



Working Lands and Blue Economy

Introducing the Sector

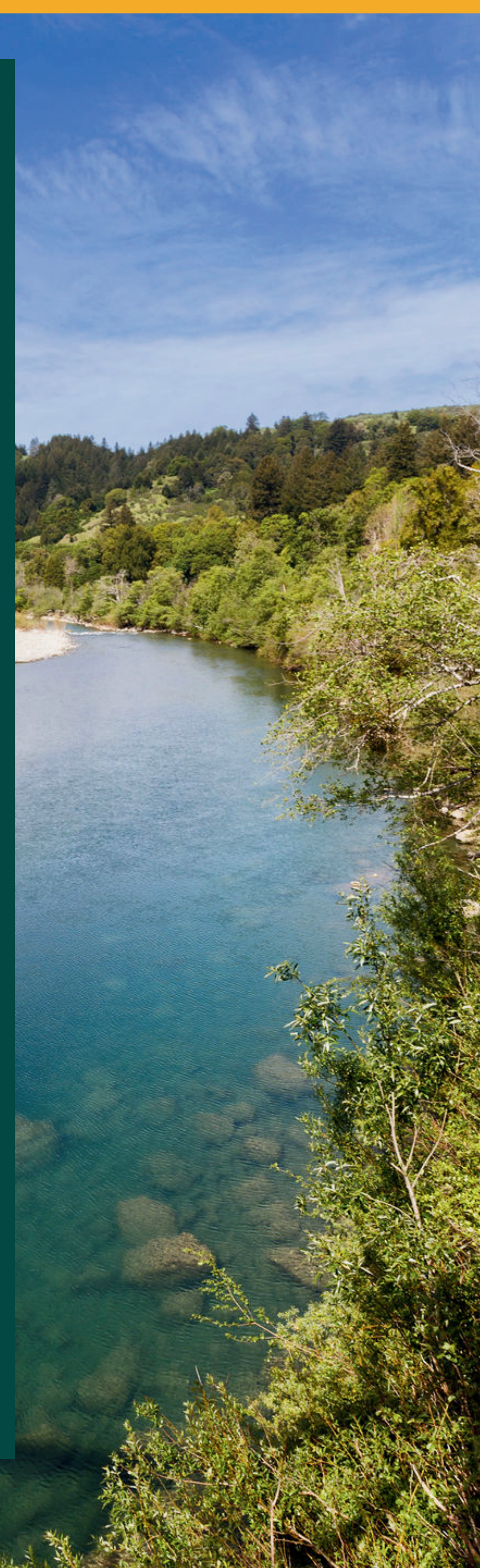
The Working Lands and Blue Economy (WLBE) sector is advancing regenerative solutions to restore the vitality of local forests, fisheries, and farms while fortifying the resilience of rural economies. Led by Mary Anne Petrillo and the West Business Development Center, this initiative connects Tribal communities, natural resource agencies, ocean restoration organizations, and harbor districts in a shared vision to strengthen both ecological and economic well-being.

Rooted in the belief that the region's natural resources form the living foundation of its communities, cultures, and climate stability, WLBE advances a model of inclusive growth—one that restores ecosystems while creating pathways for sustainable prosperity.

To realize these goals, the sector deploys a coordinated effort centered on five core strategies. It expands markets for locally produced goods, cultivates cross-sector collaborations, and develops innovative workforce training programs in forest restoration, ocean sciences, and related fields. At the same time, WLBE nurtures rural innovation by incubating scalable green enterprises and deepens research partnerships with educational institutions and Tribal leaders to design and test the sustainable business models of the future.

