

RRRISE Nov. 5th Convening Follow-Up Packet

On November 5th, 2025, leaders from across the Redwood Region and beyond gathered at Robinson Rancheria for a day of collaboration, learning, and community building. Through working sessions on policy literacy, healthy partnerships, and career pathways—alongside discussions on turning regional plans into investable pathways—we gathered with purpose: to strengthen partnerships across our four counties and Tribal Lands, begin tracking our collective impact, set a shared rural policy agenda, and connect with resource partners who can help turn our regional vision into tangible outcomes.

Our communities have weathered significant challenges—pandemic strain, industry contraction, and the loss of critical federal support. The uncertainty is real. But so is the momentum we're building. Workers are restoring waterways and forests. New facilities for housing, healthcare, and training are taking shape. Businesses are emerging, and partnerships are growing across county lines and sovereign territories. **In rural places like ours, collective impact means we're deeply interconnected—and by investing in each other's success, we build the resilience our region needs.**

This packet captures key insights, takeaways, and next steps from our time together. Whether you joined us in person or are catching up from a distance, we hope these resources inspire continued collaboration and action as we advance our collective vision for a resilient, inclusive, and sustainable Redwood Region. **Find out more:** bit.ly/RISE-follow-up

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Engage & Receive Support Moving Forward

Redwood Region RISE's focus is clear: **supporting action and creating collective impact together**. This means advancing our Catalyst Projects, strengthening regional collaboration, and ensuring our region's diverse voices shape the investments and policies that affect us all.



Picture: Amy Kumler

→ **Deepen Your Skills & Strengthen Our Collective Work**

- **Policy Working Group** – We're creating a Policy Working Group to build advocacy skills and amplify our region's voice in Sacramento, led by Toni Symonds (Policy Works California). **Interested in joining?** Email ccrp@humboldt.edu to get involved. If you already signaled interest at the Convening, we'll follow up with you soon.
- **Healthy Partnerships Follow-Up Sessions** – We're gauging interest in additional sessions to strengthen collaborative work using the frameworks Sarah introduced at the in-person session. **Interested in more tailored support for your partnerships?** Email ccrp@humboldt.edu to let us know.

→ **Stay Connected**

- Newsletter: bit.ly/RISE-Mailer | LinkedIn: bit.ly/RRRISE-Linkedin
- Questions? ccrp@humboldt.edu | Learn More: bit.ly/Redwood-RISE
- Upcoming events and opportunities to engage: bit.ly/RISE-Calendar

→ **Connect with Sector Investment Coordinators**

Our Sector Investment Coordinators link project leaders with expertise, and position projects to secure funding. **Reach out to our Coordinators:**

- Arts, Culture, and Tourism: Calder Johnson and team at calder.johnson@gmail.com

- Health and Caregiving: NCHIIN team at RRRISE@nchiin.org
- Renewable and Resilient Energy: Matthew Marshall, Blue Lake Rancheria at mmarshall@bluelakerancheria-nsn.gov
- Working Lands and Blue Economy: Mary Anne Petrillo, West Business Development Center at maryanne@westcenter.org

→ Add Your Project to Our Regional Projects Map

Working on an initiative that contributes to the regional goals (as defined in our [Regional Roadmap](#)) our Collaborative prioritizes? **Submit your project to our Projects Map** to highlight collective work and connect with potential partners and resources. Fill out our form at bit.ly/join-the-map and take a look at the Projects Map: bit.ly/rise-projects-map

→ Join Our Collaborative Activities

Quarterly Collaborative Meetings – Join our regional gatherings to celebrate progress, strengthen partnerships, and align our collective efforts. Read more at bit.ly/meet_rrrise and save the dates for next year's quarterly Collaborative Meetings:

- **Q1:** Thursday, March 26, from 11:00 a.m–12:30 p.m. (Zoom) – *Theme: Arts, Culture, and Tourism*
- **Q2:** Thursday, June 25, from 11:00 a.m–12:30 p.m. (Zoom) – *Theme: Renewable and Resilient Energy*
- **Q3:** August 2026 (Date = TBD)– In-Person Convening in Del Norte County (Tentative)

