WELCOME

Regional Roundtable 3: CEC Order Instituting an Informational Proceeding on Tribal Affairs and Tribal Energy Sovereignty
October 30, 2025

Meeting Logistics

- Public Comment Opportunities

- Principles of a Respectful Meeting

GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

CALIFORNIA
TRUTH &
HEALING
COUNCIL

CHRISTINA E. SNIDER
TRIBAL ADVISOR

CALIFORNIA TRUTH & HEALING COUNCIL

PRINCIPLES FOR RESPECTFUL MEETINGS

Agenda for Today

- Morning Registration

- Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Tribal Consultation

- Tribal Energy Sovereignty

- Tribal Cultural Resource Considerations Regarding Clean Energy Development

- Best Practices for Tribal Energy Grants

- Lunch Break

- Tribal Energy Equity Indicators

- Improving Energy Project Development Processes

- Closing Remarks
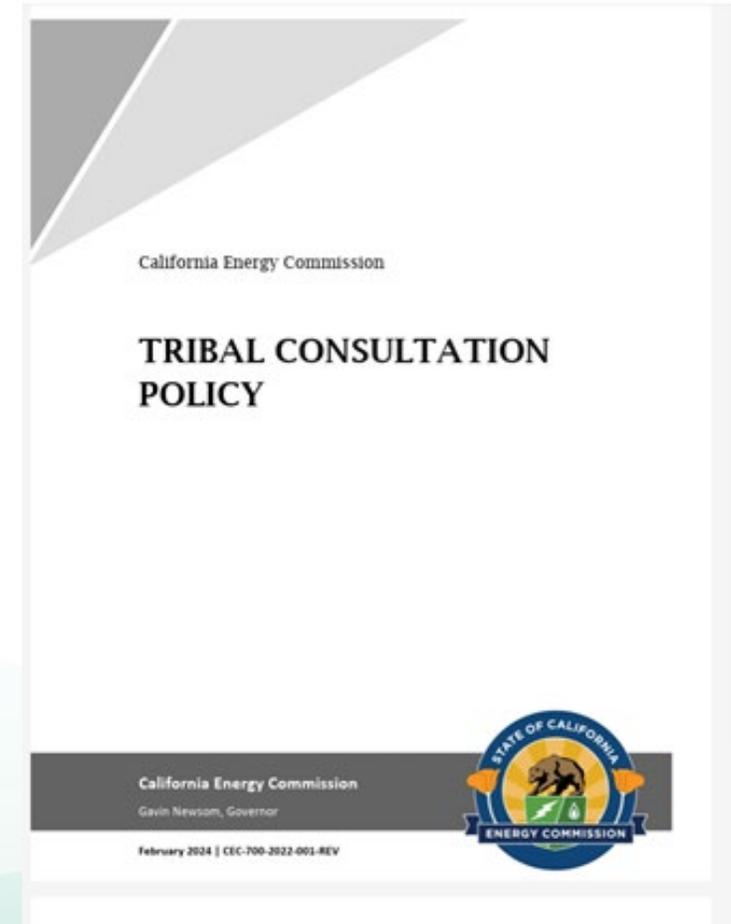
Welcome & Opening Remarks

Tribal Consultation Policy

CEC Consultation Policy

- Adopted 2014

- Administrative Update February 2024

- California Natural Resources Agency Tribal Consultation Policy November 2012 (Recently updated 9/2025)

- Assembly Bill (AB) 923

California Energy Commission

TRIBAL CONSULTATION POLICY

California Energy Commission
Gavin Newsom, Governor

February 2024 | CEC-700-2022-001-REV

CEC Tribal Consultation Policy Overview

- Identifies the responsibilities and organization of the CEC

- Designation of the CEC Tribal Liaison and Assistant Tribal Liaisons

- Affirms CEC Tribal Liaison participation in the Tribal Liaison Committee

- Outlines CEC's tribal consultation process

- Mechanisms for exchanging confidential information

- Stipulates filing and disclosure requirements concerning CEC tribal communications

- Suggests ways for fostering long-term relationships

Examples From Other Consultation Policies

- Adequate preparation

- Mutual respect

- Relationship building

- Co-management

- Traditional Ecological Knowledge

- Importance of cultural resources and restoration

- Transparency and on-going communication

What Would Tribes Like to See in CEC's Consultation Policy
(Slide co-developed 10/30/25)

- Internal procedure for all staff to be trained properly on how to interact with tribes (AB 52 if it applies)

- Communication is most important thing

- Strive for more consultations in person

- Barriers in past can be addressed better in person/face-to-face

- Show up in person and come to the tribe's lands to better understand the needs of the tribe

- Initiate communication at the beginning of the process of the project (go beyond sending letters)

How to Implement CEC's Tribal Consultation Policy
(Slide co-developed 10/30/25)

- More contact and communication with tribes

- Continue fostering ongoing relationships

- Continual contact with tribes, especially with turnovers. Important to know who is who.

- Avoid deadlines that are too tight for tribal timelines. Tribes are balancing many deadlines with limited capacity. If unavoidable, make sure deadlines are communicated clearly.

- Acknowledging tribal practices – understanding tribal practices come first before project work

- Consultations can extend to more detailed oriented exchanges, not just big picture (such as grant application portals).

- Mission is to get funding – streamline processes to make things easier; reassess how information is shared and gathered (applications, reporting, etc.)

Ahe'hee' - Thank You!