Firms & Major Employers

- Alexandre Family Farm
- Aqua-Rodeo Farms
- Caito Processing
- California Department of Forestry
- Coast Seafoods Company
- Constellation Brands Inc
- Danco Builders
- Family Tree Service, Inc.
- Fetzer Vineyards
- Fisherman's Catch
- Green Diamond Resource Company
- Hambro Forest Products
- Harwood Products
- Humboldt Bay Farm/Hog Island Oyster Co.
- Humboldt Bay Oyster Company LLC
- Humboldt Redwood Company
- Kokatat, Inc.
- Mendocino Redwood Company
- Nordic Aquafarms
- North Coast Co-op
- Ocean Gold Seafoods
- Pacific Coast Farm Credit
- Pacific Seafood/Pacific Choice Seafood
- Princess Seafood (Market & Restaurant)
- Rumiano Cheese Co.
- Reservation Ranch
- Rocky Mountain Sawmill
- Schmidbauer Lumber
- Scully Packing Co.
- Shannon Ranches, Inc.
- Sierra Pacific Industries





Working Lands and Blue Economy

Workforce and Training

The Working Lands and Blue Economy sector in the Redwood Region depends on a workforce equipped to **steward forests, rangelands, agricultural systems, and coastal waters** while supporting **sustainable resource management** and **food production**.

Programs at Cal Poly Humboldt, College of the Redwoods, and Mendocino College provide pathways into careers that **bridge traditional land and water stewardship** with innovative approaches to **conservation, climate resilience, and regenerative practices**. The overview below highlights programs that prepare students for diverse roles in this sector—from forestry and fisheries management to sustainable agriculture, aquaculture, viticulture, and natural resource policy.

Education Pathways

Cal Poly Humboldt:

- Applied Fire Science & Management (Certificate of Study)
- Environmental & Natural Resources Planning Certificate
- Environmental Science & Management (BS)
- Fisheries Biology (BS)
- Forestry (BS)
- Natural Resource Policy and Administration Certificate
- Natural Resources (MS)
- Oceanography (BS)
- Rangeland Resource Science (BS)
- Wildlife (BS)

College of the Redwoods:

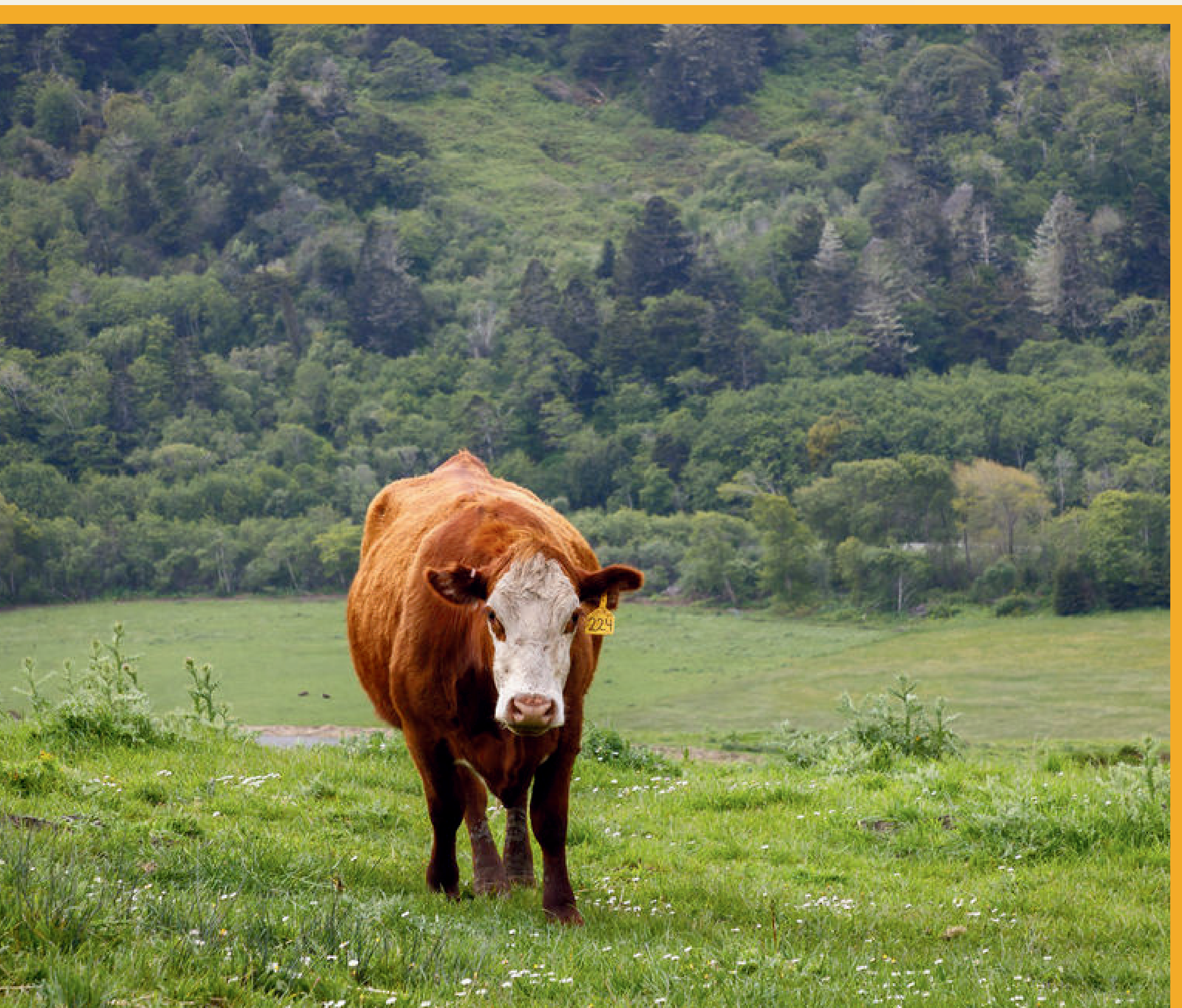
- Agriculture
- Agriculture Plant Science (AS)
- Aquaculture (AS)
- Business Management
- Forestry and Natural Resources (AS)
- Geomatics (Certificate of Achievement)
- Horticulture & Landscape Practices
- Organic/ Sustainable Agriculture