Economic Development Finance (EDF) Working Group – Attend monthly expert sessions facilitated by Regional Government Services, focused on enhancing financial capacity across the Redwood Region. Read more here: bit.ly/edf-working-group

→ Join the Tribal Table

Indigenous Colleagues: Join the RRRISE Tribal Table and connect with Tribes who are advancing youth leadership, energy sovereignty initiatives, business development on Tribal lands, and more key issues to Indian Country. **Connect with Lorna McLeod**, Tribal Table Facilitator with Northern California Indian Development Council (NCIDC): lorna@makepeacewithmoney.com

Together, we're building collective impact that creates tangible outcomes for our communities. Whether you're leading a Catalyst Project, connecting partners across sectors, advocating for policy change, or contributing your unique expertise and lived experience—everyone has something vital to offer. In rural places like ours, our strength lies in how we invest in each other's success and work together toward shared prosperity.

Key Takeaways From Each Session

RRRISE & Shine Morning Sessions

1. Sector Investment Breakfast

RRRISE's Sector Investment Coordinators met with their Sector Advisory Councils and aligned Catalyst Projects to discuss upcoming priorities, including asset mapping and other strategic initiatives for each sector. Our Sector Investment Coordinators serve as vital connective tissue, working closely with their Advisory Councils (community leaders and sector experts) to transform shared vision into reality. They provide technical support, connect project leaders with the right expertise and partners, and help position initiatives to secure funding—ensuring investments benefit the communities that need them most.

Find out more: bit.ly/sector-investment



Picture: Amy Kumler

2. Tribal Table Breakfast

The Tribal Table hosted a dinner on November 4th, followed by a Tribal Table breakfast meeting on November 5th. A significant focus of the gatherings centered on a Big Time the Tribal Table seeks to host in the summer of 2026, with plans for one or more days dedicated solely to Tribal gathering, and one or more days open to the broader community.

To ensure success, participants emphasized the importance of planning well to encourage widespread participation from Tribes across the Redwood Region. The Table is looking for the event to encompass a focus on economic development as well as meaningful cultural and community development aspects. More about the Tribal Table: bit.ly/Tribal-Table

Funding Update: The State awarded all \$15 million of the Tribal Investment Initiative funds in Round 1, so there will not be a Round 2 as far as we are aware. (Please note that while regional CCRP administered the Catalyst Funds process, they have no involvement or influence with award decisions for the Tribal or Implementation grants.)

The Letter of Intent period for Round 2 of the State's Implementation Funding just closed, and our region is putting forward several proposals. There may be opportunities for Tribal collaboration on Bioeconomy projects (particularly for Tribes that manage timber lands) and Regenerative Aquaculture initiatives—these are the major proposals currently in development. RRRISE's Working Lands and Blue Economy Sector Investment Coordinator, West Business Development Center, is helping people develop their proposals and would be happy to connect with anyone interested in partnering on proposals for these industries, in this coming week. More information on the Implementation Funding process can [be found here](#).

Key Requests and Considerations:

- Grant writing workshops were requested to support Tribal nonprofits in accessing available funding opportunities.
- Participants explored how to support community-wide restorative justice and whole family healing, recognizing the importance of each person's place within the community as a whole.
- A shared commitment emerged: when bringing forward a problem, we should also seek to bring ideas for resolution or solutions.

RRRISE Onboarding for New Members

Facilitated by Michael Kraft (Kraft Consultants)

Redwood Region RISE works to transform siloed efforts into regional collaboration, aligning organizations toward tangible results. We're advancing work through four key sectors with dedicated Sector Investment Coordinators and through [Catalyst Projects](#)—funding innovative community-driven initiatives across [Culture and Placemaking](#); [Food, Fiber, and Farm](#); ["Grow Your Own" Health Workforce](#); [Sustainable Forestry](#); and [Tribal Energy Sovereignty](#).

