

*April 24, 2024***Subject: Tribal Capacity Building Program: Pilot Round Award Recommendations**

Reporting Period: October 2023 – April 2024

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Recommended Action

Community Assistance for Climate Equity (CACE) staff recommend the Council award a total of \$1,447,012 for the Pilot Round of the Tribal Capacity Building Program to the six (6) top-scoring applications.

Summary

This Staff Report provides an overview of the Pilot Round of the California Strategic Growth Council's Tribal Capacity Building Program (Pilot Program), including a summary of the Pilot Program Guidelines development process, application process, and CACE staff award recommendations.

The Tribal Capacity Building Program Pilot Round Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) made \$1 million available for four (4) to six (6) grants ranging from \$150,000 to \$250,000. Due to the popularity of the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program (Pilot Program), the strength of applications, and the fact that the majority of applicants requested funding amounts in the higher range, program staff utilized savings to fully fund six (6) grants. The Pilot Round of the Tribal Capacity Building Program was significantly oversubscribed, receiving 31 applications that requested a total of nearly \$7.3 million. Of the 28 applications that met threshold requirements, CACE staff recommend the six (6) top-scoring applications for award at this time. Grantees will complete grant terms of two (2) years.

Background

About the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program

The Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program is a new grant program that provides funding and technical assistance to California Native American tribes, enhancing their staff capacity to advance tribes' climate-related work. CACE staff developed the Pilot Program in response to consistent feedback from tribes that their sovereign status and historical relationship with the State of California necessitate a dedicated capacity building program. Administered by the California Strategic Growth Council (SGC), the goal of the Pilot Program is to help tribes develop long-term capacity to secure funding and implement tribal-led climate solutions. The Pilot Program objectives are to build tribal staff capacity to advance and sustain climate action; secure funding to develop and implement tribal-led climate projects; and enhance peer learning relationships among tribes.

The Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program will fund staff salaries and activities that advance each tribe's climate-related work. These activities may include planning, securing funding for,

and implementing projects related to climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. Tribes will work with a technical assistance provider and receive no-cost, flexible support that will respond to each tribe's needs. The capacity building and technical assistance services offered include, but are not limited to, the following: trainings and workshops; grant application and management support; planning support; implementation assistance; peer learning; partnership building; staff and economic development.

The Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program is funded through FY 19-20 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities continuously appropriated funds that the Council allocated for technical assistance to local communities. As such, it is part of California Climate Investments and furthers the purposes of AB 32 (Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006) and SB 32 (Chapter 249, Statutes of 2016) by investing in tribal projects related to climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience that reduce GHG emissions. In working directly with tribes, the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program also advances the State's commitment to build relationships with tribes in California as mandated in Executive Orders B-10-11 (Brown, 2011) and N-15-19 (Newsom, 2019).

Pilot Program Guidelines Development Process

The [Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Guidelines](#) were developed through robust public outreach, engagement, and research over the past year to ensure the Pilot Program would be responsive to tribal needs. In May 2023, CACE staff released a Request for Information (RFI) to seek input from tribes and tribal-serving organizations to inform the development of the Pilot Program Guidelines and the development of the solicitation to select a technical assistance provider. With the RFI, CACE staff also released the draft Pilot Program Guidelines for a 90-day public comment period.

To receive feedback on the Pilot Program Guidelines, CACE staff sent 184 tribal consultation letters and 300+ tribal consultation emails to all California Native American tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Contact List. CACE staff also conducted 19 key informant interviews with tribal members, tribal-serving organizations, and State agency tribal liaisons and tribal programs' staff, and held a series of six (6) workshops with a total of 132 people registered and 71 attendees self-identifying as a staff or member of a California Native American tribe. CACE staff held two (2) tribal consultations and received written public comment and verbal feedback through the key informant interviews and workshop series. Staff received valuable input from a variety of entities and prioritized feedback from tribes and tribal-serving organizations.

To conduct direct engagement with tribes, CACE staff attended and tabled at five (5) in-person tribal events, including the Tribal Water Summit, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Regional Tribal Operations Committee Meeting, California Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (CalTHPO) & State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) Summit, 56th Annual California Native American Day, and Tribal EPA & U.S. EPA Region 9 Conference. CACE staff also presented at two (2) virtual tribal events, including the Tribal Climate Health Project Webinar and the Tribal Climate and Health Funding Fair.

CACE staff also contracted with two (2) tribal expert consultants to review the draft Pilot Program Guidelines and alert SGC staff to any inherent barriers or sensitivities that may raise issues for tribes to apply to the Pilot Program. Paired with feedback gathered through the public comment period, this was a very fruitful process and helped CACE staff ensure a comprehensive approach to gathering input on the draft Pilot Program Guidelines.