Tribal Energy Sovereignty

History of Resolution Committing to Support Tribal Energy Sovereignty

Components of Resolution Committing to Support Tribal Energy Sovereignty (Goals)

- **support** tribal self-determination, self-government, and **energy sovereignty**;

- **enhance tribal consultation** and participation in decision-making related to clean energy planning and development in California;

- **improve the protection of sacred sites**, cultural resources, and access to ancestral lands;

- **increase tribal access** to federal and state energy funding opportunities;

- **provide opportunities** for economic diversification, career development; and investment in renewable energy for California tribes;

Components of Resolution Committing to Support Tribal Energy Sovereignty (Actions)

- enter into memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with interested California tribes to establish **frameworks for collaboration** on key energy policy and planning initiatives;

- develop **capacity building** and technical assistance resources to support clean energy transitions, advance the development of tribal energy enterprises, and increase access to clean energy programs;

- increase **tribal set-asides** within State programs and funding opportunities;

- partner with California tribes to pursue **federal funding** opportunities;

- prioritize **community benefits** within programs, policies, and planning initiatives;

- enhance **land-use considerations** in clean energy planning for the protection of tribal cultural resources;

- increase cultural awareness and **knowledge of tribal priorities** among Commission staff to better inform the development of programs, policies, and planning initiatives.

Components of Resolution Committing to Support Tribal Energy Sovereignty (Actions Related to Land)

- provide assistance to facilitate California tribal government access to existing **information concerning land that may be of interest** to California tribes, including the environmental condition of the land;

- encourage and support opportunities for entities with whom the Commission conducts business with or otherwise regulates or interacts, including, but not limited to, publicly owned utilities, to provide California tribes **access, use, and co-management of lands** and to work cooperatively with California tribes that are interested in acquiring lands in excess of State needs; and

- encourage and support local agencies, as defined by Government Code section 54221(a), with whom the Commission interacts, to **transfer ownership of surplus lands** with which California tribes have a cultural connection or are within a California tribe's ancestral land.

Where we are today...

State Funding Eligibility Expanded
- Energy Conservation Assistance Act (ECAA)

Capacity Funds
- California Clean Energy Policy and Planning Program (CCEPP)
- Offshore Wind Capacity Fund

Tribal Set-Asides
- Tribal Specific Equitable Building Decarbonization Program (Tribal EBD)

Removing Funding Barriers
- Tribal Electric Vehicle Infrastructure, Planning, and Workforce Training and Development

Tribal Engagement in Planning
- Offshore Wind
- SB 100

What does tribal energy sovereignty look like for your tribe?
(Slide Co-Developed 10/30/25)

- Owning own water and energy infrastructure (such as water treatment plant)

- Control own energy, currently in times of disaster left on own. Extra protection for community when in charge of energy.

- Control the cost of energy for tribal members. Establish set costs for members, instead of fluctuating prices. Not a profit-making entity, provides a service to members at a set cost.

- Opportunity to build own infrastructure, microgrid – solar, wind, backup generators. ECAA as a good start.

- Members have their own power at their homes. Tribe having control of energy supply and transmission.

- Economic development – creates job opportunities for tribe members to support energy. Workforce opportunities for tribal youth.

- Tribal set-aside funding is important for tribes. When you give tribes the funds they need, they can get a lot done.

- There is a misconception that tribes don't pay state taxes—but there are state taxes on each energy bill. Need to see more of the benefits of those taxes coming back to tribes.

- Geothermal energy – need to explore and connect with other indigenous people around the world who are harnessing geothermal. How can this energy be harnessed for the benefit of tribes? Could be harnessing existing power or creating new. Geothermal is efficient, although lots of funding is needed. Funding needed for tribal geothermal exploration.

- Opportunity to set the costs and keep profits on the reservation.

- Legislation that is specific to tribes that help with return on solar; could set specific net metering rates for tribes.

- Outreach and education on how energy systems work (solar and true up costs, battery packs, additional fees)

When you reach your energy sovereignty goals, what does energy work with the state look like? (Slide Co-Developed 10/30/25)

- Continued communication and cooperation with agencies on how to work together (PSP outage events, weather events, etc.) Helping tribes serve as regional resiliency hubs.

- Ensuring that tribes aren't hindered by regulations or utility profit goals.

- Different rules or regulations for tribal sovereign lands; make things easier for tribes to have own power

What Would Be the Most Critical Thing to Include in the Draft Tribal Energy Sovereignty Policy? (Slide Co-Developed 10/30/25)

- Direct communication

- Build relationships with tribes

- Maintaining updates on deadlines

- Acknowledgement of tribe's cultural importance

- If a tribe develops energy source or infrastructure for their community, become a regional resource for other tribes

Morning Break

Tribal Cultural Resource Considerations Regarding Clean Energy Development

Introduction

- Power plants can affect tribal cultural resources
- Project planning: limits time, consultation, flexibility
- Advance planning: encourages time, consultation, flexibility
- Two examples of advance planning

Background on DRECP

- Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan
- Lead Agency: Bureau of Land Management
- Cultural Resource Assistance: California Energy Commission
- Resource Management and Energy Development (10.8M Acres)
- Driven by federal laws and regulations
- Needed to assess cultural resource sensitivity