- **Resources:**
 - [RRRISE Onboarding Slides](#)

- One-minute refresher video on RRRISE: bit.ly/RISE-what
 - [Sector Strategies and Enabling Industries Overview](#)
 - Catalyst Project Info: bit.ly/catalyst-projects
 - Activation Plans & Sector Tables Info: bit.ly/sector-investment
 - Projects Map: bit.ly/rise-projects-map
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Welcome & Opening Ceremony

Robinson Rancheria Vice Chairman, and District 3 Lake County Supervisor Eddie Crandell opened our gathering.

Our keynote speaker, Connie Stewart (Executive Director of Initiatives, Cal Poly Humboldt), reminded us that rebuilding rural & remote California is generational work. RRRISE is about creating belonging and building a sustainable, equitable, and innovative rural economy. Our Collaborative's job in this moment is to create strong elevator pitches that will compel those funders!

- Rebuilding rural California is generational work. We overestimate what we can accomplish in one year, and we underestimate what we can get done in a decade.
 - RISE has built a very different kind of table than what traditional economic development used to look like. Whether you are at every meeting, creating bridges and linkages, or following along from a distance, you have a role to play in our Collaborative.
 - Our region needs to develop an "elevator pitch" that communicates value to funders (and this is a great exercise for everyone). [You can find a resource for developing your elevator pitch here.](#)
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Collective Impact in the Redwood Region

This plenary session featured updates on Tribal Economic Development priorities and progress from Lorna McLeod and Maria Dahlin of the Tribal Table. County representatives then presented celebrations of economic development progress and assessed priorities for the coming months and years, with Alec Dompka speaking on behalf of Del Norte County, Gregg Foster for Humboldt County, Ben Rickelman for Lake County, and Anna Macken representing Mendocino County. Thomas Nicholson-Stratton concluded with an update on sustainability and future opportunities from the Sustainability Working Group visioning session.

- Economic development ranges far beyond the economic measures, it also includes restoring the lands, the coast and the spirit of the people
- People and nature don't care about county lines, and neither should we

- Exciting growth is happening all over our region. Del Norte County is advancing major infrastructure and housing projects that expand affordable options and strengthen the local economy. Humboldt County is emerging as a hub for offshore wind energy and turbine assembly, with port redevelopment underway to support California's clean-energy goals. Lake County is building on its renewable energy leadership, expanding housing and small-business support while investing in hydrogen, microgrids, and workforce training. Mendocino County continues to draw strength from its wine, timber, cannabis, and tourism sectors, where producers are adapting to market and climate challenges through sustainability, innovation, and small-business resilience.
 - **Resources:**
 - [Slides from Ben Rickelman, Lake County](#)
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Picture: Amy Kumler

Working Sessions: Building Regional Infrastructure: Policy, Partnerships, and People

1. Developing Policy Literacy to Advance a Rural Agenda

Facilitated by Toni Symonds (Policy Works California)

Toni Symonds (Policy Works California) emphasized that knowing who we are, what we want, and what we need is the foundation for effective advocacy. Public policy has its own language—but we can learn it and use it to elevate our region's voice.

- Having a clear idea of who we are, what we want, and what we need is the first step in advocating for the needs and priorities of our region
- Public policy has its own norms, customs, and language

- We have the power and can build the skills necessary to advocate for the needs and priorities of the region
- **Resources:**
 - [Policy Literacy Slides](#)
 - [Policy Literacy Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Resource List One: Finding and Tracking State Issues](#)
 - [Exercise – Capturing What We Know](#)
 - [Exercise – Identifying Community Priorities for Engagement](#)
 - [Exercise – Power Mapping Matrix](#)
 - [Power Mapping Checklist](#)

Note: We're creating a Policy Working Group to build advocacy skills and amplify our region's voice in Sacramento, led by Toni Symonds (Policy Works California). Interested in joining? Email ccrp@humboldt.edu to get involved. If you already signaled interest at the Convening, we'll follow up with you soon.

2. Creating Healthy Partnerships and Coalitions

Facilitated by Sarah Kerr (Pink Possum Consulting)

Sarah Kerr (Pink Possum Consulting) shared that relationships built on trust, transparency, and consistent allyship are foundational. Using the STAR framework (Separateness, Tuning, Action, Reason), we can honor diverse perspectives, listen actively, act collectively, and define mutual benefits. Small, actionable steps—even 15% solutions—can be instrumental.

