





Redwood Region RISE Semi-Annual Report





Q3 & Q4, 2025

Redwood Region RISE: Aligning action with a shared regional vision to create quality jobs, support environmental stewardship, and uplift communities. This Semi-Annual Report highlights the RRRISE Collaborative’s progress and impact during the second half of 2025.

Below are RRRISE’s priority sectors and commitments, and the outcomes they are designed to achieve. Together, these form Redwood Region RISE’s Theory of Change (see [Regional Roadmap](#), page 8). The icons used throughout the report show how specific activities and investments advance these shared priorities.

Icon	Priority Sector	Desired Outcome
	Arts, Culture, and Tourism	Economic development that celebrates culture and strengthens a sense of place. With its natural beauty, artistic vitality, and cultural heritage, the Redwood Region is positioned to build a regenerative arts, culture, and tourism model that strengthens communities and the environment.
	Health and Caregiving	Healthcare and childcare are foundational to a strong workforce. Powered by innovative care delivery and a “grow your own” approach to addressing workforce shortages, a resilient health and caregiving ecosystem strengthens community stability and economic mobility. By expanding access, building provider capacity, and policy innovation, the region can ensure quality care for all residents.
	Renewable and Resilient Energy	Clean energy initiatives are preparing the region for a low-carbon, climate-ready future. With Tribal leadership and innovation at the forefront, the Redwood Region is well positioned to lead a just energy transition. By advancing workforce development, strengthening community energy resilience, and coordinating information-sharing, rural communities can shape—and benefit from—a clean energy future.
	Working Lands and Blue Economy	Forward-thinking land and water-based industries rooted in stewardship are key to long-term prosperity. The Redwood Region leads a regenerative shift in farms, fisheries, and forests—advancing sustainable resource use, expanding markets, growing an inclusive and skilled workforce, and driving innovation across agriculture, forestry, and ocean industries.
	Workforce Development	Workforce development pathways that connect people to quality jobs are essential to shared prosperity. By mapping career pathways, aligning training programs and credentials, and strengthening coordination across regional workforce systems, the Redwood Region can improve career readiness, attract and create jobs, and expand access to quality jobs.

Learn more and explore collaboration opportunities at bit.ly/Redwood-RISE

Icon	Priority	Desired Outcome
	Equity	Economic development that celebrates culture and strengthens a sense of place. With its natural beauty, artistic vitality, and cultural heritage, the Redwood Region is positioned to build a regenerative arts, culture, and tourism model that strengthens communities and the environment.
	Climate	Healthcare and childcare are foundational to a strong workforce. Powered by innovative care delivery and a “grow your own” approach to addressing workforce shortages, a resilient health and caregiving ecosystem strengthens community stability and economic mobility. By expanding access, building provider capacity, and policy innovation, the region can ensure quality care for all residents.
	Regional Collaboration	Clean energy initiatives are preparing the region for a low-carbon, climate-ready future. With Tribal leadership and innovation at the forefront, the Redwood Region is well positioned to lead a just energy transition. By advancing workforce development, strengthening community energy resilience, and coordinating information-sharing, rural communities can shape—and benefit from—a clean energy future.
	Investment and Growth	Forward-thinking land and water-based industries rooted in stewardship are key to long-term prosperity. The region leads a regenerative shift in farms, fisheries, and forests—advancing sustainable resource use, expanding markets, growing an inclusive and skilled workforce, and driving innovation across agriculture, forestry, and ocean industries.

1. Contribution to Regional Development

Regional collaboration is foundational to strengthening our region’s investment-readiness.

California entered the second half of 2025 facing significant fiscal constraints, including a projected [\\$12–20 billion state budget deficit](#), heightened competition for public resources, and ongoing uncertainty around federal funding. These pressures have had [disproportionate impacts on rural regions](#). Even as statewide efforts continue to prioritize climate resilience, workforce development, and equitable economic growth, regions must compete more strategically for limited dollars.

As part of the statewide [California Jobs First](#) Initiative, the [Redwood Region RISE \(RRRISE Collaborative\)](#) brings partners across the region together around a shared vision for the region’s economic future, guided by an inclusive leadership structure and a [Theory of Change](#). Together, this coordinated approach aligns partner contributions to drive sustainable investment and quality job growth.

That coordination has translated into progress. Clean energy investments, and associated workforce training programs, are advancing. Training hubs have moved from planning into site acquisition and facility design. Food, forestry, and fisheries partners are coordinating on essential infrastructure and market strategies across the region. Workforce programs are aligning more directly with employer demand, creating clearer pathways into quality jobs.

As evidenced by the newly secured \$2.5 million in private philanthropic funding, RRRISE is well-positioned to strengthen the region’s investment-readiness. That investment signals growing external confidence in the region’s ability to work together and deliver results.

RRRISE’s coordinated model positions the Redwood Region not only to compete for investment – but to convert dollars into durable economic, environmental, and community outcomes.

