

# Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

## Tribal Wildfire Resilience **DRAFT** Grant Guidelines Fiscal Year 2024-2025



Draft: December 17, 2024  
Proposals Due: 3 p.m., **March** 27, 2025

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## SOLICITATION AT-A-GLANCE

- CAL FIRE has up to \$5 million total available for this 2025 solicitation
- Grant award size: \$250,000 (minimum) - \$3,000,000 (maximum)
- Applications due March 12, 2025. Awards during summer 2025. Projects start Fall 2025.
- Project start date: the date grant agreement is fully executed  
Project end date: March 30, 2028.
- Eligible applicants:
  - 1) Native American Tribes that are Federally recognized.
  - 2) Non-Federally recognized Tribes on the California Native American Heritage Commission's Contact List of California Native Tribes
  - 3) Tribally led non-profit with documentation.
- Step 1 of the application includes: project description, budget in CAL FIRE's format, list of deliverables, scope of work, support letters, and any other supporting documentation. Step 2 of the application process will include a video interview with the review panel. CAL FIRE may request additional information in this step.
- Planning projects and implementation projects are both eligible, and do not need to be separated into separate projects. All projects will be scored based on having clear goals, good descriptions of what work the grant would fund, whether the project is ready to begin, and organizational capacity. Implementation projects will score higher if environmental compliance requirements have already been completed.
- Grant funds are administered on a reimbursement basis. For awarded projects, the grantee will submit monthly reimbursement invoices to CAL FIRE showing receipts. CAL FIRE will review and then mail reimbursement checks. Some projects may be eligible for 6-month advance funds of up to 25% of the award budget. These advance funds still require all of the same documentation as reimbursement invoices.
- The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies to all CAL FIRE grant-funded projects. All applicants must discuss their CEQA compliance options with Climate & Energy's environmental compliance staff *before applying*.
- Limited Waivers of Sovereign Immunity (LWSI) may be required for federally recognized Tribes and will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- **Contact for Questions:** [TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov), Lindsay Dallison, Jordan Inzunza, Kosta Tsivikas, and Robin Bellows.

## WHAT'S NEW / CHANGES SINCE LAST SOLICITATION

1. Tribal Wildfire Resilience is now an independent solicitation and is separate from the Forest Health Grant solicitation, which is open November 2024 – January 2025. Tribes are also eligible to apply for Forest Health Grants.
2. Eligibility has been expanded to include tribally led non-profit organizations as well as tribal governments
3. Projects can be a mix of planning, implementation, and workforce development
4. Limited Waivers of Sovereign Immunity will be required for many projects when the grantee is a federally recognized tribe.
5. CAL FIRE use of California Climate Investments (CCI) funding for some grant awards. CCI funding has additional requirements for analysis, selection, reporting, and grant administration. Additional information will be provided to any proposals for which this is relevant.
6. All applicants are **required** to discuss their options for complying with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) with Climate & Energy's environmental compliance staff before applying. To do this, come to an Environmental Compliance Office Hour (dates will be posted on website) or email [cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov](mailto:cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov).
7. All applicants are **strongly encouraged** to schedule half-hour discussions about your proposal with CAL FIRE Tribal Wildfire Resilience staff. To schedule, please email [TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov).
8. Clarifications:
  - California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) applies to ALL grant projects. CEQA exemptions may be available.
  - The Grant Award amount includes both direct costs and indirect costs.
  - The grantee must have long-term access to the project area. If the grantee is not the current landowner, then there must be a long-term access or co-management agreement Long-term access is defined as, at a minimum, 3 years or the entire project performance period of the grant.

## TRIBAL WILDFIRE RESILIENCE GRANTS

### Program Summary

Tribal Wildfire Resilience grants is part of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) Climate and Energy Program and supports California Native American tribes in managing ancestral lands, implementing and promoting Traditional Environmental Knowledges (TEK) in wildfire resilience, and establishing wildfire safety for tribal communities.

For the first time in 2021, the state budget included funding to CAL FIRE for competitive grants for Native American tribes located within the State of California. CAL FIRE administers the program, including running a solicitation, issuing grant agreements, and processing progress reports and invoices.

Tribal Wildfire Resilience grants fund planning and implementation projects that serve California Native American tribes and promote wildfire resilience, forest health, and cultural use of fire. These projects address critical needs in tribal communities, and may include:

- Implementing & training Traditional Ecological Knowledges & indigenous stewardship
- Cultural and prescribed burns
- Creation and maintenance of shaded fuel breaks and defensible space
- Forest and wildfire resilience projects such as:
  - reforestation
  - dead and dying tree removal,
  - understory thinning and/or removal
- Forest health & restoration projects
- Increasing biodiversity and improving access to and use of traditional foods and culturally significant species
- Workforce Development and training programs in fire, forestry, and related Traditional Ecological Knowledges
- Mapping projects
- Development of restoration plans, fire or forest management plans
- Biological and cultural surveys
- Environmental compliance and permitting
- Fuels management
- Fire reintroduction (and planning for fire reintroduction)

## Grant Information

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are:

- 1) Federally recognized Native American Tribes.
- 2) Non-federally recognized California Native American Tribes listed on the California Tribal Contact List maintained by the California Native American Heritage Commission as described in Section 65352.4 of the Government Code.
- 3) Tribally led non-profit organizations located in California. Applications can be submitted on behalf of an inter-tribal consortium, tribal conservation district, or tribal non-profit, or tribal-serving non-profit. These applications must demonstrate eligibility in all the following ways:
  - a) Contact Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grants prior to submitting the application to discuss eligibility; and
  - b) Confirm that a California Native American Tribe(s) is actively partnering with and supporting the application through a signed letter or resolution from the Chairperson, Tribal Council, or other official representative of the tribe(s); and
  - c) Describe and provide documentation that demonstrates the applicant organization is tribally led. For example, this may include demonstrating that the organization has a majority-tribal board, that it exists to represent and pursue the interests of a California Native American Tribe, or has as a primary purpose of the protection of natural, historic, or open-space resources for cultural purposes; and
  - d) Describe how the project will serve the supporting tribe(s) and community.

Please note, CAL FIRE will ask that the Chairperson(s) confirm in writing if the inter-tribal consortium, tribal conservation district, partnership, or non-tribal entity has been authorized to submit an application on behalf or with the support of the tribe(s).

Based on the pool of applicants, Tribal governments may take priority over tribally led non-profit organizations.

Non-tribal entities may support California Native American tribes and tribally led entities in applying for the program and may be partners on the projects. However, organizations that do not demonstrate that they meet the eligibility requirements above may not be the primary grantee.

Current grantees with any of CAL FIRE's grant programs are eligible to apply.

### **Eligible Activities**

This program is a competitive grant program to support California Native American Tribes, located within the State, through planning or implementation projects. Eligible projects will focus on wildfire resiliency and forest health in tribal communities and address a critical need for the tribe.

All revenues collected as a result of activities paid for, in full or in part, with Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program grant funds must be tracked and re-invested into the project to further grant objectives (please refer to "Program Income" in Appendix A - Explanation of Terms).

Tribal Wildfire Resilience funding may not be used for land purchase, conservation easements, business development, infrastructure building, road construction / road maintenance, or research activities. If seeking funding for business, infrastructure, construction, or research activities, please visit CAL FIRE's [Wood Products & Bioenergy](#) and [Forest Health Research](#) program webpages for information.

### **Eligible Locations**

Ancestral homelands within California (as defined by the applying tribe) are eligible.

The grantee must have long-term access to the land. If the grantee does not currently have legal jurisdiction or ownership of the project area, then there must be a long-term access or co-management agreement for the grantee tribe for that land. The application will have a section to describe this. At a minimum, grantee must have access to the land throughout the project period, as defined in Project Performance Period section below.

### **Project Types**

Projects may focus on planning, implementation, or a combination of both. In the application, each project will select whether it should be reviewed as primarily planning or primarily implementation.

### **Current Funding Availability**

We expect \$3-5 million will be available for tribal wildfire resilience projects. This amount is subject to change as part of the overall statewide budget.

### **Funding Sources**

Several funding sources may be used for these grants. Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program will determine the funding source for each awarded project based on the fit of each proposal to the goals and requirements of available funding sources.

Each grant award will have a project period (end date) and reporting requirements consistent with the funding source for that grant. Tribal Wildfire Resilience staff will clearly describe any additional requirements that apply.

Some grant awards may include California Climate Investments (CCI) funding from the state's Cap-and-Trade program. Tribal Wildfire Resilience staff will request additional information for all projects being considered for CCI funding before grant agreements are formalized, including information needed for CAL FIRE to estimate net greenhouse gas emissions, potential benefits to priority populations, jobs, and other co-benefits. All projects with CCI funding will also have additional reporting requirements throughout the grant period, including regular reporting on jobs outcomes. See Appendix G for detailed information on these requirements.

CAL FIRE reserves the right to fund projects, in total or in part, with the funding source that, in its judgement, best serves the objectives of the Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program. Project applicants that are selected to receive partial funding will be provided additional information on their revised funding amount, project performance period, and any other required changes to their application, as needed.

### **Grant Amounts**

The minimum award is \$250,000. The maximum award is \$3,000,000. These include all funds paid through the grant, including both direct and indirect costs.

### **Project Performance Period**

All proposed grant work must be able to be **completed by March 30, 2028**. The official end date for each grant award will depend on the funding source used for that grant. Funding offers will indicate the total duration of each grant award being offered. Grant agreements for awarded projects will include the project performance end date. Final billing is due 30 days after project performance end date.

### **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Applies to All Projects**

Regardless of jurisdiction, CEQA compliance is required when using Tribal Wildfire Resilience grant funds for any project that may have an effect on the environment, including any ground-disturbing activity. Previously completed CEQA and/or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental documents may be utilized to fulfill CEQA requirements if they include appropriate environmental impact analyses to support grant-funded activities. Within one year of the execution of the grant agreement and prior to commencing any work that could impact the environment, CAL FIRE requires proof of adequate compliance with CEQA. All environmental documentation submitted to support grant-funded activities will be reviewed for adequacy and completeness by Climate and Energy environmental compliance staff. If CEQA and/or NEPA environmental documents have not been previously completed, the grant budget may include environmental compliance costs.



