

CalEPA Tribal Advisory Committee

January 2025: CalRecycle Report

CalRecycle recognizes California Native American tribes (Tribes) as the original stewards of California, whose leadership can guide us toward a future free of waste and trash pollution. Consultation, collaboration, and input from Tribes on our rules, regulations, policies, and programs, can help to advance decisions and policies for improved circularity. By returning to a circular economy that emphasizes sustainability through reduction, reuse, recycling, and recirculation of materials, we can regenerate healthy ecosystems and build thriving communities.

The Department of Resources Recovery and Recycling (CalRecycle) has been working with Tribes throughout the state for many years and aims to further strengthen tribal consultation and engagement through the establishment of the Office of Environmental Justice, Tribal Relations, Education and Outreach.

Many opportunities exist for Tribes to engage with CalRecycle and participate in programs, including:

- Building California's Zero-Waste, Circular Economy
- Beverage Container Recycling Program Reforms
- Composting and Surplus Food Rescue for Climate
- Disaster Debris Removal
- Illegal Dumping Cleanup and Mitigation
- Other CalRecycle Grant and Loan Programs

Consultations

Consultations Initiated

AB 52 Consultation on the Rotelli Burn Dump.

CalRecycle is proposing to implement the remediation of the Rotelli Burn Dump, located adjacent to Highway 49 near Mill Villa Court in Sonora, CA. The Rotelli Burn Dump Remediation Project (Project) will involve the excavation and reconsolidation of burn ash within the burn dump footprint (approximately 3 acres) followed by capping with 2 feet thickness of compacted soil. On November 18, 2024, CalRecycle sent a request for consultation to three Tribes under AB-52 consultation pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). To date, one Tribe has responded with a request for consultation. CalRecycle plans to conduct additional outreach to the Tribes that have not yet responded, and initiate consultation with the Tribe that has responded.

Consultations Concluded

AB 52 Consultation on the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act (Senate Bill (SB) 54, Allen, Chapter 75, Statutes of 2022).

As part of the environmental review process for the proposed program, CalRecycle is consulted with Tribes consistent with AB 52 to incorporate feedback to support the protection of cultural resources and to discuss opportunities and potential impacts associated with SB 54 to reduce plastic pollution and packaging. On May 21, 2024, CalRecycle submitted a request to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) to obtain contact information for Tribes in California. The NAHC responded with a list of 307 tribal contacts on June 12, 2024.

On July 12, 2024, formal letters and emails were sent to all the listed tribal representatives, inquiring if they wished to consult on the program under AB 52, asking for any knowledge or concerns about tribal cultural resources in the area, and requesting responses within 30 days as per PRC Section 21080.3.1(d).

As of the publication of the Draft PEIR, six Tribes have requested consultation or additional information, and five Tribes have formally declined consultation or provided comments. Consultations were concluded on October 31, 2024. The remaining Tribes have not responded. In addition to the distribution of formal consultation requests, CalRecycle announced the opportunity for consultation and engagement on SB 54 during listening sessions and presentations to Tribes.

Funding for Tribes

CalRecycle recognizes opportunities in partnering with Tribes to advance circular solutions through grants and other funding programs and continues to update grant program criteria, related budget and statutory language, and grant application documents to enhance tribal participation. In addition, CalRecycle is actively conducting tribal outreach on available grants through our listserv, presentations, meetings, and events.

As of the date of this report, CalRecycle has awarded \$1,955,425 in grants for tribal projects that include:

- **Community Composting for Green Spaces (CCG)** to increase the number of community groups operating small-scale composting programs in green spaces within disadvantaged and low-income communities, and to increase the capacity of those composting programs.
 - In March and April 2024, CalRecycle recommended awards totaling \$805,457 for its first tribal specific funding opportunity under the Community Composting for Green Spaces Grant Program, Cycles 3 and 4.