2. Highlights From the Second Half of 2025

- **California Jobs First Implementation Award**

The UC ANR Hopland Research and Extension Center’s [virtual fencing](#) pilot was included in a [\\$28.6 million California Jobs First Implementation award](#) supporting the [CA AgTech Alliance](#), smart farm development, sustainable irrigation, and statewide workforce training—in strong alignment with RRRISE’s investments in [sustainable food and fiber systems](#).

- **RRRISE Collaborative Leverages Catalyst Fund to Secure \$2.5M**

RRRISE secured \$2.5 million from a private philanthropic funder to support pre-development stage economic mobility and just transition projects. The funds were regranted to five projects focused on communities facing barriers to workforce participation.

- **Noyo Harbor Cuts the Ribbon on New Ice House**

Funded through a 2022 California Jobs First Pilot Program award, the [new Ice House](#) strengthens the region’s working waterfront by expanding cold storage capacity, supporting the commercial fishing fleet, and reinforcing the North Coast’s blue economy.

- **Region Hosts California Jobs First Council and Strategic Growth Council**

The region welcomed members of the California Jobs First Council and the Strategic Growth Council, showcasing local partnerships and progress. State agency representatives commended the region’s collaborative approach and gained deeper insight into how to better collaborate with [Tribal and rural communities](#).

- **110 Collaborative Members Convene at Robinson Rancheria**

Members gathered to strengthen coordination across sector strategies, receive training on grantwriting, healthy collaboration, and policy advocacy; and build relationships through valuable in-person connection.

- **RRRISE-funded Catalyst Projects Deliver Training, Paid Internships, and Business Growth**

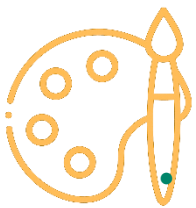
Launched in June 2025, [Catalyst Projects](#) have begun advancing workforce, business development, and infrastructure goals. The figures on the next page reflect early progress and targets underway, with more comprehensive data collection scheduled for the second half of 2026.

Workforce Development & Training	Curriculum Development	Industry Participation	Other Impact Measures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eighteen full-time and 24 seasonal jobs • ~300 workers trained • ~40 paid internships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine new training curriculums covering all priority sectors and dozens of occupations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of eight new businesses • Twenty businesses funded to lead project activities • Nine businesses, business-serving nonprofits, and worker training centers making major capital purchases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four project sites acquired • Thirteen organizations retrofitting sites into training centers, hubs, markets, new business locations • Emerging leverage—<i>at least</i> eight additional significant grant awards secured, data to be formally collected in 2026

3. Coordinating Sector Investment

In the second half of 2025, Sector Investment Coordinators (SICs) and their Advisory Councils (see Appendix) advanced key strategies and tactics to improve the region’s investment readiness ([explore Sector Activation Plans](#)). SICs also provided hands-on technical assistance and strategic coordination to RRRISE-aligned projects—connecting project leads with partners and resources ([see detailed project updates](#)). SICs also represent regionally important industries in statewide forums, develop policy platforms and advocacy, and share information with interest holders.

Working alongside Investment Coordinators, RRRISE’s Economic Development Finance Working Group (EDFWG) engaged jurisdictions throughout the region, providing technical assistance to mobilize place-based public finance capital for projects. Through [expert sessions and practical resources](#), EDFWG supports project leads to attract funding and navigate complex capital stacks.



Arts, Culture, and Tourism (ACT)

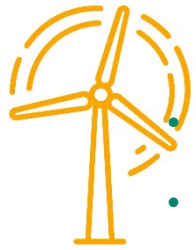
- **Coordination:** Convened 30+ industry partners regularly, improving communication, reducing fragmentation, and coordinating on shared priorities. The sector now has durable coordination infrastructure.
- **Statewide Advocacy:** Represented the region in statewide cohorts and created a community of practice, in partnership with the Sierra California Jobs First Sector Investment Coordinator, for outdoor recreation—elevating our region’s emerging strength in the industry. Outdoor recreation advocates are better positioned to influence policy, demonstrate alignment with statewide strategies, and leverage broader funding and partnership opportunities.
- **Capital Investment Milestone:** \$1M in federal funding secured to advance the Del Norte Performing Arts Center project, unlocking critical next-phase planning and development resources. [Read more about this project.](#)

- **Regional Summit Planning:** Planning is underway for a Spring 2026 Recreation Economy Summit, further elevating the region's strength (and potential) in this industry.
- **Leveraging assets:** Coordination with the Great Redwood Trail Association identified opportunities to align assets and grow investment in the Arts, Culture, and Tourism sector along the trail as it develops.
- **Regional Branding:** Established a Working Group to define strategies for regional branding.



