

State of California - Department of Conservation  
**GRANT AGREEMENT DOC6**  
(Revised 05/23)

**GRANT AGREEMENT NUMBER:**  
3023-4003  
**FI\$Cal NUMBER:**

1. This Grant Agreement is entered into by and between the Department of Conservation ("Department") and East Turlock Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (ETSGSA), a California joint powers authority ("Grantee").
2. The Grant Agreement Term is: From 09/22/2023 through 03/30/2027  
(Or upon execution of this Grant Agreement by both parties, whichever is later)
3. The maximum amount of this Grant Agreement is: \$8,890,000
4. Signing this Grant Agreement means that Grantee agrees to comply with the terms and conditions of the following exhibits which are part of the Grant Agreement:

Exhibit A, Scope of Work Pages	3 Pages
Attachment 1: Authorized Signatory Form	1 Page
Attachment 2: Work Plan	2 Pages
Attachment 3: Final Report	1 Page
Exhibit B, Budget Detail and Payment Provisions	3 Pages
Attachment 4: Budget Detail Worksheet	1 Page
Attachment 5: Invoice	2 Page
Attachment 6: Invoice Dispute Notification Template	1 Page
Exhibit C, General Terms and Conditions	2 Pages
Exhibit D, Special Terms and Conditions	4 Pages
Exhibit E, Award Letter	1 Pages
Exhibit F, Guidelines	51 Pages

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Grant Agreement has been executed by the Parties hereto.

**GRANTEE**

GRANTEE'S NAME: East Turlock Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (ETSGSA)

BY (Authorized Signature)

*Mike Tietze*

DATE SIGNED 10/31/2023

PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF PERSON SIGNING

Mike Tietze, Coordinator/General Manager

ADDRESS

731 East Yosemite Ave., Suite B #318, Merced, CA 95340

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Agency Name: Department of Conservation

BY (Authorized Signature)

DocuSigned by:

*Clayton Haas*

7EBA8A8BC71B459...

DATE SIGNED 11/1/2023

PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF PERSON SIGNING

Clayton Haas, Assistant Director

ADDRESS

715 P St, Sacramento, CA 95814

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## **Exhibit A, Scope of Work**

### **1. Multibenefit Land Repurposing Grant Program Background**

The Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program seeks to increase regional capacity to prioritize, develop, and implement projects to increase regional capacity to repurpose agricultural land to reduce reliance on groundwater while providing community health, economic wellbeing, water supply, habitat, and climate benefits. Block grants will be utilized by recipients to support strategic planning and implementation of multi-benefit groundwater sustainability projects that reduce groundwater use, repurpose irrigated agricultural land, and provide wildlife habitat consistent with the Budget Act of 2022.

The Department of Conservation ("Department") released the Final Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Grant Solicitation in February 2023 ([Exhibit F](#)) (Solicitation). The "Project" is Grantee's performance of the work set forth in the Solicitation and the Work Plan ([Attachment 2](#)).

The Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program is administered by the Department.

### **2. Authorized Signers**

The Department Director or designee is authorized to sign this Grant Agreement and grant-related documents. Grantee's Authorized Signatory or designee is authorized to sign this Grant Agreement and grant-related documents as shown in the Authorized Signatory Form ([Attachment 1](#)).

Grantee must keep Authorized Signatory Forms up to date. Within seven (7) working days of any change to the authorized signatory or to the delegated authorized signatory, Grantee shall notify the Department in writing of the change. The written notice shall be sent as an electronic mail (email) attachment to be filed with the Grant Agreement.

### **3. Project Representatives**

The project representatives are the contact people for Department and Grantee. The project representatives during the term of this Grant Agreement are:

Department

Name	Title	Phone Number	Email
Jessica Parrish	Grant Manager*	916-261-4552	Jessica.Parrish@conservation.ca.gov

\* Unless otherwise stated within this Grant Agreement, all correspondence and documents will be sent to the Grant Manager.

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**Grantee**

Name	Title	Phone Number	Email
Mike Tietze	ETSGSA (Formation Environmental) - General Manager	916-200-9038	<a href="mailto:Mtietze@formationenv.com">Mtietze@formationenv.com</a>
Len Mason	ETSGSA (Formation Environmental) – MLRP Program Manager	512-638-6464	<a href="mailto:lmason@formationenv.com">lmason@formationenv.com</a>
Karen Whipp	ETSGSA – Board Secretary	209-626-5523	<a href="mailto:kareneastsidewater@att.net">kareneastsidewater@att.net</a>

The Department and Grantee must keep the Project Representative(s) up to date. Any changes to the Project Representatives by either Grantee or the Department shall be made by providing seven (7) working days advance written notice to the other party. The written notice shall be sent as an electronic mail (email) attachment to be filed with the Grant Agreement.

#### **4. Grantee Responsibilities**

Grantee is responsible for:

- A. Using grant funds only as intended for the Project, including distributing funds to eligible subgrantees.
- B. Completing work on time and within budget. This includes meeting all milestones and deliverables, as described in the Solicitation ([Exhibit F](#)) and Work Plan ([Attachment 2](#)), and in accordance with the Budget Detail Worksheet ([Attachment 4](#)) and the terms and conditions of the Solicitation, unless otherwise agreed to by all parties through the amendment process described in Exhibit B, Section 9.
- C. Coordinating and facilitating strategic agricultural land repurposing efforts for multiple benefits within the region.
- D. Coordinating activities with the relevant Groundwater Sustainability Agencies to ensure the multi-benefit agricultural land repurposing plan, project planning, project permitting, and implementation projects are consistent with the relevant Groundwater Sustainability Plan(s).
- E. Meeting, at a minimum, the Disadvantaged Community Benefits requirements set forth in the Solicitation.
- F. Submitting invoices for reimbursement using the Invoice ([Attachment 5](#)) template, including any supporting documents.
- G. Submitting a final report with the last invoice, using the Final Report template ([Attachment 3](#)).
- H. Complying with all terms and conditions of this Grant Agreement, including all incorporated documents.
- I. Complying with all statutes, rules, and regulations applicable to the work and activities funded by this Grant Agreement.

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- J. Maintaining an accounting system that accurately reflects all fiscal transactions and provides accounting information, retaining all records and required documents as specified in [Exhibit C, Section 4](#), and providing all required documents during an audit, as specified in [Exhibit C, Section 5](#).

**5. Document Submission**

**A. Electronic Mail**

When this Grant Agreement requires Grantee to give invoices, reports, or other documents to the Department, Grantee must use email unless this Grant Agreement specifically requires that the document be sent by mail. All email must contain the Grant Agreement number and Grantee's name in the subject line.

**6. Meetings and Reporting Requirements**

- A. Grantee will participate in an orientation meeting. Attendance at the orientation is mandatory. The Department will notify Grantee of the time and place of the orientation. Grantee may invoice eligible expenses, including travel and lodging, incurred participating in the orientation.
- B. Grantee will provide monthly status updates. Updates will be provided during monthly meetings with Department staff. On a quarterly basis, in lieu of the monthly meeting with Department staff, these updates may be provided in a meeting with Department staff and Agency Advisory group members. Department staff and Grantee will meet and confer on the time, place, manner (i.e., in person, conference call, video conference or other method), attendees, and agenda of the monthly status update.
- C. Grantee will participate in monthly workshops. These workshops will be conducted by the statewide support entity. The time, place, and manner (i.e., in person, conference call, video conference or other method) of these workshops will be determined by the statewide support entity.
- D. Grantee shall identify and track investments in and benefits to disadvantaged communities following the guidance provided in the solicitation for each deliverable. Grantee shall report results and provide a copy of supporting documentation for each deliverable to the Department as deliverables are completed. In addition, Grantee shall report on disadvantaged community benefits as follows:
- i. Prior to Department approval of the Multi-benefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan, Grantee shall provide to the Department written justification and supporting documentation demonstrating how the plan meets the disadvantaged community requirements outlined in the Solicitation.
  - ii. Prior to Department approval of expenditures for project development and implementation, Grantee shall provide to the Department written justification and supporting documentation demonstrating that the Grantee has engaged disadvantaged communities in the project and evaluated whether and how the project will meaningfully benefit the relevant disadvantaged communities following the requirements outlined in the Solicitation.
- E. When the Project is completed, Grantee must submit a Final Report with the last invoice. To complete and submit the Final Report:
- i. Submit the Final Report with the last invoice. If Grantee does not submit the Final Report with the last invoice, then the last invoice will be considered incomplete and returned following process specified in [Exhibit D, Section 5](#).
  - ii. Use the Final Report Template, which is attached as [Attachment 3](#).
  - iii. Make sure the Final Report is signed by the person authorized to sign on the most current Authorized Signatory Form ([Attachment 1](#)).
  - iv. Put enough detail in the Final Report to show that Grantee fulfilled the terms of the Grant Agreement and should be paid for completing the project.

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Attachment 1: Authorized Signatory Form

I hereby verify that I am an authorized Grantee representative and signatory and, as such, can sign and/or delegate authorization to sign and bind Grantee as it relates to the above-referenced Grant Agreement and grant related documents.

Grantee Authorized Signatory:

Name: Mike Tietze Title: ETSGSA General Manager  
(Type or Print Name)

Signature: Mike Tietze Date: 10/31/2023

Delegated Authorized Signatories:

1. Name: Len Mason Title: MLRP Program Manager  
(Type or Print Name)

Signature: Len Mason Date: 10/31/2023

Document(s) Authorized to sign: ☐ All Grant Related Documents **or** ☐ Grant Agreement  
☐ Grant Amendments ☐ Budget Amendments ☒ Reports  
☒ Invoices ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name: Karen Whipp Title: Board Secretary  
(Type or Print Name)

Signature: Karen Whipp Date: 11/1/2023

Document(s) Authorized to sign: ☒ All Grant Related Documents **or** ☐ Grant Agreement  
☐ Grant Amendments ☐ Budget Amendments ☐ Reports  
☐ Invoices ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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**Attachment 2: Work Plan**

**Vision:** ETSGSA's land repurposing vision includes efforts to preserve prime farmland by focusing on an integrated approach that repurposes portions of properties where the loss of production is offset by other benefits, periodic fallowing consistent with normal orchard replanting cycles, and/or finding ways to shift land from more- to less-intensive irrigated use in a strategic fashion. The approach will rely on identifying a suite of repurposing strategies that can be self-implemented by growers and provide them with site selection and optimization criteria, standard designs, programmatic permitting strategies, and implementation guidelines. Employing grower implemented, regionally integrated multi-benefit approaches will help meet the objective of demand reduction while maintaining healthy communities, a viable agricultural economy, and sound, sustainable land use practices for working lands.

<b>TASK 1 – Land Repurposing Plan</b>	<b>Timeline [Start and End Date]</b>	<b>Deliverables</b>
<p><b>Subtask A:</b> Establish advisory committee that includes representatives from diverse stakeholder groups to guide creation of the Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan.</p> <p><b>Subtask B:</b> Develop Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan (MARLP) that identifies and prioritizes land repurposing opportunities, and provides a framework for project development and implementation.</p> <p><b>B.1:</b> Identify plan objectives, including those related to identification and prioritization of scalable alternatives, agricultural land use and economies, regional capacity and collaboration, and quantification of desired benefits</p> <p><b>B.2:</b> Update and refine the Groundwater Recharge Assessment Tool (GRAT) and perform</p>		<p>1a. Advisory committee established.</p> <p>1b. Progress Reports and completion of Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan.</p>
<p>technical analysis to support evaluation of recharge from stormwater runoff and flood flows using various land repurposing strategies, such as dispersed storage and recharge basins, orchard swale rewilding, floodplain restoration, and floodplain connectivity enhancement along local streams using artificial beaver dams and other analogs.</p> <p><b>B.3:</b> Identify opportunities for fallowing, re-cropping, cover cropping and other approaches to decrease water demand.</p> <p><b>B.4:</b> Identify opportunities for solar power projects, agrivoltaic projects, and increasing green energy production.</p> <p><b>B.5:</b> Develop tools/information to allow evaluation of Disadvantaged Community (DAC) benefits.</p> <p><b>B.6:</b> Develop project scoring and prioritization framework. Establish a project vetting process via the Steering Committee.</p> <p><b>B.7:</b> Create project application requirements and standard plans, specifications and implementation requirements for the land repurposing strategies identified in the MARLP.</p>		
<b>TASK 2 – Project Development and Permitting</b>		
<p><b>Subtask A:</b> Develop programmatic and site-specific CEQA compliance strategies.</p> <p><b>A.1:</b> Identify multibenefit land repurposing project approaches in the MARLP that (1) are already covered under the existing Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) California</p>		<p>2a. CEQA compliance strategy and documentation checklists, including a list of project approaches covered under the existing PEIR CEQA and any that qualify for a SERP.</p>

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<p>Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) analysis; (2) can tier from the PEIR; or (3) may qualify for a Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) from CEQA.</p> <p><b>A.2:</b> Develop a streamlined programmatic checklist for documentation of CEQA compliance based on the findings of Subtask A.1.</p> <p><b>Subtask B:</b> Prepare a Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Permit Management Plan.</p> <p><b>B.1:</b> Inventory permitting requirements for the multibenefit land repurposing approaches identified in the MALRP.</p> <p><b>B.2:</b> Identify permitting requirements that may be met using programmatic or regional permitting approaches (e.g., under Clean Water Act Sections 401/404, Fish and Game Code Section 1600, or existing programmatic regulatory documents), and compile the appropriate permit application and documentation materials needed to apply these programs at individual sites.</p> <p><b>B.3:</b> If needed and to the extent possible within the scope of the project, engage in regulatory agency consultations to develop and approve programmatic, regional, and streamlined permitting approaches and Safe Harbor Agreements.</p> <p><b>B.4:</b> Compile information needs, submittal requirements and compliance monitoring and</p>		<p>2b. Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Permit Management Plan.</p> <p>2c. Programmatic regulatory agreements, as applicable.</p> <p>2d. Permitting-level Project Designs and Descriptions for use in obtaining site-specific permits and approvals.</p>
<p>reporting requirements for the MALRP project approaches.</p> <p><b>Subtask C:</b> Develop permitting-level designs and descriptions of the multibenefit land repurposing project approaches to support Subtasks A and B, and to support obtaining site-specific permits under Task 3, as needed.</p>		
<b>TASK 3 – Project Implementation</b>		
<p><b>Subtask A:</b> Using site-specific designs for the deployment of the MALRP project concepts developed by the growers with assistance from the MLRP project team under Tasks 4 and 5, develop CEQA compliance documentation and obtain site-specific permits and authorizations as needed.</p> <p><b>Subtask B:</b> Implement Multibenefit land repurposing projects on irrigated lands identified using the prioritization framework and guidelines established under Task 1.</p> <p><b>Subtask C:</b> Provide incentive payments for lands enrolled in the program that accept conservation easements or term contracts for land repurposing and stewardship for at least 10 years.</p>		<p>3a. Documentation of site-specific project designs, CEQA documentation, and permit compliance.</p> <p>3b. Progress reports.</p> <p>3c. Progress reports and completed projects.</p>
<b>TASK 4 – Partner/Collaborator Capacity</b>		
<p><b>Subtask A:</b> Provide funding support for partner organizations to complete project work directly related to the completion of the deliverables of this grant agreement.</p>		<p>4a. Progress reports; invoices</p>
<b>TASK 5 – Outreach, Education, Training</b>		
<p><b>Subtask A:</b> With input from Partners, develop an outreach plan to guide outreach under this program, including outreach to growers and DACs.</p>		<p>5a. Progress reports, outreach plan finalized.</p>