In addition to CEQA, additional environmental compliance requirements may still apply. This includes, but not limited to, tribal environmental compliance, regional/county environmental permitting, CAL FIRE burn permits, and NEPA. Receipt of Tribal Wildfire Resilience grant funding does not relieve grantees of any obligations to comply with applicable environmental laws in any jurisdiction.

Because of the complexity of environmental compliance, all applicants are **required** to discuss proposed projects with Climate & Energy's environmental compliance staff **before applying**. To begin the discussion, please attend an online environmental compliance office hours (preferred option; dates/times will be posted) and/or email a brief description of your proposal to [cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov](mailto:cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov).

### **Limited Waivers of Sovereign Immunity**

Federally recognized tribes are sovereign nations with special legal status. When the primary grantee (party who signs the grant agreement contract with CAL FIRE) is a federally recognized tribe, CAL FIRE may require the tribe to agree to a limited waiver of sovereign immunity to ensure the grant agreements may be enforced in case of default. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis and is dependent on the type and scope of the project. If required, the grant agreement will include these important terms and conditions.

CAL FIRE will avoid seeking a limited waiver of sovereign immunity when possible and will strive to notify applicants early in the grant application review process if it is anticipated a limited waiver of sovereign immunity will be necessary. CAL FIRE is committed to working collaboratively with California Native American tribes on tailoring limited waiver of sovereign immunity terms to support tribal priorities while also meeting the state's legal obligations.

CAL FIRE will conduct a risk analysis of all projects that may involve limited waivers of sovereign immunity. In general, CAL FIRE will require limited waivers of sovereign immunity when the grantee is a federally recognized tribe, and the project includes any of the following elements:

- Advance funds
- Equipment purchases totaling >\$500,000
- High-risk implementation projects, which may include fuels reduction, prescribed burning, cultural burning, ceremonial or other use of fire
- Organizations without demonstrated reliability in sound financial management

For questions regarding sovereign immunity, please reach out as soon as possible by emailing [TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov). Program staff is available to discuss any concerns and questions and may refer you to the appropriate person at CAL FIRE Legal if additional information or clarification is needed.

### **Proposal Data**

The Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program values data sovereignty as an important part of our relationships with grantees. CAL FIRE is subject to the Public Records Act, and all application materials may be subject to public disclosure. **Please do not share any confidential or sensitive information in your application.** If you believe you are being asked to share confidential or sensitive information that you would not like disclosed to the public, please contact Program staff to discuss before submitting the information to CAL FIRE.

Successful applications will be summarized and posted to CAL FIRE's Tribal Wildfire Resilience webpage within two weeks of the decision to fund. Applications will be treated in accordance with the Public Records Act requirements, and certain information, subject to those requirements, may be publicly disclosed. Additionally, information provided in the application may be used in public reporting, such as to meet California Climate Investments (CCI) requirements.

Application information and information about projects that are selected for an award of grant funds will be shared in several different ways. The application will specify which answers are shared in which ways. Please contact [TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov) for any questions or clarifications.

- 1) A list of grant awards will be posted publicly to our website. This will include the grantee organization, project name, award amount, project summary paragraph, and location point. This information will also be posted on the California Grants Portal website and shared with State Senate and Assembly members.
- 2) A summary of each application will be reviewed by an interagency review committee, CAL FIRE Units, and CAL FIRE Cultural Resource Managers.
- 3) After grant projects begin, shapefiles of all planned treatment activities will be posted publicly on CalMAPPER and the California Wildfire and Landscape Interagency Treatment Dashboard. Please do not share any shapefiles containing culturally sensitive data.
- 4) All other information submitted to CAL FIRE during the application and grant administration process will be reviewed and used primarily by the Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grants Program and other CAL FIRE staff working directly on the application or award implementation. While this data is not confidential, it is typically not shared widely. This includes indirect cost request documentation, the full application questions, and additional materials submitted during the application or grant administration processes.

## **Statutory Requirements and Priorities**

### **General Requirements**

1. Projects must serve California Native American Tribes and their communities located within the State of California.

2. Projects must establish or improve wildfire resiliency or forest health on tribal ancestral lands to address a critical need in tribal communities or prepare tribes to develop or increase wildfire resiliency or forest health through planning activities.

### **Funding Priorities**

Applicant must propose a planning or implementation project. Combined planning and implementation projects are eligible, and do not need to be separated into different applications, but the applicant must identify the primary focus of the project in the application. Different scoring criteria will apply for projects that are primarily planning vs primarily implementation.

Planning or implementation projects containing any of the following elements will be given priority consideration in funding decisions.

### **Planning Projects**

1. Planning activities to prepare a tribe to apply for and implement a State or federal grant for forest and wildfire resiliency or wildfire safety within the tribe's ancestral lands or to implement and promote Traditional Ecological Knowledges in wildfire resilience or forest health. (This does not include writing grants.)
2. Planning activities to prepare a California Native American tribe for a cultural or prescribed burn.
3. Planning activities that incorporate tribal wildfire prevention, forestry expertise, or Traditional Ecological Knowledges.
4. Planning activities to prepare tribal and ancestral lands for wildfire resilience.
5. Planning activities to prepare a tribe for a restoration project with the goal of increasing biodiversity or access to traditional food sources or habitats.
6. Planning activities focused on forest health.
7. Planning to include a workforce or economic development aspect into a proposed project.
8. Developing burn plans, forest management plans, or other planning process.
9. Environmental compliance surveys, analysis, and documents to provide for future landscape treatments.

## **Implementation Projects**

1. Projects that are ready to implement at the time of application. Projects that will be ready to begin on-the-ground implementation in Fall 2025, as soon as grant funds are ready to use.
2. Projects that conduct cultural or prescribed burns.
3. Projects that utilize tribal wildfire prevention and forest health expertise, Traditional Ecological Knowledges, and existing expertise within a tribe.
4. Projects that will establish or improve wildfire resiliency, forest health and wildfire safety within a tribe's ancestral lands or focus on increasing biodiversity and restoration within a tribe's ancestral lands.
5. Projects that will include workforce development, training programs, or conservation corps programs, especially those with opportunities for tribal youth.
6. Projects including economic development, land access, or co-management.

## **Other Funding Considerations**

In evaluating project proposals, scores are used to determine initial rankings and facilitate discussions for each proposal among a multidisciplinary evaluation team. To achieve equitable distribution of funds, the State may consider additional factors including, but not limited to geographic distribution of funds, previous grant performance, and feasibility to accept partial funding.

## **Examples of Potentially Funded Activities**

This program is a competitive grant program to support California Native American tribal planning and implementation projects to establish or improve forest and wildfire resiliency and wildfire safety on or upon tribal and ancestral lands.

Below is a list of eligible project activities; this is not a comprehensive list, but a list of examples. Innovative planning and education activities not listed below, could still be eligible. Please reach out to [TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov) to discuss potential eligibility.

## **Planning Activities**

- Preparation of CEQA, NEPA, or other compliance documents
- Surveying or mapping of proposed project areas
- Development of site maps and implementation plans
- Obtaining project permits
- Preparing and delivering an outreach campaign targeted at adjacent landowners, tribes, community partners, etc.
- Researching and training in tribal wildfire prevention and forest health expertise and Traditional Ecological Knowledges practitioners or staff
- Developing restoration plans that will incorporate cultural or prescribed burns to increase biodiversity, restore habitats, and improve wildfire resiliency, forest health, or increase access to traditional foods and materials.
- Developing a workforce development component of a future cultural or prescribed burn, forest restoration, or wildfire resiliency project
- Planning for one or more of the implementation activities listed below

## **Implementation Activities**

- Implementation of a cultural burn
- Implementation of a prescribed burn
- Implementation of forest and wildfire resiliency projects including, but not limited to, dead and dying tree removal, understory thinning or removal, tree or other native or traditional vegetation plantings
- Implementation of restoration projects focused on forest health that provides benefits including, but not limited to, increasing biodiversity and improving access to and use of traditional foods and culturally significant species.

## **Ineligible Project Examples**

The list below provides examples of projects and elements that are not eligible; this is not a comprehensive list.

- Projects that do not serve tribes or tribal communities
- Planning or implementation projects that will not move a tribe towards wildfire resiliency or cultural or prescribed burns or increased biodiversity or improved forest health on ancestral lands
- Land Purchase
- Implementation projects contingent on future land acquisition for project
- Cash reserves, endowments, or fundraising activities
- Business purchase
- Payment of a debt or mortgage
- Lobbying or lawsuits
- Sub-granting or regranting

- Implementation projects where the applicant cannot satisfactorily gain permission to develop/maintain the site
- Grant writing for future projects
- Road upgrades & road maintenance
- Building, construction, and infrastructure development
- Disaster recovery hazardous debris removal operations. These activities are better suited to other grant programs administered by FEMA and CalOES.

## APPLICATION & REVIEW TIMELINE

TWR Staff will hold online Office Hours throughout the application period. The schedule will be posted on the Tribal Wildfire Resilience website.

If you have any questions about the application, please come to TWR Grants Office Hours or contact [TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov).

Month	Grant state
2024 December	Guidelines posted for public comment & tribal input
2025 January	Round Table Workshop for Tribal Input into grant process. Application opens; weekly online office hours
2025 February	Application remains open; weekly online office hours
2025 March	Applications due March 12; weekly online office hours
2025 April	Step 2: video interviews & additional documentation requests
2025 April – May	Proposal review, follow-up, & selection
2025 June	Funding offers and award announcements
2025 Summer	Grant agreements developed and signed
2025 Fall – Winter	Project work begins!

### Step 1: Eligibility & Project Proposals, due March 27, 2025

#### Eligibility

- Short summary of the project. TWR staff uses this to check that the proposal generally fits the program. This summary will be posted publicly for all applicants.
- Description & documentation of applicant organization’s status as Federally Recognized Tribe, a Tribe on the NAHC’s Contact List, or a Tribally led non-profit organization.

#### Project Proposals

- Online application questions in Grants Portal
- Project description. What activities will the grant fund, and why are they important?
- Grant budget & budget narrative
- Photos of the project area or general area/ecosystem
- List of goals and deliverables
- For implementation projects, list of acres of each specific treatment or land activity
- Environmental Compliance description - All applicants are **required** to discuss their proposed project(s) with Climate & Energy's environmental compliance staff before submitting an application. Please attend an online environmental compliance office hour (dates times will be announced on the Tribal Wildfire Resilience webpage) or email [cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov](mailto:cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov) with a description of your project(s) to begin the discussion.
- Statement of Qualifications, description of project readiness, & timeline
- Optional: maps

## **Step 2: Video Interviews (April 7-18, 2025) & Additional Documents**

The most competitive applicants will advance to Step 2, video interviews and additional document requests. This will be determined by review and scoring of Step 1 application materials.