Health and Caregiving (HCG)

- **Strategic Direction:** Health and Caregiving Sector Investment Coordinators and their Advisory Council centered [~35 high-priority, sequenced actions](#) based on impact and feasibility. This recalibration responded directly to funding realities and legislative shifts.
- **Expanded Regional Participation:** Strengthened participation from hospitals and Tribal partners across the region. Regular SIC coordination with the Bay Area, Eastern Sierra, and other health and childcare-prioritizing regions in the California Jobs First Initiative elevated shared priorities. Strengthened coherence between regional and state strategies.
- **Rural Health Agenda:** Drafted a rural health policy agenda to advance expanded access and affordability in childcare, strengthen in-home caregiving workforce standards and supports, and protect critical healthcare workforce and safety-net funding in rural communities. The platform prioritizes regulatory streamlining, workforce development investment, and sustained federal and state funding to ensure equitable access to care across the Redwood Region.
- **State Agency Engagement:** Provided input to California Department of Healthcare Access and Information (HCAI) and Rural Health Transformation Program (RHTP). Facilitated meetings with the California Labor Board and HCAI about [RRRISE priorities and their alignment with the Rural Health Transformation Program proposal](#).
- **Career Pathway Efforts:** RRRISE-funded HEART Hub moved into architecture + permitting phase; \$500K additional capital secured. RRRISE works with the Redwood Coast K-16 Collaborative to support this and other career pathway work in the sector. [Read more about the HEART Hub project](#).
- **Clinical Workforce Coordination:** Regional clinical placement consortium formed to expand rural healthcare workforce capacity.
- **Funding:** SIC coordination contributed to successful grant outcomes, including [PATH CITED funding](#) supporting training hub development.
- **Training Partnerships:** Workforce and clinical training initiatives advanced through collaboration with Cal Poly Humboldt, College of the Redwoods, Mendocino Community College and others. Outreach to the Tribal Table began to discuss potential training sites to serve Tribal youth and continues as part of ongoing coordination efforts.



Renewable and Resilient Energy (RRE)

- **Capital Leveraged:** ~\$5M+ leveraged (Tribal energy enterprise, pre-apprenticeship expansion, philanthropic & state funding secured). [Read more about Tribal energy projects.](#)
- **Workforce and Infrastructure Expansion:** Expanded electrician training pipelines and launched Tribal-led energy business development at Blue Lake Rancheria. Supported the development of clean energy infrastructure at the Pinoleville Rancheria and the Hoopa Reservation. [Dive deeper into project updates.](#)
- **Leadership Growth:** Strengthened engagement of industry leaders across utilities, research institutions, clean power agencies, workforce intermediaries, and private industry. Advisory Council growth is expected to increase sector expertise and boost shared ownership of implementation priorities.
- **State-Level Visibility:** Hosted a California Jobs First Council and California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) site visit; elevated state-level understanding of regional energy assets, including microgrid, offshore wind, and Tribal energy initiatives.
- **Finance & Technical Capacity:** Partnership with the [Alliance for Tribal Clean Energy](#) expanded access to specialized financing expertise and technical assistance.
- **Tribal Pre-Apprenticeship Pilot:** A Tribally led low-voltage electrician pre-apprenticeship pilot served four Tribal communities and created a direct pathway into registered apprenticeships. [Read more about these projects.](#)
- **Industry Coordination:** Coordination across offshore wind, geothermal, microgrid, and Tribal energy initiatives maintained momentum despite shifting federal priorities and uncertainty. The Tribal Energy Resilience & Sovereignty (TERAS) initiative advanced, pursuing additional funding and continuing to convene partners.



Working Lands and Blue Economy (WLBE)

- **Infrastructure and Market Development:** California Jobs First Pilot Funding (2022) culminated in \$3.2M infrastructure investment—Noyo Harbor cut the ribbon on their 20-ton/day ice facility in October 2025. Launched North Coast Catch seafood brand; expanded local seafood into schools and new markets.
- **Blue Economy Implementation Proposal:** Blue Economy work became shovel-ready; submitted an Implementation Funding proposal for a Blue Economy Network covering much of the California coast.
- **Forestry Innovation Lab Advancement:** Forest WRX Alliance partners advanced to shovel readiness for a certified wood products materials testing and innovation lab at the Port of Humboldt Bay. The team refined the lab's scope, engaged industry, Tribal, and research partners to assess feasibility and strengthen alignment around workforce training and product commercialization. The project began permitting. [Learn more.](#)

- **State Level Visibility:** Hosted a California Jobs First Council and California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) site visit to Mad River Mass Timber; elevated regional timber and forestry assets.
- **Food System Infrastructure:** The North Coast Food System Network advanced to shovel readiness and applied for Implementation funding to build a multi-region climate smart food system infrastructure including cold storage and distribution nodes—ensuring California producers greater access to local markets and improving resilience and emergency preparedness. [Read more about this project.](#)
- **Regional Food Systems Alignment:** Connected northern and southern food system infrastructure projects via agriculture sector convenings. [See the North Coast Food System Network](#) and [Redwood Corridor SEEDS Network project updates.](#)
- **Targeted Technical Assistance:** SICs secured additional \$50,000 in state funding to provide targeted technical assistance to businesses and project sponsors.
- **Statewide AgTech Engagement:** Represented the region on the California Jobs First AgTech Working Group, positioning the region to take advantage of state support for the sector.