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<p><b>Subtask B:</b> Stakeholder outreach, education, training, and other engagement built on existing partnerships and outreach activities, including a mix of traditional large public workshops and smaller, nuanced discussions.</p> <p><b>B.1:</b> Obtain input and develop concepts for land repurposing strategies, land prioritization process, incentive structures, and restoration activities for the proposed MALRP.</p> <p><b>B.2:</b> Finalize plan design and create a process for plan implementation.</p> <p><b>B.3:</b> Guide implementation of the land repurposing process.</p>		<p>5b. Progress reports and documentation of participation, interpretation services, meeting times, newsletters, invitations, and email blasts; Project-specific web content and links; Op-eds and letters to the editor and translated materials that allow for broad participation by community members, and meeting locations conducive to participation by traditionally underserved and disadvantaged community members.</p>
<b>TASK 6 – Monitoring</b>		
<p><b>Subtask A:</b> Monitor project performance using key performance indicators, including participation, compliance rates, and socioeconomic and environmental metrics.</p> <p><b>Subtask B:</b> Review monitoring data regularly to assess program performance and recommended revisions as needed for improvement.</p>		<p>6a. Monitoring/project effectiveness reports.</p>
<b>TASK 7 – General Grant Management and Reporting</b>		
<p><b>Subtask A:</b> General Grant Management</p> <p><b>Subtask B:</b> Reporting</p>		<p>7a. Staff costs - invoices</p> <p>7b. Reporting; invoices</p>
<b>OTHER EXPENSES</b>		
Travel		

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**Attachment 3: Final Report**

Final Report	Date Submitted:
Grantee Name:	Grant Number:
Project Name:	

1. Based on your experiences with this grant program, please provide feedback about how the Department can improve future grant programs.
2. Briefly summarize the Project's results and outcomes, including how the goals and objectives were accomplished, findings or conclusions, and planned or potential future projects that may result from the Project. Include a list of other sources of funding that were secured, directly or indirectly, through this Project.
3. Describe and explain any differences between the planned results, as listed in the Work Plan ([Attachment 2](#)), and the actual results. Include a discussion of any problems, barriers, or issues that occurred during the Project, corrective actions taken, and the outcomes.
4. Explain any plans to continue funding for the Project, and/or to expand, modify, or replicate the Project.
5. Attach any relevant documents to this report, including plans, photos, news articles, fliers, etc. If the documents cannot be sent electronically, notify the Grant Manager.
6. Equipment Inventory Record: Grantee must submit an inventory of all equipment acquired with grant funds at the end of the Project Completion Period using the template provided by DOC.

I certify that this Final Report is accurate and that this project complies with the Agreement. I further certify that any expenditure discussed in this report is allowed under the Agreement and that all funds were expended for the purposes of this Project.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Type or Print Name)

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Exhibit B, Budget Detail and Payment Provisions**

**1. Payment**

- A. Payment will be on a reimbursement basis for actual costs and expenses incurred.
- B. Advances may be permitted under this Grant Agreement at the Department's discretion. The Department may distribute up to 25% of the grant amount at a time in anticipation of the work to be performed in advance of actual expenditures. Approval of an advance does not require the Department to approve future requests for an advance. If the Department does not approve a request for an advance, Grantee will submit invoices monthly in arrears unless a subsequent request for advance payment is made and approved.
- C. Except for permitted advances, invoices will be submitted monthly in arrears.
- D. Both invoices for advance payment and incurred expenses in arrears require submittal of an itemized invoice and supporting documentation. Supporting documentation for advance funds include cost estimates for performance of specified tasks within the Work Plan.
- E. Upon receipt and approval of an itemized invoice and required supporting documentation, the Department agrees to reimburse Grantee for actual expenditures for tasks completed, in accordance with the rates specified in the Budget Detail Worksheet ([Attachment 4](#)).
- F. The Department may withhold final payment until all terms of the Grant Agreement have been satisfied.
- G. Payment shall be made within forty-five (45) days upon receipt and approval of an invoice. Failure to comply with requirements may result in non-payment or delayed payment.
- H. For cost principles, see [Exhibit B, Section 5](#).

**2. How to Submit Invoices**

- A. Send the invoices to the Grant Manager by email. Include the Grant Agreement number and Grantee's name in the subject line.
- B. Send invoices regularly, to keep getting paid. Grantee shall submit invoices no more frequently than monthly, in arrears, to the Grant Manager.
- C. A request for payment shall consist of:
  - i. The Invoice ([Attachment 5](#)) on official letterhead and signed by the Authorized Signatory, or authorized designee on file with the Department ([Exhibit A, Section 3](#)), certifying the expenditures are for actual expenses for the tasks performed under this Grant Agreement.
  - ii. Each cost category and task must correspond to a cost category and task identified in the Budget Detail Worksheet ([Attachment 4](#)).
  - iii. Supporting documentation for reimbursement of funds (e.g., timesheets, activity logs, subcontractor invoices, cancelled checks).
- D. If Grantee receives advanced funds, it will report quarterly:
  - i. Eligible costs incurred and paid from advance funds and include supporting documentation (e.g., timesheets, activity logs, subcontractor invoices, cancelled checks). Each cost must correspond to a category and task identified in the Budget Detail Worksheet ([Attachment 4](#)).
  - ii. Certification that the expenditures were for actual expenses for the tasks performed under the Grant Agreement.
  - iii. Remaining total of advance funds on hand.
- E. At any time, the Department may request hard copies of invoices, reports, supporting documentation, and evidence of progress.

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### **3. Invoice Dispute**

In the event of an invoice dispute, see [Exhibit D, Section 5](#).

### **4. Budget Contingency Clause**

- A. If the Budget Act of the current year and/or any subsequent years covered under this Grant Agreement does not appropriate sufficient funds for the program, this Grant Agreement shall have no further force nor effect. In this event, the Department shall have no liability to pay any funds whatsoever to Grantee or to furnish any other considerations under this Grant Agreement, and Grantee shall not be obligated to perform any provisions of this Grant Agreement.
- B. If funding for any fiscal year is reduced or deleted by the Budget Act for purposes of this program, the Department shall have the option to either cancel this Grant Agreement with no liability occurring to the Department or offer an amendment to reflect the reduced amount.

### **5. Cost Principles**

- A. All costs to be reimbursed must be consistent with the Solicitation ([Exhibit E](#)).
- B. All costs to be reimbursed must be reasonable, as defined in the Solicitation ([Exhibit E](#)).
- C. The Department will reimburse Grantee only for actual expenses incurred during the term of this Grant Agreement, as specified in the Budget Detail Worksheet ([Attachment 4](#)). Any costs incurred outside of the Grant Agreement term are not eligible for reimbursement.
- D. Grantee shall place advance funds in a separate interest-bearing account, setting up and identifying such account prior to the advance. Interest earned on advances must be used solely on the Project. Unless spent on approved costs, the grant amount will be reduced by the amount of the interest earned. Unused advances will be returned to the Department within 30 days of completion of the Project or termination of the agreement.

### **6. Travel Reimbursement**

Travel expenses directly related to the performance of this Grant Agreement will be subject to the State of California travel reimbursement rates in effect during the term of this Grant Agreement.

- A. The Department will only reimburse for actual expenditures incurred for in-state travel, as specified in the Solicitation ([Exhibit E](#)).
- B. Grantee shall maintain, and submit upon request, detailed travel records and supporting documents (e.g., travel request and approval forms, expense claims, invoices, receipts for lodging and transportation) showing the date and purpose of the grant-related travel, destination, and, in the case of travel by automobile, the number of miles driven.
- C. Grantee shall ensure travel costs are included in the Budget Detail Worksheet ([Attachment 4](#)) and are tied to tasks and deliverables in the Work Plan ([Attachment 2](#)).
- D. Grantee and any person traveling pursuant to this Grant Agreement shall indemnify and hold harmless the Department and State of California for any liabilities resulting from such travel.

### **7. Equipment**

The Grantee, Partner, or Subcontractor, as applicable and with concurrence of the Department, must be the sole owner on title for any equipment purchased with funds that are reimbursable as a direct cost of the Project, as determined by the Department. During the Project, equipment must be dedicated to the described use in the same proportion and scope as in this Grant Agreement, unless the Department authorizes otherwise following the amendment process, specified in [Exhibit B, Section 9](#).

On termination of the Grant Agreement, the Department will either require that the equipment be returned or

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authorize the continued use of such equipment at the Project Area. In making that determination, the Department will consider the useful life of the equipment, and the Grantee may be required to refund the Department for the fair market value of equipment that continues to have a usable life, but is no longer required for Project implementation.

For any vehicles that were approved as equipment purchases, the vehicles acquired – including cars, trucks, vans – must be maintained in a state of good repair and dedicated to the described use during the grant term and to public use for their full useful life.

Grantee must maintain an inventory record for each piece of non-expendable equipment purchased or built with funds provided under the terms of a Grant Agreement. Grantee must submit an inventory of all equipment acquired with grant funds at the end of the Project Completion Period using a template provided by the Department.

## **8. Budget Modifications**

- A. Grantee must keep the [Budget Detail Worksheet](#) up to date.
- B. Changes up to twenty percent (20%) between tasks shall be made by providing written notice with or before submission of an invoice. If submitted before the invoice, the written notice shall be sent as an electronic mail (email) attachment to be filed with the Grant Agreement.
- C. Changes of more than twenty percent (20%) between tasks shall follow the amendment process, specified in [Exhibit B, Section 9](#).

## **9. Amendments**

- A. This section applies to any changes to this Grant Agreement, excluding the following:
  - i. Changes to the Authorized Signatory Form ([Attachment 1](#)). For changes to the Authorized Signatory Form see [Exhibit A, Section 3](#).
  - ii. Changes to project representatives, see [Exhibit A, Section 4](#).
  - iii. Changes to the Budget Detail Worksheet of up to twenty percent (20%) between tasks, see [Exhibit B, Section 8](#).
- B. Except as otherwise specified, Grantee must request and obtain prior written approval before any change (amendment) to this Grant Agreement is valid.
- C. Request for amendments must:
  - i. Be prepared, in writing, on official letterhead and signed by the Authorized Signatory or designee on file with the Department.
  - ii. Be submitted to the Grant Manager at least two (2) months prior to when the amendment is needed.
  - iii. Include the Grant Agreement number, a detailed explanation of the proposed amendment, reason for the amendment, and the effect of not approving the request.
  - iv. Include a copy of the document(s) requested for amendment that shows the requested changes.
- D. The Grant Manager will respond in writing within fifteen (15) working days from receipt of request to approve or deny the request for amendment, including the reason for the decision.
- E. The Grant Manager will process amendments within thirty (30) days of the approval date. The amendment will not be in effect until both parties have signed the Grant Agreement amendment.

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Attachment 4, Budget Detail Worksheet

Total Budget Allocation

Budget Detail Worksheet					
Grantee Name: East Turlock Subbasin GSA		Grant #:	3023-4003		
Budget Item	Units (if applicable)	Rate (if applicable)	Program Reimbursement Request	Grantee Match	Grand Total
<b>Task 1: Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan</b>					
			\$ 495,800	\$ -	\$ 495,800
<b>Task 2: Project Development and Permitting</b>					
			\$ 191,800	\$ -	\$ 191,800
<b>Task 3: Project Implementation</b>					
			\$ 6,978,300	\$ 1,110,000	\$ 8,088,300
<b>Task 4: Partner/Collaborator Capacity</b>					
			\$ 382,800	\$ -	\$ 382,800
<b>Task 5: Outreach, Education, Training</b>					
			\$ 292,000	\$ -	\$ 292,000
<b>Task 6: Monitoring</b>					
			\$ 60,000	\$ -	\$ 60,000
<b>Task 7: General Program Management and Reporting</b>					
			\$ 410,500	\$ -	\$ 410,500
<b>Other Expenses:</b>					
Travel			\$ 68,800	\$ -	\$ 68,800
Administrative Costs (not to exceed 20% of the grant)			\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000
					\$ 78,800
<b>Grand Total</b>					
			\$ 8,890,000	\$ 1,110,000	\$ 10,000,000
<b>TABLE 2: RATES DETAIL</b>					
<b>Title</b>	<b>Rate (\$/hour)</b>	<b>Notes</b>			
<b>Staff Rates</b>		**Hours will vary by position. Amount for reimbursement not to exceed amount stipulated and allocated by workplan phases.			
ETSGSA General Manager	\$195.00				
MLRP Program Manager	\$165.00				
TAC Chairperson	\$300.00				
Legal Counsel, Partner	\$350.00				
Legal Counsel, Senior Associate	\$325.00				
Legal Counsel, Junior Associate	\$295.00				
Legal Counsel, Paralegal	\$200.00				
Board Secretary	\$45.00				
Accountant	\$75.00				
<b>Consultant</b>		*Total amount not to exceed that which is listed in this budget component of the grant agreement.			

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Attachment 5, Invoice

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Email required invoice documents to: Grant Manager  
dlrpinvoices@conservation.ca.gov

Invoice Number:	
Grantee Name:	Grant Number:
Project Name:	
Invoice Period:	(Start Date) (End Date)

Cost Category	Task #1	Task #2	Task #3	Task #4	Task #5	Task #6	Other Expenses	Total
Staff								
Contractors								
Sub-grantees								
Equipment, Materials, Permits								
Travel								
Administrative Costs (not to exceed 20%)								
Current Total								
Cumulative Total								
Allocated Total								

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Work Plan Task #	Description of Work Completed
	<i>Please refer to specific deliverables in the Budget and Work Plan.</i>

Status Update			
Work Plan Task #	On Schedule (Y/N)	Within Budget (Y/N)	Corrective Plan or Action, if needed
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

**CERTIFICATION:** By my signature below, I certify that I have full authority to execute this payment request on behalf of Grantee. I declare under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, that this invoice for reimbursement, and any accompanying supporting documents, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, and all disbursements have been made for the purposes and conditions as outlined in the Grant Agreement.