### **Video Interviews**

- Each interview will be a half-hour video call with members of the Tribal Wildfire Resilience grants staff and Review Panel.
- The first 10 minutes is a presentation (no more than 5 slides, including pictures) about the proposal.
- The rest of the time is open conversation and Q&A about the project.
- All video interviews will be scheduled for the weeks of April 7-18, 2025
- The application includes a link where applicants can sign up for their video call spot.
- If you know that these dates do not work for your team, please contact TWR staff as early as possible, and no later than March 27, so we can set up an alternate time.
- Applicants may be required to provide additional documentation prior to the project presentation.

### **Additional Documentation Requests**

- Projects under consideration for grant awards may be required to submit additional documentation for review and clarification.
- Projects that need a Governing Board Resolution will submit that resolution.

- Any projects under consideration for funding from California Climate Investments will be required to submit additional information prior to grant awards in accordance with CCI requirements. This may include information to support a quantitative or qualitative assessment of greenhouse gas impacts, an assessment of co-benefits and benefits to priority populations, and jobs estimates.

## **EVALUATION AND SCORING CRITERIA**

Upon the close of the application period, applications will be reviewed to determine if the project meets eligibility requirements. Applications must be completed and submitted by an eligible applicant in the Grants Portal. Projects must be within funding limits and must be able to be completed within the statutory time limits. Applications that do not meet these criteria will be disqualified, will not be scored against the selection criteria, and will not be eligible for award.

Information provided during the evaluation process should demonstrate how effectively the proposed project meets statutory requirements, funding priorities, and program objectives. Projects will be evaluated using established criteria, and any additional funding considerations identified by the review team. Project Proposals will receive an initial ranking score. The initial ranking will be used to facilitate discussions about each proposal among a multidisciplinary evaluation team.

Each project will be evaluated for eligibility. Points will then be attributed according to criteria in the tables below.



## Eligibility Criteria

The first part of the application review is to confirm that the proposal is eligible for the program.

Criteria	Score Based On	Scoring
<p>Eligible Applicants, satisfying at least one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Federally recognized tribe</li> <li>2. Tribe on NAHC list</li> <li>3. Tribally led non-profit with documentation</li> </ol>	<p>Documentation provided in the eligibility section of the application. Respective documentation related to the criteria of eligibility.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If applying as a federally recognized tribe: any document on Tribe or Bureau of Indian Affairs letterhead showing federally recognized status.</li> <li>2. If applying as a tribe on CA NAHC list: documentation from NAHC confirming presence on NAHC list.</li> <li>3. If applying as a Tribally led non-profit: documentation of how the organization is tribally led. See the Eligible Applicants section above for more information. Any applicant in this category <b>will have to contact</b> Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program before application deadline.</li> </ol>	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Disqualified
Eligible Activities	All proposed activities are within grant program scope as described in the <a href="#">Eligible Activities section</a> , and <a href="#">Examples of Potential Funded Activities</a> . This will include a general review of Budget, Scope of Work, Deliverables List, Treatment Plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Disqualified
Grant Amount	Between \$250,000 and \$3,000,000, including <b>BOTH</b> direct costs and indirect costs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Disqualified
Project Performance Period	All grant activities occur between October 2025 and March 2028.	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Disqualified
Complete application	All required information has been provided. This will be clearly labeled in the online application. It will include project information, project summary, scope of work, budget, workbook with deliverables list, and so on.	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Disqualified
Environmental Compliance Discussion Completed	Applicant discussed environmental compliance options with Climate & Energy's environmental compliance staff at either online CEQA office hours, individual emails, and / or individual calls.	<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible <input type="checkbox"/> Disqualified

## Scoring Criteria (100 Points Available)

Eligible proposals will then be scored by the review panel. This table shows the criteria, number of points, and what the score is based on.

Criteria	Points	Description	Score Based On
Supports Tribal Priorities	20	The project furthers Traditional Ecological Knowledge, in TEK; wildfire resilience; land management; biodiversity or culturally important species; cultural or prescribed fire; forest health; training and workforce development; access, co-management, or stewardship of ancestral lands.	Statement of Purpose, Scope of Work, Application questions about TEK and Tribal Land Management
Clear goals & purpose	15	The proposal describes why the project is important and relevant. The proposal describes the background of the project area, the applicant and partners, and why this is an important project.	Statement of Purpose, Application questions about TEK and Tribal Land Management
Clear Project Plan & Scope	20	<p>The proposal describes what the grant would fund. The proposal is clear and organized.</p> <p>Proposed activities have a clear connection to the applicant's goals for the project.</p> <p>The project proposes to fund activities that are eligible for this program.</p> <p>Reviewers understand what the proposal includes.</p>	<p>Planning: Scope of Work, Deliverables List, Work Plan, Budget</p> <p>Implementation: Scope of Work, Deliverables List, Treatment Acres, Work Plan, Budget</p>

Criteria	Points	Description	Score Based On
Environmental Compliance & Legal Readiness	15	<p>The environmental compliance summary should describe how environmental compliance will be completed, if awarded, within one year of the execution of the grant agreement, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any existing or needed permits and/or regulatory approvals necessary to meet environmental compliance requirements to support the project.</li> <li>• The anticipated CEQA lead agency for the project.</li> <li>• Whether NEPA applies to the project.</li> <li>• Whether a BIA environmental compliance process applies to the project.</li> </ul> <p>Existing and previously approved environmental documents intended to support the project should be included.</p> <p><u>Implementation Projects</u>: Preference for projects with completed CEQA and/or NEPA.</p> <p><u>Planning Projects</u>: Inclusion of information pertaining to environmental compliance processes, if required, to be carried out to support the grant.</p> <p>Note: Planning activities do not always require CEQA analysis and documentation.</p>	Scope of Work, Environmental Compliance Summary, Environmental Compliance Worksheet, Pre-application discussion with Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Score Based On</b>
Collaboration, Community Engagement, & Local Support	10	<p>Major project partners are committed to participating in the project.</p> <p>The project is supported by the surrounding community. This may include tribal members, non-tribal community members, neighbors, or other organizations interested in the project.</p> <p>The applicant has good working relationships with neighbors and partners. The applicant is communicating with all important stakeholders for the project.</p>	<p>Letters of Commitment from major partners describing how they will participate.</p> <p>Letters of Support from other community members describing their connection to the project and their support of it.</p> <p>Letters of Support from other tribes that may have a connection to the lands where the project takes place.</p>
Administrative Capacity	10	Applicant and major partners have the relevant knowledge, skills, and time to successfully complete the project. The budget may include hiring additional staff and contractors.	Statement of Qualifications, Work Plan, Environmental Compliance
Budget	10	<p>The budget is entered accurately into the Grants Portal application.</p> <p>Budget matches scope of work. The budget clearly lists each expense that the grant will pay for, with all costs in appropriate categories.</p> <p>All budget items are eligible for this program.</p>	Budget, Budget Narrative

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are submitted online through the [Grants Portal](#). An editable Word document of the application will be on the TWR Grants website.

Applicants to the Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program must submit applications using the Grants Portal by the application deadline of **3 p.m. PST on March 27, 2025**. Please verify that you have selected the applicable grant solicitation for the project type you are applying for when starting your application.

[\[Link will be provided when application is live.\]](#)

All required questions and forms must be submitted through the Grants Portal. Hard copy and electronic copies submitted through an alternate method will not be accepted. If you do not have access to reliable internet or have other barriers to utilizing the Grants Portal, please contact CAL FIRE at TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov or (916) 224-5584, within 1 month of solicitation release to discuss alternative ways to submit an application.

Please refer to the [Grants Portal – Application Submittal User Guide](#) for detailed instructions on how to access Grants Portal and complete your application. The guide is also accessible via the [CAL FIRE Grants webpage](#). It is highly recommended that you set-up an account and submit your application in advance of the application deadline to avoid any technical issues.

## Proposal Discussions

All applicants are **strongly** encouraged to schedule a half-hour call with Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program to discuss project ideas and whether they may be eligible for the program.

CAL FIRE staff cannot provide detailed review of draft documents in order to avoid unfair conflicts of interest.

## Environmental Compliance Discussions

All applicants are **required** to discuss their project with Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff before submitting an application.

Applicants should be prepared to discuss the details of their proposed project, any existing CEQA or NEPA documents that may cover project activities, and whether the applicant anticipates asking CAL FIRE to act as lead agency for the development of additional CEQA documents, if known.

To begin environmental compliance discussions, there are two options:

- A) Preferred option: Attend an online Environmental Compliance Office Hour (dates/times will be announced on the Tribal Wildfire Resilience website).
- B) If the Environmental Compliance Office Hours or the dates/times do not work for you, please email a brief description of the proposed project(s) and expected

environmental compliance requirements, documents, and/or detailed plan for how environmental compliance will be completed, if awarded, within one year of grant execution to [cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov](mailto:cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov)

## Application Documents

The below is a list of files that must be uploaded as part of your application. Please refer to the full application for further information, templates, required file formats and size limitations for each file type.

Applications will be treated in accordance with the Public Records Act requirements, and certain information, subject to those requirements, may be publicly disclosed.

### Required

- Eligibility description & documentation
- [Payee Data Record \(Std. 204\)](#) *A W-9 may be substituted for tribal and governmental agencies*
- Grant Budget & Budget Narrative
- Project Workbook including
  - Deliverables List
  - Planned treatment activities
  - Work Plan
  - Environmental Compliance Worksheet
- Statement of Qualifications (SOQ)
- Environmental Compliance Summary
- For non-profits: Articles of Incorporation  
May be required for application Step 2: Governing Resolution. CAL FIRE will provide additional information when this is required, such as for projects that need to designate who has signing authority or projects with a Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity

### Optional

- Project Partner Letters of Commitment
- Community Letters of Support
- Justification and supporting documentation for indirect rates exceeding 12% (such as a NICRA)
- Existing Environmental Compliance supporting documents (if available), such as signed NEPA or CEQA decisions
- Pictures of the project area (up to 5)
- Maps of the project area
- Shapefiles of the project area. Please do not include any culturally sensitive data.