Capacity Support and Workforce Development

- **Talent Pipeline Management:** The [Talent Pipeline Management \(TPM\) framework](#) is now being used across the four sectors (industry clusters) to guide employer engagement, career pathway design, and workforce coordination. Coordinators with Capital Impact delivered a TPM workshop at the November 5th Convening and provided follow-up technical assistance to RRRISE-aligned and funded project leads.
- **Regional Labor Market Data:** Regional labor market dataset developed, linking the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)—which categorizes workers by job duties—with the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), which categorizes businesses by industry. These federal classifications enable matched reporting on employment, wages, and industry trends, supporting consistent workforce analysis across sectors.
- **Interactive Workforce Tools:** Interactive dashboards are in development to organize information on employment demand, wage levels, training requirements, and projected gaps. These tools will support sector planning and funding alignment and are expected to be fully available in the second half of 2026.
- **Education Pathways Mapping:** K-16 and postsecondary training programs aligned with RRRISE industries were cataloged to better understand the existing education and training pipeline.
- **Career Pathway Development:** Using labor market and training data, career pathway maps are being drafted to outline entry points, training options, and advancement opportunities within priority industries. Final versions are anticipated this spring.
- **Sector-Specific Workforce Support:** For Arts, Culture, and Tourism, SICs scoped job quality strategies and are coordinating a grant writing community of practice. For Health and Caregiving, they developed employer outreach tools to support the HEART Hub initiative,

convening employers to inform curricula for this simulation training center, and a Clinical Placement Consortium was launched. In Renewable and Resilient Energy and Working Lands and Blue Economy, workforce mapping activities and interest holder convenings launched to identify workforce needs in construction, utilities, and blue economy occupations.

4. Projects in Action

Catalyst initiatives received \$9 million in funding through California Jobs First. Aligned with the [Regional Roadmap](#), these predevelopment (early-stage) projects began work in June 2025. This section highlights early progress from those efforts. Additionally, the RISE [Projects Map](#) was launched to help partners, funders, and community members connect with good ideas and work which advances the Regional Strategy.



Investment & Growth



Climate



Equity



Regional Collaboration



Arts, Culture, and Tourism Projects

ACT Catalyst Projects invest in creative placemaking in Del Norte County and a new Blue Lake Rancheria Tribal business rooted in tradition.

[The Del Norte Performing Arts and Civic Center](#), led by the Partnership for Performing Arts, creates a permanent hub for arts, education, and community gathering in Del Norte County. The Del Norte PAC also serves as an emergency response facility outside the tsunami zone.

→ **Key Achievements:** The Center secured an additional \$1 million through the U.S. Congressman Huffman’s Community Project Funding (CPF) and completed a four-day feasibility site visit with Tribal, education, civic, and arts partners. RISE funding prepared and launched a capital campaign for the PAC through partner agreements, donor engagement, and a fundraising event with 60+ donors and 80 attendees, positioning the Center for its next phase.

Led by Blue Lake Rancheria, [Carving a Legacy: Tribal Traditions, Woodworking, and Workforce Development](#) strengthens Tribal economic self-determination by establishing a sustainable woodworking and workforce training program rooted in cultural traditions and indigenous forest stewardship. The project is completing business planning and purchasing equipment to process non-commercial timber species like tan oak and pepperwood. By delivering culturally grounded training for Tribal members and disadvantaged individuals, the initiative creates skilled job

pathways, expands access to traditional materials, improves forest health, and builds new local timber markets.

→ **Key Achievements:** Blue Lake Rancheria launched an artisanal wood products program, creating economic opportunity from the nearly 700 acres of timberlands the Tribe sustainably stewards. Early work included purchasing a portable sawmill and vacuum kiln, hiring 2-3 employees to run the program, implementing forest thinning, and processing locally harvested fir, tanoak, madrone, and redwood into finished wood products that support culturally grounded workforce pathways. Through engagement with RRISE, the initiative is exploring potential contract opportunities, including collaboration with the Great Redwood Trail.



Health and Caregiving Project

The **Healthcare Education and Regional Training Hub (HEART Hub)**, led by Lake County Economic Development Corporation, in partnership with City of Clearlake, Sutter Health/University, Adventist Health, County of Lake, the Population Health Innovation Lab (PHIL), and others, addresses critical healthcare workforce shortages by developing coordinated training, career pathways, and regional infrastructure, delivering healthcare education from elementary through adult learners. By building a simulation training center, the project supports rural and underserved communities with opportunities to grow their own health workforce in Lake and Mendocino Counties.