Print Name:	Print Title:
Signature:	Date:

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Attachment 6, Invoice Dispute Notification

INVOICE DISPUTE NOTIFICATION

GRANTEE ADDRESS		INVOICE DATE
		INVOICE NUMBER
		INVOICE AMOUNT \$
		DATE INVOICE RECEIVED
		GRANT AGREEMENT NUMBER

The invoice referenced above is disputed for the following reasons:

- ☐ Request reimbursement for expenses not in the Budget Detail
- ☐ Invoiced for indirect cost reimbursement
- ☐ Invoiced for incidental costs or travel costs outside of California
- ☐ Work performed prior to the Grant start or end date
- ☐ Insufficient evidence of progress made or task completion
- ☐ Invoice submitted without using required templates
- ☐ Insufficient supporting document for reimbursement
- ☐ Progress Report or Final Report not included with invoice
- ☐ Invoice not submitted by 5:00 p.m. on the required due date
- ☐ Request reimbursement through another funding source
- ☐ Other not listed above:

Comments:

THIS NOTIFICATION IS A FOLLOW UP TO A PHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE GRANTEE OR DESIGNEE WHOSE NAME APPEARS BELOW.

NAME	DATE OF CONVERSATION
------	----------------------

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS DISPUTE, CONTACT:

NAME	TELEPHONE NUMBER (include Area Code)
------	--------------------------------------

RETURN A COPY OF THIS NOTIFICATION WITH THE CORRECTED INVOICE TO:	STATE OF CALIFORNIA USE ONLY	
	DATE DISPUTE RESOLVED	INITIALS
	RESOLUTION	

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**Exhibit C, General Terms and Conditions**

**1. Approval**

This Grant Agreement is of no force or effect until signed by both parties. Grantee may not commence performance until such approval has been obtained.

**2. Amendment**

No change to this Grant Agreement shall be valid unless made in accordance with [Exhibit A, Section 3](#), or [Exhibit B, Section 9](#). No oral understanding or change not incorporated in this Grant Agreement is binding on any of the parties.

**3. Assignment**

This Grant Agreement is not assignable by Grantee, either in whole or in part, without the consent of the Department in the form of an amendment.

**4. Records Retention**

- A. Grantee shall establish an official file containing adequate documentation of all actions taken with respect to the Project, including copies of the Grant Agreement, changes, amendments, letters, email correspondence, financial records, and required reports for a minimum of four (4) years following the final payment of funds or until completion of any action and resolution of all issues which may arise as a result of an audit, whichever is later.
- B. Grantee shall adequately protect all records, physical and electronic, from loss, damage, or destruction during the four (4) year retention period.

**5. Audit**

- A. Grant funded projects are subject to audit by the State of California during the grant term and for up to four years following the termination of the grant agreement. Grantee agrees that the Department, Department of Finance, Bureau of State Audits, or their designated representative shall have the right to review and to copy any records and supporting documentation pertaining to the performance of this Grant Agreement. The audit may consist of examining and auditing pertinent books, documents, papers, and records including financial transactions and supporting documents, general accounting systems, internal controls, management practices, policies, and procedures pertaining to the performance of this Grant Agreement.
- B. At any time, the Department, Department of Finance, Bureau of State Audits, or their designated representative may request to review Grantee's records to ensure proper grant management. Grantee shall be given advance notice when the grant-funded Project is selected for an audit or review by the Department, Department of Finance, Bureau of State Audits, or their designated representative. Grantee agrees to allow the auditor(s) access to such records during normal business hours, excluding State of California holidays, and to allow interviews of any employees who might reasonably have information related to such records. Further, Grantee agrees to include a similar right of the Department to audit records and interview staff in any subcontract related to performance of this Grant Agreement in accordance with Government Code section 8546.7. Grantee shall comply with the above and be aware of the penalties for violations of fraud and for obstruction of investigation as set forth in Public Contract Code section 10115.10.

**6. Indemnification**

Grantee agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the State of California, its officers, agents, and employees from any and all claims and losses accruing or resulting to any and all Grantees, partners, subcontractors, suppliers, laborers, and any other person, firm, or corporation furnishing or supplying work services, materials, or supplies in connection with the performance of this Grant Agreement, and from any and all claims and losses accruing or resulting to any person, firm, or corporation who may be injured or damaged by Grantee in the performance of this Grant Agreement.

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**7. Disputes**

Grantee shall continue with the responsibilities under this Grant Agreement during any dispute.

**8. Independent Grantee**

Grantee, and the agents and employees of Grantee, in the performance of this Grant Agreement, shall act in an independent capacity and not as officers, employees, or agents of the Department.

**9. Non-Discrimination Clause**

During the performance of this Grant Agreement, Grantee and its subcontractors shall not unlawfully discriminate, harass, or allow harassment against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, creed, age (over 40), mental disability, physical disability, sex, gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, and military and veteran status. Grantee and subcontractors shall ensure that the evaluation and treatment of their employees and applicants for employment are free from such discrimination and harassment. Grantee and subcontractors shall comply with the provisions of the Fair Employment and Housing Act (Gov. Code §12990 (a-f) et seq.) and the applicable regulations promulgated thereunder (California Code of Regulations, Title 2, Section 7285 et seq.). The applicable regulations of the Fair Employment and Housing Commission implementing Government Code Section 12990 (a-f), set forth in Chapter 5 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, are incorporated into this Grant Agreement by reference and made a part hereof as if set forth in full. Grantee and its subcontractors shall give written notice of their obligations under this clause to labor organizations with which they have a collective bargaining or other Grant Agreement.

Grantee shall include the nondiscrimination and compliance provisions of this clause in all subcontracts to perform work under this Grant Agreement.

**10. Timeliness**

Time is of the essence in this Grant Agreement. The Department and Grantee will work collaboratively to ensure this Grant Agreement is administered in a timely fashion.

**11. Governing Law**

This Grant Agreement is governed by and shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of California.

**12. Unenforceable Provision**

If any provision of this Grant Agreement is unenforceable or held to be unenforceable, then the parties agree that all other provisions of this Grant Agreement have force and effect and shall not be affected thereby.

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**Exhibit D, Special Terms and Conditions**

**1. Compliance with Laws and Regulations**

By signing this Grant Agreement, Grantee certifies that it shall comply fully with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, regulations, and permits and shall secure any new permits required by authorities having jurisdiction over the Project(s), and maintain all presently required permits. Grantee shall ensure that any applicable requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act are met in order to carry out the terms of this Grant Agreement.

**2. Subcontractors**

The Department contractual relationship is with Grantee, and not any of its subcontractors. Grantee is entitled to make use of its own staff and subcontractors, as identified in the Budget Detail Worksheet ([Attachment 4](#)), and will comply with its own competitive bidding and sole sourcing requirements for subcontracts that arise out of or in connection with this Grant Agreement. Grantee shall manage, monitor, and accept responsibility for the performance of its own staff and subcontractors, and will conduct Project activities and services consistent with professional standards for the industry and type of work being performed under this Grant Agreement.

Nothing contained in this Grant Agreement or otherwise, shall create any contractual relation between the Department and any subcontractors, and no subcontract shall relieve Grantee of its responsibilities and obligations hereunder. Grantee agrees to be as fully responsible to the Department for the acts and omissions of its subcontractors and of persons either directly or indirectly employed by any of them as it is for the acts and omissions of persons directly employed by Grantee. Grantee's obligation to pay its subcontractors is an independent obligation from Department's obligation to make payments to Grantee. As a result, the Department shall have no obligation to pay or to enforce the payment of any moneys to any subcontractor.

**3. No Third-Party Beneficiaries**

This Grant Agreement is not intended for the benefit of any person or entity other than the parties, and no one other than the parties themselves may enforce any of the rights or obligations created by this Grant Agreement.

**4. Project Monitoring and Oversight**

Project monitoring and oversight is essential to ensure the Project stays within scope and is completed on schedule and within budget in accordance with this Grant Agreement.

**5. Dispute Resolution**

**A. Invoice Disputes**

- i. In the event of an invoice dispute, the Grant Manager will notify Grantee by phone and follow up in writing using the Invoice Dispute Notification Template ([Attachment 6](#)) within ten (10) working days of receipt of the disputed invoice.
- ii. During the dispute, both parties shall deal in good faith to resolve the dispute. Grantee shall continue to meet its responsibilities and obligations under the terms of this Grant Agreement.
- iii. If Grantee contests the decision made by the Grant Manager, Grantee shall submit a written "Notice of Dispute" on official letterhead, according to Subsection C below.

**B. General Disputes**

- i. In the event of a dispute unrelated to the dispute of an invoice, Grantee shall first attempt to resolve the dispute with the Grant Manager.
- ii. Both parties shall deal in good faith and attempt to resolve the dispute informally.
- iii. Grantee shall continue to meet its responsibilities and obligations under the terms of this Grant Agreement during a dispute.

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- iv. If Grantee contests the decision made by the Grant Manager, Grantee shall submit a written "Notice of Dispute" on official letterhead, according to Subsection C below.

**C. Contesting a Dispute Decision**

- i. If Grantee contests a decision made by the Grant Manager, Grantee may submit a written "Notice of Dispute" on official letterhead. The "Notice of Dispute" shall include:

- The Grant Agreement number
- A complete description of the basis for the dispute
- Legal authority or pertinent facts, supporting arguments and documentation
- Action requested for resolution

The "Notice of Dispute" shall be sent to:

Department of Conservation  
Division of Land Resource Protection  
Attn: Division Director  
dlrpinvoices@conservation.ca.gov

- ii. Within 30 days after receipt of the "Notice of Dispute," the Division Director shall review the dispute and submit a written decision to Grantee, which shall include:

- The decision made
- An explanation for the decision
- Whether the decision shall be conclusive and binding or can be appealed and the steps to take to appeal the decision

**6. Termination**

- A. Completion of Project. This Grant Agreement shall terminate upon completion of the project and payment of the last invoice.
- B. Early Termination. Either Party may terminate this Grant Agreement upon thirty (30) days advance written notice by certified mail to the other Party. The notice shall specify the reason for early termination and may permit Grantee or the Department to rectify any deficiency(ies) prior to the early termination date.

**7. Waiver of Rights**

- A. Grantee waives any and all rights to any type of express or implied indemnity or right of contribution from the Department, its officers, agents, or employees for any liability arising from, growing out of, or in any way connected with this Grant Agreement.
- B. Grantee waives all claims and recourses against the Department, including the right to contribution for loss or damage to persons or property arising from, growing out of, or in any way connected with or incident to this Grant Agreement, except claims arising from the gross negligence of the Department, its officers, agents, and employees.
- C. None of the provisions of this Grant Agreement shall be deemed waived unless expressly waived in writing.

**8. Insurance Requirements**

- A. Grantee that is a governmental organization may provide evidence of self-insurance to satisfy this requirement.
- B. If Grantee is not a governmental organization or is unable to provide evidence of self-insurance, then it shall obtain and keep in force for the term of this Agreement the following insurance policies that cover any acts

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or omissions of Grantee, its subcontractors, or its employees engaged in the provision of service specified in this Agreement:

- i. Workers' Compensation Insurance in an amount of not less than \$1,000,000 in accordance with the statutory requirement of the State of California (California Labor Code § 3700 et seq.).
- ii. Commercial general liability insurance in an amount of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence for bodily injury and property damage combined.
- iii. Motor vehicle liability with limits not less than the amounts below for combined single limit per accident. Such insurance shall cover liability arising out of a motor vehicle including owned or hired, and non-owned motor vehicles.
  - 7 or fewer passengers: \$1,000,000
  - 8-15 passengers: \$1,500,000
  - 16+ passengers: \$5,000,000
- C. The State of California, its officers, agents, and employees are included as additional insured, but only with respect to work performed for the State of California under this Grant Agreement. The additional insured endorsement must accompany the certificate of insurance.
- D. Grantee shall submit proof of insurance documents referencing this Grant Agreement number to the Department electronically within thirty (30) days of signing this Grant Agreement.
- E. Grantee shall notify the Department in writing within five (5) working days of any cancellation, non-renewal, or material change that affects required insurance coverage.
- F. Grantee shall submit proof of new or updated policy based on insurance requirements within thirty (30) days of policy cancellation or substantial policy change. Failure to provide proof of insurance may result in termination of this Grant Agreement.

## **9. Stop Work**

If it is determined, at the sole discretion of the Department, that Grantee is not meeting the terms and conditions of this Grant Agreement, immediately upon receiving a written notice through certified mail from the Department to stop work, Grantee shall cease all work under this Grant Agreement. The Department has the sole discretion to determine that Grantee meets the terms and conditions after a stop work order, and to send through certified mail a written notice to Grantee to resume work under this Grant Agreement.

## **10. Publicity**

Grantee agrees that it will acknowledge the Department's support whenever activities or projects funded, in whole or in part, by this Grant Agreement are publicized in any news media, brochures, articles, seminars, websites, or other type of promotional material.

Grantee shall also include in any publication resulting from work performed under this grant an acknowledgment substantially as follows:

"The work upon which this publication is based was funded in whole or in part through a grant awarded by the California Department of Conservation."

**Media:** Grantee is required to identify a point of contact for all press inquiries and communications needs related to the Project and provide the name, phone number, and email address of this individual to the Department. All press releases must be approved by the Department prior to distribution, and the Department must be alerted and invited to participate in all press conferences related to the grant.

**Social Media:** Grantee is encouraged to use social media to inform and share with the public activities under this Grant Agreement. Furthermore, the Department should be tagged on all posts related to activities under this Grant Agreement.

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**11. Drug-Free Workplace Certification**

In signing this Grant Agreement, Grantee certifies that it and or its subcontractors will comply with the requirements of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1990 and will provide a drug-free workplace by taking the following actions:

- A. Publish a statement notifying employees that unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited and specifying actions to be taken against employees for violations.
- B. Establish a Drug-Free Awareness Program to inform employees about:
  - i. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace.
  - ii. The person's or organization's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace.
  - iii. Any available counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs.
  - iv. Penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations.
- C. Every employee who works on this Grant Agreement will:
  - i. Receive a copy of the company's drug-free workplace policy statement.
  - ii. Agree to abide by the terms of the company's statement as a condition of employment on this Grant Agreement.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in suspension of payments under this Grant Agreement or termination of this Grant Agreement or both, and Grantee may be ineligible for award of any future State of California agreements if the Department determines that any of the following has occurred: Grantee has made false certification, or violated the certification by failing to carry out the requirements as noted above (Gov. Code §8350 et seq.).

**12. Americans with Disabilities Act**

Grantee assures the Department that it complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, as well as all applicable regulations and guidelines issued pursuant to the ADA (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

**13. Air/Water Pollution Violation Certification**

Under State of California laws, Grantee shall not be: (1) in violation of any order or resolution not subject to review promulgated by the California Air Resources Board or an air pollution control district; (2) subject to cease and desist order not subject to review issued pursuant to Section 13301 of the Water Code for violation of waste discharge requirements or discharge prohibitions; or (3) finally determined to be in violation of provisions of federal law relating to air or water pollution.

**14. Payee Data Record Form - STD 204**

This form must be completed by all Grantees that are not another state agency or other governmental entity.