- **Edible Food Recovery Grants** to support new and expanded edible food recovery and food waste prevention projects to keep unsold food from creating climate pollution in landfills by redirecting it to those in need.
 - In March 2022, CalRecycle awarded \$488,969 to Tribes under the Edible Food Recovery Grant Program, Cycle 1.
- **Farm and Ranch Solid Waste Cleanup and Abatement Grants** to clear illegally dumped materials from farming or agricultural land and prevent future dumping.
 - In September and October 2024, CalRecycle awarded \$200,000 to Tribes under the Farm and Ranch Solid Waste Cleanup and Abatement Grant Program, Cycle 83.

Resources and Opportunities

Resources

- [CalRecycle Funding Homepage](https://calrecycle.ca.gov/funding/) (https://calrecycle.ca.gov/funding/)
- [CA Grant Portal Site](https://www.grants.ca.gov/) (https://www.grants.ca.gov/)
- Email: grant.assistance@calrecycle.ca.gov or Raaz.Morairty@calrecycle.ca.gov for grant questions.

Opportunities

Funding Program	What's funded
<u>Beverage Container Quality Infrastructure Grant Program</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program funds infrastructure that sorts materials from curbside recycling programs or drop-off collection programs to create cleaner, recyclable beverage container materials mostly free of contamination. • \$50,000,000 is available for the fiscal year. • The minimum requested amount is \$1,000,000. • The maximum grant award amount is \$10,000,000
<u>Beverage Container Recycling Grant</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Beverage Container Recycling Grant (BCRG) Program aims to reach and maintain an 80% recycling rate for all California Refund Value (CRV) beverage containers – aluminum, glass, plastic, and bi-metal. • \$1.5 million is available for each grant cycle. • \$75,000 is the minimum available for individual grant awards.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$275,000 is the maximum available for individual grant awards.
<u>Beverage Container Redemption Innovation Grant Program</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This grant program allows different types of redemption to encourage recycling center innovation that can increase places to redeem California Refund Value (CRV) around the state. • Funding to be determined in the state budget.
<u>Community Composting for Green Spaces (CCG)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of community groups operating small-scale composting programs in green spaces within disadvantaged and low-income communities, and to increase the capacity of those composting programs.
<u>Edible Food Recovery</u> <u>Food Waste Prevention & Rescue (EFR/FW)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes new or expanding existing food waste prevention projects (either by edible food recovery for people or source reduction efforts) in California to reduce the amount of food disposed of in landfills.
<u>Farm and Ranch Solid Waste Cleanup and Abatement (FR)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanup of illegal solid waste sites on farm or ranch property.
<u>Household Hazardous Waste Grants (HD)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish or expand HHW collection programs
<u>Increased Recycling of Empty Glass Beverage Containers Grant Program</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To recycle more glass beverage containers, the Increased Recycling of Empty Glass Beverage Containers Grant Program funds regional pilot programs that supply bins for collecting empty glass beverage containers from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restaurants ○ Retail licensed establishments that sell beverages to drink onsite (on-sale), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On-sale beer and wine licenses ▪ On-sale general licenses ▪ On-sale general licenses for seasonal businesses • \$4,000,000 available for each fiscal year.

<u>Local Government Waste Tire Cleanup (TCU)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection, removal, transportation, recycling, and disposal of waste tires from illegal tire piles and areas where illegal dumping has occurred along public rights-of-way.
<u>Local Government Waste Tire Amnesty (TA)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct free amnesty events for the public to recycle their waste tires.
<u>Organics (ORG)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For projects to lower overall greenhouse gas emissions by expanding existing capacity or establishing new facilities in California to reduce the amount of California-generated green materials, food materials, and/or Alternative Daily Cover being sent to landfills. Each cycle has a different set of requirements or allowable project types.
<u>Recycled Fiber, Plastic, and Glass (FPG)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand existing capacity or establishing new facilities in California that use California-generated postconsumer recycled fiber (old corrugated cardboard, paper board, or textiles), plastic, or glass to manufacture products. This program has not received funding since FY19/20.
<u>Reusable Beverage Containers Infrastructure Grant Program</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reusable Beverage Containers Infrastructure Grant Program provides start-up costs for a deposit-return system of reusable glass containers in the Beverage Container Recycling Program to support California's circular economy. \$25,000,000 is available for fiscal year 2022-2023. The minimum requested amount is \$3,000,000. The maximum grant award is \$25,000,000.
<u>Reuse (GRU)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand and improve waste diversion in California through reuse. This was a Pilot Project and has not received funding since FY19/20.
<u>Rubberized Pavement (TRP)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote markets for recycled-content surfacing products derived from waste tires generated in California and decrease the adverse environmental