Summary of Data-gathering Initiative

1. One-mile grid over the DRECP area
2. 10% random sample of 1-mile squares
3. Records searches within the sampled squares
4. GIS: archaeological resource locations and attributes
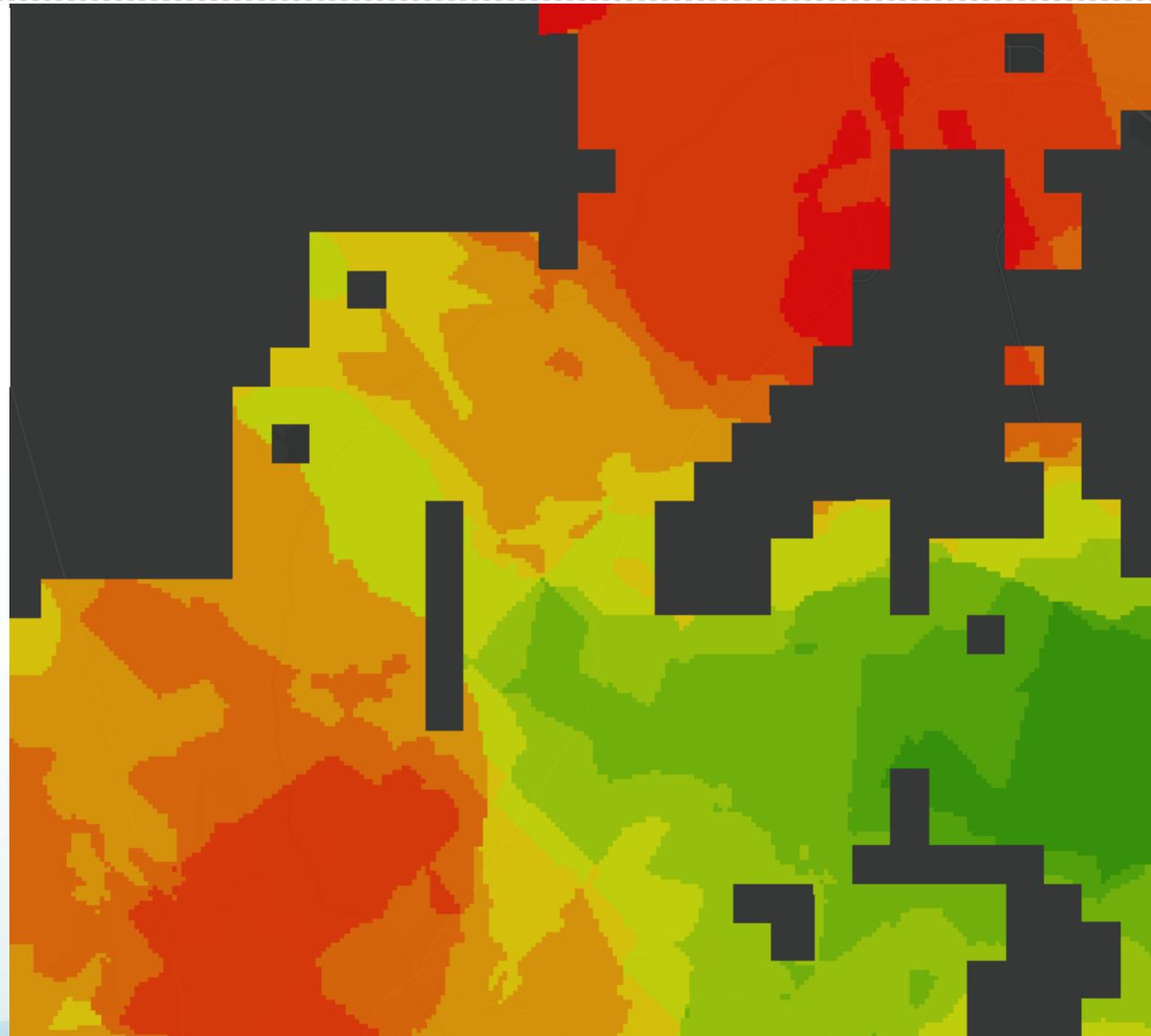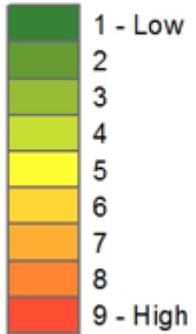5. Total archaeological resources in sample squares: 4,057

Summary of DGI Methods (Cont.)

