

Technical Advisory Council

Item 6: Vulnerable Communities Platform

May 16, 2025

Introduction

The Climate Services team is happy to announce that the [Vulnerable Communities Platform \(VCP\)](#) is now publicly available!

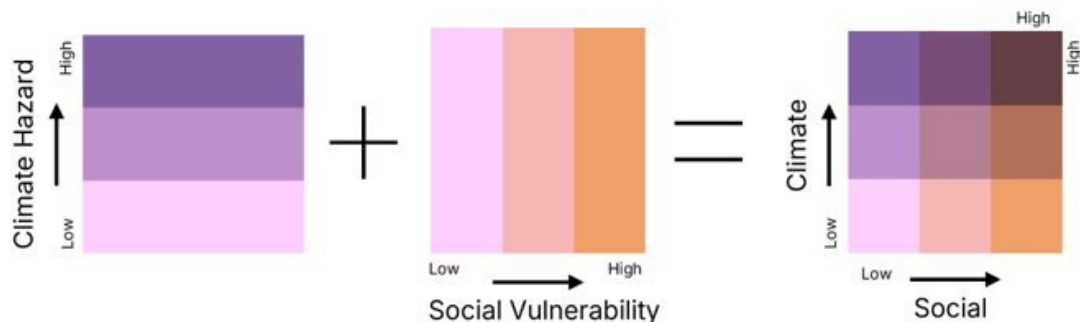
The VCP is a website and mapping tool created by the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) to help identify California communities most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

What does the VCP do?

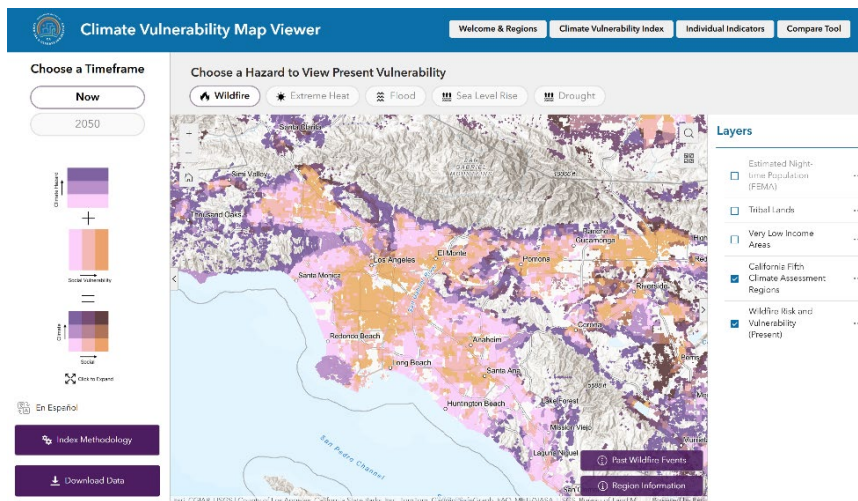
The Vulnerability Map application helps us answer three main questions 1) where different climate hazards will be most severe, 2) which communities are most vulnerable, 3) and what makes them vulnerable.

We use the intersection of climate hazard and social vulnerability to identify areas that should be prioritized for adaptation action.

We calculate a bivariate index for each major climate risk: wildfire, extreme heat, flooding, sea level rise, and drought.

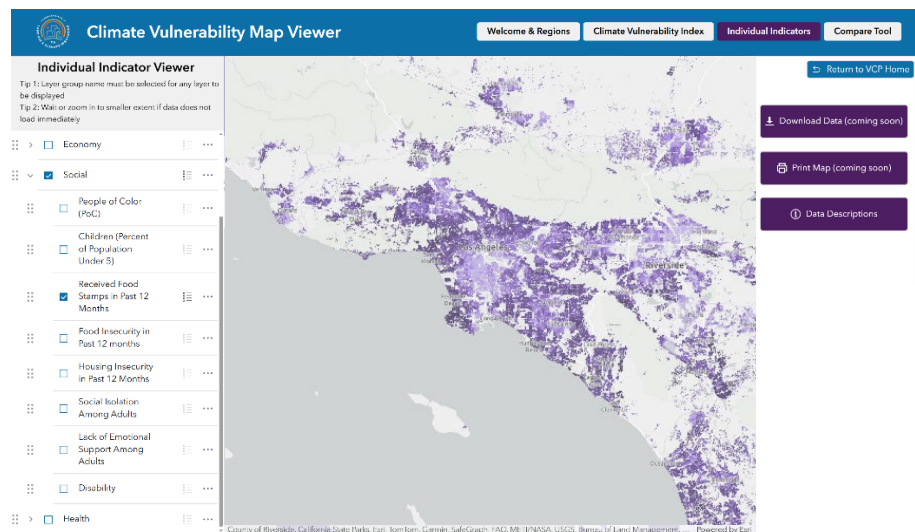


The purple gradient in the first box represents climate data (ex. for wildfire this includes CAL FIRE FHSZ, burn probability) while the orange gradient in the second box represents related social data (ex. for wildfire this includes income, FAIR insurance policies, asthma rates). The dark maroon color in the combined gradient represents highest combined vulnerability.



The Climate Vulnerability Index map shows areas of relative low, medium, and high vulnerability to extreme heat, sea level rise, flooding, wildfire, and drought.

The Individual Indicator map includes maps for each social, environmental, and economic factor in the vulnerability index to help users dig into the specific factors that influence vulnerability in certain areas.



A report generation tool will allow users to enter their city/town, zip code, or census tract to create a simple 2-page pdf document that summarizes the area's vulnerability. This feature is still in development, see preview below.

Community Vulnerability Summary				CA Census Tract: 06081601601
Hazard	Climate Hazard Low Med High	Social Vulnerability Low Med High	Combined Climate Vulnerability	
Extreme Heat	Low	Low		
Wildfire	High	High		
Sea Level Rise	N/A	N/A		
Flooding	High	Med		
Drought	Low	Med		

More than ‘Just a Map’

The VCP does more than show what climate vulnerabilities communities face. It's also designed to help answer, "What's next?." The website will act as a hub, connecting users to adaptation guidance, resources, and links to other adaption planning tools. This is intended to support community-based organizations, tribes, and local governments in designing adaptation projects, building partnerships, and finding funding.

What data is used in the platform?

The platform utilizes only publicly available data sources. The methodology, code, and data used are available in our methodology report and [GitHub repository](#).

To represent climate hazard, we use combinations of climate and environmental data from state databases. To represent social vulnerability, we use demographic data from national sources, such as the U.S. Census and the CDC PLACES as well as other state and academic sources for more specific indicators.

Who has informed development of the platform?

The VCP was developed through iterative rounds of discussion and feedback with state agency partners and local government and community representatives.

On the state agency side, the VCP team formed an Interagency Technical Working Group (ITWG) in 2021 to inform the platform's data framework. On the regional and community side, the VCP team has engaged with one-on-one and group conversations with local government, tribal, and community-based organizations to share our in-progress platform and strategy and solicit input.

Discussion Questions

- How can the VCP be useful to your organization?
- Who should we be coordinating with about the VCP? What groups, subject matter experts, or outlets would you suggest we engage with? These can be internal to your organization or external.