	<p>impacts created by unlawful disposal and stockpiling of waste tires.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible projects are RAC and Chip Seal projects.
<u>Tire-Derived Aggregate (TDA)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides assistance for solving a variety of engineering challenges. TDA, which is produced from shredded tires, is lightweight, free-draining, and a less expensive alternative to conventional lightweight aggregates.
<u>Tire-Derived Product (TDP)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the use of TDPs for repurposing projects such as pathways, landscaping, mats, curb stops, and ramps.

Engagement & Key Priority Projects

Office of Environmental Justice, Tribal Relations, Education, and Outreach

Under AB 649 ([Bennett, Chapter 492, Statutes of 2022](#)), CalRecycle established a new Office of Environmental Justice, Tribal Relations, Education and Outreach (EJTREO). In November 2023, CalRecycle appointed the deputy director to lead the office. The office is providing continued resource dedication for our tribal partners, aiming to enhance tribal consultation, outreach, and engagement in all programs, considerations, and initiatives.

In Quarter 3, EJTREO onboarded 3 new staff members. In Quarter 4, EJTREO launched the CalRecycle website dedicated to Tribal Relations, <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/tribalrelations/>.

CalRecycle's Extended Producer Responsibility Programs

CalRecycle oversees statewide extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs for paint, carpet, mattresses, pharmaceuticals and sharps waste, batteries, packaging, and textiles. These EPR programs are operated by non-profit stewardship organizations that are responsible for providing convenient program access throughout California. In Q3 of 2024, staff from CalRecycle's Pharmaceuticals and Sharps EPR Unit and the Office of Environmental Justice, Tribal Relations, Education and Outreach initiated an assessment of existing EPR programs to better understand Tribes' current access to EPR programs, including identifying ongoing efforts by stewardship organizations to coordinate with Tribes and barriers to participation. This assessment will continue in 2025 and seeks to identify opportunities to coordinate with stewardship organizations to maximize tribal engagement in existing EPR programs and provide guidance for

ensuring tribal considerations are included in regulatory processes and departmental decision-making for emerging EPR programs. The overall goal of the assessment is to enhance CalRecycle's EPR program oversight while respecting tribal sovereignty.

Responsible Textile Recovery Act of 2024

The Responsible Textile Recovery Act of 2024 ([SB 707, Newman, Chapter 864, Statutes of 2024](#)), introduces a statewide stewardship program aimed at diverting textile articles and apparel from landfills through recycling, repair, and reuse initiatives. CalRecycle is positioned to play a pivotal role in implementing this legislation by creating and enforcing regulations, collaborating with a producer responsibility organization (PRO), and advancing environmental justice through sustainable waste management practices. The department is actively seeking new opportunities to engage with producers, interested parties, and Tribal Nations to maximize participation and equitable outcomes, fostering innovative solutions to align with California's broader zero waste and circular economy goals.

Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act

California's Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act ([SB 54, Allen, Chapter 75, Statutes of 2022](#)) requires industry to form a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) to create and implement a source reduction, collection and recycling program for their single-use packaging and single-use plastic food ware. CalRecycle began a [robust rulemaking process in 2023](#) that will be continued into 2025. CalRecycle is also collaboratively developing the first statewide needs assessment, which will guide the PRO's budget and plan detailing how California will meet the goals of SB 54. SB 54 was discussed with Tribes during the April 8 event, "California's Path towards Zero Waste with California Native American Tribes." CalRecycle seeks to continue meaningful engagement to inform the needs assessment and better understand tribal priorities, needs, and potential consequences as it relates to SB 54.

Tribal Composting Needs Assessment and Permitting Guide

CalRecycle recognizes the critical role and commitment of California Native American tribes (Tribes) in advancing climate solutions. Composting is a proven practice to reduce the GHG emissions from landfilling of organic waste. Compost is a valuable resource often used as a component of systems and treatments designed for carbon sequestration, food production, green space development, erosion control, fire remediation, stormwater management, and other uses. CalRecycle launched the Tribal Composting Needs Assessment and Permitting Guide to understand the priorities and resources needed by Tribes related to developing and operating composting facilities to divert materials from landfills and to help foster climate resilience. The contract was awarded in June 2024. CalRecycle approved the contractor's Tribal Engagement Plan and assisted with the formation of the Tribal Advisory Panel for the Needs Assessment. The first Advisory Panel session occurred November 14, 2025. Four Tribes were represented at the session and provided valuable insights into their composting efforts

and topics to focus on in the Needs Assessment. The next Advisory Panel session is planned to occur in February 2025. Three to five listening sessions open to all California Native American Tribes will occur in 2025. The final Needs Assessment report is due July 2025, and the Permitting Guide is due December 2025.

California's Zero Waste Plan and Public Education and Change Campaign

In February 2024, California launched the development of a Zero-Waste Plan and Public Education and Change Campaign for the Circular Economy and Zero Waste to be conducted over the next 2 years. The Zero-waste Plan will identify actions to lessen the negative impacts of materials we produce, use, and discard. Wasting these materials generates climate pollution and results in other negative environmental and human health impacts, including toxic pollution and hazards. The Public Education and Change Campaign is intended to raise awareness and create behavior change related to recycling, zero waste, and the circular economy.

On April 8, 2024, CalRecycle co-hosted the first intergovernmental hybrid event focused on zero waste with Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians Tribe and Robinson Rancheria Pomo Indians along with representatives from the Native American Fiber Program.

June 5, 2024, CalRecycle introduced the Zero Waste Plan initiative to the Tribal Advisory Committee.

On September 16, 2024, CalRecycle hosted a Tribal Listening Session to provide early input into the development of the Zero Waste Plan.

On October 24, 2024 CalRecycle hosted a Think Tank Session at the Tribal EPA & U.S. EPA Region 9 Annual Conference: Regenerating Circularity for Zero Waste and Thriving Communities. The session focused on small group discussions on zero waste approaches, supporting collaboration among tribal Environmental Departments.

everage Container Recycling Program (BCRP) Modernization

Coupling historic budget investments with the most significant beverage container recycling changes in over a decade under SB 1013 ([Atkins, Chapter 610, Statutes of 2022](#)), CalRecycle looks forward to working with Tribes to enhance convenient recycling solutions and new business opportunities for tribal enterprises and tribal members. The Beverage Container Recycling Program was discussed with Tribes during the April 8 event, "California's Path towards Zero Waste with California Native American Tribes," which included a tour of the Robinson Rancheria Recycling Center.

The following Tribes now have registered recycling centers:

- Hopland Band of Pomo Indians DBA Lalil Daqaw Pomo Recycling Center
- Robinson Rancheria of Pomo Indians
- Pala Band of Mission Indians
- Morongo Band of Mission Indians
- Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians

- San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
- Chemehuevi Indian Tribe
- Fantasy Springs Resort Casino – operated by Cabazon Band of Mission Indians