→ **Key Achievements:** HEART Hub partners created healthcare curricula and built out career pathways, selected an architect, and initiated facility design and site improvements. The project finalized architectural selection (William Fisher Architecture), began building scans and systems modeling, initiated permitting with the County of Lake, and launched early site improvements including HVAC, roof, and parking lot work. The Hub secured K-16 funding for student outreach (with Sonoma State University), launched its [website](#), and began employer engagement with support from Workforce SIC, Capitol Impact. Partners are also pursuing approximately \$700,000 in equipment funding for the future simulation center, moving the project from concept into facility development.



Renewable and Resilient Energy Projects

The Renewable and Resilient Energy Catalyst Projects advance Tribal energy sovereignty and community resilience across the Redwood Region through workforce training and developing clean energy infrastructure and housing.

BLBS GRID Workforce Training Program, led by Building Lives By Building Structure (BLBS) in Hoopa, this program is training Tribal youth in construction and solar installation through hands-on tiny-home builds.

→ **Key Achievements:** Working from the Hoopa modular facility, BLBS constructed two modular homes, with house #1 being completed at the end of the year and being put on the market in the coming months. The project supported 5 part-time jobs, launched a construction cohort serving 5 students, and engaged 12 participants in planned solar workforce training, demonstrating a locally driven model for affordable housing and skills training. Project leads will expand training offerings via a course hosted by College of the Redwoods in Hoopa.

Pinoleville Solar Port & Renewable Energy Workforce Development, led by the Pinoleville Pomo Nation, is deploying solar infrastructure while delivering paid renewable energy and cultural skills internships. The project delivers a solar carport for the Tribe, while providing youth training opportunities alongside the build, and critical wraparound services to youth to set them up for success.

→ **Key Achievements:** The project completed geotechnical and utility assessments, coordinating final design with partner GRID Alternatives, and securing an additional \$249,352 in TSAF gap funding to restore the project's full scope, including two EV charging stations. In parallel, 16 interns completed workforce training—averaging 100+ hours each—gaining hands-on solar, financial literacy, and job-readiness skills while supporting a four-day Cultural Camp that engaged 150 community members (50% youth).

Note: The **Red Hills Bioenergy Facility & Central Wood Processing Plant**, led by Scotts Valley Energy Corporation, was unable to secure a viable project site and therefore did not move forward as planned. To preserve both the southern regional focus and the Tribal-led intent of the original investment, funding was reallocated to the Pinoleville Solar Port & Renewable Energy Workforce Development Project, another Catalyst awardee advancing clean energy infrastructure and Tribal workforce development.



Working Lands and Blue Economy Projects

The Working Lands and Blue Economy Catalyst Projects focus on filling gaps in infrastructure that supports food, fiber, and forestry. The initiatives range from feasibility to near shovel-readiness, and poise the region to lead the state in sustainable innovation of land-based industries. Initiatives not

only explore the creation and marketing of new sustainable products, but also prepare a local workforce to meet local needs for fire resilience and landscape restoration.

The [North Coast Food System Network](#), led by the North Coast Growers' Association, connects farmers, fishermen, Tribes, and community organizations across the North Coast. The Network supports shared infrastructure, regional coordination, and investment attraction for food hubs, expanded cold storage access, direct-to-market seafood sales, and emergency food efforts.

→ **Key Achievements:** The North Coast Food System Network advanced regional food infrastructure by investing in a 15,000-square-foot food hub (due to break ground in 2026), receiving 60 applications from farmers for small equipment grants, and delivering hands-on climate-smart agricultural education to nearly 1,000 students. The Network expanded direct seafood sales by launching Dockside Markets in Humboldt and supporting existing markets in Del Norte, and supported six Tribal food sovereignty programs. By coordinating food system partners across the region and beyond, the project has created a shovel-ready vision for climate-adapted food and ag industries on the North Coast. The Network is being considered for California Jobs First Implementation Funding.

[Fire Lines & Fiber Bioregions: A Regional Wool Industry Cluster](#), led by Kaos Sheep Outfit, addresses the loss of local fiber processing. Although the region produces more than 57,000 pounds of wool each year, most of it leaves the state unprocessed—missing value-added opportunities for this sustainable material and its innovative applications. This feasibility study evaluates workforce needs, market demand, and infrastructure investments required to build a viable regional supply chain from raw wool to finished products, creating local jobs while reducing the carbon footprint by keeping wool processing close to home.

→ **Key Achievements:** Fire Lines and Fiber Bioregions advanced regional grazing and wildfire resilience by convening one multi-county grazing workshop early in 2026, bringing together graziers, Resource Conservation Districts, fire councils, and land managers to refine a GIS-mapped grazing assessment across the Redwood Region. The project launched a three-day animal husbandry workforce training that served 21 participants—nearly all of them with workforce barriers and supported by scholarships. The feasibility study continues to document site parameters and business scenarios for a regional wool scour and value-added fiber facility, supporting fire-safe land stewardship and future industry growth.