## **REVIEW DECISIONS**

### **Review Process**

A list of Tribal Wildfire Resilience applications received will be posted on the Tribal Wildfire Resilience grants webpage at least 10 business days prior to award.

Tribal Wildfire Resilience staff will make funding recommendations to CAL FIRE Leadership. Upon approval by the CAL FIRE Executive, grant awards are announced.

CAL FIRE will review completed applications that meet the Program Eligibility Criteria. Eligibility, proposal documentation, and interview content will be evaluated by Tribal Wildfire Resilience staff using the scoring criteria.

Eligible applications will be scored by using the Grant Selection Criteria. Final awards will be determined based on project scores, program need, and relative fit of the awarded projects to each other both geographically and with respect to proposed activities and funding priorities.

Additional reviewers will read proposal summary information and provide feedback on the proposals. This will include CAL FIRE Unit Foresters from each project area; CAL FIRE Cultural Resource Managers (Archeologists); and interagency reviewers that include members of the tribal land management and cultural fire communities.

### **Funding Offers**

CAL FIRE reserves the right to fund projects in total or in part, whichever best serves the objectives of the Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program. Project applicants that are selected to receive partial funding will be provided additional information on their revised funding amount, project performance period, and any other changes to their application as needed.

Project applicants will be notified by email if they have, or have not been, selected to receive funding. Successful applications will be summarized and posted to CAL FIRE's Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grants webpage within two weeks of the decision to fund.

### **Disqualification of Application**

CAL FIRE may consider an application inadequate and, therefore, disqualified from the selection process for several reasons.<sup>1</sup> These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Application is not complete
- Application contains significant inconsistencies with spatial data or project acres proposed for treatment
- Application is not submitted by an eligible applicant in Grants Portal
- Project is not within funding limits
- The project does not meet any of the other eligibility criteria outlined in the Grant Guidelines

The State reserves the right to reject any Project Proposal from an applicant who is in violation of law or policy at any other public agency. Potential violations include, but are not limited to, being in default of performance requirements in other contracts or grant agreements issued by the State, being engaged in, or suspected of, criminal conduct that poorly reflects or brings discredit to the State or failing to have all required licenses necessary to carry out the project.

The State further reserves the right to reject any Project Proposal from an applicant who has a history of performance issues with past grants or other agreements with any public entity.

## Equity

CAL FIRE Tribal Wildfire Resilience is committed to supporting disadvantaged and marginalized communities. This commitment furthers the mission of CAL FIRE to serve and safeguard the people of California. Applicants are invited to describe how implementation of grant funds may elevate historically under-represented populations.

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<sup>1</sup> CAL FIRE retains discretion in decisions of disqualification. Disqualification depends partly on the solicitation. If the total number of applications that entirely meet all requirements is low in relation to the funding amount available for awards, then CAL FIRE may select applications for awards on the condition of prompt resolution of identified application issues. In addition, factors that may be considered include, but are not limited to, ensuring balanced distribution of funding. If *any* application is disqualified, then *all* applications will be disqualified that were received as part of the same solicitation and that share the same issue that was the basis for disqualification.

If a solicitation is determined not to meet minimum requirements, CAL FIRE may also pursue other options such as re-directing some available funding to other programs or projects aligned with statutory objectives.



## GRANT CONDITIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

### Grant Agreement

To receive funding and carry out the project, grant recipients must enter into a grant agreement with CAL FIRE. Project applicants are encouraged to review [CAL FIRE's standard terms and conditions \(available online\)](#) prior to submitting a grant application to ensure they understand and are able to meet the legal requirements that grantees are subject to in the grant agreement. Please reach out with any questions or concerns about the standard grant agreement. Tribal Wildfire Resilience may send questions to CAL FIRE Legal to discuss more specifics.

### Project Performance Period

- The Project Performance Period is from the time the Grant Agreement is fully signed by either the CAL FIRE Deputy Director or designee to the Agreement termination date. Only eligible costs incurred during the Project Performance Period will be paid by the State.
- CAL FIRE will execute all Grant Agreements as soon as feasible and no later than one year from announcement of grant awards.
- **All project work must be completed within the Project Performance Period.**
- Final invoices for all grant-related work must be submitted to CAL FIRE no later than 30 days after the Project Performance Period.
- For this solicitation, all proposed activities should begin in October 2025 (or later) and be entirely completed by March 30, 2028.
- We expect that awarded grants will have funds available to begin work in fall 2025.

### Project Reporting

Using the Grants Portal system, grantees must report on progress toward completion of the Scope of Work included in the Grant Agreement with every invoice or quarterly, whichever is more frequent, using the Tribal Wildfire Resilience Progress Report templates. Each invoice includes a progress report describing the work covered by that invoice. More detailed reporting occurs quarterly on acres treated and progress toward project deliverables. Quarterly progress updates are due on the last business day of the month following the end of a quarter (April 30, July 31, October 31, January 31).

Report contents are determined by CAL FIRE. Information to be submitted includes, but is not limited to:

- Project accomplishments
- Challenges and obstacles

- State dollars allocated and matching funds contributed
- Acres of land treated, activities completed, and GIS shapefile(s) that map those treatments, number of trees and acres planted
- Bone dry tons of biomass delivered to a renewable energy facility, tons of biomass delivered to a sawmill, and renewable energy produced
- Before and after photographs
- All grantees must submit a final project report to CAL FIRE with the final invoice. Final report will include final summary of all metrics reported in prior periodic progress reports, as well as narrative summary of project outcomes and photographic documentation of project activities and outcomes.

Note: Applicants may budget grant funding to meet reporting requirements that apply as part of fulfilling the terms and conditions of the grant. CAL FIRE encourages applicants to consider their needs for reporting and to prepare the proposed project budget accordingly. This may include accounting, project management, administration, GIS, and similar support.

## **Spatial Data**

Grantees must provide project information to CAL FIRE for entry into CalMAPPER, CAL FIRE's geospatial database that facilitates mapping and monitoring of CAL FIRE vegetation treatment projects. Information from grantees will include grantee contact information, project costs, and geospatial data of the project boundary, treatments, and activities (using GIS Software), according to CAL FIRE specifications and deadlines. CalMAPPER information from grantees will be required at specific times throughout the project performance period of the grant, including at initial grant award and at periodic invoice billing submissions. It is highly recommended that applicants include a budget line item to procure a GIS specialist to provide required geospatial data throughout the life of the grant.

Treatment polygons and other project information will be publicly available on the CAL FIRE website. Please do not share culturally sensitive information in the application proposal or during the life of a grant. Please ensure the reporting of your treatment location data does not disclose confidential information.

CAL FIRE is subject to the California Public Records Act. All records in CAL FIRE's possession will be treated in accordance with the requirements of that Act and may only be withheld from public disclosure if a specific statutory exemption applies.

Please contact Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program with any questions about location confidentiality.

## **Changes to an Approved Project and Amendments**

A grantee wishing to change the scope of work, budget, or project performance period of an approved project must submit the proposed change via Grants Portal for review and approval.

Any change must be consistent with the statutes, regulations, and guidance governing the program. Requested budget changes may not increase the amount of funds awarded by CAL FIRE, unless such changes are initiated by CAL FIRE.

The following scope of work revisions may require the project Grant Agreement to be amended and re-signed, referred to as a Major Amendment:

- Change in project end date (as allowed by legislation or liquidation deadline for the funding source).
- Changes to the budget that are greater than 10% of the total award amount.
- Changes in the Scope of Work, including changes to the physical project location or treatment areas, changes in treatment objective or treatment activity, and additions or subtractions of treatment acres.

CAL FIRE reserves the right to reject proposed changes to an approved project or budget. Specific amendment guidance will be provided on [Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grantee Resources webpage](#).

Once a Grant Agreement has been signed, it may only be amended with advanced written consent of CAL FIRE and the Grantee. Any amendment requests to extend the project timeline, where permissible, must be submitted to CAL FIRE sixty (60) days before the agreement end date using the Grants Portal system. CAL FIRE reserves the right to waive the sixty (60) days in extenuating circumstances.

## **Project Termination**

Before work on the project begins, a Grant Agreement may be terminated by CAL FIRE or the grantee upon 30 days advanced written notice to the other party. After work begins on the Project, termination may occur: (1) if CAL FIRE and the Grantee mutually agree to terminate the agreement; (2) if the State determines Grantee has made a material misrepresentation, violated the Grant Agreement, failed to fulfill its obligations under the Grant Agreement, or otherwise determines there is cause to do so; or (3) if the State gives 30-days written notice of termination to Grantee. Further details on this process will be provided in the Grant Agreement.

## **Accounting Requirements**

The grantee must maintain an accounting system that accurately reflects fiscal transactions. The accounting system must provide an adequate audit trail, including original source documents, such as receipts, progress payments, invoices, purchase orders, timecards, cancelled checks, etc. The accounting system must document the total cost of the project. The grantee must maintain accounting records for three years following the duration of the Project

Performance Period or one year after final disposition of any disputed audit findings, whichever occurs later. Grantees are required to keep source documents for all expenditures related to each grant for at least three years following Project completion and one year following an audit.

## **Loss of Funding**

CAL FIRE reserves the right to withdraw a funding award if stated requirements are not met. The following are examples of actions that may result in a grantee's loss of funding. This is not a complete list and is intended only to show examples.

1. Grantee fails to obtain an executed Grant Agreement within one year from award announcement.
2. Grantee has not satisfied all legal requirements (e.g., CEQA, NEPA, ancillary contracts, agreements, MOUs, etc.) necessary to initiate ground disturbing project work within 1 year of grant agreement execution.
3. Grantee begins ground-disturbing grant funded work prior to grant program written approval on meeting environmental compliance.
4. Grantee fails to use all the grant funds.
5. Grantee withdraws from the grant program.
6. Grantee fails to complete the funded project described in the Grant Agreement Scope of Work.
7. Grantee fails to submit all documentation within the time periods specified in the Grant Agreement.
8. Grantee changes the Project Scope of Work or project implementation without CAL FIRE's prior written approval.
9. Grantee changes the Project Scope of Work that is inconsistent with the overall program goals or eligible activities.
10. Grantee or CAL FIRE terminates the Agreement.
11. Grantee does not reinvest program (project) income into the project by subtracting it from the subsequent reimbursement or advance payment invoice. This includes interest on advances, as well as income from commercial timber, firewood sales, or other aspects of the grant budget.
12. Grantee does not submit or is repeatedly tardy in submitting, required project reporting.