Background on the Application Process

Application Review

CACE staff carried out a completeness review immediately after receiving Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program applications. Applicants were notified if their application was incomplete and were given two (2) business days to resubmit any incomplete or missing materials. Staff also conducted threshold review at this time, ensuring applications met the threshold criteria specified in the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Guidelines. CACE staff and an interagency panel reviewed all 31 submitted applications and provided written feedback to applicants on the scored components of their application. Of the 31 submitted applications, 28 met threshold requirements.

CACE staff assembled an interagency review panel of 26 reviewers from across 17 State agencies to score applications. Each application was randomly assigned and reviewed by five (5) reviewers from the interagency panel. Reviewers used the scoring criteria rubric in the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Guidelines to score applications. Reviewers scored applications individually and attended a reviewer orientation and deliberation session to come to a consensus on application scores. The 13 top-scoring applicants were invited to participate in finalist interviews.

The finalists were invited to 45-minute interviews with a panel of two (2) CACE staff and one (1) interagency reviewer. The interview panel members were the same for each applicant. Interviewers used the scoring criteria rubric in the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Guidelines to score interviews individually and attended a deliberation session to come to a consensus on interview scores. CACE staff added the application scores and interview scores together to determine overall scores. The six (6) top-scoring applicants that also reflect statewide geographic and tribal diversity are recommended for awards.

The 17 State agencies represented on the review panel include:

- CA Air Resources Board
- CA Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency
- CA Department of Food and Agriculture
- CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
- CA Department of Housing and Community Development
- CA Department of Insurance
- CA Department of Public Health
- CA Department of Transportation
- CA Department of Water Resources



- CA Energy Commission
- CA Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment
- CA Public Utilities Commission
- CA State Lands Commission
- CA State Parks
- CA State Water Resources Control Board
- CA Strategic Growth Council
- Delta Stewardship Council

Summary of Applications Received

SGC received a total of 31 applications to the Pilot Round of the Tribal Capacity Building Program, including 18 from federally recognized and 13 from non-federally recognized California Native American tribes. The applications varied across focus areas that include, but are not limited to, the following: affordable housing; aquaculture, habitat, and watershed restoration; cultural burning; invasive species removal; land-back and repatriation; land stewardship; native tree planting and plant propagation; and youth education and outreach. Applications came from all regions of the State, covering eight (8) regions (see Table 1). SGC has a total of \$1,447,012 million to award for its Pilot Round, and the total amount requested across all applicants was nearly \$7.3 million. The average amount requested was \$235,000.

Table 1: Tribal Capacity Building Program Pilot Round Applicants by Region

Region	Number of Applications
North State	5
North Coast	4
Northern Sierras	4
Bay Area	4
Central Coast	4
Southern Sierras	2
Coastal SoCal	2
Inland SoCal	6

Recommendations

CACE staff recommend the Council approve Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program grant awards to the six (6) top-scoring applications (see Table 2). The recommended awardees represent:

- 5 regions from across the State including the North State (1), North Coast (1), Northern Sierras (1), Bay Area (1), and Central Coast (2)
- 2 federally recognized tribes



- 4 non-federally recognized tribes

Table 2: Staff Recommendations for Tribal Capacity Building Program Pilot Round Awards

Applicant Name	Tribal Designation	Region	Funding Requested
Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of Trinidad Rancheria	Federally recognized	North Coast	\$244,500.00
Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation	Non-federally recognized	Bay Area	\$245,595.00
Esselen Tribe of Monterey County	Non-federally recognized	Central Coast	\$249,999.99
Mooretown Rancheria of Concow-Maidu Indians of California	Federally recognized	Northern Sierras	\$250,000.00
Winnemem Wintu	Non-federally recognized	North State	\$250,000.00
yak tityu tityu yak tilhini Northern Chumash Tribe	Non-federally recognized	Central Coast	\$206,917.00

Next Steps

Upon Council approval of the Tribal Capacity Building Program Pilot Round Awards, the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program will issue grant agreements to the six (6) top-scoring applicants recommended for award. CACE staff will also begin to onboard the Technical Assistance Provider Team contracted to support the tribal grantees throughout the grant term.

CACE staff have offered to hold debrief calls with all unsuccessful Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program applicants, in which staff will offer feedback on applications if they are interested. With permission from applicants, CACE staff will also publish applicant project profiles on the Pilot Program's webpage and share additional funding opportunities with applicants. CACE staff are exploring opportunities for future funding rounds.

Council Recommendation

Community Assistance for Climate Equity (CACE) staff recommend the Council award a total of \$1,447,011.99 from the FY 19-20 Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities continuously appropriated funds for the Pilot Round of the Tribal Capacity Building Program to the six (6) top-scoring applications.

Should the Council agree with Staff's recommendation, the following motion language is suggested:

"I move that the Council approve Staff's recommendation of awarding the six (6) top-scoring applicants for Tribal Capacity Building Program Pilot Round awards."

Attachments

Attachment A: Project Descriptions for Applicants Recommended for Tribal Capacity Building Program Pilot Round Funding

Attachment B: Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Applicant List

Attachment C: Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Applicant Map

