California Jobs First

## Regional Investment Initiative: Tribal Investment Phase

In February 2025, the California Jobs First Council released a request for proposals (RFP) for the RII: Tribal Investment Phase. This RFP was designed as a flexible fund, with $15 million available, for California Native American Tribes, coalitions of Tribes, and Tribally led organizations to support planning, pre-development, and/or implementation projects.

In June 2025, the California Jobs First and Council Co-Chairs awarded the full $15 million in available funding to the following 14 projects. Specific information on each of the proposals is below:

## Kashia Band of Pomo Indians - $999,912.50 – Pre-Development

The re-opening of the recreational abalone fishery through sustained kelp, sea star and abalone restoration activities will benefit Kashia and other local Tribes: related economic activity, tourism and fishing will return, while Tribal communities will regain access to culturally important abalone.

This funding will allow the Tribe to acquire the technical information necessary to inform the design of a state-of-the-art conservation and commercial aquaculture production facility, and support development of the design and engineering documents necessary for permitting and eventually construction.

The facility will also host workforce training programs in state-of-the-art aquaculture production techniques, with the goal of employing and training workers proficient in sustainable ocean food production, with an emphasis on an integrated and inseparable restoration mission implemented with the support of numerous participating partners.

## Mechoopda - $999,912.50 – Pre-Development

The Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria (MIT) currently does not have a location to provide community support services in emergency or non-emergency times. This funding will support the pre-development work necessary to establish the Resilience Hub and Multi-Functional Community Center (the Hub Center). The Hub Center is intended to support Tribal members through planning, withstanding and recovering for/from disasters, while also providing space to deliver the following: educational training for climate adaptive and mitigation initiatives, Tribal small business and entrepreneurial technical assistance, MIT economic development strategic planning sessions, and culturally relevant workforce development programs focused on career readiness, skill-building for all ages, and job creation. Additionally, the Hub Center will provide wrap-around services including childcare/after school programs, recreational programs, food access and distribution programs, wellness programs, and others as identified by MIT.

## Native First Lending - $1,000,000.00 – Implementation

This funding will be used to support the creation of a $750,000 revolving loan fund that will expand Native First Lending’s (NFL) services, allowing NFL to increase its support of Native American business communities across Los Angeles County.

## Owens Valley Career Development Center - $1,995,136.00 – Implementation

Owens Valley Career Development Center (OVCDC) in partnership with GRID Alternatives Central Valley (GRID CV), GRID Alternatives Inland Empire (GRID IE), and Tribal Energy Alternatives (TEA), will build a more equitable regional solar jobs and energy ecosystem for Tribal members by investing in regional partnerships, building local capacity, and offering intensive training and pathways to employment in the solar industry, with additional opportunities for trainees to learn how to initiate, develop, and implement solar projects in their own communities.

## Pit River Tribe - $954,972.10 – Pre-Development

The Pit River Tribe’s Land Use Assessment Project is designed to support the Pit River Tribe in developing a comprehensive land use assessment that will guide our actionable economic opportunities and strengthen long-term self-sufficiency for Tribal members, specifically in the North State, where the highest concentration of Pit River Tribal members resides. This funding will support the development of an assessment of their current assets, gather critical data, address NEPA/CEQA gaps, and establish a roadmap that supports small business growth, and new sectors such as tourism, working lands and water and more.

## Scotts Valley Energy Corporation - $1,000,000.00 – Implementation

The Scotts Valley Energy Company (SVEC), a wholly tribal subsidiary corporation of the Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians (SVBPI), has been in the planning and development phase of a bioenergy production facility on its small piece of fee land, for the last five years.  This land is commonly referred to as Red Hills, and is located within the unincorporated area of Kelseyville, Lake County. The goal of this energy production plant is to generate revenue for the welfare and benefit of SVBPI and its 315 members. The production facility will transform agricultural and forest waste material into 100% renewable bioenergy (carbon neutral). The facility will also create a residual biochar byproduct, which will be a salable product to store carbon for agricultural use.  SVEC has a 20-year power purchase agreement (see appendix 9) for Red Hill's 200 kW net clean energy generation with PG&E (the first tribal entity to accomplish this action). This project will provide clean energy for the grid, produce an environmentally friendly agricultural amendment, and provide an avenue to reduce Lake County's substantial biomass. SVEC is also implementing a Central Wood Processing Plant (CWPP) in Upper Lake to process forest material into inputs for its planned bioenergy facilities.

## Southern CA Tribal Chairperson’s Association - $933,782.00 – Implementation

The Innovation Ecosystem will rapidly advance the development of viable businesses and technologies that propel innovation in clean energy and climate change and transform the Southern California Tribal Chairman’s Association (SCTCA) region into a magnet for innovation-based economic development. The Ecosystem vision focuses on developing a complementary portfolio of clean energy and climate change technologies, services, and solutions that support and enable one another's success, while strengthening economic resiliency and improving the conditions for economic growth in the SCTCA region.