## Eligible Costs

Project costs must be consistent with the approved Project Application and incurred during the Project Performance Period as specified in the Grant Agreement. Costs associated with meeting grant reporting requirements, managing spatial data, and complying with the California Environmental Quality Act or National Environmental Policy Act may be eligible costs.

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Salaries and Wages	Salaries and wages of employees employed by the grantee who are DIRECTLY engaged in the execution of the grant project. Limited to actual time spent on the grant project. Leave benefits (i.e. sick leave, vacation, etc.) that are consistent with the grantee's leave benefit policy may be charged to the grant in proportion to the percentage of time worked on the grant within the pay period. Examples of expenditures include time related to site visits and project monitoring, and completion of reporting related to the grant project. Staff time related to accounting, business services, etc. are allowed only if those functions are not included in the grantee's overhead cost.	A payroll summary of all employees' time spent on the project must be provided with invoices requesting salary/wage reimbursement. Payroll documentation should show a nexus between time worked on the project and wages paid to the employee after the fact. Timesheets or similar documentation detailing days and hours worked on the project must be maintained and retained by the grantee for audit purposes but should not be submitted to CAL FIRE unless otherwise instructed. Any leave charged to the grant must reflect the calculation of time spent on the grant compared to overall time worked. A statement certifying that leave charged to the grant is in proportion to employee's time spent must be included as part of the supporting documentation. All salary and wages charged to the grant must tie back to the grantee's accounting records.
Benefits	Employer contribution share of fringe benefits associated with employees (paid from salaries and wages Budget Item) who are directly engaged in the execution of the grant project. This will include Social Security, Medicare, Health Insurance, Pension Plan costs, etc. as applicable for the specific employee. Leave benefits (i.e. sick leave, vacation, etc.) that are consistent with the grantee's leave benefit policy may be charged to the grant in proportion to the percentage of time worked on the grant within the pay period.	Same documentation as Salaries and Wages. Payroll documentation showing wages and hours paid to the employee and associated fringe benefits.

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Contractual	Direct consultant and contractual services necessary to achieve the objectives of the grant. Examples of contractual costs will be RPF supervision/certification, professional/consultant services (the costs of consultant services necessary for project planning and implementation), fire prevention contractor, etc. Procurement of contractual services should be documented to ensure selection on a competitive basis and documentation of price analysis. Grantee should follow their organizations own procurement policies and have documented policy available for audit purposes.	Invoices from Consultant/Contractor identifying expenditure, services performed and period of services. When reporting acres, contractor invoices must identify when and where the acres were treated. Documents related to consultant/contractor selection analysis shall be kept by the grantee but available for audit purposes.
Supplies	Supplies that are used in the direct support of the project are allowable. Supplies exceeding \$500 per unit cost shall be documented to ensure procurement of supplies on a competitive basis and documentation of price analysis.	Receipts identifying items purchased, cost and date of purchase. Documentation related to cost analysis of procurement of supplies exceeding \$500 shall be kept by the grantee but available for audit purposes.
Travel	Travel cost associated with travel to and from project sites, meetings, etc. directly related to the grant project and must be considered reasonable and necessary for the completion of the project. Reimbursement rates shall be consistent with the grantee's written travel policy. Absent a written policy, per diem shall not exceed the California Standard Per Diem Rate allowable by the <a href="#">U.S. General Services Administration</a> . Mileage rates shall not exceed the <a href="#">rates allowable by IRS</a> . Travel costs are applicable only to the grantee and their employees. Contractors' travel costs must be billed to the "Contractual" category.	Receipts identifying travel cost (i.e. lodging, rental cars). Mileage must be documented by either employee travel claims that are signed by the employee or vehicle mileage logs for vehicles owned by the grantee. Per Diem must be documented by employee travel claims. Grantee may be requested to provide a copy of their written travel policy. Documentation must be kept by the grantee and made available for audit purposes, upon request.

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Equipment	<p>Equipment is an item exceeding \$5,000 or more per unit cost and has a tangible useful life of more than one year. Cost to lease equipment to use in the grant project may be charged to the grant. A cost-benefit analysis to justify the cost of purchasing equipment versus leasing must be provided. Procurement of equipment must be done on a competitive basis and include documentation of price analysis. Grantee must include in the application package the proposed use and maintenance plans for equipment after the performance period of the grant. Disposition of equipment beyond the project performance period is subject to CAL FIRE approval.</p>	<p>Cost of equipment purchased shall be substantiated by purchase receipt and a bid quote worksheet at the time of invoicing. All other documentation related to price analysis of procurement of equipment must be kept by the grantee and made available for audit purposes, upon request. Disposition of the equipment must be submitted and approved by CAL FIRE every two years upon completion of the project until notified in writing by CAL FIRE that reporting is no longer required. Applicant must submit detailed justification of purchase to CAL FIRE and receive approval prior to purchasing.</p>
Other	<p>Other costs that do not fit in any of the above categories. Costs must be directly related to the grant project. Use of equipment owned by the grantee may be charged to the grant at a rate set by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) <a href="#">"Labor Surcharge and Equipment Rental Rate" guide</a>. If the Caltrans guide does not address rates for a particular piece of equipment, grantee must obtain CAL FIRE approval prior to using such equipment. Costs (such as rent, utilities, phones, general office supplies, etc.) that must be apportioned to the grant are considered indirect costs unless written justification is submitted and approved by CAL FIRE.</p>	<p>Invoices or receipts identifying the item and cost charged to the grant. Cost of leased equipment charged to the grant must be substantiated with receipts identifying equipment leased, dates equipment was leased, lease rate, and total cost. Usage of grantee equipment must be substantiated with an equipment usage log, equipment used, rate, and total rental cost. Documentation must be kept by the grantee and made available for audit purposes, upon request.</p>

Budget Item	Eligible Cost	Required Documentation
Indirect Costs	Indirect Costs are costs associated with doing business that are of a general nature and are incurred to benefit two or more functions within the grantee organization. These costs are not usually identified specifically within the grant agreement, project, or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization. Examples include salaries and benefits of employees not directly assigned to a project; functions such as personnel, accounting, budgeting, audits, business services, information technology, janitorial, and salaries of supervisors and managers; rent, utilities, supplies, etc. The maximum allowable indirect charge for this grant program is 12% unless an exemption is granted by CAL FIRE (see Indirect Rate Exemption).	Applied on a percentage (%) basis on direct costs <u>except for equipment</u> . Documentation related to the determination of the grantee’s indirect cost rate as well as any costs falling under the indirect cost category must be retained by the grantee for audit purposes.

## Indirect Rate Exemption

Inclusion of indirect costs is acceptable and should generally not exceed 12% of the total direct grant costs, minus equipment costs. Applicants may request a higher indirect rate by providing additional justification as to why a higher rate is needed as well as including appropriate documentation substantiating the basis of the higher indirect rate (e.g. a copy of a federally approved Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, etc.). In no instance may the request exceed 20%. Documentation related to the determination of the Grantee’s indirect cost rate must be retained by the Grantee for audit purposes.

For applicants requesting the higher rate, you may include this rate within your application request and budget breakdown. CAL FIRE will evaluate your request for higher indirect rate concurrently with your grant application. If your project is selected for award but the higher rate is not approved, CAL FIRE will notify you of the revised award amount and changes to your budget if needed. Approval of the higher indirect rate is solely at CAL FIRE’s discretion. For specific questions regarding indirect cost rates please contact [TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:TribalWildfireResilienceGrants@fire.ca.gov).

## Ineligible Costs

The following are ineligible for reimbursement under the grant:

1. Costs incurred before or after the Project Performance Period, including but not limited to costs to prepare the project application associated with this solicitation.



2. Overtime for employees being paid out of Salaries & Wages, unless pre-approved by CAL FIRE in writing. Otherwise, all hours will be reimbursed at the straight time rate.
3. Projects or activities utilizing CAL FIRE staff without corresponding reimbursements or requests seeking funding for services already provided by CAL FIRE.
4. Late fees, penalties, and bank fees.
5. Any practice or activity that, in CAL FIRE's judgment, is not a best management practice or that is, or could be, harmful to the forested landscape.
6. Any indirect costs based on percentage of equipment costs (see above).
7. Any equipment costs greater than \$400,000 or greater than 25% of the grant award amount.

## Payment of Grant Funds

Funds will be disbursed only once there is a fully executed Grant Agreement between CAL FIRE and the grantee. **Payments will be made on a reimbursement basis.** The grantee pays for services, products or supplies; invoices CAL FIRE for the same; and the State reimburses the grantee upon approval of the invoice. No work prior to or after the grant period is reimbursable. At CAL FIRE's discretion and subject to statutory requirements, advance funds may be provided (see Advances below) in lieu of reimbursement.

The grantee will submit to CAL FIRE an invoice form consistent with invoice guidance in Appendix F when requesting payment of any type and include appropriate documentation to support the costs (e.g., paid vendor receipts, payroll documents, other back-up documentation of expenses). An invoice template will be provided to all approved grants.

A Progress Report or Final Report must accompany all invoices. CAL FIRE may conduct a site inspection to verify that work invoiced has been satisfactorily completed. The invoice will then be forwarded to Sacramento Headquarters for review and subsequent approval of payment. **Expect payment to be issued 45 calendar days from the time an undisputed invoice is received.** If an invoice is incomplete or non-reimbursable, it will be returned to the grantee.

## Advances

Advance payments may be considered for non-profit organizations, local agencies, special districts (including Resource Conservation Districts), private forest landowners, and California Native American tribes per California Public Resources Code § 4799.05. Advance payments are solely at CAL FIRE's discretion.

An Advance must be submitted identifying how funds may be used over a six-month period. No single advance payment shall exceed 25% of the total grant award. An Advance [Accountability Report](#) form must be submitted to CAL FIRE no later than every four months after receiving the advance until the funds have been fully utilized. Advances should be fully utilized within a six-month period unless additional time is approved by CAL FIRE. Any Advance Payment, or

portion thereof, that is not spent within the later of six months or the spending timeline approved by the State must be returned to the State and will be returned to the grant balance. No additional advances may be requested until acceptable documentation is received by CAL FIRE that the previous advance has been fully exhausted on eligible expenses.

