

# CAL FIRE TWR 2026 Grant Guidelines

## Summary of Public Comments & Changes

July 7, 2026

CAL FIRE received public comments from May 28, 2026 – June 29, 2026, via email and at an online Tribal Input Workshop. This document summarizes comments received and highlights parts of the grant guidelines that have been updated in response to the comment period.

### Planning/Implementation & Minimum Acreage

CAL FIRE received several comments recommending allowing planning-only projects and several questions regarding asking about the minimum threshold to be considered implementation.

#### Not Changed

The Climate Bond (Proposition 4) requires implementation be part of grant projects, per PRC 91520(c), PRC 90050(c), and [California Natural Resources Agency Guidance](#). CAL FIRE will consider this recommendation for future years when a different funding source may be available. Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grants appreciates the description of why planning grant projects are an important step in wildfire resilience work.

#### Clarified

- There is no minimum acreage.
- Proposals can include both planning and implementation of the same project. For example, mapping, environmental compliance, site prep, and a prescribed burn can all be included in one proposal. Environmental Compliance must be completed within the first year after the grant starts.
- Cultural resource surveys are eligible activities when part of a project or proposal that also includes fuels treatments on the ground.

## Climate Bond Benefits to Disadvantaged Communities, Severely Disadvantaged Communities, and Vulnerable Populations (DAC/SDAC/VP)

CAL FIRE received several questions seeking clarification.

### Clarified

- Added overview, definitions, and application information. Concept Proposals will request basic information. Full applications will require details on benefits provided to DAC/SDAC/VP.
- Added information on how benefits will be assessed.

### Not Changed

- There is no additional benefit to the applicant from demonstrating benefits to both VP and S/DAC. In this solicitation, applications will be reviewed and prioritized based on whether they have meaningful and direct benefits to VP or DAC or SDAC. There is not additional prioritization from counting in multiple categories. This is of particular interest since the California Natural Resources Agency recognizes that the datasets used to make the S/DAC maps may be missing data for some tribal communities.
- DAC/SDAC will be determined by the [Climate Bond Disadvantaged Communities Map](#). Tribal Wildfire Resilience does not expect to have a process to approve alternate DAC/SDAC methodology. However, we do expect that most if not all proposals may receive priority/points allocated for DAC/SDAC through VP as the whole program is oriented towards wildfire resilience and tribal applicants.

## Limited Waivers of Sovereign Immunity:

CAL FIRE received several comments in opposition to the limited waiver of sovereign immunity (LWSI) requirements for proposals from federally recognized tribes.

### Not changed

Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grants appreciates the comments describing these concerns, potential impacts, and how LWSI can be problematic for many

tribes and values. These comments have been passed on to CAL FIRE leadership for future consideration.

At this time, CAL FIRE will be maintaining the current policy on LWSI. CAL FIRE must balance access to the program with accountability and safeguards for public funds.

For the 2026 solicitation, we aim to make the grant guidelines as up-front as possible about when and how LWSI will be part of the grant process.

### Clarified

- Updated language and wording the LWSI section of the grant guidelines.
- CAL FIRE requires that disputes be resolved in California court. CAL FIRE is not able to waive the State's sovereign immunity to have disputes resolved in tribal court.
- LWSI are negotiated after Full Applications.
- Template LWSI language provided.

### Infrastructure

CAL FIRE received a recommendation to allow funding wildfire and land management infrastructure, such as emergency water storage, fire protection systems, and emergency access improvements.

### Not changed

CAL FIRE recognizes the importance of infrastructure and access upgrades and maintenance. However, this funding source and this program are oriented toward land and vegetation management. Tribal Wildfire Resilience will consider this for future years, programs, or future funding sources.

### Scoring

CAL FIRE received several comments recommending that scoring criteria be revised to better fit tribal need, including wildfire risk, existing funding opportunities, limited staffing capacity, rural and isolated communities, training/workforce development, and projects protecting homes, cultural resources, traditional use areas, or community infrastructure.

## Updated

- Scoring criteria descriptions were edited to add these elements, within the parameters of what is authorized by Proposition 4 and existing law that applies to the program.
- Scoring criteria points were adjusted to focus on these elements.

## CEQA/ Environmental Compliance:

CAL FIRE received a comment suggesting that funding should prioritize need and wildfire risk rather than pre-existing administrative capacity.

## Updated

- Language in the grant guidelines was revised to clarify that applications are evaluated on project readiness, not just environmental compliance.
- Added wildfire risk & community protection in scoring.

## Capacity Building and Technical Assistance

Received a comment recommending CAL FIRE increase technical assistance for environmental compliance, surveys, permitting, spatial data, and reporting.

## Clarified

- Added capacity building to eligible activities and scoring criteria. Proposals can build into budget to hire more people to increase admin capacity or hire technical assistance positions.

## Upcoming

- CAL FIRE is planning a Request For Proposals for technical assistance. This would be a contract to provide technical assistance to Tribal Wildfire Resilience applicants & grantees as well as serve several other grant programs.

## Invoices & Reporting

Received several comments about timely processing of invoices, advances, and time between advances.

### Not changed

The grant guidelines allow for 25% of the grant to be advanced at a time. This is the maximum that CAL FIRE is statutorily allowed to advance.

Tribal Wildfire Resilience Grants program staff will look into options for allowing grantees to reduce the time period between finishing one advance and requesting the next. However, this administrative process is not expected to change for the current solicitation.

### Updated

- Removed requirement that advance payments must be deposited into an interest-bearing account. If an advance is deposited into an interest-bearing account, then that interest is considered program income that is deducted from the next reimbursement.

### Clarified

- Specified quarterly report and invoice due dates
- Specified start date when award is signed by both grantee and CAL FIRE
- Clarified that salaries, environmental compliance, and cultural resource work can be paid by advance.

## Cultural Information and Data Sovereignty

Received several comments regarding protecting cultural information and data sovereignty.

### Updated

- Added Tribal Data Sovereignty section describing when and how CAL FIRE requests and shares grantee data.
- Expanded spatial data reporting section with additional details so that applicants can assess if this is feasible for their projects.

# Application Process and Documents

## Updated

- Added information about specific documents and information requested in Concept Proposals and Full Applications
- Removed duplicate sections to clarify the application process & requirements.
- Added information about Project Background, Scope of Work, Deliverables List, and Project Readiness application requests.
- Moved several sections in the document for better flow.