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Exhibit E, Award Letter

DocuSign Envelope ID: 8FF700AC-CF7D-4ADA-9659-B80858269EC0



California  
Department of Conservation  
Division of Land Resource Protection

Govin Newsom, Governor  
David Shabazzian, Director

June 12, 2023

Mike Tietze  
East Turlock Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (ETSGSA)

Via Email to: [mtietze@formationenv.com](mailto:mtietze@formationenv.com)

Re: Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program Grant Solicitation – Regional Block Grants

Dear Mike:

Thank you for your application in response to the Department of Conservation's Round 2 Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program regional block grant solicitation. We were pleased to receive numerous strong proposals totaling over \$84.6 million in requests and demonstrating a commitment to repurposing agricultural lands to support groundwater sustainability and provide multiple benefits.

It is my pleasure to inform you that your proposal has been awarded \$8.89 million in funding through this solicitation.

Department of Conservation staff will work with you to complete the draft grant agreement that was included in the solicitation. If your budget, work plan, or any other aspect of your proposal requires revision, staff will work with you to update these elements of your proposal prior to preparing the grant agreement. The grant agreement must be fully executed before expenses can be incurred.

Please contact Jessica Parish, Grant Manager for this project, at [Jessica.Parish@conservation.ca.gov](mailto:Jessica.Parish@conservation.ca.gov) or (916) 261-4552 should you have any questions. We look forward to working with you and wish you success in implementing your work plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keali'i Bright".

Keali'i Bright  
Director, Division of Land Resource Protection

State of California Natural Resources Agency | Department of Conservation  
715 P Street, MS 1904, Sacramento, CA 95814  
[conservation.ca.gov](http://conservation.ca.gov) | T: (916) 324-0830 | F: (916) 327-3430

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**Exhibit F, Guidelines**

**California Department of Conservation  
Solicitation Notice and Application for:**

**Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program**

**FINAL  
January 31, 2022**



California  
**Department of  
Conservation**

## At A Glance

### Program

The Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program seeks to increase regional capacity to repurpose agricultural land to reduce reliance on groundwater while providing community health, economic wellbeing, water supply, habitat, and climate benefits.

### Funding Source

This program is funded by the Public Resources Trailer Bill (AB 211, Ch. 574, Statutes of 2022)

### Critical Dates (proposed, subject to change)

Public Comment Period Closes—December 30, 2022

Solicitation Notice and Application released— January 24, 2023

Applications due— March 29, 2023

Awards Announced— June 1, 2023

### Contact for Questions

Department of Conservation

Division of Land Resource Protection

Shanna Atherton-Bauer, Land Conservation Programs Manager

[mlrp@conservation.ca.gov](mailto:mlrp@conservation.ca.gov)

(916) 858-9724

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## Section 1: Introduction and Program Summary

### Background

Implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act ("SGMA") necessitates coordinated management of landscapes to minimize economic, social, and environmental impacts from the transition of agricultural lands in areas of groundwater overdraft to less water intensive land uses while providing benefits to local and regional communities. The Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program seeks to increase regional capacity to repurpose agricultural land to reduce reliance on groundwater while providing community health, economic wellbeing, water supply, habitat, renewable energy, and climate benefits.

### Multi-Agency Implementation

The Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program will be led by the Department of Conservation ("Department") and implemented in close partnership with multiple state and federal agencies. This partnership will help the Department structure the program so that it can efficiently respond to specific regional needs related to SGMA implementation and land repurposing, as well as provide support to grantees throughout program implementation.

An Agency Advisory Group comprised of representatives from state and federal agencies will provide ongoing guidance to the program and coordinate the alignment of technical and other grant program resources to support the goals of the program. While the Advisory Group will have an adaptive membership model, the initial participants include:

- CA Department of Conservation
- CA Department of Water Resources
- CA Department of Food and Agriculture
- CA Department of Fish and Wildlife
- CA State Water Resources Control Board
- CA Wildlife Conservation Board
- Governor's Office of Business Development
- CA Strategic Growth Council
- US Natural Resources Conservation Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Agency Advisory Group will directly consult with non-member agencies, including regulatory agencies, on an as-needed basis to inform the program.

### Vision

This program is part of a suite of complementary programs administered by the Department of Conservation Division of Land Resource Protection's Conservation Unit. These programs protect, restore, and enhance natural and working lands through capacity building, land-use and project planning, and implementation funding. The programs operated by the Conservation Unit include:

- Agricultural Land Mitigation Program
- California Farmland Conservancy Program
- Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program
- Working Lands and Riparian Corridors Program

These programs address the land element of the Department of Conservation's mission, which is to balance today's needs with tomorrow's obligations by fostering the wise use and conservation of energy, land, and mineral resources.

## Program Authorization and Funding

This program is funded by the Public Resources Trailer Bill (AB 211, Ch. 574, Stat. of 2022), which appropriated \$40 million to the Department to fund groundwater sustainability projects that reduce groundwater use, repurpose irrigated agricultural land, and provide wildlife habitat.

Grants up to \$8.89 million each will be awarded as block grants to regional or basin-scale organizations to develop and implement land repurposing programs. Block grant recipients will then award subgrants and contract to achieve the program deliverables. The Department reserves the right to increase grant awards above \$8.89 million as funding allows.

\$500,000 will be awarded to the statewide support entity to ensure provision of statewide technical assistance to Round 2 grantees and continued facilitation of communication and collaboration necessary to meet the purposes of the program. The Department reserves the right to increase the statewide support entity grant award as funding and the Department's need allows.

Up to \$2.44 million in grants, comprised of \$1.94 million from the current grant solicitation and \$500,000 from the remaining funding from the Budget Act of 2021 (SB 170, Ch. 240, Stat. 2021), will be awarded to federally recognized and non-federally recognized California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission to plan for, develop, and implement multibenefit land repurposing projects within the eligible groundwater basins identified in Section 2. This funding may also be used to increase regional block grant awards where the block grant recipient partners or collaborates with a tribe to plan for, develop, and/or implement multibenefit land repurposing projects. The Department reserves the right to increase awards above \$2.5 million as funding allows.

Up to 5% of the funds available under this program may be used by Department of Conservation to administer the program.

## Goals

The primary goals of the Program are to:

- Support coordinated, regional and basin-scale efforts to achieve groundwater sustainability in critically overdrafted basins and in high and medium priority basins where a state emergency drought declaration has been declared
- Support long-term repurposing of lands least viable for agriculture and multibenefit opportunities that convert land to less intensive water uses while maintaining natural and working lands
- Provide short- and medium-term drought relief
- Support regional efforts to sustain land-based economies that are impacted by groundwater sustainability measures
- Reduce groundwater use
- Create or restore wildlife habitat and wildlife connectivity, including seasonal wetland habitat to replenish aquifers

- Improve groundwater supply, including through groundwater recharge, improved baseflows in rivers and streams, and groundwater supply improvement for fish and wildlife habitat
- Support nature-based solutions to reduce the impacts of hazards on lives, property, and the economy from overdrafted groundwater basins
- Provide benefits to disadvantaged communities and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers
- Foster partnerships and collaboration among diverse entities to enable regional scale leadership to meet this program's goals
- Develop scalable, transferable land repurposing models
- Support farmer, rancher, and farm worker leadership in multibenefit land repurposing strategies and project implementation
- Provide flexible and efficient program administration so that grantees can lead expeditious and adaptive programs to meet their needs.

### **Disadvantaged Communities**

The Public Resources Trailer Bill of 2022 requires that the Department prioritize the achievement of disadvantaged community benefits when implementing this program. For the purposes of this program, a disadvantaged community is defined as a) a community with a median household income less than 80 percent of the statewide average, or b) a community where the lands are under the control of a federally recognized Tribe. This may include providing access to nature, protection of community air quality, improved drinking water supplies, and creation of recreational spaces and community-agriculture buffer zones.

## Section 2: Regional Block Grants

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible regional block grant applicants are: (1) Groundwater Sustainability Agencies ("GSAs"), (2) federally recognized California Native American tribes, (3) non-federally recognized California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission; (4) public agencies; (5) nonprofit groups with 501(c) status; and (7) Watermasters implementing an approved groundwater sustainability plan or approved alternative to a groundwater sustainability plan.

Eligible applicants that are not Groundwater Sustainability Agencies or tribes must partner with at least one Groundwater Sustainability Agency to submit an application. The application must include a resolution or letter from the Groundwater Sustainability Agency(ies) stating their support for the project, and how the Groundwater Sustainability Agency will be involved in the applicant's work.

Eligible applicants must also be either: 1) locally-based, which is defined as an entity that maintains a local office and focuses on issues within or proximal to the region or basin that is the focus of the application; or 2) non-local, where there are strong local partnerships between the applicant, the local GSA(s), and other important stakeholders.

### Partnering and Collaboration

This grant program requires partnering and collaboration among stakeholders within regions or basins. Proposals should demonstrate multiple, committed partnerships and extensive collaboration with other agencies, organizations, entities, and individuals with interests in their proposal area.

Partnering is defined as commitments by other organizations, government agencies, private citizens or volunteer groups to provide funds or in-kind services. Partners will be eligible to receive program dollars to support their participation in work toward the program deliverables. Partnerships must be initially evidenced by letters of commitment that explain the relationship between the partner and block grant recipient and outline the partner's contributions to the program. As land repurposing projects progress toward implementation, the Department will require partners to enter into memoranda of understanding with the block grant recipients to formalize roles.

Collaboration is defined as working with other organizations, government agencies, groups, and individuals to ensure that all entities work in agreement and are non-duplicative of each other's activities, and to ensure that diverse interests are meaningfully incorporated into the block grant recipient's work. Collaboration may be evidenced by letters of support, signed agreements, board resolutions, or other signed documents.

### Eligible Groundwater Basins

Eligible proposals are those that address a project area as defined by the applicant and comprised of one or more SGMA critically overdrafted basins managed under an approved groundwater sustainability plan or alternative to a groundwater sustainability plan, one or more high- or medium-priority groundwater basins where a state emergency drought declaration has been declared, or a combination of the two (collectively, eligible groundwater basins). High and medium priority groundwater basins under an emergency

drought declaration will still be considered eligible for funding if that drought declaration is lifted on or after the application deadline. A map of eligible basins is provided in Appendix A.

### Regional Block Grant Deliverables

Regional block grant recipients must include each the following activities in their scope of work:

1. Develop a **Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan** to reduce reliance on groundwater while providing regionally appropriate benefits, including community health, economic wellbeing, water supply, flood resilience, habitat, renewable energy, and climate benefits;
2. Complete **project development and permitting** to generate implementation-ready projects to repurpose agricultural lands for funding consideration;
3. Implement **land repurposing projects** that achieve multiple benefits;
4. Support **capacity needs of partners** to achieve the deliverables of the grant;
5. Conduct **outreach, education, and training** as needed to facilitate and build capacity to implement the above activities; and
6. Conduct **monitoring** to ensure defined conservation outcomes from projects have been achieved and maintained for the agreed upon duration the benefit.

The majority of each block grant recipient's budget should go toward project implementation. Block grant recipients may conduct work toward each deliverable in parallel or sequentially as is appropriate for their region and the successful implementation of their grant.

### *Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plans*

Each block grant recipient must use a portion of this funding to develop a Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan that identifies and prioritizes land repurposing strategies and projects to address groundwater sustainability within their region. Plans must be consistent with the relevant Groundwater Sustainability Plan(s) for the region and prioritize projects that provide meaningful benefits to disadvantaged communities and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Desired outcomes from the Plan's development and implementation include:

- Identification and prioritization of agricultural land repurposing strategies and projects that can be implemented at scale within their region
- A quantifiable estimate of project benefits, such as reduction in groundwater demand, quantity of recharge, stream flow improvement, or habitat acreage/quantity
- Protection of long-term viability of agricultural economies through support for agricultural systems with flexible water demand and sustainable groundwater management
- Attainment of strong regional support for the Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan and identified projects through broad inclusion of stakeholders and partners

- Development and management of a broad collaborative structure and effective networks of partners and collaborators
- Coordination of agricultural land repurposing efforts across land ownerships
- Resource and habitat connectivity
- Identification of habitat restoration opportunities that are located adjacent to land with high habitat value and provide habitat for endangered plant or animal species
- Identification of adaptive management strategies to avoid adverse impacts on neighboring properties of repurposed lands
- Economic development planning to support regional land-based economies through sustainable groundwater management implementation
- Identification of strategies to address cumulative and economic impacts of land repurposing on farmworker jobs
- Durable, long-term benefits that meet the program goals
- Short- and medium-term emergency groundwater demand reduction to address environmental or public health needs caused by drought
- Benefits to disadvantaged communities and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers
- Tribes' ownership, co-ownership, co-management of, and access to the land
- Support for local jobs, local communities, small businesses, and local economies.

Desired outcomes from the priority projects identified in each Plan should be consistent with the outcomes listed for Land Repurposing Projects below.

Each Plan must:

- be developed in coordination with the applicable groundwater sustainability agency, farmers and ranchers, local/state/federal agencies, local disadvantaged communities, tribes, non-governmental organizations, and environmental justice organizations
- be consistent with the applicable Groundwater Sustainability Plan
- Include a description of all disadvantaged communities in the region and the extent to which the program will benefit those communities
- Identify a clear process for engaging disadvantaged communities in project development and implementation.

Block grant recipients should ensure that their plan is consistent with the best available state, regional, and local data (water, climate, habitat, etc).

Block grant recipients will lead the development of the Plan for their region, partnering directly with organizations in their region through sub-contracts or other agreements as needed throughout the process.

Block grant recipients and partnering entities will work in coordination with the Department, the Agency Advisory Group, and the statewide support entity to ensure that the Multibenefit

Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan is consistent with the program's goals and desired outcomes for plans.

If a comprehensive multibenefit agricultural land repurposing plan already exists for the region and substantially meets the requirements above, that plan may be used in lieu of development of a new plan, at the discretion of the Department. Block grant recipients may also incorporate relevant portions of existing plans into their Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan as applicable.

#### *Land Repurposing Project Development and Permitting*

Block grant recipients must use a portion of this funding to support preliminary project development and permitting activities for the priority projects identified in their Plan or previously contemplated projects that were identified prior to development of the Plan and already have regional support. Developing and completing permitting for these projects should ensure that projects are ready to receive implementation funding from state and non-state programs. These projects should contribute to the desired outcomes identified for land repurposing projects.

To ensure that disadvantaged communities are engaged in and meaningfully benefit from projects developed using this funding, as part of a project's development, block grant recipients must:

- Identify and describe the disadvantaged communities near the proposed project
- Describe to what extent each disadvantaged community near the proposed project will benefit from the project or, if no benefit is provided to a particular disadvantaged community, provide justification why
- Describe the process by which the block grant recipient will engage with the relevant disadvantaged communities in the project's development and implementation
- Engage the relevant disadvantaged communities in the project's development

Project development and permitting may occur in parallel with the development of the Plan pursuant to consultation with the Department.

