

CalEPA Tribal Advisory Committee

February 2026: 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
- Disaster Debris Removal
- Illegal Dumping Cleanup and Mitigation
- Other CalRecycle Grant and Loan Programs

Consultations

No consultations were conducted during this quarter.

Funding Awarded

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 over \$10 Million in grants for tribal projects. The most recent award from this last quarter includes the following:

[Beverage Container Redemption Innovation Grant Program \(RIG\)](#) the RIG4 program provided opportunities to Recycling Centers to support start-up costs for recycling programs, which shall be limited to recycling centers, mobile recycling, reverse vending machines, or bag drop programs for Qualifying Tribal Entities.

In December 2025, CalRecycle recommended awards totaling \$8,996,475 for its first tribal specific funding opportunity under the RIG Grant Program.

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

All funding opportunities listed below are either currently active or upcoming.

Funding Program	What’s funded
<u>Beverage Container Redemption Innovation Grant Program (RIG 5)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minimum requested amount must be at least \$500,000. The maximum requested amount must not exceed \$10,000,000 per grant award. • Applications due June 30, 2026.
<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. • Current round of applications due April 7, 2026, with future rounds expected.
<u>Increased Recycling of Empty Glass Beverage Containers</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$4,000,000 available for each fiscal year. • Up to \$2,000,000 maximum available per applicant per fiscal year (FY)
<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. • Application Materials for fiscal year (FY) 2026–27 will tentatively be available in early Spring 2026.
<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

	<p>shredded tires, is lightweight, free-draining, and a less expensive alternative to conventional lightweight aggregates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$375,000 maximum per grant award. • Application Materials for fiscal year (FY) 2026–27 will tentatively be available in early Spring 2026.
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Engagement & Key Priority Projects

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. CalRecycle 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 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 provide greater access to CalRecycle’s EPR programs while respecting tribal sovereignty (<https://calrecycle.ca.gov/epr/>).

Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act of 2022

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](#). 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.

On January 9, 2026, CalRecycle withdrew proposed regulations from the Office of Administrative Law's review to make changes to improve clarity and support successful implementation of the law. CalRecycle will conduct an additional 15-day comment period.

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.

CalRecycle, in partnership with Kauffman and Associates and Tribes throughout California, hosted three hybrid listening sessions. The third and final engagement session was hosted by Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians in July 2025. In August 2025, the draft Needs Assessment and Permitting Guide was circulated to attendees of the listening sessions as well as the Tribal Advisory Panel to solicit feedback. Feedback was accepted via email and open meetings, and private meetings if requested. The final report is expected January 2026. Kauffman and Associates is also preparing a Community Readiness Assessment tool to assist Tribes with identifying the degree of readiness for composting programs and ideal program scale. This document will be finalized in Spring 2026. Both documents will be posted at <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/tribalrelations/compost/>.

Disaster Debris Removal Operations

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 cleanup.

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.

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/>). Operations have mostly concluded, and reports are being finalized.

Priorities for Next Quarter

- CalRecycle will present on February 11, 2026, during a webinar on EPR programs organized by the US EPA for California Tribes.
- CalRecycle will present at EPA Pacific Southwest (Region 9) RTOC Workgroup Session in February.
- Conduct Antelope Valley Illegal Disposal Tribal Consultation.
- Finalize and publish the Tribal Composting Needs Assessment Community Readiness Guide.
- CalRecycle will be preparing to cohost the Spring TAC meeting.
- Continue the assessment of EPR programs to improve tribal participation.
- Support grants team to increase tribal access and participation in grant programs.

For more information:

- Email: tribalaffairs@calrecycle.ca.gov