Mendocino College:

- Agriculture: Horticulture
- Agriculture: Landscape Practices
- Agriculture: Nursery Production
- Marine Biology
- Natural Resources (AS)
- Sustainable Small Farms Management
- Viticulture Skills

BS = Bachelor of Science

AS = Associate of Science





Working Lands and Blue Economy

Working Lands and Blue Economy Projects (California Jobs First)

Career Pathways: Fire, Forest, Fish, and Facilities

Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Project

Creating sustainable wage opportunities in natural resource jobs across three counties. The 4F (Fire, Forests, Fish & Facilities) initiative, builds a shared network for workforce development across fire, forestry, watershed, and cultural sectors. The Rural Resilience Partnership unites ten organizations to create sustainable jobs in forestry, fire suppression, and restoration across the Redwood Region. By establishing local training hubs in three counties, it provides accessible, paid certification programs, prioritizing underserved communities including Native and rural residents. The goal is to train 200 individuals and place 50 in living-wage positions by October 2026.

Connecting Local Mass Timber Production to Regional Housing and Building Needs

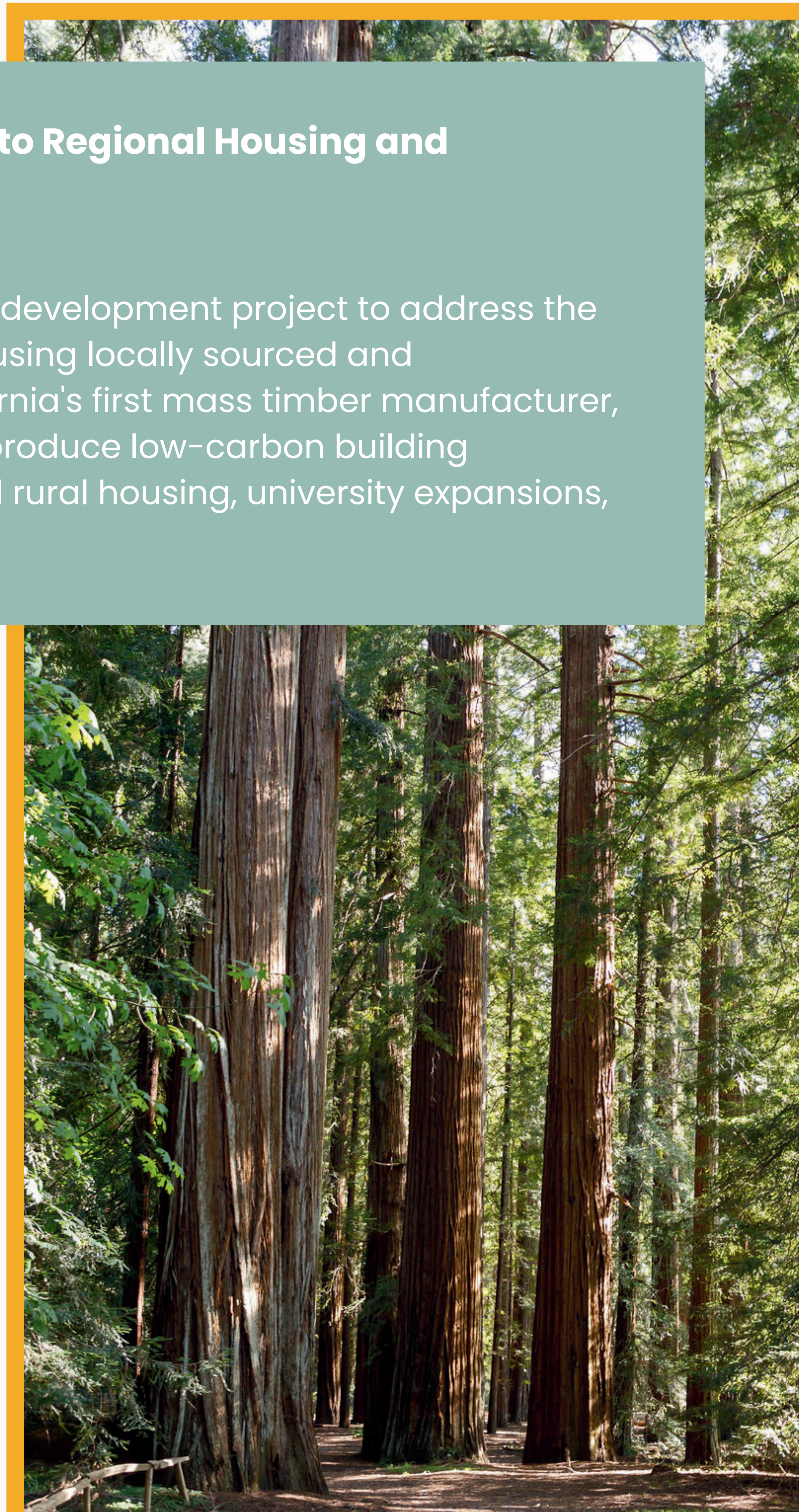
Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Project