Desired outcomes for project development and permitting include:

- Completed project design and permitting
- Established non-state partnerships, support, and funding, as well as broad partnerships with regional stakeholders
- Completed memorandums of understanding with project partners to implement projects
- Developed pipeline of multiple years of implementation-ready projects that meet the goals of the Plan available for funding consideration
- Integrated benefits to disadvantaged communities and tribes

#### *Land Repurposing Project Implementation*

Block grant recipients must use a majority of their grant to implement multibenefit agricultural land repurposing projects that achieve the goals of the program. Projects must result in

multiple benefits lasting at least 10 years, unless they are directly responding to a state emergency drought declaration, in which case, benefits must be reasonably durable.

Block grant recipients must prioritize projects that:

- Meaningfully benefit disadvantaged communities
- Are conducted on lands that are least viable for irrigated agriculture
- Contribute to resource connectivity (e.g., connectivity of habitat, agricultural landscapes, renewable energy centers, etc.)

Multibenefit projects are those that provide both groundwater sustainability benefits as well as at least one other community health, economic wellbeing, habitat, flood, renewable energy, or climate benefit.

Block grant recipients should identify regionally appropriate project opportunities throughout the grant period.

Block grant recipients will work with the statewide support entity to identify performance measures to assess desired outcomes of projects.

Block grant recipients should propose the most effective means to implement projects to meet their goals. This may include subcontracting with conservation partner organizations, paying farmers and ranchers to lead implementation, working with academic institutions, or other options as appropriate.

The program encourages early action on funding-ready implementation projects while supporting thoughtful development of project priorities through the Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan. Land repurposing projects funded by this program must be consistent with the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the area and may either be identified through the Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan or pre-identified, shovel-ready projects that meet program requirements and maximize the project outcomes outlined below.

Examples of strategies and projects that may be funded include:

- Rewilding landscapes, including through creation or restoration of habitat such as pollinator habitat, wetland habitat, upland habitat, and riparian habitat
- Creation of multibenefit recharge areas
- Restoring floodplains
- Transitioning irrigated land to dryland farming or non-irrigated rangeland
- Transitioning to less water intensive crops, including for native seed production
- Planting cover crops or conservation cover
- Reestablishment of tribal land uses
- Implementation of tribal cultural practices
- Facilitation of renewable energy projects that have an overall net GHG reduction
- Creation of parks or community recreation areas
- Incentive payments to landowners, farmers, and ranchers to implement multibenefit land repurposing projects that create a public benefit for at least ten years
- Land acquisitions to facilitate land repurposing and protect repurposed land uses
- Voluntary land transfers to tribes or qualified public entities to facilitate land repurposing and protect repurposed land uses

- Easement acquisitions, including conservation easement and flood easement acquisitions, to facilitate land repurposing and protect repurposed land uses

The block grant recipient will work with the Department to develop reasonable incentive payments to landowners, farmers, and ranchers to implement multibenefit land repurposing projects.

Land acquisitions, land transfers, and easement acquisitions must occur in conjunction with at least one non-acquisition land repurposing strategy or project type on the acquired land.

Desired outcomes for land repurposing projects include:

- Reduced groundwater use
- Increased groundwater recharge
- Improved baseflows in rivers and streams
- Transition of land to less water intensive, regenerative uses while maintaining natural and working lands
- Creation and/or restoration of wildlife and pollinator habitat and/or migratory resources
- Protection of cultural resources
- Improved water quality
- Increased access to nature
- Land use agreements to accomplish prioritized opportunities
- Quantified achievement of multiple benefits of the program
- Incorporated participation from multiple partners, collaborators, and funding sources
- Replicability and scalability
- Integrated benefits to disadvantaged communities and tribes
- Increased community outreach, involvement, and education
- Increased regional workforce development opportunities and support of local business
- Diversified economic opportunities.

Funding for project implementation will only be released upon Department review of individual projects and confirmation that said projects are consistent with the goals of the program.

On a case-by-case basis, the Department may approve use of funds to implement projects outside of an eligible groundwater basin if that project can be shown to:

- 1) Reduce groundwater use in an eligible groundwater basin interconnected with surface water,
- 2) Improve groundwater supply in an eligible groundwater basin interconnected with surface water , or
- 3) Improve baseflows in rivers and streams in an eligible groundwater basin.

For the Department to consider such projects for funding, the GSA responsible for the eligible groundwater basin must provide a letter attesting to the benefits the project would provide to the eligible groundwater basin.

The Public Resources Trailer Bill (AB 211, Ch. 574, Stat. of 2022) requires that any groundwater recharge achieved through these strategies and projects must be subtracted from any calculation by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency from the groundwater available for extraction by water users for the duration of the benefits paid for by the program. Payments for benefits must be linked to the achievement and delivery of the defined conservation outcomes for the project and the duration of those outcomes.

### *Partner and Collaborator Capacity Needs*

The program requires broad partnerships and collaborations with entities to participate in regional planning, project development, and project implementation, and support broader block grant implementation to achieve the program's goals. Block grant recipients must develop mechanisms to support the critical capacity needs of their partners and collaborators to ensure their participation can be sustained and meaningful and to meet program goals. This may include providing payments for services to disadvantaged community members and tribal members for their participation in and contributions to planning, project development, and project implementation efforts, subject to the requirements outlined in the Eligible Costs section.

The Department will work with the block grant recipient and fiscal control entities to determine whether actual expenditures are reimbursable, but examples of partner and collaborator capacity needs that should be considered include:

- financial compensation for program staff time
- minor office materials
- compensation for participation by non-paid members of organizations that bring specific expertise to the grant.

### *Outreach, Education, and Training*

Critical to all the above activities, the Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program intends to support outreach to a broad and diverse range of communities within each region to develop a comprehensive understanding of and support for the program. This includes block grant recipients' outreach to and engagement of farmers, ranchers, and disadvantaged communities in the development of Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plans. Further, the program aims to strengthen grantees' skills by developing region-wide peer-to-peer training opportunities. Block grant recipients must use funds from this program to further the above goals.

Desired outcomes of outreach, education, and training efforts associated with each block grant include:

- Community-level engagement and education, including to disadvantaged communities, regarding the need to repurpose land, options for repurposing land, and what happens in a "do-nothing" scenario

- Targeted outreach to and engagement of farmers and ranchers about land repurposing, including education regarding the need to repurpose, options for repurposing, and what happens in a “do-nothing” scenario
- Practitioner-level education and regional coordination
- Regional understanding of the benefits of land repurposing strategies and projects identified in the Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan
- Trainings to support upward financial mobility and transitions from agricultural work for farmworkers
- Broad regional support for Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan
- A collaborative stakeholder structure that can implement the Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan long-term

### *Monitoring*

Regional block grant recipients must monitor projects funded by this program to ensure defined conservation outcomes from projects, including identified benefits to disadvantaged communities, have been achieved and are maintained for the agreed upon duration the benefit. Block grant recipients are not expected to monitor every project; however, they are expected to develop a monitoring plan to be approved by the Department to ensure satisfactory tracking of outcomes across their portfolio of projects. At a minimum, grantees will be required to capture the before and after condition for each project.

For projects with an easement component, grantees will be required to monitor and report on compliance with the easement terms annually for the duration of the easement.

### **Optional Activities**

In addition to the deliverables outlined above, block grant recipients may use funds to support research and demonstration projects needed to test innovative land repurposing strategies of interest to block grant recipients.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

Below are the Eligibility Criteria upon which each proposal will be evaluated. Applications must meet all eligibility criteria listed below to be considered for funding under this solicitation:

- Applicant is a (1) Groundwater Sustainability Agency; (2) federally recognized California Native American tribe, or (3) non-federally recognized California Native American tribe on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission **OR** is a public agency; nonprofit group with 501 (c) status; or Watermaster implementing an approved groundwater sustainability plan or approved alternative to a groundwater sustainability plan and is partnering with a GSA to submit an application.
- Applicant is locally based or has strong, well-documented ties to local communities, stakeholders and/or GSA(s).

- Applicant has overall capacity to administer the grant.
- Application is for one or more SGMA critically overdrafted basins managed under an approved groundwater sustainability plan or alternative to a groundwater sustainability plan; one or more high- or medium-priority groundwater basins where a state emergency drought declaration has been declared; or a combination of the two.
- Application includes the following deliverables in the scope of work and budget:
  - Develop a **Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan** to reduce reliance on groundwater while providing regionally appropriate benefits, including community health, economic wellbeing, water supply, habitat, renewable energy, and climate benefits;
  - Complete **project development and permitting** to generate implementation-ready projects to repurpose agricultural lands for funding consideration;
  - **Implement land repurposing projects** that achieve multiple benefits;
  - **Support capacity needs of partners and collaborators** to achieve the deliverables of the grant;
  - Conduct **outreach, education, and training** as needed to facilitate and build capacity to implement the above activities; and
  - **Conduct monitoring** to ensure defined conservation outcomes from projects have been achieved and maintained for the agreed upon duration the benefit.
- Application is complete and was received by the deadline.

## Selection Criteria

Total selection criteria points available out of 100. Factors to be considered when selecting regional block grant recipients include:

- **Goals** (25 points): The extent to which the applicant's vision for an agricultural land repurposing program in their region aligns with the program's goals.
- **Partnerships and Collaboration** (20 points): The extent to which the applicant has built strong regional partnerships and collaborations to support the grant, and has a plan to expand and enter into new partnerships and collaborations to execute the grant. Partnerships are demonstrated through letters of support outlining the financial and in-kind commitments of partner organizations to the work conducted under the grant. Collaboration is evidenced by demonstrating meaningful incorporation of diverse interests into the block grant recipient's work through letters of support, signed agreements, board resolutions, or other signed documents.
- **Community Engagement** (15 points): The extent to which the applicant demonstrates experience and expertise in conducting effective and inclusive engagement across diverse communities and organizations, as well as the extent to which the applicant plans to engage with and meaningfully include the feedback of: farmers, ranchers, disadvantaged community members, tribes, and other interested practitioners in the development and implementation of their land repurposing work. Applicants who demonstrate experience and expertise engaging with farmers, ranchers, disadvantaged communities, and tribes will receive more points. Applicants who outline clear steps in their work plan for engaging with disadvantaged communities

through planning, project development, and project implementation will receive more points.

- **Disadvantaged Community Benefits** (15 points): The extent to which the proposal is likely to result in projects that provide substantiated benefits to disadvantaged communities. Substantiated benefits to disadvantaged communities may include increased access to nature, improved drinking water supplies, improved air quality, and creation of community-agriculture buffer zones next to disadvantaged communities.
- **Fiscal and Administrative Capacity** (15 points): The extent to which the applicant has the fiscal and administrative control systems to adequately oversee the expenditure of block grant awards.
- **Policy and Project Expertise** (10 points): The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the policy and project implementation expertise necessary to complete the grant deliverables. Applicants may demonstrate this ability in-house or through partnerships and collaborations.

## Application Review and Award

### *Materials and Submission*

The application template is provided in Appendix B and is available on the [Department's website](#). Applicants should familiarize themselves with this solicitation prior to completing the application.

Applicants must submit all required application materials via email to [mlrp@conservation.ca.gov](mailto:mlrp@conservation.ca.gov). Applications must be received digitally by 11:59 p.m. on March 29, 2023.

Incomplete applications, applications that don't meet all the eligibility criteria, and applications not received by the deadline will not be evaluated for funding.

Each applicant will receive an acknowledgement upon the Department's receipt of their application.

The schedule for this solicitation is provided in the "[At-A-Glance](#)" section of this solicitation. The schedule is subject to change.

### *Application Review Process*

Applicants for regional block grants will be required to submit an application for funding and participate in a virtual interview with reviewers to discuss their project prior to funding decisions being made.

Applications will be evaluated by Department of Conservation and scored by a review panel comprised of representatives from the Department of Conservation and/or Agency Advisory Group, collectively "reviewers." Mean scores and reviewer rankings will be considered when determining funding recommendations.

The reviewers will convene to provide consensus for funding recommendations.

### *Project Selection*

The projects, selection scoring, and reviewer rankings will be presented to the Director of the Department who will consider the comments and recommendations of the reviewers and make the final funding decisions. The Department will notify applicants within 10 days of the Director's determination as to whether their project was approved for funding.

The Director may consider the following when making awards:

- Selection criteria scores
- Reviewer rankings
- Interview responses
- The availability of funds
- The program purposes
- The balance and distribution of funding among program priorities and/or geographic area.

### **Program Participation**

Block grant recipients must participate in all of the following activities:

- An orientation
- Monthly check-in meetings with the Department
- Monthly block grant recipient webinars with the statewide support entity
- Quarterly progress report meetings with the Department and Agency Advisory Group members

### Section 3: Statewide Support Funding Eligibility and Scope of Work

\$500,000 will be provided to increase the statewide support entity's existing award to ensure they are able to provide technical assistance services to regional block grant recipients awarded under the current solicitation. The statewide support entity will provide technical assistance and facilitate communication and collaboration necessary to meet the purposes of the program. The statewide support entity may partner and contract with other entities to meet the deliverables outlined below.

#### **Deliverables**

The statewide support entity will:

1. Coordinate collaboration between block grant recipients
2. Develop a peer-learning structure through which block grant recipients can receive education and training to successfully execute the deliverables of their grant
3. Connect block grant recipients to resources needed to successfully execute the deliverables of their grant
4. Coordinate external communications about program work (e.g., reports, stories, press), including working with the Department to produce an annual report of program outcomes
5. Working with block grant recipients to engage disadvantaged communities, tribes, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in the development of their Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plans and in the development and implementation of land repurposing projects
6. Work to fill gaps in and build capacity to develop and implement land repurposing work, and provide technical assistance to entities interested in applying for land repurposing funding
7. Oversee monitoring efforts and outcomes reporting to ensure consistency and transparency in outcomes monitoring across regions.

#### **Optional Activities**

In addition to the deliverables outlined above, the statewide support entity may use funds to support research and demonstration projects needed to test innovative land repurposing strategies.

## Section 4: Funding for Tribes

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants under this Section are: (1) Federally recognized California Native American tribes; (2) non-federally recognized California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission; and (4) nonprofit groups with 501(c) status with meaningful connections to or on behalf of eligible tribes.

Non-profit applicants must have a Native American-centered mission or have a majority Native American board. If the non-profit applicant does not meet this criterion, they must provide a letter of support from an eligible tribe detailing the nature of the relationship between the non-profit and the tribe, how the tribe will benefit from the project, and the tribe's support for the project.

At its discretion, the Department may also use the funding available under this Section to increase block grant awards where the block grant recipient partners or collaborates with a tribe to plan for, develop, and/or implement multibenefit land repurposing projects consistent with the project types listed below. In order to receive additional funding under this Section, block grant recipients must provide memoranda of understanding with or letters of support from the tribe(s) they are partnering or collaborating with detailing the work to be conducted using this funding.

