

Feb. 25, 2026

Subject: California Tribal Gap Analysis

Reporting Period: June 2020 - February 2025

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Summary

The California Tribal Gap Analysis report, prepared by Prosper Sustainably LLC on behalf of SGC and the California Energy Commission (CEC), offers recommendations to strengthen the state's relationships with Tribes and enhance Tribes' preparedness to achieve climate goals. From July 2020 to April 2022, the California Tribal Gap Analysis (CTGA) project conducted extensive Tribal outreach and research to help the State of California identify Tribal priorities, needs, and barriers in the areas of clean energy and climate change adaptation and resilience.

The final report provides recommendations for the development and enhancement of State of California programs, funding, technical assistance (TA), and other resources to address Tribal needs and priorities. Reducing barriers for Tribes to participate in state programs not only levels the playing field for all applicants but also enables Tribes to accelerate their climate leadership in a way that benefits all Californians. The report's recommendations also aim to foster stronger partnerships between Tribes and state agencies, providing concrete actions to deepen relationships with tribes as state agencies are mandated in Executive Orders B-10-11 (Brown, 2011) and N-15-19 (Newsom, 2019). Note that the analysis conveyed in the report is that of the authors and not necessarily of the SGC or the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI). The mention of any organization or source reported is not to be construed as actual or implied endorsement of the CTGA findings.

The Recommendations and Conclusions section (Attachment B) includes wide-ranging guidance to help state agencies provide more effective support to Tribes through improvements in state programs, TA, and Tribal outreach and engagement. An Executive Summary (Attachment A) summarizes key findings, gaps, and recommendations and conclusions. The full report, including appendices, can be found on the [California Gap Analysis Website](#).

Background

Methodology

The scope of the CTGA project included primary research to gather perspectives from Tribes and Tribal-serving organizations through a Tribal questionnaire, as well as from state agencies through an informal questionnaire. The Project Team invited all 181 California Native American Tribes to participate and performed extensive statewide outreach to engage participants. Representatives from 76 Tribes — 57 federally recognized and 19 non-federally recognized — responded to the CTGA questionnaire. 60 Tribes reported they hold lands in federal trust, and 16 reported they do not hold any land or did not answer the question.

Table 1. CTGA Survey Respondents by California Climate Region

Fourth California Climate Assessment Regions	Respondents
1. Inland South/Los Angeles	13
2. San Diego	14
3. Sierra Nevada Mountains/Sacramento Valley	21
4. North Coast/SF Bay	19
5. Central Coast/San Joaquin	9

The CTGA process also included gathering and analyzing information from a variety of secondary sources, including reports from a series of Tribal energy and climate meetings hosted by the CEC and more than 150 relevant assistance programs offered by state, federal, nongovernmental and private sources, ranging from grants and incentives to TA. The project team also performed a preliminary assessment of applicable assistance programs to identify the most significant gaps in assistance for Tribes (e.g., awareness, access, and availability) to inform its recommendations.

Public Comment Period

A draft version of the CTGA Report was released for public comment on Aug. 25, 2025 and the project team and SGC and CEC staff held a series of public workshops to gather feedback from Tribes and Tribal-serving organizations on the draft recommendations. Feedback opportunities included a webinar, three virtual workshops, two in-person presentations, and feedback to report authors. More than 70 people participated in one or more of those opportunities to provide feedback, including more than 20 Tribal members, leaders and staff.

Recommendations and Conclusions

While Tribes have demonstrated the creativity, adaptability, and knowledge to help lead the country on clean energy and climate change adaptation, centuries of disenfranchisement and legal hurdles continue to make it uniquely difficult for California Native American Tribes to access adequate resources to meet their needs and goals. Tribes need greater assistance in all areas addressed in the CTGA, and those without recognition, land, or facilities need greater assistance overall. While some relevant assistance programs exist, much work is needed to improve Tribal awareness, access, and availability of these programs. The role of the State of California becomes even more vital to sustain progress in an era of shifting federal policies and budget cutbacks that affect a wide range of Tribal priorities.

The Recommendations and Conclusions section of the CTGA report addresses in detail each of the general recommendations listed below and provides specific action steps for implementation. As stated above, the recommendations are those of the authors of the CTGA report and not necessarily of SGC or LCI.

I) Improve state-led Tribal Outreach, Communication, and Engagement

- Increase Tribes’ knowledge and awareness of assistance programs



- Maintain the Tribal clean energy and climate program assistance database
- Conduct regular Tribal energy and climate meetings
- Improve Tribal relations, capacity, and training among state employees
- Improve state Tribal engagement policies and processes
- Empower Tribes to inform and shape programs and policies
- Centralize, streamline, and sustain interagency communications and engagement

II) Improve Tribal Access to and Utilization of Existing State Programs

- Eliminate requirements that undermine Tribal sovereignty, such as:
 - Requiring waivers of sovereign immunity
 - Imposing the California Environmental Quality Act requirements on Tribal land
 - Infringing on data sovereignty
- Further assess Tribal access, challenges, and utilization of applicable assistance programs such as, among others:
 - Expand eligibility including access to non-Tribal specific programs
 - Expand Tribal set-asides and Tribe-specific grants
 - Reduce or eliminate cost-share requirements
 - Provide guidance and TA during solicitation periods
 - Expand Q&A during solicitation periods
 - Remove unfunded plans and other requirements
 - Simplify, streamline, and coordinate grant solicitations
 - Reduce and simplify grants management requirements
- Collaborate with Tribes on state climate change research
- Use standard metrics for state agencies to track and report Tribal utilization of programs as well as agency performance on best practices and policies that uphold and support Tribal sovereignty

III) Increase State Investments to Create and Expand Tribal Assistance Programs

- Increase investments in top eight Need Areas
- Increase flexible funding
- Increase recurring funding
- Offer funding and assistance for pre-development activities
- Offer phased funding and assistance programs
- Increase and expand TA
- Provide grant writing assistance
- Increase funding for Tribal staffing
- Increase Tribal staff training
- Provide cost-share for federal grants
- Provide low-interest loans and loan guarantees
- Fund initiatives to acquire ancestral lands
- Fund basic and broader Tribal energy projects and initiatives
 - Basic electrification (on- and off-grid)

- Infrastructure modernization
- Tribal utilities and energy ventures
- Cultural resource protection
- Create a centralized, evergreen inventory and pipeline of fundable Tribal energy and climate projects
- Establish Tribal-serving regional energy and climate hubs

Next Steps

Per the CTGA report, the recommended next step in applying the CTGA process outcomes is for the state and Tribes to jointly develop an implementation plan that addresses the identified Tribal clean energy and climate change gaps and considers CTGA report recommendations. The report recommends creating a Tribal-state committee or other organized body to develop and oversee this implementation plan.

The CTGA team gratefully appreciates the contributions from Tribal representatives who shared invaluable knowledge and perspectives through their participation in the CTGA survey as well as in TECX meetings and other forums for state-Tribal engagement on clean energy and climate change issues. Per the report, continued engagement and progress by the state following its consideration of the findings and recommendations from the CTGA process will demonstrate the state's commitment to meaningfully collaborate with Tribes in achieving their clean energy and climate change goals, benefiting all Californians for generations to come.

Attachments

Attachment A: "Executive Summary" of the CTGA Report

Attachment B: "Recommendations and Conclusions Section" of the CTGA Report