## The Sierra Fund - $945,875.00 – Pre-Development

The Sierra Tribal Economic Futures project supports a coalition, technical advisors, and Tribes with representation across the *Sierra Jobs First* and *We Prosper Together* regions of California Jobs First. The project responds to the urgent need for Tribal-led economic planning, workforce development, and future career paths for Tribal youth by laying a foundation for culturally grounded, place-based economic initiatives. Our goal is to prepare two Tribes to apply for future implementation funds and work towards the economic future of the larger bioregion.

## Tule River Economic Development Corporation - $1,600,000 – Implementation

The Tule River Economic Development Corporation (TREDC), a federally chartered Section 17 corporation wholly owned by the Tule River Tribe of California, will implement a portfolio of clean energy deployment strategies across California’s disadvantaged communities. This implementation project will focus on three core objectives including (1) financing community-led zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) retrofits and training technicians to service those vehicles; (2) Expanding clean energy career pathways in tribal and disadvantaged communities; and (3) providing forgivable financing through the “Powered by Solar” mortgage program for tribal and low-income households.

Together, these initiatives will accelerate TREDC’s clean transportation and renewable energy goals, expand access to solar homeownership, and upskill rural and tribal workforces to participate in California’s clean economy.

## California Indian Museum and Cultural Center - $587,032.00 – Pre-Development

The California Indian Museum and Cultural Center (CIMCC), a 100% Native governed and led non-profit organization, will finish developing a pilot program titled Climate-Ready Tribal Community Health Representatives to prepare it for roll out post-project. Funded initially by the CARESTAR Foundation from 2022-2024, CIMCC planned the program in collaboration with Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC), Sonoma County Indian Health Project (SCIHP), and The Cultural Conservancy (TCC), with guidance from a 6-member Native Community Advisory Committee composed of youth, adults, and elders. The short-term objective of this culturally sustaining, career pipeline program is to help Native Americans, especially youth, secure jobs as Community Health Representatives/Community Health Workers (CHR/CHW) in the high-growth healthcare sector. Their vision is to build a workforce of Tribal CHR/CHW who are employed in quality jobs, know pathways for job and career advancement, and are prepared to meet the climate change resilience and health equity needs of Native people and Tribal communities. To be directed in its pilot stage towards Sonoma, Lake, and Mendocino Counties where 24 federally recognized and non-recognized Tribes have homelands, our aim is to eventually extend this program to other regions in California.

## Table Mountain Rancheria (TMR) - $950,000.00 – Pre-Development

Table Mountain Rancheria will use this funding to complete pre-development activities for the planned TMR Healthcare Center to be constructed on Tribal lands.  When constructed and operational, this facility will offer an expanded array of direct health benefits for the Tribal community (including pharmacy services), increased employment opportunities at the Rancheria, improved ability for the Tribe to attract and retain quality employee talent, and reduced carbon footprint by eliminating thousands of vehicle trips to nearby population centers seeking medical and pharmacy services.

## Berry Creek Rancheria of Maidu Indians - $1,510,573.30 – Implementation

Berry Creek will work with their technical assistance partners, Iniskim & Resilient Energy Solutions, to develop a well-executed Strategic Energy Plan as the cornerstone for clean energy deployment in our communities. The proposed plan includes careful preparation through pre-workshops and stakeholder engagement to ensure the plan is directly responsive to community needs. Eight Pre-Workshop meetings will be held to identify a Tribal “Energy Champion,” develop and convene a Community Stakeholder Team; conduct analysis of Tribal loads and resource assessments; identify past energy project successes and challenges; and develop a community engagement strategy. Following these meetings, a four-day workshop series will be held, including site visits, Energy 101 training, Energy Audit training, and emergency management. The goal will be to develop their Energy Visions and their Energy Goals, build their plan, and ensure consensus. At the end of the workshop series, Berry Creek and Iniskim & Resilient Energy will create a Strategic Energy Plan and present it to their Tribal Council for adoption.

## California Heritage: Indigenous Research Project - $744,744.00 – Implementation

The project will focus on the Tribally guided restoration of two recently acquired properties: a 35-acre property on Deer Creek, located adjacent to downtown Nevada City, and a 232-acre property that is a culturally significant historical location of a Nisenan village known as Yulića. Both properties hold cultural significance and paramount potential to help the Tribe, and its non-profit organization build capacity and heal trauma; and importantly both properties are in states of deferred maintenance (aging buildings and environmental degradation) that will require major effort, staffing, and funding to restore.

## Native Development Network (NDN) - $776,697.00 – Pre-Development

The Native Development Network (NDN) will use this funding to support a pre-development research and planning project titled Pathways to Prosperity: Pre-Development Research for AI/AN Workforce Access in California’s Vital Sectors.

Their vision is to identify viable, livable-wage employment pathways for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) individuals across healthcare, renewable energy, environmental protection, fire protection, water conservation, and technology sectors. Through comprehensive research, community engagement, and coalition building, we aim to empower Native communities to achieve economic stability, good-paying jobs, educational attainment, and career advancement while promoting gender equity and self-sufficiency.