An [Advance Payment Request form](#) must be submitted identifying how funds may be used over a six-month period. No single advance payment shall exceed 25% of the total grant award. [An Advance Accountability Report](#) form must be submitted to CAL FIRE no later than every four months after receiving the advance until the funds have been fully utilized. Advances should be fully utilized within a six-month period unless additional time is approved by CAL FIRE. Any Advance Payment, or portion thereof, that is not spent within the later of six months or the spending timeline approved by the State must be returned to the State and will be returned to the grant balance. No additional advances may be requested until acceptable documentation is received by CAL FIRE that the previous advance has been fully exhausted on eligible expenses.

Advance payments must be deposited into a federally insured, interest-bearing account that provides the ability to track interest earned and withdrawals. Any interest earned on advance payment funds must be accounted for as Program Income and used toward offsetting the project cost in the next invoice (or advance request) or returned to the STATE. Refer to Appendix E on calculations and supporting documentation for interest income.

A Limited Waiver of Sovereign Immunity will be required for all grant contracts with federally recognized tribes that include potential advance payments.

The Advance process includes:

- Grantee requests an advance as directed by grant management staff, including using Grants Portal online portal, submitting an Invoice Cover Sheet, submitting an Advance Accountability Report that describes work planned for the advance for the next 6 months.
- Advance payment is sent by mail and must be deposited into an interest-bearing account.
- Each grantee with an advance will submit monthly reimbursement invoices documenting how the advance has been spent. These invoices include the full supporting documentation as would be required for all expenses and purchases if they were requested for reimbursement.
- Interest on the unspent advance funds will be document and reinvested into the project by being subtracted from the subsequent monthly advance payment drawdown invoice or reimbursement request.
- Advance Accountability Reports are due 4 months after the advance payment is made and 6 months after the advance payment is made, when the advance is fully spent.

## Prevailing Wage Requirements

CAL FIRE provides no opinion as to whether projects may be subject to prevailing wage law. For determination on prevailing wage applicability, please contact the [Department of Industrial Relations](#). It is the applicant's responsibility to budget for prevailing wages in their project cost when applicable.

Please Note: Beginning July 1, 2026, certain fuel reduction work, including but not limited to residential chipping, rural road fuel breaks, and fire breaks funded by the State will be subject to prevailing wage, record keeping, and registration requirements. (California Public Resources Code section 80200 et seq.). While the requirements do not apply to any contract, subcontract, or grant agreement that is fully executed before July 1, 2026, the requirements will apply if a contract, subcontract, or grant agreement is renewed or re-signed as part of an amendment after July 1, 2026.

## State Conflict of Interest Laws

All applicants, individuals who participate in the review of submitted Project Proposals, and grantees are subject to state and federal conflict of interest laws. Applicable statutes include, but are not limited to, California Government Code section 1090 and Public Contract Code sections 10365.5, 10410, and 10411. These statutes include, but are not limited to, prohibitions on the following conduct:

- i. **Current State Officers or Employees:** No State officer or employee shall engage in any employment, activity, or enterprise from which the officer or employee receives compensation or has a financial interest and which is sponsored or funded by any State agency, unless the employment, activity, or enterprise is required as a condition of regular State employment. No State officer or employee shall contract on his or her own behalf as an independent contractor with any State agency to provide goods or services.
- ii. **Former State Officers or Employees:** For the two-year period from the date he or she left State employment, no former State officer or employee may enter into a contract in which he or she engaged in any of the negotiations, transactions, planning, arrangements, or any part of the decision-making process relevant to the contract while employed in any capacity by any State agency. For the twelve-month period from the date he or she left State employment, no former State officer or employee may enter into<sup>7</sup> a contract with any State agency if he or she was employed by that State agency in a policy-making position in the same general subject area as the proposed contract within the twelve-month period prior to his or her leaving State service.

Any individual who has participated in planning or setting priorities for a specific grant solicitation over and above the public comment process and tribal consultation or who will participate in any part of the grant development and negotiation process on behalf of the State is ineligible to receive funds or personally benefit from funds through that solicitation. Failure to comply with conflict-of-interest laws, including business and financial disclosure provisions, will result in the Project Proposal being rejected or any grant agreement made in violation of the conflict-of-interest laws being declared void. Other legal actions may also be taken

If an applicant has any questions about compliance with conflicts of interest laws, the applicant should consult the California Fair Political Practices Commission or a qualified attorney.

### **Private Benefit Prohibited**

Grantee will not be reimbursed for any costs that exceed the fair market value of an “arm’s length” transaction for goods or services rendered in furtherance of the grant project.

An “arm’s length” transaction exists where the parties have an adverse (or opposing) interest. For example, a seller wants to sell his goods at the highest possible price, while a buyer wants to buy at the lowest possible price. These are adverse interests. In negotiating with a person, an adverse interest is assumed if that person is otherwise unrelated to you in the sense of not being in a position to exercise substantial influence over you or your affairs. If the person is in a position to exercise substantial influence over your affairs, then an arm’s length standard requires additional precautions to eliminate the effect of the relationship. Using a conflict-of-interest policy, information about comparable transactions between unrelated parties, and reliable methods for evaluating the transaction, are examples of precautions that would help make the negotiation process equivalent to one between unrelated persons.

Fair market value is the price at which goods, services, or property would change hands between a willing buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy, sell, or transfer the goods, services, or property, and both having reasonable knowledge of relevant facts.

Grant recipients must avoid or scrutinize transactions that exhibit signs of actual or possible conflicts-of-interests and should avoid even the appearance of conflicts. The appearance of a conflict of interest occurs when a person in a position of authority over an organization, such as a director, officer, or manager, may benefit personally from a decision he or she could make. Conflict-of-interest red flags may also include organizations that engage in transactions that are less than “arm’s length” indicating there may be a bargain or gift element, such as transactions with friends and relatives, or receiving gifts from contractors. In addition, transactions with organizations that have several employees or Board members who are personally or professionally related should be highly scrutinized.

CAL FIRE may require Grantee to establish conflict-of-interest policies and procedures and maintain adequate controls to ensure that the grantee or anyone acting on behalf of the grantee does not have any conflicting personal and/or financial interest associated with activities funded by the grant project. CAL FIRE may request additional documentation during

the performance of the grant, including during review of financial-or progress reporting, or during State Audit to verify that a conflict of interest does not exist.

## **State Audit**

Projects may be subject to an audit at any time during the Project Performance Period and for three years following Project completion. The purpose of the audit is to verify that project expenditures were properly documented. Typically, an audit is requested by the State after the final payment request has been received and all project transactions have been completed.

If your project is selected for audit, you will be contacted at least 30 days before the audit commences. The audit should include all books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of the grantee, as they relate to the project for which State funds were granted.

To expedite the audit, the grantee must have the project records, including the source documents, and cancelled checks readily available. The grantee must also provide an employee having knowledge of the project and the accounting procedure or system to assist the State auditor. The grantee must provide a copy of any document, paper, record, or the like as requested by the State auditor.

Grantees must keep source documents for all expenditures related to each grant for at least three years following Project completion, or one year following completion of an audit, whichever occurs later, unless the grantee has a longer retention policy.

## APPENDIX A: EXPLANATION OF TERMS

TERM	EXPLANATION
<b>Agreement</b>	A legally binding agreement between the State and another entity.
<b>Amendment</b>	A modification or material change of the agreement, such as term, cost, or scope of work. All amendments must be approved in advance by CAL FIRE following the amendment request process. This includes both Minor Modifications and Major Amendments (both defined below).
<b>Application</b>	The form identified by CAL FIRE as the document to be submitted by a potential grantee who seeks grant funding through this program, and supporting attachments, required by the enabling legislation or program, or both.
<b>Authorized Representative</b>	The designated person or position identified by the Grantee as the agent to sign all required grant documents including, but not limited to, grant agreements, application forms and payment requests.
<b>CEQA</b>	The California Environmental Quality Act is a law establishing policies and procedures requiring agencies to identify, disclose to decision makers and the public, and attempt to lessen significant impacts to environmental resources that may occur as a result of a proposed project.
<b>Contractor</b>	An entity contracting with the grantee for services and generally receives a Form 1099 for tax purposes.
<b>Employee</b>	Individuals employed directly by the grantee and generally receives a W-2 for tax purposes.
<b>Forestland</b>	As in Public Resources Code § 4793, land at least 10% occupied by trees of any size that are native to California.
<b>Indirect Costs</b>	Expenses of doing business that are of a general nature and are incurred to benefit at least two or more functions within an organization. These costs are not usually identified specifically with a grant, grant agreement, project or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization. Indirect costs include salaries and benefits of employees not directly assigned to a project, which provide functions such as personnel, business, information

	technology or janitorial services, and salaries of supervisors and managers. Indirect costs may only be applied as a % of direct costs, except equipment, within the agreement.
<b>Major Amendment (Formal Amendment)</b>	A formal modification or a material change that must be accomplished by a written amendment fully executed by the signatories of the grant agreement, typically involving a change to the Project Performance Period or significant changes to the budget or scope of work.
<b>Minor Amendment (Informal Amendment)</b>	A modification to the grant that (1) moves dollars in the line-item and task budgets not to exceed 10% of the total award amount, (2) makes a change in deliverable due dates, or (3) makes a minor change in the work of a grant agreement. It does not require a formal re-signing of the grant agreement but must be approved by CAL FIRE.
<b>Net GHG Benefit</b>	The sum of the GHG emission reductions and sequestration less any GHG emissions resulting from project implementation.
<b>Non-profit Organization</b>	Any California corporation organized under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code.
<b>Operating Expenses (Direct Cost)</b>	Any cost that can be specifically identified as generated by, and in accordance with, the provisions or activity requirements of the grant agreement.
<b>Payee Data Record (Std. 204)</b>	A form required to establish a supplier number to encumber funds and subsequent payment.
<b>Project Performance Period</b>	The Project Performance Period is from the time the Grant Agreement is fully signed to the Agreement termination date. Only eligible costs incurred during the Project Performance Period will be paid by the State.
<b>Project</b>	The activity, activities, or work to be accomplished utilizing grant and matching funds (if applicable).
<b>Program Income</b>	Income that is generated directly by Grantee's performance of the Project, including any interest earned on Advance Payments.
<b>Project Scope of Work</b>	The detailed description of the proposed tasks, as described in enabling legislation and detailed in the grant agreement.