Mad River Mass Timber (MRMT) proposes a pre-development project to address the Redwood Region's building and housing needs using locally sourced and manufactured mass timber. MRMT will be California's first mass timber manufacturer, leveraging sustainable forest management to produce low-carbon building materials for affordable, student, workforce, and rural housing, university expansions, and community infrastructure.

Developing a Climate Forward Workforce & Innovation Pipeline for Forest and Community Resilience

Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Project

The Forest WRX Alliance proposal aims to enhance forest and community resilience in the Redwood Region by integrating workforce development, educational pathways, sustainable building solutions, and new funding streams. It includes four main components: Workforce Training Assessment and Dashboard Development, Climate Tech and Natural Resource Management Program, Mass Timber Manufacturing for Rural Housing, and Carbon Market Development.





Working Lands and Blue Economy

Working Lands and Blue Economy Projects (California Jobs First) (Continued)

Fire Lines and Fiber Bioregions: A Regional Wool Industry Cluster

Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Project

Assess the feasibility of a Regional Wool Industry Cluster—from raw fiber to finished product—and create a shovel-ready roadmap for implementation. This project will address this disconnect between in-state raw fiber production and developing finished products, while examining workforce development needs, market demand for wool products, and necessary infrastructure investments to create a viable regional supply chain from raw wool to finished products.

