



Press Release

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Cal/EPA Provides Grants to Communities for Environmental Justice Projects

SACRAMENTO – Citing the need to address environmental and health issues in communities disproportionately affected by pollution, California Secretary for Environmental Protection Matt Rodriquez announced the selection of 13 organizations for this year's Environmental Justice (EJ) Small Grants. The grants will provide nearly \$250,000 to these community-based nonprofit groups and federally recognized tribal governments to support environmental justice-related projects across California.

“These grants will have a direct impact in some of our most vulnerable California communities, helping to improve their health and quality of life,” said Secretary Rodriquez. “The continuation of this important grant program is a reflection of our ongoing commitment to environmental justice and public health protection.”

Projects selected for the 2013 EJ grants address a variety of environmental and public health objectives, including education on health and safety issues relating to pesticide use, reducing diesel emissions, ensuring safe drinking water, and participation in the environmental decision-making processes at both local and state levels. The projects are located in communities across the state.

The grants are intended to address environmental justice concerns for which no permanent source of funding is available. This is the third year that funding for this program has been provided by the boards and departments within Cal/EPA. The Cal/EPA EJ Small Grants Program was established under Assembly Bill 2312 (Statutes of 2002, Chapter 994) to provide grants up to \$20,000 per project to eligible nonprofit organizations and federally recognized tribal governments.

This year's grant recipients include:

- **Coalition for a Safe Environment, Los Angeles (\$20,000)**
The Coalition for a Safe Environment and the Los Angeles Community Environmental Enforcement Network will monitor air quality in a predominately Latino neighborhood in Wilmington, Calif., impacted by heavy industrial land uses. The project aims to reduce exposure to toxic air pollutants through a web site providing both real-time data reporting and the ability for residents to make incident reports in English and Spanish. Data gathered through the air monitor and reports will be shared with community

members and local, state and federal regulators. The project will focus on approximately 500 residents.

- **Community Water Center, Southern San Joaquin Valley (\$20,000)**

The Community Water Center project will help address the lack of safe and affordable drinking water in rural communities. This will be achieved by providing ongoing technical assistance and support coordination in at least five environmental justice communities in the southern San Joaquin Valley. The support will be designed to enhance effective community participation in addressing local community water challenges and their root causes, such as nitrate contamination of drinking water sources. It will also support local efforts to educate decision-makers, agencies, and other organizations on community water challenges and efforts to address them.

- **Pacific Institute, McCloud River Area, Northern California (\$20,000)**

The Pacific Institute project will build the capacity of members of the Winnemem Wintu Tribe to map their environment and communicate research and solutions regarding the environmental justice challenges they face. The Winnemem Wintu are a small, federally unrecognized tribe of 150 members connected to the McCloud River, Mount Shasta and the surrounding meadows in Shasta County. The challenges they face include issues related to sacred sites, cultural survival, water reliability and fish habitat. This participatory research project will generate data, maps and a research report that the tribe will use to more fully participate in decision-making processes affecting their health, environment and culture.

A complete list of grant recipients is available on the Cal/EPA website at www.calepa.ca.gov/EnvJustice/Funding/SmallGrants/2013/GrantSummary.pdf.

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