<b>Project Budget Detail</b>	The proposed detailed budget plan identifying costs to be funded by the grant, matching funds, and projected program income broken down by budget category.
<b>Resolution</b>	A signed resolution by the grantee's governing body, which identifies individual(s) authorized to act on behalf of the grantee's governing body for the grant project.
<b>Tribe</b>	A Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the California Native American Heritage Commission.
<b>Tribal-Led Organization</b>	A legally incorporated entity with the primary mission to serve and benefit California tribal communities.
<b>Tribal Non-profit</b>	A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with a majority tribal-led board that is legally affiliated with a Tribe to represent and pursue the interests of a California Native American tribe. Tribal Sovereign Immunity may still apply to cover these organizations.
<b>Tribal-serving non-profit</b>	A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that provides services to Tribal communities, facilitates tribal practices, and/or supports the protection or continuance of natural, historic, or open-space resources for cultural purposes in their mission statement and purpose







## Worksheet #3: Work Plan

Complete with appropriate detail describing the phases of work necessary to successfully implement the project.



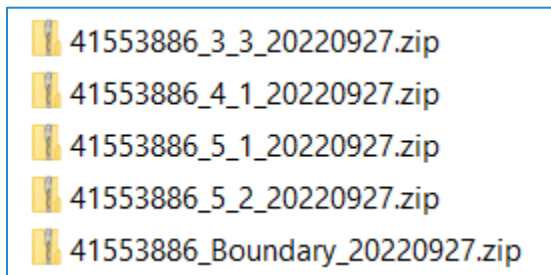
CAL FIRE Forest Health Program  
California Climate Investments  
Work Plan Sheet

**Instructions**

1. Every treatment number in Treatment\_Tracking must be included in Work\_Plan.
2. Add key non-ground-disturbing tasks that will be conducted within the project scope.
3. Use "in progress" to indicate that work will be actively underway but not completed during a given quarter, and use "Complete" to show that work will finish during a given quarter.

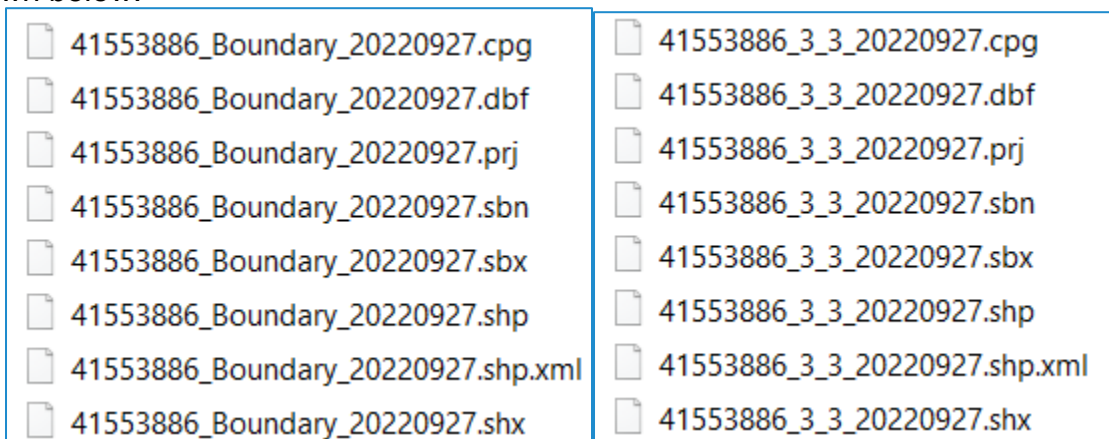
Treatment Number or Major Milestone	Ground-Disturbing Activity OR Non-Ground-Disturbing Task	Q4 2022 Apr-Jun	Q1 2022 Jul-Sep	Q2 2022 Oct-Dec	Q3 2023 Jan-Mar	Q4 2023 Apr-Jun	Q1 2023 Jul-Sep	Q2 2023 Oct-Dec	Q3 2024 Jan-Mar	Q4 2024 Apr-Jun
1	Planning			In progress	In progress	In progress	In progress	Complete		
1	Contracting							In progress	In progress	
1	Site prep by machine pile								In progress	In progress
1	Planting									
Field Data Collection	Planning		In progress	Complete						
Field Data Collection	Hiring			Complete						
Field Data Collection	Data Collection				In progress	Complete				
Field Data Collection	Sample preparation and analysis					In progress	In progress	Complete		





For example, if a project has 15 individual treatment components listed on the Treatment Tracking sheet of the progress report (i.e., a total of 15 rows of information in the Ground-Disturbing Activity Information table), there should be a total of 16 zipped shapefile folders submitted: one zipped folder for the project boundary and 15 separate zipped files for the 15 different treatment components listed on the Treatment Tracking sheet in the progress report.

5. Within each zipped shapefile folder, please provide all associated file extensions as shown below.



## **Types of Shapefiles**

Please include a project boundary shapefile, and a separate shapefile for each of the treatment components (rows) listed in the Treatment Tracking sheet in the progress report, as follows.

### **Project Boundary Shapefile**

1. The project boundary shapefile should have only one feature. The project boundary can be a multipart feature in the case of dispersed treatment areas.
2. The shapefile should define the acres, as closely as possible, on which ground-disturbing activity will take place (in a shapefile showing work to be completed) or has taken place (in a shapefile representing work completed), within the project scope. It is important to exclude any “dead” or “skip-over” or areas to give an accurate map of where ground-disturbing work occurs. Please be sure to exclude any “impact areas” where benefits are expected to result, but ground-disturbing work is not directly implemented. There should be no overlapping areas, and the project boundary acreage

should not exceed the cumulative treatment activity polygons acres. In summary, the project boundary shapefile should be one feature that covers all and only the areas on which the grant project conducts ground-disturbing work – i.e., a cumulative feature that includes all treatment activity boundaries.

3. Please submit your project boundary shapefile with the following naming convention.  
 Grants PortalApplicationNumber\_Boundary\_Date.zip. (Date format: YYMMDD)  
 Example: 41553886\_Boundary\_20231109.zip
4. The attribute table for the project boundary shapefile must include these fields: eCivis Application Number, Project Name, Grantee, Acres (see example below).

	FID	Shape	AppNumber	Proj_Name	Grantee	Acres
1	0	Polygon ZM	41553886	Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Experiment	Board of Regents, Uni...	1676.787447
Click to add new row.						

### **Treatment Activity Shapefiles**

Each project will have multiple treatment component or activity shapefiles.

1. The number of treatment activity shapefiles must match the number of treatment components (rows) listed in the Treatment Tracking Sheet of the progress report. For example, if the Treatment Tracking Sheet lists 15 different treatment activities (one activity per row, across a total of 15 rows), there must be 15 treatment activity shapefiles.
2. Each treatment activity boundary should only have one feature; it can be a multipart feature if treatment areas are dispersed.
3. All treatment activities must fall within the project boundary footprint.
4. Each treatment activity shapefile should include the associated treatment number (TN) as listed on the Treatment Tracking worksheet in the project workbook.
5. Each treatment activity shapefile must have one and only one responsibility area (“jurisdiction”). Please see the “Determining Jurisdiction” section for requirements and guidance.
6. Please submit your treatment activity boundary shapefiles with the following naming convention.
  - i. Grants PortalApplicationNumber\_TreatmentNumber\_Date.zip (Date format: YYMMDD)
  - ii. Example: 41553886\_6\_20231109.zip
7. The attribute table for the treatment activity boundary shapefiles must include these fields: TN (treatment number), eCivis Application Number, Treatment Name, Ownership Type, Jurisdiction, Treatment Objective, Vegetation Type, Acres (see example below).

	FID	Shape	TNumber	AppNumber	TName	OwnType	Jurisdicti	TObjective	VegType	Acres
1	0	Polygon ZM	3	41553886	North Complex SPI	Private (industrial forestry)	SRA	Reforestation	Timber	2.974324
Click to add new row.										

## **Templates**

1. Please [click here](#) to download an empty shapefile zip file to use for submitting project boundary shapefile.
2. Please [click here](#) to download an empty shapefile zip file for submitting treatment activity shapefiles.
3. Please [click here](#) to validate your shapefile with CAL FIRE's data validator tool.

## **Determining Jurisdiction**

When providing shapefiles of treatment activities, each treatment activity polygon must fall entirely within one responsibility area ("jurisdiction"): Federal Responsibility Area (FRA), State Responsibility Area (SRA), or Local Responsibility (LRA).

CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) maintains a GIS responsibility area layer publicly available online. Using this layer is necessary to ensure polygons do not span multiple responsibility areas.

Grantees may view the layer while first drawing polygons, and/or to check polygons drawn in the field (for example, if problems with connectivity might affect the accuracy of map work in remote locations). Below are tips on using the layer.

1. Download the responsibility area geodatabase under the SRA-LRA-FRA tab from <https://www.fire.ca.gov/Home/What-We-Do/Fire-Resource-Assessment-Program/GIS-Mapping-and-Data-Analytics>.
2. Load the geodatabase into a survey application (e.g., Avenza, Collector, or Survey123) to use it offline while in the field.
3. Apply spatial join (one-to-many) or overlay (intersection) tools by using the responsibility area and the activity shapefile in GIS software (e.g., ArcMap).
4. The resultant dataset will produce a new shapefile that has a combination of activity attributes with responsibility area attributes.
5. If an activity shape falls into multiple responsibility areas, then there will be multiple rows, each with a different responsibility area, for the one activity. Then:
  - a. Correct any drawing errors found that could eliminate inaccurate overlapping by the polygon of more than one responsibility area.
  - b. If the correctly drawn activity polygon still covers more than one responsibility area, the polygon will need to be broken into multiple polygons so that each polygon falls into only one responsibility area. In this case, add a row in the Treatment Tracking sheet (in the progress report form) for each new activity polygon.

At the end, there should be a one-to-one relationship: one activity, one row in the Treatment Tracking sheet, one activity polygon.

## **APPENDIX D: ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE**

**All grants are subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).** Tribal Wildfire Resilience grants are funded by the State of California. Regardless of jurisdiction, projects that are funded by the State of California that may have an effect on the environment, including *any*

ground-disturbing activity, require CEQA compliance. This includes projects that otherwise would not be subject to CEQA, such as implementation projects on Trust or federal lands.

