North Coast Resource Partnership
- Partners: Watershed Research and Training Center, Sonoma Water

Paradise Regional Wildfire Resilience Implementation Plan

Building on previous modeling work, this project develops an implementation plan, including regional governance structures and cost-benefit analyses, to create regional wildfire buffer zones.

- Sacramento Valley, Sierra Nevada - \$570,533
- Lead: Paradise Recreation and Park District
- Partners: Town of Paradise, Rural Community Assistance Corporation, Camp Fire Collaborative

Santa Ana River Watershed Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan

Addressing climate risks like drought, wildfire, and flooding, this project develops multi-benefit strategies for the entire watershed and provides resources to pursue implementation funding.

- 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

Yolo County Regional Resilience Collaborative

This project aims to build the region's first collaborative structure, engage vulnerable communities to identify shared climate priorities, establish a governance structure, and develop a funding strategy.

- Sacramento Valley - \$598,420
- Lead: County of Yolo
- Partners: Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, City of Davis, City of Woodland, University of California, Davis, and others

Monterey Bay Adaptation and Resilience Implementation and Funding Roadmap

This project develops funding and implementation plans for priority adaptation goals, particularly addressing underserved and vulnerable communities.

- 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

Coachella Valley Regional Water Resilience Plan

Addressing structural barriers to clean water access, preparing for droughts, improving infrastructure resilience, and aligning regional plans with state water management objectives.

- Inland Desert - \$649,335
- Lead: Coachella Valley Water District
- Partners: Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, Pueblo Unido Community Development Corporation

Solano Bayshore Resiliency Project

Involving diverse stakeholders, this project creates a Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Analysis and Action Plan, emphasizing nature-based solutions and community engagement to address climate hazards affecting vulnerable communities.

- Bay Area - \$601,113
- Lead: Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District

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

Climate Resiliency through Regional Water Recharge in the San Joaquin Valley

This project addresses 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.

- 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

Building Climate Resilience in the Central Sierra Region

This 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.

- 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