The **Hmong Meat Processing Facility**, led by the Hmong Association of Crescent City, responds to the closure of the region's last meat processing plant in 2025. The proposed USDA-approved facility will process approximately 160 animals per month, create five full-time jobs, and eliminate 160-mile transportation trips currently required for local farmers—reducing transportation costs and associated carbon emissions. The facility is designed to meet both regional agricultural needs and culturally specific community needs.

→ **Key Achievements:** Advanced financing, business planning, and facility design, working closely with ranchers, Tribal partners, and county agencies. The project evaluated 10+ potential sites and completed early engineering and feasibility work, reflecting both progress and the challenges of site acquisition. Remaining funds are designated to secure site control and proceed through remaining permitting steps.

The **Redwood Corridor SEEDS Network**, led by North Coast Opportunities and in partnership with the School of Adaptive Agriculture, Women With Bows/Just Soup, UC ANR Hopland Research & Extension Center, Ridgewood Ranch, and regional Grange kitchens, centers Tribal food sovereignty. The SEEDS Network works directly with Tribal leaders and food programs to strengthen Indigenous-led food production, harvest networks, and land access strategies.

The project plans a series of community food hubs along Highway 101 that will include shared commercial kitchens, processing equipment, and market space—supporting small producers while also serving as emergency food preparation and storage sites during disasters. This work complements regional food infrastructure efforts by the North Coast Food System Network, aligning culturally rooted value-added production with corridor-wide resilience planning.

→ **Key Achievements:** The Network activated shared kitchen infrastructure at Ridgewood Ranch, installed a freeze dryer, and completed the first round of freeze-dried soup production. Through Women With Bows' Just Soup initiative, the project engaged 150+ community members, strengthened Tribal and inter-Tribal partnerships, and advanced harvest mapping and land access strategies.

Led by Trees Foundation—in partnership with Mid Klamath Watershed Council, Mattole Restoration Council, Northern California Indian Development Council, Southern Humboldt Fire & Rescue, Tribal EcoRestoration Alliance, and other regional partners—**Career Pathways: Fire, Forest, Fish & Facilities** delivers paid certifications in forestry, fire suppression, and watershed restoration across Lake, Mendocino, and Humboldt Counties. By establishing local training hubs and aligning programs with employer demand, the project expands living-wage career pathways for rural and Tribal residents while strengthening wildfire response and long-term forest health.

→ **Key Achievements:** The project expanded regional wildfire readiness by issuing 147 RT-130 firefighter certifications and strengthening training and documentation systems. In December 2025, Southern Humboldt Fire & Rescue was formally established as a Joint Powers Authority, creating a durable structure for coordinating training, resource sharing, and workforce development across rural member agencies. In partnership with the Humboldt County Resource Conservation District, the project helped secure a \$9.8 million USDA Community Wildfire Defense Grant supporting multi-year fuels reduction, prescribed fire, and community safety jobs. Partners also expanded fisheries and restoration workforce capacity through DIDSON sonar deployment for salmon monitoring and swift water rescue certification. A 3-month Early Career Internship program was finalized, coordination with Cal Poly Humboldt's Indian Natural Resources, Science & Engineering Program (INRSEP) advanced pathways into Spring 2026 fire and chainsaw certifications, and a Community Equity Coordinator was hired to expand access and participation among Tribal and rural residents.

The Redwood Region faces housing shortages, high building costs, increasing wildfire risk, and limited markets for small or fire-damaged timber. Led by Mad River Mass Timber in collaboration with atelierjones and informed by UC Berkeley research, [Connecting Local Mass Timber to Regional Housing and Building Needs](#) turns underused local wood into durable, climate-friendly building panels. By linking forest restoration and wildfire mitigation to affordable housing and prefabricated building kits, the initiative creates new rural jobs, reduces construction emissions, and supports faster, lower-cost housing development. Locally-produced mass timber strengthens forest health while helping the region transition to cleaner, more sustainable building practices.

→ **Key Achievements:** The project advanced practical housing designs using locally produced mass timber. A standardized Design Guide and kit-of-parts system was launched to support repeatable construction of an ADU, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom home, with the single-family prototype structural design reaching ~55% completion. About three-quarters of planned community meetings were completed, with feedback—including input from Blue Lake Rancheria and other Tribal representatives—informing designs ahead of permitting. Early coordination with structural engineers and county planning departments clarified permitting pathways, and outreach to state representatives explored broader application of the housing models. Together, these steps move locally sourced timber closer to becoming buildable, scalable housing for the region.

The Redwood Region faces growing wildfire risk, excess forest biomass from past harvest practices, and workforce shortages in sustainable forestry and wood manufacturing. Led by [Forest WRX Alliance](#) in partnership with Blue Lake Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Cal Poly Humboldt, Mendocino Redwoods Company, Mad River Mass Timber, the Humboldt Bay Harbor District and others, [Developing a Climate Forward Workforce and Innovation Pipeline for Forest and Community Resilience](#) connects forest restoration with economic opportunity. By integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge with forestry and mass timber innovation, the initiative expands hands-on training and clear career pathways in forest management and wood products manufacturing. A proposed wood products innovation hub will help move locally sourced materials to market, strengthening forest health, local jobs, and long-term climate resilience.