Dealer Cooperatives - [Rulemaking is nearing completion](https://calrecycle.ca.gov/laws/rulemaking/sb1013dealercooperatives/) to shape the operation of dealer cooperatives, which offer CRV beverage container retailers a new way to meet their legal materials management obligation (<https://calrecycle.ca.gov/laws/rulemaking/sb1013dealercooperatives/>). If there are no recycling centers nearby to redeem consumer deposits on these beverage containers, retailers will no longer have the option of paying a \$100 per day fee to fulfill their obligations. Instead, starting in 2025, retailers that sell CRV beverage containers, and are over 5,000 square feet and with more than \$1.5 million in gross annual sales (excluding fuel), with no certified recycling center nearby, must either set up a system to redeem empty beverage containers in-store or join a dealer cooperative. Note that these requirements do not apply to retailers on tribal land, but Tribes may be interested in participating in a dealer cooperative, and/or expanding access to recycling centers.

A dealer cooperative is a non-profit organization representing these retailers that must:

- Submit a plan to CalRecycle for approval on how it will redeem beverage containers and fully implement its plan
- Collect from consumers and re-pay their deposits on beverage containers
- Provide accessible outreach to encourage consumer use and retailer participation in the dealer cooperative program
- Set performance standards and ensure collection in its convenience zone(s)

CalRecycle hosted a public meeting on November 13, 2024 to provide an [overview of dealer cooperative requirements](#) and a [draft of the model dealer cooperative stewardship plan](#) to support interested parties with preparing and submitting a stewardship plan. The draft model plan is subject to change until the regulations are effective.

Disaster Debris Removal Operations: Pre-Disaster Planning

CalRecycle and the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) work in coordination on disaster preparedness efforts. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and/or California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) conducts consultation with interested tribes on disaster debris removal efforts managed by the state. Cal OES then provides information to CalRecycle for operational coordination during the debris removal process. Note that CalRecycle is not assigned to clean up after every disaster recovery mission. If a project is not directly managed by CalRecycle, the local jurisdiction will most likely be responsible for the clean up.

CalRecycle is working to enhance tribal engagement as part of disaster preparedness and provide additional information in disaster debris brochures for homeowners and tribal communities. CalRecycle has finalized an informational flyer on CalRecycle's

Tribal Coordination for Disaster Debris Recovery process. The flyer has been distributed during outreach events, such as the Tribal EPA & U.S. EPA Region 9 Annual Conference and Native American Day. The Tribal Coordinator continues to develop methods to efficiently reach Tribes and their POCs more quickly for any unexpected California disasters.

Current Operations:

CalRecycle is mission tasked by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to conduct private property structural debris and hazard tree removal across four counties including Butte, Kern, Lake and Tehama Counties following the 2024 Statewide Fires. View the [dashboard](https://calrecycle.ca.gov/Disaster/) to learn more about Disaster Debris Removal Operations to date (<https://calrecycle.ca.gov/Disaster/>).

CalOES received communications from Tribes interested in monitoring sensitive areas within the burn scar. CalOES notified CalRecycle of their interest, and CalRecycle followed up to engage interested Tribes and further assist with operational logistics.

Priorities for Next Quarter

- CalRecycle will launch the development of a CalRecycle Tribal Consultation Policy to strengthen partnerships, integrate Tribal perspectives, and ensure meaningful engagement on environmental initiatives, supporting tribal sovereignty and sustainability.
- Continue engagement on the Tribal Composting Needs Assessment and launch coordination of three to five listening sessions.
- Continue outreach and engagement on the Zero Waste Plan.
- Continue outreach, consultation, and engagement to inform the SB 54 Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act Needs Assessment.
- Further development of the California-Mexico Border project. The project focuses on examining waste streams and types in the border region while assessing the impacts of pollution on local communities, including Tribal Nations. This initiative aims to deepen understanding of environmental challenges in the area and promote equitable, sustainable solutions.
- Continue the assessment of EPR programs to improve tribal participation.
- Support grants team to develop increase tribal access and participation in grant programs.

For more information:

- Email: tribalaffairs@calrecycle.ca.gov