**NOTE:** Grantee must submit proof of CEQA and/or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance within one year of the execution of the grant agreement. To ensure this occurs in a timely manner, it is **required** that all applicants contact Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff **prior** to submitting their application (further details under Environmental Compliance Discussion, above).

No grant funds shall be spent on any project activity that may have an effect on the environment without written environmental compliance approval from Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff.

Planning-specific activities may not require additional environmental compliance formal documents. These activities will be identified by Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff when grantees discuss projects prior to application submittal.

CAL FIRE reserves the right to withdraw funding if a grantee has not satisfied all legal requirements, including CEQA compliance, necessary to initiate project work that requires environmental compliance, within 1 year of grant agreement execution.

## **NEPA Compliance**

Project work involving Federal actions must comply with NEPA. For Federal jurisdictions that meet the requirements of PRC section 4799.05(d)(1), a CEQA notice of exemption will need to be filed. This means that prescribed fire, reforestation, habitat restoration, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken, in whole or in part, on federal lands (including Tribal Trust lands) to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under NEPA may not need additional analysis and would be statutorily exempt from CEQA. See Item #5 below.

## **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

Within one year of the execution of the grant agreement and prior to commencing any work that could impact the environment, CAL FIRE requires proof of adequate compliance with CEQA. This may be accomplished by one or more of the following methods:

1. Notice of exemption filed with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk in the manner specified in subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 21108 or subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 21152.
2. Initial study and negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration and all associated noticing documents filed with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk.
3. Draft and final environmental impact report and all associated noticing documents filed with the State Clearinghouse and the county clerk.
4. Timber harvesting permit or notice in compliance with the California Forest



Practice Act and Rules for projects that undertake timber operations per PRC § 4527. Note that use of timber harvest documents for CEQA compliance in the absence of timber operations is not appropriate, as the Forest Practice Act and Rules do not apply in these circumstances.

5. Finding of no significant impact-decision notice, categorical exclusion-decision memo or environmental impact statement-record of decision prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act for projects that are exempt from CEQA pursuant to PRC § 4799.05(d)(1). When using a NEPA document, per PRC § 4799.05(d)(4)(A), a CEQA notice of exemption needs to be filed with the State Clearinghouse and with the county clerk in the county in which the project will be located in the manner specified in subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 21108 or subdivisions (b) and (c) of Section 21152. The lead agency will also need to post the notice of exemption on its internet website together with a description of where the documents analyzing the environmental impacts of the project under the federal National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 are available for public review
6. Completed and accepted Project-Specific Analysis (PSA) under the [California Vegetation Treatment Program](#) (CalVTP).

## **CEQA Exempt Projects**

For exempt projects where the grantee is a public agency per Public Resources Code § 21063 the grantee, or a willing project partner that is a public agency, must: (a) complete due diligence for an Exempt Project and prepare a notice of exemption; and (b) file the notice of exemption with the State Clearinghouse **and** the county clerk.

For exempt projects where the grantee is not a public agency and is anticipating CAL FIRE to act a lead agency, the grantee should contact Climate and Energy environmental compliance staff prior to application submittal. Prior notification is necessary to ensure CEQA processes and associated requirements are clear and understood. CAL FIRE may prepare and file the notice of Exemption.

## **CEQA Non-exempt Projects and Lead Agency**

For non-exempt projects where the grantee is a public agency the grantee will assume the role of lead agency per Public Resources Code § 21067 The lead agency is responsible for: (a) performing the necessary environmental effects analysis; (b) preparing environmental documents; and (c) filing associated notices. For these projects, CAL FIRE will be a responsible agency, if necessary, and as such will review the lead agency's CEQA documents and any supporting documentation in order to develop its own CEQA findings and make a discretionary decision for a project.

If the applicant or any project partner is not a public agency and is anticipating CAL FIRE to act as CEQA lead agency, or if CEQA lead agency has not been identified, the grantee should include this information in the application and initiate a discussion with Climate & Energy

environmental compliance staff prior to application submittal. Once the grant is awarded, the grantee should continue to coordinate closely with Climate & Energy environmental compliance staff. For these projects, the grantee will be required to provide information, as necessary, to ensure compliance with CEQA. This includes conducting the necessary surveys and environmental effects analysis as well as preparation of environmental documents for projects and following CAL FIRE processes. The environmental compliance document must be submitted in Final Draft format ready for CAL FIRE's review and approval utilizing CAL FIRE's procedures and most current templates. Grantees will be responsible for all costs, including the analyses and document preparation; please budget accordingly, and schedule appropriately for final review and approval of the CEQA document(s). As CEQA lead agency, CAL FIRE requires, at a minimum, 90 days to review and approve non-exempt CEQA projects. It is the grantee's responsibility to meet CAL FIRE's grant requirements, which includes CEQA compliance within one year of the execution of the grant agreement and prior to commencing any activities that require environmental analysis.

Grantees should ensure they ask for adequate funds for environmental work when applying for grants. When preparing their budgets, grantees should consider the need to contract with appropriate resource professionals to do the necessary environmental effects assessment and document preparation work. This may include biologists, professional archaeologists, air quality experts, registered professional foresters, environmental planners, etc.

**Note:** Per CAL FIRE's procedures, CAL FIRE Certified Archaeological Surveyor certificate can only be used when CAL FIRE is the lead agency for CEQA. This means that when a grantee is a public agency or another public agency assumes the role as lead, the grant CANNOT use CAL FIRE Certified Archaeological Survey or certificate, and the grantee will need to utilize appropriate archeological professionals to complete this work. Please budget accordingly.

For all environmental documents where CAL FIRE is the lead agency, cultural resources must be assessed per the procedures outlined in [Cultural Resources Review Procedures for CAL FIRE Projects](#). All submitted cultural resource documents are reviewed by an Associate State Archaeologist or Professional Archaeologist prior to approval. It is strongly encouraged to submit cultural resource analyses and documentation to Climate and Energy environmental compliance staff as early as possible to begin the review process. Timber harvesting permits or notices, intended to be used or completed to support grant funded activities, will incorporate cultural resource assessment, separately, through the Forest Practice document process.

## **Environmental Compliance Review**

CAL FIRE must review all environmental documents and associated notices for adequate compliance with applicable procedures and CEQA.

Prior to any project activity that may have an effect on the environment, *including any ground-disturbing activity*, using grant funds, grantees must receive written

approval from Climate and Energy environmental compliance staff confirming that CEQA compliance has been met. This includes when the grantee is planning on using a Timber harvesting permit or notice in compliance with the California Forest Practice Act and Rules for projects that undertake timber operations per PRC § 4527. Even though the grantee may have a validated Forest Practice document from CAL FIRE, the document still requires *Environmental Compliance review* by Climate & Energy staff to confirm that it covers grant-funded activities. Please email all document reviews/submittals with your grant agreement number included in the subject line to [cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov](mailto:cegrants.ceqa@fire.ca.gov) as early as possible *but no less than six weeks* before you expect related work to begin. As discussed above, more time is required if CAL FIRE assumes role of lead agency. For details on what is required, please see [Environmental Compliance Review Instructions](#)

## APPENDIX E: CALCULATING INTEREST ON ADVANCE PAYMENTS

Interest on Advance Payments must be reported on invoices as Program Income no less frequently than quarterly, unless otherwise waived by CAL FIRE. Documentation to be provided with the invoice should include a copy of the statement showing the grantee's name, initial deposit of the advance funds into the account and the interest rate earned for each statement period associated with the invoice period reported until the advance funds have been fully liquidated. It is advised that the account number and other sensitive information be redacted from the bank statement.

**Separate Account for Advance Payments:** Advance funds that are deposited in a separate interest-bearing account that is not comingled with any other funds should be documented with a copy of the statement showing the interest earned for each statement period. The amount reflected as interest earned on each statement should tie to the Program Income reported on the invoice, unless there is additional program income earned.

**Co-mingled Advance Payments:** Advance funds that are co-mingled with other funds should be documented with a copy of the statement for each statement period associated with the advance funds. The calculation for the invoice period must be included and the total interest should tie to the Program Income reported on the invoice, unless there is additional program income earned. The interest earned can be calculated as:

Formula:

Remaining advance funds x interest rate % = Annual Interest.

Annual Interest/365 days = Daily Rate.

Daily Rate x number of days = Interest/Program Income

Use of an alternative calculation method based on the grantee's accounting process may be accepted at CAL FIRE's discretion.



## APPENDIX G: REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTS WITH FUNDING FROM CALIFORNIA CLIMATE INVESTMENTS



### Guidelines for Grants with CCI Funding

A portion of grant awards may include funding from California Climate Investments (CCI). Proposals under consideration for CCI funding will be required to provide additional information to evaluate CCI criteria. This information will be required before grant agreements are signed. All grant awards with CCI funding will also have additional reporting requirements for CCI.

### Proposal information & selection

Proposals will be assessed for their fit for California Climate Investments funding based on their alignment with [CCI legislative mandates](#). CAL FIRE will consider eligibility, estimated greenhouse gas benefits, expected benefits to priority populations, expected jobs and other co-benefits, community engagement, and organizational capacity when making CCI funding decisions.

During the review process, all proposals under consideration for CCI funding will be provided with additional information on the specific required documents, deadlines, and requirements for CCI funding. This will likely include additional analysis and information about:

- Greenhouse gas (GHG) benefits
- Jobs benefits
- Disadvantaged or low-income community benefits
- Community engagement
- Other co-benefits

### CCI Reporting

All projects with CCI funding will have additional requirements for the duration of the grant agreement, including reporting on actual job and job training outcomes. Additional information and specific details, files, and timelines will be provided to all applicants under consideration for CCI funding.

A subset of CCI-funded projects may also include before and after evaluation of project impacts and conditions. This would be developed in partnership with Tribe / Grantee interests.

## **CCI Grant Administration**

Additional administrative provisions will apply to grant awards with CCI funding, including those listed below. Additional details will be provided to all applicants under consideration for CCI funding.

1. Applications may be evaluated for CCI funding, based in part on whether the project is designed to facilitate GHG benefits.
2. Awarded grants funded through CCI may be terminated by CAL FIRE due to any activity that results in significant change to the expected GHG impacts of the project.