→ **Key Achievements:** Forest WRX Alliance and partners—including Cal Poly Humboldt, Blue Lake Rancheria, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Humboldt and Mendocino Redwood Companies, and others—coordinated to connect forest restoration with workforce development and wood products innovation. A cross-sector Design Team identified priority areas across wood products, forest management, and restoration support, conducting outreach to 75 potential advisors to guide program development. Regional partners also formalized cross-county collaboration and began assessing workforce training needs and career pathways in forest stewardship. Additional work evaluated carbon credit revenue potential from forest treatment areas, while site evaluation advanced for a proposed wood products materials testing laboratory at the Port of Humboldt Bay. Together, these efforts lay the groundwork for turning low-value forest material into training opportunities, new market pathways, and stronger wildfire resilience.

Led by Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians of California, the [Middletown Rancheria Community RISE Project](#) integrates housing, climate justice, cultural resiliency, and community planning to support long-term, Tribal-led development priorities in the Middletown Rancheria.

→ **Key Achievements:** After onboarding new staff later in the year, Middletown Rancheria quickly advanced a Tribal fuel reduction and workforce development initiative. The project trained eight Tribal youth interns through a three-week internship, building skills in fuel reduction, safety, and leadership, while launching planning for a six-week fuel reduction crew. The Tribe also purchased a DJI drone and initiated surveying and training for work on the Noyes Ranch and Big Canyon properties, strengthening Tribal capacity for land stewardship and wildfire resilience.

New Projects Supporting Workers Facing Barriers

In December 2025, the RRRISE Collaborative awarded **\$2.5 million in private philanthropic funding** to a new cohort of projects supporting a Just Transition and economic mobility in the Redwood Region. Projects advanced shared priorities across housing, workforce development, working lands and blue economy sectors, and are led by communities affected by economic marginalization. Coming seven months after the Catalyst awards, this investment signals confidence in the region's capacity to deliver a Just Transition and builds on momentum already underway.



Equity



Regional Collaboration

Lessons Learned: Regranting, Project Support, and Impact Tracking

- Catalyst After-Action Review findings informed improvements to engagement, governance, and regranting processes, highlighting the need for:
 - Targeted, clear, funding priorities and processes.
 - Early engagement to address barriers faced by underserved communities in crafting competitive proposals.
- Despite recent regulatory reforms, predevelopment activities like site acquisition still take longer than short-term granting periods can accommodate.
- Establishing success indicators from the outset helps keep projects impact-oriented and moving forward.

5. Tribal Table: Elevating Indigenous Leadership



Equity



Regional Collaboration



Climate

The RRRISE Tribal Table provides a space for Indigenous colleagues and communities to connect, coordinate on shared priorities, and guide the Collaborative on shared priorities and issues impacting Tribal Lands. In 2025 the Table focused on youth empowerment and Tribal business development. Key activities included:

- **October 2025 Tribal Roundtable** with [California Jobs First and Strategic Growth Council leadership](#), convening Tribal leaders across the Redwood Region to elevate priorities and strengthen state-Tribal partnerships. Issues surfaced included the economic contributions of Tribes to the wellbeing of the state as a whole, and Tribal leadership on environmental stewardship. Leaders called for honoring Tribal sovereignty in funding processes—particularly around grants and waiver requirements—while simplifying applications, fund distribution, and reimbursements, and investing in sustained capacity-building.

- **November 4–5 Tribal Table in-person convenings**, including planning for a 2026 regional Tribal Gathering envisioned as a 100% Tribal-led, culturally grounded event weaving together ceremony, storytelling, and strategic dialogue. The Gathering celebrates culture as economic development—centering Tribal entrepreneurship, cultural economies, workforce pathways, and land- and water-based stewardship as drivers of regional resilience—while strengthening intertribal relationships, advancing sovereignty, and addressing systemic barriers through community-rooted solutions.
- Ongoing **financial technical assistance** to Tribal-led, RRRISE-funded projects.
- Development of a **Tribal youth scholarship and training opportunity database** and weekly youth and business development programming.

6. Centering Equity



Equity



Regional Collaboration

During this period, RRRISE deepened its commitment to equity by elevating the advisory Equity Council into a decision-making role as a committee of the Voting Member Block.

The Collaborative affirmed the importance of diverse communities and their organizations through training on [healthy \(equitable\) partnerships](#), [grant writing for new organizations](#), and [policy literacy](#). North Edge Financing also provided five scholarships for Collaborative members to attend [Leadership Redwood Coast](#). New Voting Members brought important voices and perspectives to the table: Operating Engineers Local 3; Kno'Qoti Native Wellness, Inc.; Great Redwood Trail Agency; Indigenous Wellness Alliance; Redwood Valley Rancheria; Equity Arcata; State Council on Developmental Disabilities (North Coast Region); and Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District. See full roster in the Appendix.