- Relationships are the foundation (trust, transparency, consistent allyship; commitment, even when funding changes; practice humility, keep learning)
- Use the STAR framework (Separateness: honor diverse perspectives; Tuning: listen actively; Action: Act collectively; Reason: Define mutual benefits)
- Take small, actionable steps (focus on what's within your control; small changes can be instrumental (15% solutions); it's okay to part ways when appropriate)
- **Resources:**
 - [Healthy Partnerships Slides](#)
 - [Healthy Partnerships Handout](#)
 - [Key Learnings](#)

Note: We're gauging interest in additional sessions to strengthen collaborative work using the frameworks Sarah introduced at the in-person session. Interested in more tailored support for your partnerships? Email ccrp@humboldt.edu to let us know.

3. Strengthening Career Pathways

Facilitated by Capitol Impact

[Capitol Impact](#) introduced Talent Pipeline Management, a demand-driven, employer-led framework that helps businesses and education partners co-design talent supply chains connecting learners to jobs and career advancement opportunities.

- TPM is built by business, for business—working backward from employer needs to close skills gaps
- The six-strategy framework helps employers and educators align on job requirements, project demand, and build sustainable talent pipelines
- TPM provides strategies and tools for workforce development that create positive returns for all partners
- **Resources:**
 - [Strengthening Career Pathways Slides](#)
 - [Talent Pipeline Management \(TMP\) Framework One-Pager](#)
 - [Helpful Links and Resources](#)



Picture: Amy Kumler

Afternoon Working Sessions

1. Turning Regional Plans Into Investable Pipelines

Facilitated by Regional Government Services (RGS)

Sector Investment Coordinator Panel (contact information in the “[Opportunities to Engage & Receive Support Moving Forward](#)” section)

Regional Government Services Authority reminded us that our shared vision and elevator pitch make us a model for rural economic development. By reframing challenges as opportunities, we can tell our story and attract values-aligned investment.

- A vision and elevator pitch can come from us, we become the example of how to do rural economic development
- Challenges and opportunities are two sides of the same coin
- Tell the region's story and attract investment that supports a vision of a sustainable, equitable, and innovative region
- **Resources:**
 - [Turning Regional Plans Into Investable Pipelines Slides](#)
 - [Case Studies Web Page](#)
 - [Sector Asset Poster: Arts, Culture, and Tourism](#)
 - [Sector Asset Poster: Health and Caregiving](#)
 - [Sector Asset Poster: Renewable and Resilient Energy](#)
 - [Sector Asset Poster: Working Lands and Blue Economy](#)

2. Grant Writing and Grant-Readiness Workshop for New and Growing Organizations

Facilitated by Ursula Bischoff (Ursula Bischoff Consulting)

Ursula Bischoff highlighted that grant writing is storytelling—turning passion into proposals that align with funders' goals. Tip: always read the full RFP and know your audience!

- Grantwriting is creating an overarching story about your project and translating what you're passionate about into a grant proposal
- There are many different types of grants, with many different types of funders, and you have to develop the type of story that will match their goals
- Make sure you read the entire Request for Proposal (RFP) and understand who will be reading your proposal
- **Resources:**
 - [Grantwriting and Grant-Readiness Slides](#)

- [Exercise – Strengthening Grant Application Skills](#)
 - [Budget Handout – Simple Template](#)
 - [Budget Handout – Administrative – Indirect and Direct Costs – ARPA](#)
 - [Budget Handout – Funding and Reporting Requirements](#)
 - [Application Info – CA Jobs First Implementation – Full – Application – FAQ](#)
 - [Additional Resources Handout](#)
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Closing & Networking Reception (Plenary)

Special thank you to our hosts, Robinson Rancheria, for welcoming us so graciously.

With appreciation to Calder Johnson and team for their contributions to the Networking Reception, featuring ice cream from Foggy Bottoms Boys and reusable serveware from Bright and Green.

We ended the day on a high note with a beautiful dance performance by Tribal Members from the Robinson Rancheria Pomo Indians of California.



Picture: Amy Kumler

Learn more about Redwood Region RISE here: bit.ly/Redwood-RISE