6. Square sensitivity based on frequency and density

7. Kriging estimated archaeological sensitivity of unsampled squares

8. GIS processing abstracts resource locations

9. GIS: mapped places in public ethnographies

10. Compiled other supplementary GIS layers

DGI Archaeological Sensitivity Map

San Joaquin Valley Solar

- **Least-Conflict Areas for San Joaquin Valley Solar**
- Agencies, agriculture, bio & tribal conservation, industry
- Covered 9.5M acres across eight counties
- Not driven by laws or regulations
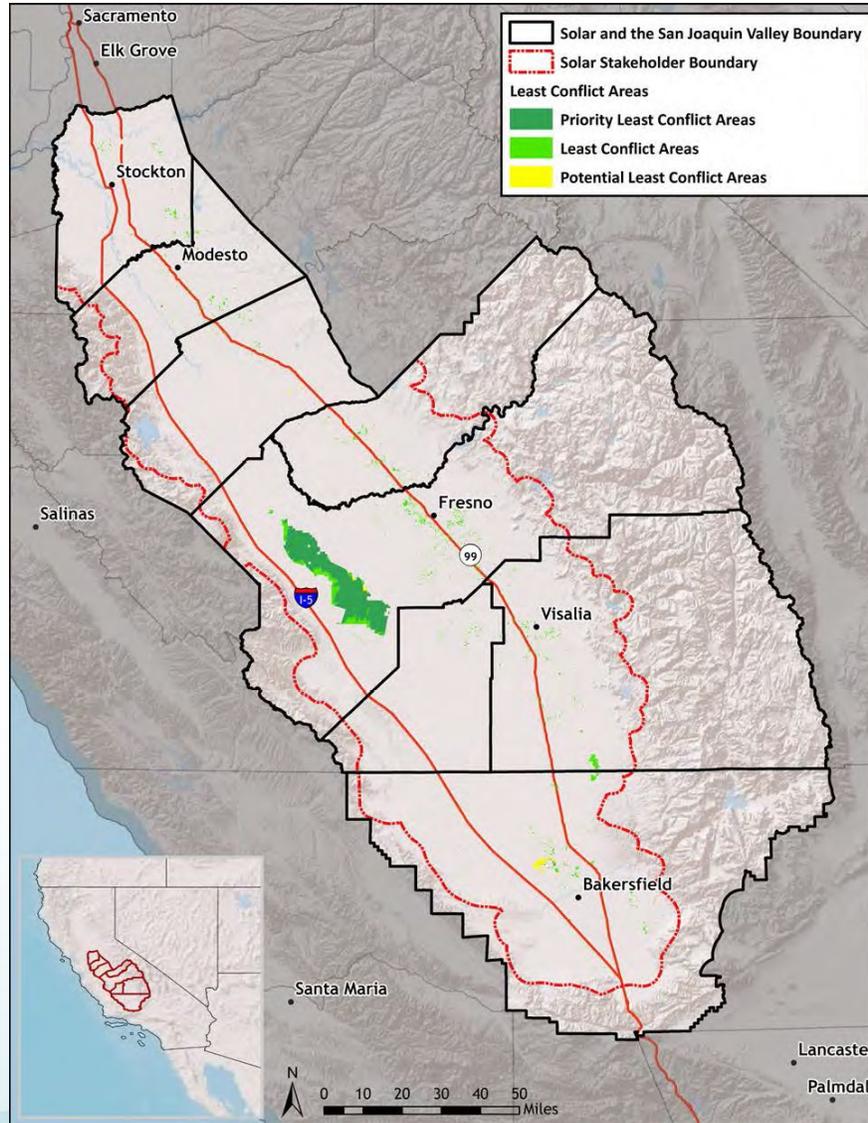- Tribes affected and steward important knowledge

San Joaquin Valley Solar: Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resource Methods

1. Initiated tribal consultation

2. Convened virtual and in-person meetings

3. Documented written and verbal comments

4. Tribally led information-gathering and GIS mapping

5. Integrated tribal data into other data

6. Tribal review of the outcome

7. Published approved results (*A Path Forward*)

San Joaquin Valley Solar: Tribally Identified Least-Conflict Areas

Comparing Approaches: Status Quo

Typical Project Planning Sequence

- Developer's due-diligence planning: variable tribal outreach
  - Developer often options project site
- The developer prepares an application
  - Sometimes the first agency viewing
- Permitting agencies conduct their environmental impact review
  - Tribal consultation is most intense here

Comparing Approaches: Advance Planning

- Can reduce schedule-related pressure
- Can increase consultation frequency and quality
- Reduces pressure associated with optioned land
- Fewer conflicts about confidential information
- Can reduce risks for tribes and developers
- Question: How about landscape-level approaches?

LUNCH BREAK

We will resume at 1:05 p.m.

Best Practices for Tribal Energy Grants

CEC Tribal Grants Working Group

Goals:

▶ Inform OIIP Process

▶ Identify Challenges

▶ Share Solutions

▶ Coordinate Implementation

▶ Collaboration Across Divisions to Build Capacity

EXAMPLE GRANT STRUCTURES

Example 1:
Equitable Building Decarbonization Program, Tribal Direct Install

Overview: Retrofits to buildings and homes owned by tribes, tribal members, or tribal organizations.

Structure of grant:

- Tribal formula allocation with option for additional funding:

- Choice between direct grant administration or community-based organization as "implementer."

Example 2:
Clean Transportation Program
Tribal Electric Vehicle Infrastructure, Planning, and Workforce Training and Development

Overview: provided funding for Tribes, Tribal Organizations, and Tribally-owned businesses for:

1. EV Charging Infrastructure
2. EV Infrastructure Planning
3. EV Workforce Training and Development

Structure of grant:
- Supporting planning and building capacity
- Direct apply or apply with a partner organization

Example 3:
Fifth Climate Change Assessment Tribal Research Grant Program

Overview: supports tribally led research, implementation of resilience projects, and information sharing amongst tribes. Tribal Research Grant Program focused on climate research, Indigenous Knowledges, and similar projects deemed a priority by California tribes.