### Maximum Grant Award

Up to \$2.44 million in funding is available under this Section. At the Discretion of the Department Director, this amount may be increased if funding allows. Applications may be submitted for up to the total amount of funding available under this Section.

### Solicitation Period

Applications submitted under this Section will be accepted on a rolling, non-competitive basis. If funding remains available under this section as of March 1, 2026, the Department, in consultation with the Agency Advisory Group and the California Natural Resources Agency Assistant Secretary of Tribal Affairs or similar position, may elect to distribute the remaining funds to regional block grant recipients.

### Project Types

Tribes may apply for funding under this section to plan for, develop, or implement multibenefit agricultural land repurposing projects that address two or more project outcomes identified below. Projects must result in benefits lasting at least 10 years, unless they are directly responding to a state emergency drought declaration, in which case, benefits must be reasonably durable. Multibenefit projects are those that provide both groundwater sustainability benefits as well as at least one other community health, economic wellbeing, habitat, renewable energy, or climate benefit.

Examples of projects that may be funded include:

- Creation or restoration of habitat, including pollinator habitat, wetland habitat, upland habitat, and riparian habitat
- Creation of multibenefit recharge areas
- Conversion of irrigated land to dryland farming or non-irrigated rangeland
- Planting cover crops or conservation cover
- Reestablishment of tribal land uses

- Implementation of tribal cultural practices
- Facilitation of renewable energy projects that have an overall net GHG reduction
- Creation of parks or community recreation areas
- Incentive payments to landowners, farmers, and ranchers to implement multibenefit land repurposing projects that create a public benefit for at least ten years
- Land acquisitions to facilitate land repurposing and protect repurposed land uses
- Easement acquisitions to facilitate land repurposing and protect repurposed land uses

Land acquisitions, land transfers, and easement acquisitions must occur in conjunction with at least one non-acquisition land repurposing strategy or project type on the acquired land.

Desired outcomes for land repurposing projects include:

- Reduced groundwater use
- Increased groundwater recharge
- Improved baseflows in rivers and streams
- Conversion of land to less intensive water uses while maintaining natural and working lands
- Creation and/or restoration of wildlife and pollinator habitat and/or migratory resources
- Protection of cultural resources
- Improved water quality
- Land use agreements to accomplish prioritized opportunities
- Quantified achievement of multiple benefits of the program
- Incorporated participation from multiple partners and funding sources
- Replicability and scalability
- Integrated benefits to disadvantaged communities
- Tribes' ownership, co-ownership, co-management of, and access to the land
- Increased community outreach, involvement, and education
- Increased regional workforce development opportunities and support of local business.

As required by statute, any groundwater recharge achieved through these strategies and projects must be subtracted from any calculation by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency from the groundwater available for extraction by water users for the duration of the benefits paid for by the program. Payments for benefits must be linked to the achievement and delivery of the defined conservation outcomes for the project and the duration of those outcomes.

Tribes must work with the relevant Groundwater Sustainability Agency to quantify the groundwater recharge achieved by funded projects.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

Below are the Eligibility Criteria upon which each proposal will be evaluated. Applications must meet all eligibility criteria listed below to be considered for funding under this solicitation:

- Applicant is a (1) Federally recognized California Native American tribes; (2) non-federally recognized California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission; (3) members of a Federally

recognized or non-federally recognized California Native American tribe; and (4) nonprofit groups with 501 (c) status with connections to or on behalf of eligible tribes.

- The project is located in one or more SGMA critically overdrafted basins managed under an approved groundwater sustainability plan or alternative to a groundwater sustainability plan, one or more high- or medium-priority groundwater basins where a state emergency drought declaration has been declared, or a combination of the two; or the project is located outside of an eligible groundwater basin but is shown to reduce groundwater use, improve groundwater supply, or improve baseflows in rivers and streams in an eligible groundwater basin interconnected with surface water.
- Application is for an eligible project type.
- Application is complete.
- The proposed project provides groundwater sustainability benefits.
- The proposed project provides benefits in addition to groundwater sustainability benefits. Additional benefits include community health, economic wellbeing, habitat, renewable energy, or climate benefits. Projects that are conducted on lands that are least viable for irrigated agriculture and that contribute to resource connectivity (e.g., connectivity of habitat, agricultural landscapes, renewable energy centers, etc.) will receive priority for funding.
- The benefits provided by the proposed project will last for at least ten years.
- The proposed project meets at least three goals of the program and provides at least one desired outcome for project development or implementation grants, as relevant.
- The applicant has the fiscal and administrative control systems to adequately oversee the expenditure of the grant.
- The funding request is reasonable and commensurate with the work required to complete the project.
- The applicant has and is able to demonstrate access to the site.

## **Application Review and Project Selection**

### *Materials and Submission*

The application template is provided in Appendix D and is available on the [Department's website](#). Applicants should familiarize themselves with this solicitation prior to completing the application.

Applications will be reviewed as they are received.

Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant for revision. Applications that don't meet all the eligibility criteria will not be awarded funding.

Each applicant will receive an acknowledgement upon the Department's receipt of their application.

### *Application Review Process*

Applicants will be required to submit an application for funding and participate in a site visit prior to a funding decision being made. Applications will be evaluated by Department of Conservation for consistency with the program's goals and requirements. Projects that meet

the program's eligibility criteria will be awarded funding on a first come, first served basis as funding allows. The final funding decisions will be made by the Director of the Department.

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

Limited waivers of sovereign immunity may be necessary to ensure the enforceability of agreements. The Department will consult with tribes as needed in the formation of grant agreements.

## Section 5: Eligible Costs

Only eligible costs incurred during the grant agreement term that are related to the project will be reimbursed. All eligible costs must also be reasonable and supported by appropriate documentation to be reimbursed. All eligible costs must, to the satisfaction of the Department, support the work plan and be directly related to, and in support of, the program deliverables.

### Reasonable

For an eligible cost to be considered reasonable, the cost, in its nature and amount, must not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. In determining reasonableness of a given cost, consideration must be given to:

- Whether the cost is of a type generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the operation of the entity or the proper and efficient performance of project.
- The restraints or requirements imposed by such factors as: sound business practices; arm's-length bargaining; federal, state, local, tribal, and other laws and regulations; and terms and conditions of this project.
- Market prices for comparable goods or services for the geographic area.
- Whether the individuals concerned acted with prudence in the circumstances considering their responsibilities to its employees, the public at large, and the state.
- Whether the cost significantly deviates from the acquiring entity's established practices and policies regarding the incurrence of costs.

### Direct Costs

Funding may be used for the following direct costs incurred to meet the program deliverables:

- Block grant recipient, statewide support entity, tribal set-aside recipient, subgrantee, and their contractors' staff costs, including salary at the fully burdened rate. Indirect costs should not be included in the staff rate or salary. Indirect costs should be budgeted separately and must comply with the requirements outlined below.
- Payments to tribes or members of tribes for expertise provided in the development of plans; the development, permitting, and implementation of projects, and in the development and implementation of educational, training, and monitoring activities.
- Incentive payments to landowners, farmers, and ranchers to implement multibenefit land repurposing projects that create a public benefit for at least ten years.
- Travel. Eligible travel costs can only be used for in-state travel for the watershed coordinator as necessary to complete coordination work. Mileage for watershed coordinator activities is reimbursable if included in the proposed budget and work plan. In addition to mileage for watershed coordinator activities, costs must meet the requirements outlined below and in the Grant Agreement:
  - Accommodation-related travel costs: maximum reimbursement rates based on county as shown at: <https://hrmanual.calhr.ca.gov/Home/ManualItem/1/2203>, with no option for approval of an "excess lodging rate."

- Rental car costs or personal vehicle mileage for travel directly related to the grant activities will be reimbursed at the relevant rental car or Reimbursement Rate Per Mile for Personal Vehicle as shown here:  
<https://www.calhr.ca.gov/employees/Pages/travel-reimbursements.aspx>
- Rental car, personal vehicle, ride share, train, or airfare costs will only be reimbursed for travel directly related to execution of the work plan, and then only if it is the typical method used to get from one location to the other. Grantees should choose the least expensive mode of transportation feasible given their travel needs.
- No other travel-related costs will be reimbursed through this grant program.

### **Indirect Costs**

Indirect costs may account for no more than twenty percent (20%) of the total funding award. This limit may be exceeded if the block grant recipient or statewide support entity has a federally approved administrative cost rate that is greater than 20%. Proof of the federally approved indirect cost rate must be submitted with the application. Indirect costs may include those costs incurred by a block grant recipient to administer their grant, or administrative costs by subgrantees necessary to fulfill the deliverables outlined in these guidelines. Indirect costs include:

- Office space
- Supplies and equipment
- Legal or management oversight
- Prorated general liability, Workers' Compensation (may be included in payroll), and automotive insurance

### **Project Development Costs and Permitting Fees**

Block grant funding and funding provided under Section 4 may be used for project development costs, including:

- Preparing project plans, specifications, and cost estimates that will result in a specific project
- Acquiring permits for specific, future on-the-ground projects
- Analysis required to support and complete CEQA and or NEPA documentation for specific projects
- Performing necessary cultural resources, biological, botanical, aquatic, soil, hydrologic, wildlife, timber, or other studies/surveys and/or developing necessary project designs related to a specific site or physical project
- Contracting grow-outs or initial payments to growers or nurseries to support the sourcing and production of regionally adapted native plant materials to be used in block grantees' land repurposing projects

### **Project Implementation Costs**

Block grant funding and funding provided under Section 4 may be used for project implementation costs, including:

- Preparation of bid packages and contractor documents

- Performance costs within the scope of the project, including materials and supplies
- Labor and other costs necessary for the physical implementation of the project

### **Outreach, Education, and Training**

The following costs associated with outreach, education, and training activities directly related to the execution of program deliverables are considered eligible, in keeping with the program's goal of ensuring that the program provides benefits to disadvantaged communities, and recognizing that public participation in community engagement activities is a benefit to the program and public:

- Meeting space
- Meeting materials
- Facilitation services
- Technical assistance to landowners, farmers, or ranchers to apply for program funds
- Translation and interpretation for meetings and written materials
- Participant compensation that is an exchange of payment for services rendered in the development of community work products, and appropriately documented with deliverables such as sign in sheets or written surveys.
- Provision of transportation services for community residents, such as a vanpool.
- Provision of childcare services for community residents.
- Food and refreshments, excluding alcoholic beverages of any kind, that are determined to be an integral part of the event. Examples of activities where it would be appropriate to approve food purchase would include a design charrette held in the evening, where the meal is consumed as part of the event and replaces a meal otherwise missed by attending the event.

### **Monitoring**

Block grant funding and funding provided under Section 4 may be used for pre- and post-project monitoring and adaptive management, including preparation of long-term management plans associated with projects.

### **Research**

Block grant funding may be used for research and demonstration projects needed to test innovative land repurposing strategies of interest to block grant recipients.

### **Ineligible Costs**

Ineligible costs are:

- Costs that are not related to the Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Program
- Costs that occur outside of the Grant Agreement term
- Meals, incidentals, tips, per diems, or refreshments for travel not allowed above
- Out-of-state travel and activities

## Section 6: Grant Implementation

### Grant Agreements

All grantees will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the Department. Grantees will work with an assigned grant manager to develop their grant agreement. Grant agreements will not be executed until authorized by the Department and will be effective upon execution by the Department's authorized signatory. The Department may require modifications to the project in the grant agreement. All contents of the grant recipient's application will be included in the grant agreement.

### Responsibility of the Block Grant Recipient

The block grant recipient will be responsible for carrying out the project and for managing finances, including: invoicing; payments to contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers; accounting and financial auditing; and other project management duties such as monitoring and reporting requirements.

Block grant recipients shall:

- Distribute necessary funds through subgrants and/or contracts to create regional multibenefit agricultural land repurposing plans; develop and permit land repurposing projects; implement land repurposing projects; support the capacity needs of partners; provide outreach, education, and training; and monitor land repurposing projects all consistent with these guidelines and the applicable Groundwater Sustainability Plan
- Ensure execution of all project deliverables and requirements outlined in Section 2 within the grant term
- Coordinate and integrate management of agricultural land repurposing efforts within their region or basin
- Coordinate activities with the relevant Groundwater Sustainability Agency to ensure activities are consistent with the goals of the applicable Groundwater Sustainability Plan and to ensure any groundwater recharge achieved through these strategies and projects is subtracted from any calculation by the Groundwater Sustainability Agency from the groundwater available for extraction by water users for the duration of the benefits paid for by the program.

### *Distribution of Block Grant Funds to Third Parties*

As the fiscal administrators of the Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program, block grant recipients will award subgrants of Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program funding or enter into contracts to fulfill the scope of work of this program. Subgrantees may be selected to engage in completion of all the deliverables or for discrete tasks. Block grant recipients may award subgrants via competitive or non-competitive processes and may engage subgrantees and contractors to fulfill individual deliverables or multiple deliverables, at their discretion.

Eligible subgrantees include federal, state, and local government agencies; federally and non-federally recognized California Native American tribes; resource conservation districts;

special districts; universities, colleges, and research institutions; and California 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations.

Contracts may be entered into with qualified entities in accordance with block grant recipients' internal contracting policies and procedures.

Block grant recipients may also provide incentive payments directly to landowners, farmers, and ranchers to implement multibenefit land repurposing projects that create a public benefit for at least ten years, including reasonable incentives to support a farmer or rancher's ability to transition land use. In order to distribute funds to landowners, block grant recipients must establish guidelines for funding projects based on the conservation outcomes achieved and delivered, and the duration of the outcomes provided. Block grant recipients must verify that the defined conservation outcomes of the project have been achieved and delivered for the duration identified in order to distribute incentive payments and must report this information to the Department quarterly.

## **Invoicing and Reporting**

### *Payments*

Grant agreements will generally be structured to provide reimbursement in arrears for work performed. Invoices for reimbursement may be submitted quarterly or monthly.

Advance payment terms will be considered and negotiated on a case-by-case basis. Advance payments may require additional statutory authority and are subject to future approval from the Department and its control agencies. Advance payment terms may allow up to 25% of the original grant amount to be paid in advance at a time. Funding for project implementation will only be released upon Department review of individual projects and confirmation that said projects are consistent with the goals of the program.

Block grant recipients receiving advanced funds must provide a fiscal report detailing how those funds have been expended on a quarterly basis and along with each subsequent request for an advance. Block grant recipients that receive funding on a reimbursement basis must provide a fiscal report detailing how funds have been expended along with each invoice.

### *Loss of Funding*

Actions of the grantee that may lead to suspension or cancellation of the grant agreement include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to execute an agreement within six months of receiving an official funding notification,
- Withdrawal from the grant program prior to completion of the work plan,
- Failure to submit required documentation within the time periods specified in the grant agreement,
- Change in project scope, schedule, or budget without prior approval,
- Failure to complete the deliverables within the grant agreement term,
- Failure to demonstrate sufficient progress toward deliverables, and

- Failure to comply with applicable laws or grant requirements.