Hmong Meat Processing Facility

Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Project

This project works towards USDA certified meat processing, benefitting not just the employees and the region with local meats, but also serving the Hmong Association of Crescent City to allow them autonomy to become more entrepreneurial and build wealth as a community

North Coast Food System Network

Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Project

An initiative to increase connectivity and collaboration between the North Coast region through investments into infrastructure and capacity building. This Network will help fill gaps in critical food infrastructure, workforce development, and connection to resources in our region's agriculture and fishing industries. Coordination of community owned and operated businesses will improve the access residents have to locally grown, raised, and caught food.





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Working Lands and Blue Economy Projects (California Jobs First) (Continued)



Noyo Harbor Revitalization

Community Economic Resiliency Fund Pilot Program

Noyo Harbor Revitalization Project and West Business Development Center were awarded a pilot grant through the California Jobs First initiative (formerly the Community Economic Resiliency Fund, CERF). Funds were allocated to the construction of a 20-ton flake ice house, creating affordable ice that is essential to the fishing industry. The project also supports expanding consumer markets for local seafood and maritime education with the aim of bolstering and revitalizing the depressed fishing industry out of Noyo Harbor's working waterfront.

Redwood Corridor SEEDS Network

Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Project

The SEEDS Network integrates Tribal food sovereignty initiatives with practical infrastructure development to create resilient food systems along California's Highway 101 corridor. By establishing native-led food hub featuring commercial kitchens, processing equipment, and marketplace facilities, the project addresses systemic inequities in food access and creating economic opportunities for small-scale producers.



Working Lands and Blue Economy

High-Level Strategy and Tactics

These Working Lands and Blue Economy strategies aim to strengthen regional agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and coastal industries through **integrated market development**, **workforce training**, and **collaborative networks**. By fostering innovation and research, these tactics build resilient rural and coastal communities that support sustainable economic growth.

Strategy 1: Expand and Integrate Markets

- Tactic 1.1: Strengthen the Value Chain
- Tactic 1.2: Promote Regional Products

Strategy 2: Build Collective Capacity

- Tactic 2.1: Establish Sector-Specific Networks

Strategy 3: Enhance Workforce and Community Resilience

- Tactic 3.1: Foster Education and Skills Development

Strategy 4: Promote Rural Innovation

- Tactic 4.1: Advance Rural Economic Growth

Strategy 5: Advance Working Lands and Blue Economy Research

- Tactic 5.1: Develop Research Initiatives
- Tactic 5.2: Pilot Blue and Green Business Solutions

Working Lands Blue Economy Strategies





Working Lands and Blue Economy

Additional RRRISE-Aligned Investment Projects

Del Norte:

- Construction of a new inner harbor seawall
- Construction of a new Citizens' Dock to serve the commercial fishing industry
- Installation of a new Fish Filet Station for direct sales of locally caught fish
- Construction of new restrooms and showers to serve visitors at South Beach

Humboldt:

- Completion of a feasibility study for a new dockside market
- Humboldt harbor wind energy projects
- Launch of new dockside market
- Nordic Aquafarms

Lake:

- Bioeconomy Roadmap mapping
- Climate Housing and Workforce Development – Lake County Community Foundation
- Lake County Resilience Center – County of Lake
- Re-Open Historical Redwood Meat Co.
- Ocean View Beef LLC DBA Lopez Ranch
- Tan Oak Park Training Center – Trees Foundation

Mendocino:

- Construction of a 20-ton flake ice house which will service Noyo Harbor and the surrounding areas, creating affordable ice essential to the fishing industry
- Provided no-cost safety trainings to the fishing community
- Noyo Harbor District facilitated a sea to schools initiative bringing fresh, local seafood into the local school system
- Created North Coast Catch program and, brought consumer awareness to the 9 seafood species off the local coast
- Dockside sales program equipped with signage and consumer sales notification system
- \$70 million for Noyo Center for Marine Science, including Aquaculture wet labs, and visitor's center