Structure of grant:

- Two rounds of funding

- Intended to encourage tribally led research to address California-specific tribal research needs

- Application office hours

Example 4: Funding Tribal Microgrids

Overview: Over $130 million towards Tribal Microgrids funded through:

- Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC)
- Long Duration Energy Storage (LDES)
- California Energy Commission's Energy Conservation Assistance Act (ECAA)

DISCUSSION

How can CEC better reduce the barriers to applying for grants? (Slide Co-Developed 10/30/25)

- Establishing Tribal set-asides – needs to be an adequate amount.
- If agency gives a minimum amount for a formula allocation, stick to that. Do not cut the minimum if there are a lot of applicants.
- Implement a scoring system that awards funds to tribes that have strong applications
- Mention all fine print regarding scoring upfront so tribes understand the whole process; make sure no hidden criteria
- Offer debriefing sessions of application process with staff
- Set up applications with a "Save page" function so that applicants can adequately save all they complete.
- First screen of application portal should include information about what documents will be required (especially docs that take time)
- Workforce development plan should not necessarily be a requirement to receive funds. Tribes have differing workforce need.
- Reassess the documents that are required depending on what type of grant (ie are insurance docs needed for a planning grant?)
- Ensure the contact emails that are included can and will respond to questions
- If funding is targeted to tribes with specific level of development already, make that clear in the application upfront so tribes can adequately assess whether to apply.
- Hold a place in line for grants that have many rounds of funding; if tribes have submitted an application and do not get funding, their application can roll over to next round. Create a pipeline of unfunded projects that can be matched with the next grant opportunity.
- Prefer that funds go directly to tribes rather than partners.
- Create simple applications! (2-page over-the-counter applications)
- Use of funds needs to be explained and presented clearly on application
- Offer grants with no match requirement
- Support setting up a Tribal Utility Authority
- Funding made available to help support connectivity issues for EV charging stations, apps
- Engage with tribes to learn what grant funding topics would be helpful in their regions. Dedicated funds for tribes.
- Workforce development expands beyond tribes and supports community and regional job development and employment
- Specify what equitable funding means, ensure funding is available for smaller tribes and rural communities

What challenges have you experienced in grant administration? (Slide Co-Developed 10/30/25)

- Too much and constant reporting requirements – very time consuming and takes away from doing work on the project.
- Many people are impacted by the reporting requirements (leaders, CFO, grant writers, etc.) Worry that if they miss deadlines will affect other opportunities, but capacity very limited.
- Condense reporting to bi-annually instead of quarterly. Have zoom check ins rather than written reports. Start reporting once the project has actually started.
- Have a CEC Implementer to work with tribes on reporting (implementer would be funded by separate grant funds). Implementer would be from tribe.
- Online reporting – once a year financial and narrative reporting. Good example is the Indian Housing Block Grant. Boxes built into the reporting form that you check with progress made.
- Consider intent of reporting. Look at track record of grant recipients to determine if they have used funds properly. If so, adjust reporting requirements accordingly.
- Include up front notice of reporting due dates

What would you like to see in terms of the structure of CEC grant opportunities? (Slide Co-Developed 10/30/25)

- Look at grant funding at a regional or community level
- Online portal is helpful, especially with teams working on grants
- Allow system to cut and paste responses from word document or PDF into portal so you can work offline and across a team. Make sure you can save portal pages.
- Communication of grant opportunities – newsletters, workshops.
- Notify tribes of tribal set-asides or grants that do not have applications from tribes; or funding that might be expiring by end of year (highlight any "use it or lose it" funds)
- Announcements in LinkedIn – highlight grants through repeated social media posts
- Work with tribal associations that can help share information

THANK YOU

Tribal Energy Equity Indicators

Energy Equity Indicators Tool
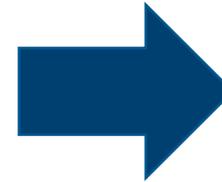
Data Visualization and Mapping

Database of Equity Data

Geographic Data Layers

Data Access and Analysis

Insights to Help Prioritize CEC Efforts and Investments for Tribes

Relevance to Other OIIP Efforts

Energy Resources

- Motivate equitable distribution of clean energy resources by increasing transparency
- Track progress over time to measure impact of CEC efforts

Energy Grants

- Help identify communities that could use support to tackle their energy challenges
- Provide quantitative metrics to help strengthen grant proposals