### **State Audits**

Projects are subject to audit by the state annually and for three (3) years following the final payment of grant funds. If the project is selected for audit, the grantee will be contacted in advance of the audit. The audit will include all books, papers, accounts, documents, or other records of grantee, as they relate to the project. All project expenditure documentation should be available for an audit, whether paid with grant funds or other funds.

The grantee must have project records, including source documents and evidence of payment, readily available and must provide an employee with knowledge of the project to assist the auditor. The grantee must provide a copy of any document, paper, record, or other such material requested by the auditor.

### **Accounting Requirements**

Grantees must maintain an accounting system that:

- Accurately reflects fiscal transactions, in accordance with standard accounting principles,
- Provides a good audit trail, including original source documents such as purchase orders, receipts, progress payments, invoices, employee paystubs and timecards, evidence of payment, etc.,
- Provides accounting data so the total cost of each individual project can be readily determined, and,
- Maintains records for a period of three (3) years after final reimbursement is made by the state. Grantee must retain all project records at least one (1) year following an audit

## Section 7: General Requirements

### Confidentiality

Once the application has been submitted, any privacy rights, as well as other confidentiality protections afforded by law with respect to the application package may be waived. All applications, communications, or other documentation received by Department are subject to the Public Records Act (Government Code § 6250, et seq.).

### Conflict of Interest

All applicants and individuals who participate in the review of submitted applications are subject to applicable conflict of interest laws. Any individual who has participated in planning or setting priorities for a specific solicitation or who will participate in any part of the grant development and negotiation process on behalf of the public is ineligible to receive funds or personally benefit from funds awarded through this solicitation. Applicants should also be aware that certain local agencies may submit applications that will compete for funding. Failure to comply with the conflict of interest laws, including business and financial disclosure provisions, will result in rejection of the application and any subsequent grant agreement being declared void. Other legal actions may also be taken.

This paragraph is not intended to enlarge the scope of existing restrictions under applicable conflict of interest laws, including the Political Reform Act (Government Code, § 81000, et seq.) and provisions regarding financial interests in public contracts (Government Code, § 1090, et seq.). Those laws, including their relevant statutory exceptions, apply to this solicitation and any ensuing grants and contracts.

### Compliance with Laws

Activities funded under this solicitation must be in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and applications may include in their budgets the funding necessary for compliance-related activities. As part of a grantee's project development work, grantees must identify expected required permits, state whether they have received the required permits or describe the process through which the permits will be obtained, and indicate which permits could significantly delay project implementation.

### Environmental Compliance

Grants awarded consistent with this solicitation may be subject to prevailing wage provisions of the California Labor Code commencing with section 1720. Any questions of interpretation regarding the California Labor Code should be directed to the Director of the Department of Industrial Relations, the state department having jurisdiction in these matters. For more details, please refer to the Department of Industrial Relations website.

The Department, as a government agency that will be taking a discretionary action to provide funding for projects, must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Each proposed project must follow the California Environmental Quality Act, Division 13 (commencing with Public Resources Code section 21000) and California Code of Regulations Title 14 section 15000 et seq. ["CEQA"].

For applications submitted by government entities, it is expected that the resolution adopted to submit the application will address CEQA and that the Department will act as a responsible agency. For applications submitted by non-profits or California Native American

tribes, the Department will act either as a lead or responsible agency depending on what other CEQA documents have been completed for the proposed activities.

Projects implemented using program funding must meet all environmental compliance requirements prior to disbursement of funding.

Therefore, for the Department to review a project proposed for implementation, one of the following must be submitted:

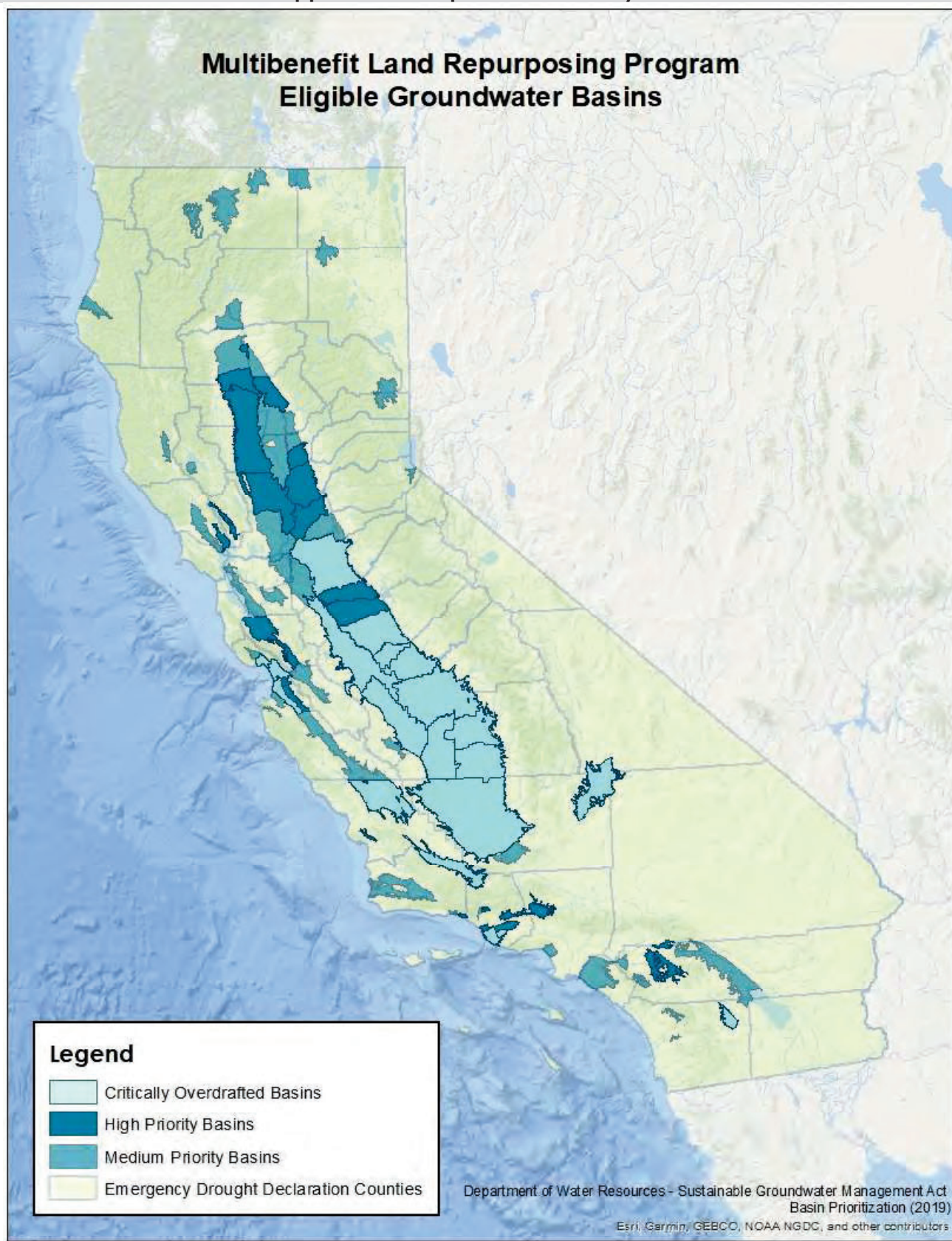
- a. A Finding or similar determination that the proposed project is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act, with an explanation as to why it is not a project, with the appropriate sections of the Public Resources Code and California Code of Regulations cited.
- b. The Notice of Exemption filed with the County Clerk and State Clearinghouse (as applicable) if the proposed project is categorically or statutorily exempt, with the appropriate Public Resources Code section citation to the exemption(s) being relied upon by the lead agency.
- c. The Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration adopted by the lead agency and Initial Study, including a copy of the Environmental Checklist Form located in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and the Notice of Determination filed with the County and with the State Clearinghouse. If the lead agency has adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration, the applicant must also provide the adopted mitigation monitoring and reporting program.
- d. The Final Environmental Impact Report certified and adopted by the lead agency with Initial Study, including a copy of the Environmental Checklist Form located in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the adopted mitigation monitoring and reporting program, and the Notice of Determination filed with the County and the State Clearinghouse. Please include any State Clearinghouse responses received by the applicant.

\*For b and c, include documentation the State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife CEQA fee was paid or is not applicable.

- e. Projects that tier from a Programmatic, Master, or other Environmental Impact Report shall include a copy of any subsequent Initial Study for the proposed project together with a copy of any supplementary environmental documentation adopted by the lead agency, including, if applicable, any required findings pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21157.1, subdivision (c), and the Notice of Determination, filed with the County Clerk and with the State Clearinghouse, as applicable.

Pursuant to section 75102 of the Public Resources Code, before the adoption of a Negative Declaration or Environmental Impact Report, the lead agency shall notify the proposed action to a California Native American tribe, which is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission, if that tribe has traditional lands located within the area of the proposed project.

## Appendix A: Map of SGMA Priority Basins



As of October 19, 2021, the Emergency Drought Declaration covers all 58 counties.

## **APPENDIX B: Regional Block Grant Application**

This is the application for the Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Program. The solicitation details the background and requirements to apply for funding under the program.

### **Application Instructions**

- Each application must contain all of the materials listed in the checklist below.
- Materials should be presented in the order indicated on the checklist.
- Please complete all materials using an easy-to-read font, 11 point or larger.
- In the header or footer of each page of the application, applicants should include: (1) name of applicant and (2) sequential page numbers.
- Materials not specifically requested (e.g., press clippings or brochures) will not be considered during the evaluation.

### **Application Checklist**

1. ☐ Cover Sheet
2. ☐ Applicant Eligibility and Capacity
3. ☐ Basin(s) Description
4. ☐ Proposal Summary
5. ☐ Partnerships and Collaboration
6. ☐ Community Engagement
7. ☐ Disadvantaged Community Benefits
8. ☐ Policy and Project Expertise
9. ☐ Budget Summary
10. ☐ Project Maps
11. ☐ Authorizing Resolution from Governing Body

## 1. Cover Sheet

### **Project Information**

Project Title:

Location (County/ies):

District Number(s):

Senate:

Assembly:

SGMA Sub-basin(s) (see Appendix A – List of eligible basins):

### **Applicant Information**

Applicant Name:

Organization Type:

Federal Employer ID Number:

Mailing Address:

Contact Person:

Title:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

### **Partner Information** *(if applicant is not a GSA or tribe)*

Partner Name:

Organization Type: Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Federal Employer ID Number:

Mailing Address:

Contact Person:

Title:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

## 2. Applicant Eligibility and Capacity

### *Eligibility*

Applicants must provide all the following to demonstrate eligibility:

- Verification that the applicant is a: (1) Groundwater Sustainability Agency; (2) federally recognized California Native American tribe, or (3) non-federally recognized California Native American tribe on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission OR is a public agency; nonprofit group with 501(c) status; or Watermaster implementing an approved groundwater sustainability plan or approved alternate plan and is partnering with a GSA to submit an application.
  - Non-profit groups must provide a copy of their IRS 501(c) Tax Determination Letter.
- Evidence that the applicant is locally based or has strong working ties to local stakeholders, communities, and/or GSAs.

### *Capacity*

Applicants must provide a short narrative description of their capacity to successfully implement the grant, should the project be funded. This description should address:

- How the applicant's board and/or management structure will contribute to the effective execution of project activities.
- Any professional staff within the applicant's employ who are qualified to develop and successfully implement the activities outlined in the proposal. The response should include a description of the skills and experience of such staff or, if the applicant does not possess such expertise, how the applicant will acquire this expertise.
- Any financial resources at the applicant's disposal to support the implementation of the grant.
- Any additional resources the applicant can draw on to ensure his/her success. Resources include, but are not limited to volunteers, physical capital, and existing partnerships.

Applicants must provide the following to demonstrate capacity:

- A copy of the current annual organizational budget.
- A copy of the most recent financial audit (if an audit is not available, a copy of the organization's recent financial statements).

## 3. Basin(s) Description (1/2-page maximum)

Briefly describe the basin(s) included in the proposal, including whether they are critically overdrafted, or whether they are high- or medium-priority basins where a state emergency drought declaration has been declared. Indicate whether a Groundwater Sustainability Plan has been approved for each critically overdrafted basin included in the proposal.

#### **4. Proposal Summary (3-page maximum)**

- Summarize the applicant's land repurposing vision for their region.
- Describe the proposed work to be conducted under the grant, including how the proposed work relates to the goals and objectives of the program. The summary of proposed work should include:
  - Development of a Multibenefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan
  - Project development and permitting
  - Land repurposing project implementation
  - Support of partner and collaborators' capacity needs
  - Outreach, education, and training to facilitate and build capacity to conduct land repurposing
  - Monitoring to ensure defined conservation outcomes of projects.

If the application is funded, the Department will work with the applicant to convert this summary into a work plan to be included in the grant agreement.

#### **5. Partnerships and Collaboration (1-page maximum)**

Partners are defined as organizations, government agencies, private citizens or volunteer groups that provide funds or in-kind services. Collaboration is defined as working with other organizations, government agencies, groups, and individuals to ensure that all entities work in agreement and are non-duplicative of each other's activities, and to ensure that diverse interests are meaningfully incorporated into the block grant recipient's work. Proposals that demonstrate multiple, committed partnerships and extensive collaboration with other agencies, organizations, or entities will be given more points. Applicants are urged to work collaboratively with other groups and agencies to avoid multiple proposals for the same sub-basins.

- List any participating partners and describe how each partner will contribute to the work, including their proposed financial contribution, proposed in this application. For each partnership, provide a letter of commitment explaining the relationship between the partner and applicant and outlining the partner's contributions to the proposed work.
- List any participating collaborators and describe how each collaborator will contribute to the work proposed in this application. For each collaboration, provide documentation from the relevant individual(s)/organization(s) describing those collaborations.
- Describe your plan, if any, to expand these partnerships and/or collaborations to execute the grant.

Do not submit general letters of support that do not specify the individual/organization's specific contributions to the proposal, as these will not increase the number of points awarded.

#### **6. Community Engagement (1-page maximum)**

- Describe the applicant's experience and expertise conducting effective and inclusive engagement and collaboration across diverse communities and organizations.

- Explain how the applicant will engage with and include feedback from farmers, ranchers, disadvantaged community members, tribes, and other interested practitioners in the development and implementation of their land repurposing work.
- Describe the disadvantaged community/ies to be served by the applicant's land repurposing work, and describe how the work performed will result in benefits to those communities.

## **7. Disadvantaged Community Benefits (1-page maximum)**

A disadvantaged community is defined as a) a community with a median household income less than 80 percent of the statewide average, or b) a community where the lands are under the control of a federally recognized Tribe.