The Equity Committee advanced a proposed micro-investment initiative planned for early 2026, designed to provide \$1,000–\$3,000 awards to help early-stage projects, businesses, nonprofits, and collaboratives get off the ground across the Redwood Region. The fund will prioritize initiatives led by or in close partnership with historically underrepresented communities and aligned with RRRISE target sectors. Beyond funding, the Equity Committee will provide coaching and networking opportunities to support each project's growth throughout 2026.

7. Looking Ahead

Amid changing economic conditions and funding landscapes, the RRRISE Collaborative remains focused on:

- Increasing investment to RRRISE-aligned projects by communicating impact to funders, regional partners, policymakers, and the public at large.
- Boosting the region's investment readiness, particularly in key sectors.
- Ensuring our region's voice is present in state-level discussions.
- Sustaining the RISE momentum beyond the California Jobs First-funded period (post-September 2026).



8. Appendix: Collaborative Roster

Voting Member Block Organizations

Blue Lake Rancheria	Lake County Office of Education
Centro del Pueblo	Mendocino Community College
City of Crescent City	Mendocino County Council of Governments
College of the Redwoods	Middletown Rancheria of the Pomo Indians
Community Foundation of Mendocino	NoRTEC/SMART Workforce Center
County of Lake	North Coast Opportunities
County of Mendocino	North Coast Small Business Development Center
Del Norte Chamber of Commerce & Visitor Bureau	Northern California Indian Development Council
Economic Development & Financing Corporation	Operating Engineers Local 3
Elk Valley Rancheria	Redwood Coast K-16 Collaborative
Equity Arcata	Redwood Parks Conservancy
GrassRoots Institute	Redwood Region Econ. Dev. Commission
Great Redwood Trail Agency	Redwood Valley Rancheria
Hoopla Valley	Resilient DNATL
Humboldt Area Foundation	Sonoma Mendocino Economic Development District
Humboldt County Association of Governments	State Council on Developmental Disabilities, North Coast Region
Humboldt County Workforce Development Board	Tolowa Nation
Indigenous Wellness Alliance	True North Community Organizing
Kno'Qoti Native Wellness, Inc.	University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources
Lake County Chamber of Commerce	West Business Center
Lake County Community Foundation	Wild Rivers Community Foundation
Lake County Economic Development Corporation	Workforce Alliance of the North Bay

Sector Investment Coordinators

Arts, Culture, Tourism	Health and Caregiving	Renewable and Resilient Energy	Working Lands and Blue Economy	Workforce Development
North Coast Repertory Theater	North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network	Blue Lake Rancheria	West Business Development Center	Capitol Impact

Sector Advisory Councils

Members of the Sector Investment Advisory Councils bring their experience in their respective sectors and collaborate closely with their Sector Investment Coordinators. Please contact Leigh Pierre-Oetker with any questions at lao3@humboldt.edu

Arts, Culture, Tourism	Health and Caregiving	Renewable and Resilient Energy	Working Lands and Blue Economy
Arts Council of Mendocino County Bright and Green California Arts Council City of Eureka – Economic Development DiRT & Glitter Great Redwood Trail Agency Greater Ukiah Business and Tourism Alliance Humboldt Made Ink People Center for the Arts Redwood Parks Conservancy Southern Humboldt Visitors Bureau Tri-County Independent Living	Adventist Health Alliance for Rural Community Health Blue Lake Rancheria Cal Poly Humboldt Changing Tides Family Services College of the Redwoods First 5 Mendocino GoHumCo/Humboldt County Workforce Development Board Humboldt County Workforce Development Board Humboldt Independent Practice Association Indigenous Wellness Alliance K’ima:w Medical Center Lake County Economic Development Corporation Mendocino College Mendocino Community Health Clinic North Coast Clinics Network	Greater Eureka Chamber of Commerce GRID Alternatives Hoopa Valley Public Utility District Pacific Gas & Electric Redwood Coast Energy Authority Redwood Region CORE Hub Schatz Energy Research Center Sonoma Clean Power Vineyard Offshore	Black Dog Farm Kaos Sheep Outfit North Coast Growers’ Association North Coast Opportunities Northern California Indian Development Council True North Organizing Network University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources West Business Development Center Women with Bows

	<p>North Coast Health Improvement and Information Network</p> <p>North Coast Opportunities Open Door</p> <p>Community Health Centers</p> <p>Partnership HealthPlan</p> <p>Redwood Caregiver Resource Center</p> <p>Redwood Coast Regional Center</p> <p>Regional Government Services</p> <p>State Council on Developmental Disabilities</p> <p>Sutter Health</p> <p>United Indian Health Services</p>		
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Tribal Table

The Redwood Region RISE Tribal Table brings together economic development planners, community leaders, and representatives from all 33+ Tribal communities across our region - including federally and non-federally recognized Tribes, plus Tribal organizations and entities.

Facilitator: Northern California Indian Development Council