Energy Equity Metrics Categorization

Energy Metrics

- Access
- Reliability
- Efficiency
- Affordability
- Programs
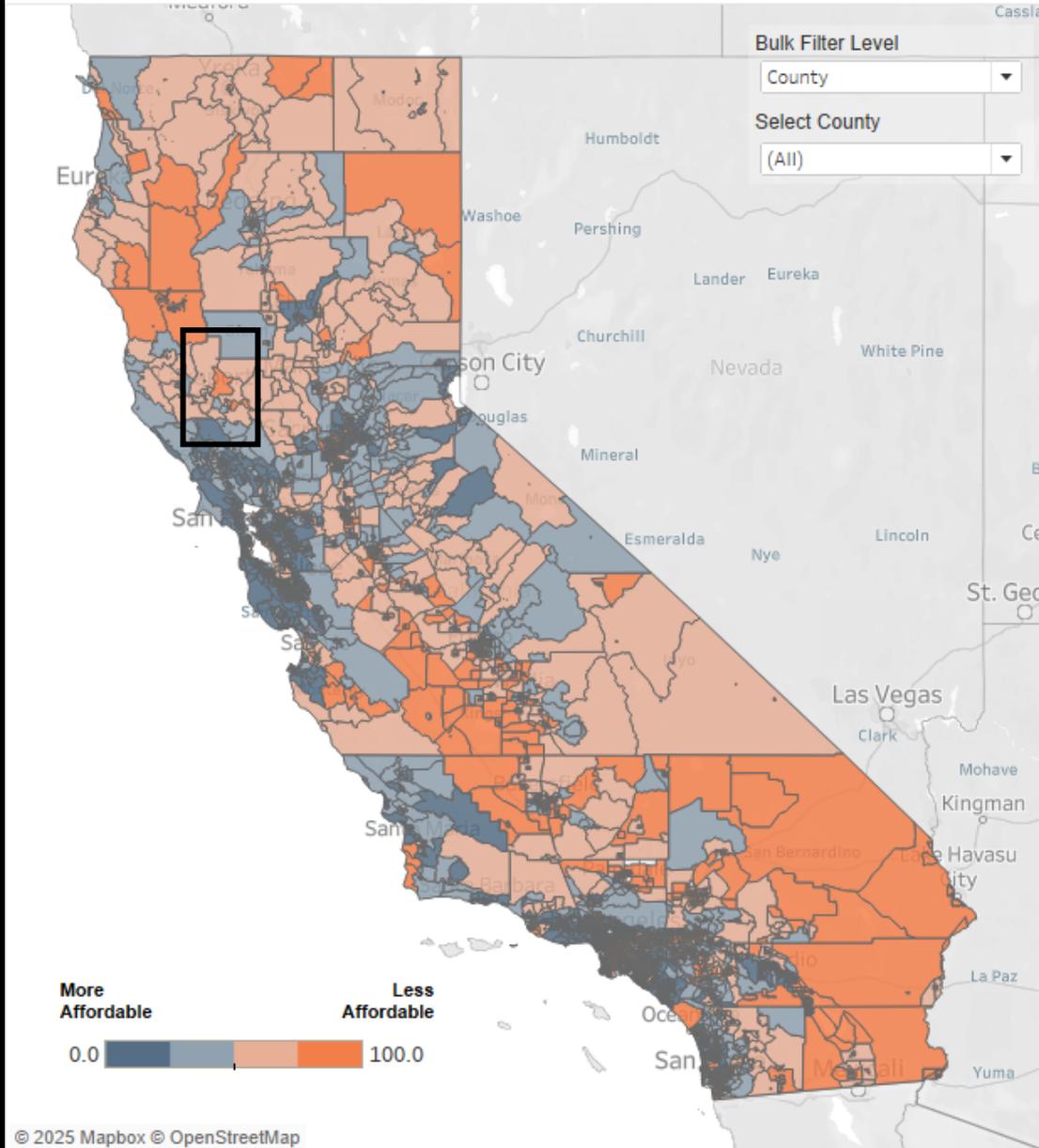- Clean Energy Adoption

Supplementary Metrics

- Community
- Health
- Safety
- Socioeconomics

A Deep Dive into Energy Affordability
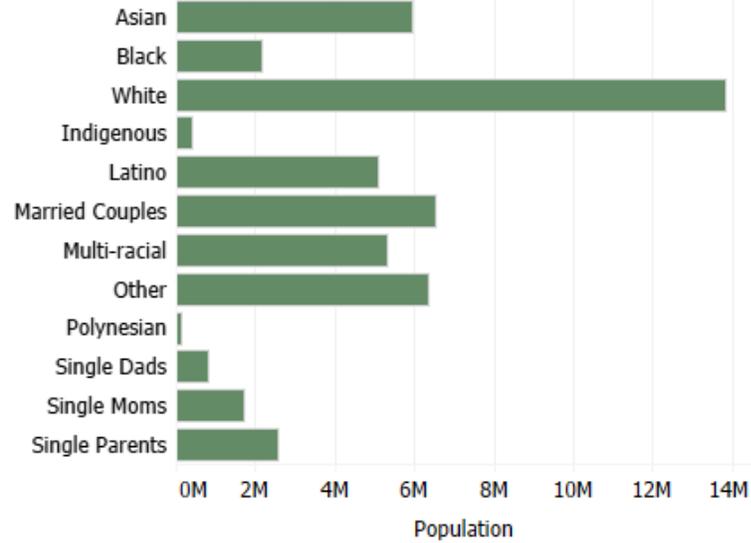
Energy Affordability Index by Census Tract

Bulk Filter Level
County

Select County
(All)

More Affordable — Less Affordable
0.0 — 100.0

© 2025 Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Pearson Correlation Tool

Independent Variable:
Energy Affordability Index

Vulnerability Variable:
Energy Affordability Index

r = 1.00

Community Characteristics

Asian
Black
White
Indigenous
Latino
Married Couples
Multi-racial
Other
Polynesian
Single Dads
Single Moms
Single Parents

0M 2M 4M 6M 8M 10M 12M 14M
Population

Population Selected **39,234,926**   Average Household Size **3.0**

Average Energy Affordability Index **50.00**

Average Energy Burden **2.1%**

Total Energy Affordability Gap **59,216.8M**

Filters

Geographic Level:
- ◉ Census Tract
- ○ ZIP Code
- ○ City
- ○ County
- ○ State Assembly District
- ○ State Senate District
- ○ Natural Gas Provider
- ○ Electric Power Provider

Metric:
- ◉ Energy Affordability Index
- ○ Energy Affordability Gap
- ○ Energy Burden