- Describe how the proposal will provide substantiated benefits to disadvantaged communities, including through project prioritization and implementation.

## **8. Policy and Project Expertise (1-page maximum)**

Describe the applicant's land repurposing policy expertise and project implementation expertise. Applicants may demonstrate this ability in-house or through partnerships and collaborations.

## 9. Budget Summary

Applicants must provide a budget broken down by cost type (line item). Cost estimates should be consistent with the proposal summary. All costs must be eligible. If awarded funding, the Department will work with the applicant to refine the budget for incorporation into the Grant Agreement.

### 2021 Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Program: BUDGET SUMMARY

#### Line Item

Development of Multi Benefit Agricultural Land Repurposing Plan - \$  
 Project Development and Permitting - \$  
 Land Repurposing Project Implementation - \$  
 Partner Capacity Needs - \$  
 Outreach, Education, and Training - \$  
 Monitoring - \$  
 [Optional Activities] - \$  
 Indirect Costs (*max 20% of grant*) - \$

**TOTAL - \$**

## 10. Project Map(s)

A location map (in PDF) that identifies the project area relative to nearby cities and/or landmarks must be included with the application.

Additional maps that further describe or otherwise support the proposal may be included as relevant (e.g., maps of the subbasins included in the proposal, maps of disadvantaged communities within the proposal area, etc).

All maps must be of sufficient resolution to be legible if printed on an 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper.

The applicant may submit geographic information system (GIS) data along with any maps.

## 11. Authorizing Resolution from Governing Body

Applicants must submit a signed Resolution of Support adopted by the entity's governing body that evidences authority to submit the application and, if awarded funding, to enter into and perform under the terms of the Grant Agreement template ([Appendix C](#)).

The resolution must:

- Authorize the submittal of the grant application for a 2022 Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Program grant.
- Authorize entrance into a grant agreement with the Department for the project and accept the template terms and conditions, if the project is awarded funding.
- Authorize a designated individual to, as agent, accept the award of grant funding and to execute tasks, such as signing documents, related to the application, grant agreement, reimbursement requests, if the project is awarded funding.

## APPENDIX C: Tribal Project Grant Application

This is the Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Program application for planning, project development, and project implementation funding for tribes. The solicitation details the background and requirements to apply for funding under the program.

### Application Instructions

- Each application must contain all of the materials listed in the checklist below.
- Materials should be presented in the order indicated on the checklist.
- Please complete all materials using an easy-to-read font, 11 point or larger.
- In the header or footer of each page of the application, applicants must include: (1) name of applicant and (2) sequential page numbers.
- Materials not specifically requested (e.g., press clippings or brochures) will not be considered during the evaluation.

### Application Checklist

1. ☐ Cover Sheet
2. ☐ Applicant Eligibility and Capacity
3. ☐ Project Summary
4. ☐ Application Questions
5. ☐ Work Plan
6. ☐ Budget
7. ☐ Project Map(s)
8. ☐ Environmental Documentation
9. ☐ Authorizing Resolution from Governing Body
10. ☐ Proof of site access (for implementation projects only)

## 1. Cover Sheet

### Project Information

Project Title:

Property Location (County and Nearest City):

SGMA Sub-basin(s):

[SGMA Sub-basin status](#) (check all that apply):

- ☐ Critically overdrafted
- ☐ High priority basin
- ☐ Medium priority basin
- ☐ Located in a county subject to an emergency drought declaration

[Groundwater Sustainability Plan](#) approved: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Landowner Name(s):

Project APN(s):

Property's 5-year agricultural history:

Disadvantaged Community: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Census Tract:

### Project Category

- ☐ Project Development
- ☐ Project Implementation

### Project Implementation Grants Only

Proposed Project Acreage:

Site Access Agreement:

Project type (check all that apply):

- ☐ Creation or restoration of habitat, including pollinator habitat, wetland habitat, upland habitat, and riparian habitat
- ☐ Creation of multibenefit recharge areas
- ☐ Conversion of irrigated land to dryland farming or non-irrigated rangeland
- ☐ Planting cover crops or conservation cover
- ☐ Reestablishment of tribal land uses
- ☐ Implementation of tribal cultural practices
- ☐ Facilitation of renewable energy projects that have an overall net GHG reduction
- ☐ Creation of parks or community recreation areas
- ☐ Incentive payments to landowners, farmers, and ranchers to implement a multibenefit land repurposing project
- ☐ Land acquisition to facilitate land repurposing and protect repurposed land uses
- ☐ Easement acquisition to facilitate land repurposing and protect repurposed land uses
- ☐ Other:

## **Project Funding**

Grant Request Amount:

Total Estimated Project Cost:

## **Applicant Information**

Applicant Name:

Applicant type (check all that apply):

- ☐ Federally Recognized California Native American Tribe
- ☐ Non-federally recognized California Native American tribes on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission
- ☐ Member of one of the above
- ☐ Nonprofit group with 501(c) status with connections to or on behalf of an eligible tribe

Mailing Address:

Contact Person:

Title:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

## 2. Applicant Eligibility and Capacity

### Eligibility

Applicants must provide the following (as relevant) to demonstrate eligibility:

- For Federally recognized California Native American tribes: Documentation of Federal acknowledgement
- For non-federally recognized California Native American tribes: Documentation that the applicant is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission
- For Non-profit groups:
  - A copy of their IRS 501 (c) Tax Determination Letter
  - A letter of support, signed agreement, board resolution, or other signed document demonstrating the non-profit's connection to or work on behalf of a tribe.

### Capacity

Applicants must provide a short narrative description of their capacity to successfully implement the grant, should the project be funded. This description should address:

- How the applicant's governance and/or management structure will contribute to the effective execution of project activities.
- Any financial resources at the applicant's disposal to support the implementation of the grant.
- Any additional resources the applicant can draw on to ensure his/her success. Resources include, but are not limited to volunteers, physical capital, and existing partnerships.

## 3. Project Summary (1-page maximum)

Concisely summarize the proposed project. Include:

- a description of the property's existing condition and agricultural use
- a description of work proposed
- how the proposed work will enhance the project site

## 4. Application Questions

### Groundwater Sustainability (1/2-page maximum)

Describe how the project will result in groundwater sustainability benefits, either through reduced groundwater use or increased groundwater recharge. Describe the length of the benefits to be provided by the proposed project and how those benefits will be maintained (must be a minimum of ten years).

**Additional Benefits (1/2-page maximum)**

Describe any additional benefits provided by the project. Additional benefits include community health, economic wellbeing, habitat, renewable energy, or climate benefits. Describe the length of the benefits to be provided by the proposed project and how those benefits will be maintained (must be a minimum of ten years).

**Program Goals (1/2-page maximum)**

Select three of the goals listed below. Describe how the proposed project meets those goals.

- Support coordinated, regional and basin-scale efforts to achieve groundwater sustainability in critically overdrafted basins and in high and medium priority basins where a state emergency drought declaration has been declared
- Support long-term repurposing of agricultural lands
- Provide short- and medium-term drought relief
- Support regional efforts to sustain land-based economies and the communities that rely on them while achieving groundwater sustainability
- Reduce groundwater use
- Create or restore wildlife habitat and wildlife connectivity, including seasonal wetland habitat to replenish aquifers
- Improve groundwater supply, including through groundwater recharge and improved baseflows in rivers and streams
- Support nature-based solutions to reduce the impacts of hazards on lives, property, and the economy from overdrafted groundwater basins
- Provide benefits to disadvantaged communities and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers
- Foster partnerships and collaboration among diverse entities at the regional scale to effectively meet this program's goals
- Develop scalable, transferable land repurposing models to reduce groundwater reliance
- Support farmer, rancher, and farm worker leadership in multibenefit land repurposing strategies and project implementation
- Provide flexible and efficient support to grantees so that they can lead expeditious and adaptive programs to meet their needs.

**Project Development Outcomes (1/2-page maximum)**

Only complete this section if the application is for a project development request. Select one outcome listed below. Describe how the proposed project addresses that outcome.

- Completed project design and permitting
- Established non-state partnerships, support, and funding, as well as broad partnerships with regional stakeholders
- Completed memorandums of understanding with project partners to implement projects
- Developed pipeline of multiple years of implementation-ready projects that meet the goals of the Plan available for funding consideration

### **Project Implementation Outcomes (1/2-page maximum)**

Only complete this section if the application is for a project implementation request. Select one outcome listed below. Describe how the proposed project addresses that outcome.

- Reduced groundwater use
- Increased groundwater recharge
- Improved baseflows in rivers and streams
- Transition of land to less water intensive, regenerative uses while maintaining natural and working lands
- Creation and/or restoration of wildlife and pollinator habitat and/or migratory resources
- Protection of cultural resources
- Improved water quality
- Land use agreements to accomplish prioritized opportunities
- Quantified achievement of multiple benefits of the program
- Incorporated participation from multiple partners, collaborators, and funding sources
- Replicability and scalability
- Integrated benefits to disadvantaged communities and tribes
- Increased community outreach, involvement, and education
- Increased regional workforce development opportunities and support of local business
- Diversified economic opportunities

## **5. Work Plan**

Applicants must provide a detailed work plan that specifies the tasks and subtasks that will be performed during the grant term.

The work plan will also include a schedule of target completion dates, cost estimates, and a list of deliverables to be provided as proof of project completion. The schedule should be of sufficient detail to allow assessment of the progress through the work plan at regular intervals. Cost estimates should be consistent with the budget. If awarded funding, this work plan will be incorporated into the Grant Agreement.

**Task 1: [Task Name]**

Subtask A:

Subtask B:

Subtask C:

Deliverables:

Timeline [start and end date]:

Total Requested:

**Task 2: [Task Name]**

Subtask A:

Subtask B:

Subtask C:

Deliverables:

Timeline [start and end date]:

Total Requested:

**Task 3: [Task Name]**

Subtask A:

Subtask B:

Subtask C:

Deliverables:

Timeline [start and end date]:

Total Requested:

**Other Expenses:**

Education:

Total Requested:

Training:

Total Requested:

Travel:

Total Requested:

Indirect Costs:

Total Requested:

## 6. Budget

Applicants must provide a budget broken down by cost type and by task. Cost estimates should be consistent with the work plan. All costs must be eligible. If awarded funding, this Budget will be incorporated into the Grant Agreement. Refer to the Department's website for an excel version of this spreadsheet.

## 7. Project Map(s)

The following maps must be included in the application:

- A location map that identifies the project relative to nearby cities and/or landmarks
- A site map that identifies the project location, extent, and areas of impact relative to property boundaries and relevant landscape features (e.g., stream corridors)
- A parcel map that depicts the APNs of the parcels impacted by the project.
- Additional maps that further describe or otherwise support the proposal may be included.

All maps must be of sufficient resolution to be legible if printed on an 8 ½" x 11" sheet of paper.

The applicant may submit geographic information system (GIS) data along with any maps.

## 8. Photos

Applicants must provide photos of the proposed project site sufficient to convey the before condition of the site in the application.

## 9. Environmental Documentation

The proposed project (select the appropriate answer):

- ☐ Is not a project under CEQA. Briefly specify why.
- ☐ Is exempt under CEQA. Provide the CEQA exemption number and specify how the project meets the terms of the exemption.
- ☐ Requires Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report. Specify the lead CEQA agency (the agency certifying the document) and the expected completion date.

Provide the documentation prepared in accordance with the Environmental Compliance sub-section of the solicitation (see page 26).

## 10. Authorizing Resolution from Governing Body

Applicants must submit a signed Resolution of Support adopted by the entity's governing body that evidences authority to submit the application and, if awarded funding, to enter into and perform under the terms of the Grant Agreement template ([Appendix C](#)).

The resolution must:

- Authorize the submittal of the grant application for a 2022 Multi-Benefit Land Repurposing Program grant.
- Certify that the Applicant understands the assurances and certification in the application,
- Authorize entrance into a grant agreement with the Department for the project and accept the template terms and conditions, if the project is awarded funding.
- Authorize a designated individual to, as agent, accept the award of grant funding and to execute tasks, such as signing documents, related to the application, grant agreement, reimbursement requests, if the project is awarded funding.

## **APPENDIX D: Best Practices for Disadvantaged Community Engagement**

The Multibenefit Land Repurposing Program prioritizes the achievement of disadvantaged community benefits through the development and execution of all deliverables. For the purposes of this program, a disadvantaged community is defined as a community with a median household income less than 80 percent of the statewide average.

To meet this goal, the Department has outlined basic requirements for disadvantaged community engagement in the Guidelines. This Appendix provides a set of best practices grantees should also consider when engaging disadvantaged communities in their planning and project development efforts to meet the program requirements and meaningfully incorporate disadvantaged communities in their land repurposing efforts. These best practices should serve as a starting place for each grantee's work with disadvantaged communities and should be expanded upon to meet the needs of the disadvantaged communities each grantee works with.

### *Language Access*

- Materials used to conduct outreach to disadvantaged communities should be translated to the most spoken language in the relevant disadvantaged community, and, where feasible, into the second and third most spoken languages in that community.
- Grantees should employ bi-lingual staff or hire bi-lingual subcontractors to facilitate engagement with disadvantaged communities.
- Grantees should provide interpretation services for the most spoken languages in the relevant disadvantaged communities at each meeting.
- Offer at least one meeting during each stage of a plan or project's development in the most spoken language of the relevant disadvantaged community.

### *Meeting Notifications*

- All hearing, workshop and/or meeting times should be posted well in advance, but no less than 72 hours ahead of time.
- Meeting notices should be easy to find and shared via multiple formats (e.g., via door-to-door outreach, mailings, online, at physical locations frequented by disadvantaged community members, etc).
- Door-to-door outreach should be prioritized over online postings and mailings.
- All meeting materials, including agendas, reference documents, translated materials, and detailed information regarding participation should be shared at least 72 hours in advance of the hearing or meeting, and further in advance where feasible.
- All meeting materials, including agendas, reference documents, translated materials, and detailed information regarding participation should be provided to key community-based stakeholders for dissemination to interested residents well in advance of the hearing or meeting.
- Translated materials should be posted at the same time as all other materials.

### *In Person Meetings*

- Provide children's activities (stickers, coloring books, etc.) or childcare to allow caregivers to attend.
- Host meetings at a location accessible via public transit and/or provide transportation to and from the meeting.
- Provide refreshments and/or food at the meeting if the meeting is held during regular meal times.
- Provide multiple options for participation (e.g., in-person or virtual, verbal, written, tactile, etc).
- Offer meetings during non-business hours to allow broad participation by members of the public.

### *Virtual Meetings*

- For meetings conducted via webinar, offer a telephone call-in option for individuals who may not have access to reliable internet.
- In situations where multiple individuals from one household log-in or call-in using one line, allow each person on the line time to speak equal to that allowed for a single commenter calling in from their own line. This should be allowed without the household having to disconnect and reconnect to return to the queue.
- Offer meetings during non-business hours to allow broad participation by members of the public.