Home Ownership Type:
- ◉ Combined
- ○ Owners
- ○ Renters

Energy Affordability Index:
- ◉ Show All
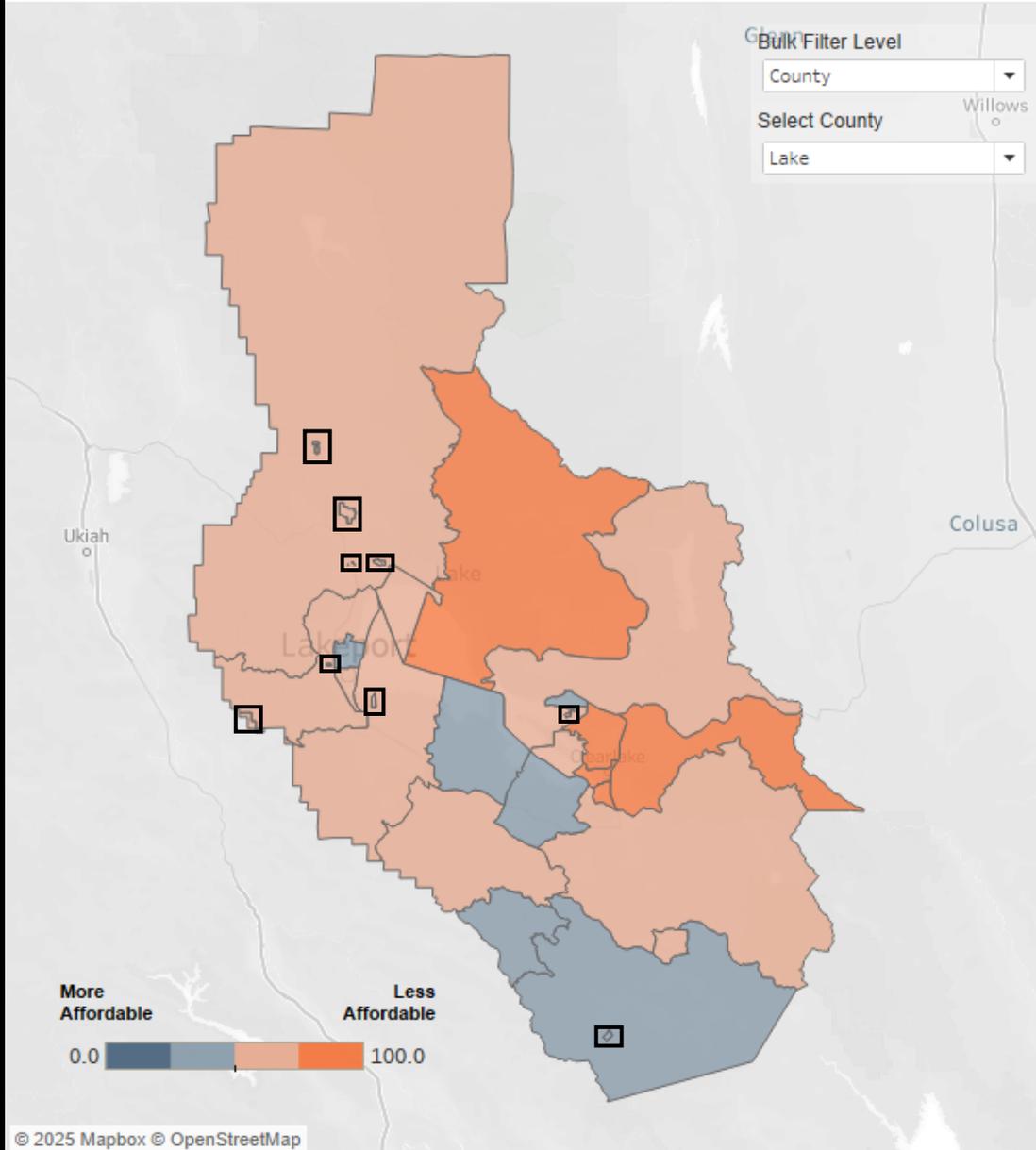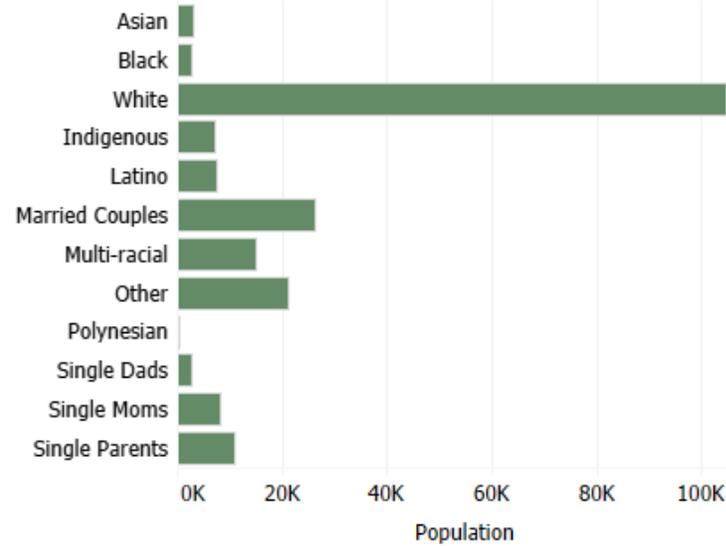- ○ Filter Top 25%

SB 535 DACs Filter:
- ◉ Show All
- ○ DACs

Justice Census Tract Filter
- ◉ Show All
- ○ Justice Census Tracts

A Deep Dive into Energy Affordability

Discussion-Guiding Questions

- How could your tribe utilize these metrics or this tool?
    - Would it be useful for energy planning?
    - Would it be useful for grant funding?

- Are there any other uses that your tribe would find beneficial?
    - Are there features or metrics you would like to see added?

- Do you have any other thoughts on how Energy Equity Indicators can better meet tribal needs?

Thank You!

Quenby Lum, Energy End Use Survey Specialist
Martín Flores, Energy Equity and Energy Modeling Specialist

Group email: EnergyEquityIndicators@energy.ca.gov

Afternoon Break

Improving Energy Project Development Processes

Purpose of discussion

- Explore potential approaches to improve coordination and consultation on energy related projects

- Identify and strengthen roles for participation in both tribal and non-tribal energy related project development

- Improve consideration of cultural resources on non-tribal land

- Identify non-process issues that impact effective communications and coordination

Example Approaches for Energy Project Development Process

- Project development is **iterative**

- Unexpected variables may result in **changes to a project**

- **Communication** should occur throughout all processes

- Project **data transparency and accessibility** needed throughout all processes

Project Process Example

1. Project Potential
- Preliminary assessment of opportunity
- Data collection

2. Project Options
- Determine ownership structure
- Permitting and environmental compliance considerations

3. Project Refinement
- Planning and development
- Engineering and design

4. Project Implementation
- Financing
- Construction

5. Project Operations and Maintenance (O&M)
- Post-construction management of project

1. Project Potential

Determine if basics met for project development

- Possible site locations, restrictions, and conflicts
- Feasibility studies
- Need or demand for project or resource

Below co-developed 10/30/25

- Early communication/contact is important. Have a standing agreement for tribal notification early in the process.
- Early contact and notifications from agency and private developer.
- Phone call communications, in addition to other methods of communication (emails, letters).
- Ensure laws are being complied with by companies, and that they understand the law.
- Do not rely on earlier "previously disturbed" designations, they may not extend to the entire project.
- Identify long term owners and start conversations around cultural resources before proposed development.

2. Project Options

Determine roles, ownership structure, and regulatory considerations

- Understand tribal roles and business structure
- Explore opportunities for tribal partnerships
- Identify permitting other use considerations

Below co-developed 10/30/25

- Communication and collaboration.
- Bring tribes into conversations around project and partnership opportunities. Build off of monitoring and mitigation roles for full partnership.
- Understanding tribes' needs and goals and reach out with options that might fit.
- Tribal Ambassador – finds out info to bring back to liaison. Find out the needs of different tribes and regions.
- Tribal outreach to let developers know what projects might work and what the needs are.
- As energy systems are built and projects move forward, look into opportunities to assert tribal tax authority (ie for transmission lines). Or leveraging right of ways for equity stakes.
- For projects, having a seat at the table is important. Opportunities to be owners of projects.
- Tribes understanding the power they have in the process; need to get a piece of the equity of renewable projects.
- CEC could be facilitator of process of ensuring tribes identify needs and how they can best benefit from projects. How are the tribes' voices being heard?
- Tribal energy development could eclipse gaming with right economic support. CEC can help promote ownership.

3. Project Refinement

Finalize project structure and decisions

- Finalize ownership structure i.e. tribal, community, or developer
- Determine regulatory requirements, technology, and costs
- Environmental studies, CEQA, NEPA

Below co-developed 10/30/25

- Categorical exclusions for environmental reviews can help streamline. Could CEC help identify streamlining opportunities?
- Educate on streamlined processes for environmental studies (such as Opt-in projects)
- CEC providing training for tribes on NEPA process, including exclusions. More training on environmental review overall.

4. Project Implementation

Project contract and construction

- Finalize pre-construction agreements and finances

Below co-developed 10/30/25

- Standing community meetings to provide weekly/periodic updates (organized by developer)
- Project calendar, schedules, cultural monitors, community meetings. Laying this out in a project agreement.
- Communication plan that is followed.
- Ensuring project is sticking to set schedules.
- Negotiating in good faith

5. Project O&M

Conduct or ensure ongoing O&M including repair and replacement of items as needed

- Warranties and O&M agreements
- System performance and monitoring

Below co-developed 10/30/25

- Data transparency
- Opportunities to own or partially own project after completion. Opportunities for flipped ownership, including with transmission and distribution lines. CEC can help facilitate this.
- Coordination on additional projects down the road
- Build and cultivate partnerships
- Opportunity for tribes to maintain future projects; need for workforce development funds to build out O&M workforce, be able to sustain long term maintenance.
- Operations and maintenance contracts can stay local; managed by tribes
- Decommissioning process – involve tribes in conversation, especially with opportunities for land acquisition.

Thank you

Useful links:

- DOE reference slides: [The Five-Step Process Framework for Project Development](#)

Closing Comments

Upcoming Funding Opportunities

- Tribal Set-aside Equitable Building Decarbonization

  ➤ Guidelines posted.

- Electric Program Investment Charge 5 (EPIC 5)

  ➤ Currently standing up outreach an engagement for the 5th investment plan.

Way to Stay Engaged

- Follow the proceeding around the state!
  - 9 more regional roundtables in Round 1!

- Sign-Up for the "Tribal Program" email list.

- Request tribal consultation

- Submit written comments to the docket.

SUBSCRIBE

Tribal Program

Email *

Email

SUBSCRIBE

Next OIIP Regional Roundtable:
Information will be available soon!

Thank You!