



Chico State

North State Planning and Development Collective

2023-24 ANNUAL REPORT

COLLABORATION IS THE
BACKBONE OF SUCCESS



From the Director



“

As we look to the year ahead, we can't wait to continue our collaborative work across the region while providing ongoing, transformative learning opportunities for Chico State students.”

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Collective's 2023–24 Annual Report. I'm so proud of the incredible impact we're having on the region, thanks to the strong partnerships our team has forged with changemakers in education, the Tribal community, workforce development, broadband and natural resources, to name a few.

As an organization, we remain focused on finding innovative solutions to our region's most challenging issues. With a shared commitment to creating a lasting impact across the North State for generations to come, last year we united with University, local, state, and federal partners to help create career pathways for students, fill critical jobs in the forestry sector, protect endangered salmonid habitat, and facilitate digital equity and access in some of our most vulnerable communities. Our work co-convening the North State Region's California Jobs First initiative has resulted in the development of a comprehensive regional economic development strategy and will facilitate the distribution of \$9 million in Catalyst Program funds to North State communities for regional economic development projects.

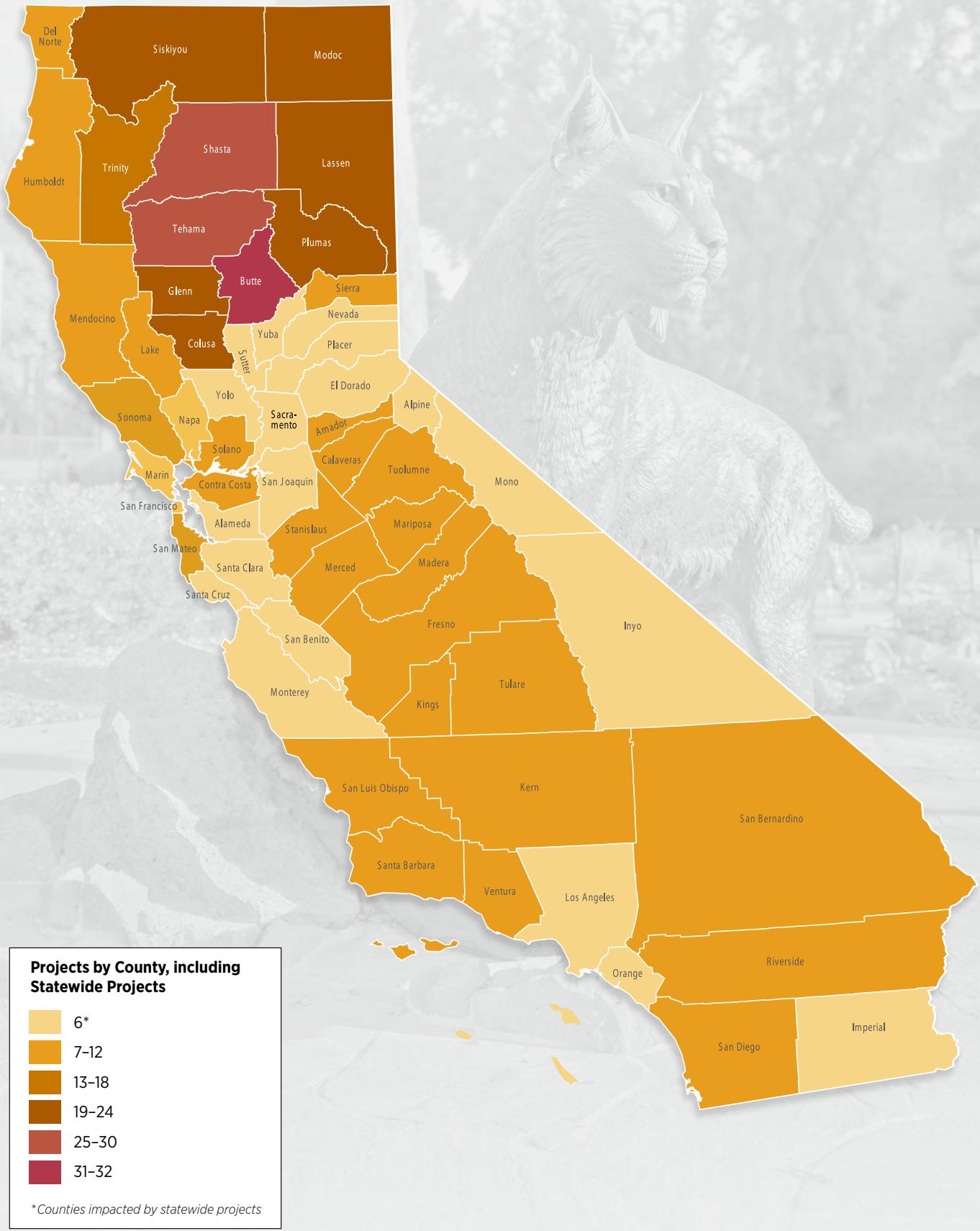
We're just getting started.

As we look to the year ahead, we can't wait to continue our collaborative work across the region while providing ongoing, transformative learning opportunities for Chico State students. I'd like to thank our dedicated partners who make this work possible (see back cover). Working together, we're creating a thriving region in which to live, learn, and do business.

Sincerely,

JASON SCHWENKLER
Executive Director
North State Planning and Development Collective
jschwenkler@csuchico.edu

Statewide Impact



The Collective—At a Glance

From humble beginnings in the 1980s operating as the Center for Economic Development and Geographical Information Center at Chico State, the North State Planning and Development Collective was formed in 2018 to merge and leverage the professional research and GIS services of both departments into one comprehensive organization. Under one roof, experts in GIS and economic development now collaborate and partner on projects that serve the region in a more robust fashion than could be accomplished as individual entities.

Fondly known as the Collective, we have grown hand-in-hand with our community and funding partners into a multi-faceted organization that offers learning opportunities for Chico State students and is finding solutions to some of our communities' greatest challenges. From land stewardship and habitat restoration to digital equity, workforce development, and regional strategic planning, our impact reaches every county in California.

CHICO STATE PARTNERS

- Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve
- Center for Regenerative Agriculture
- Human ID Lab, Chico State
- Department of Geography and Planning
- Department of Biological Sciences



\$45.6 M
GRANT FUNDS RECEIVED

\$3.4 M
STATE & LOCAL TAXES PAID

\$21 M
WAGES PAID

\$67.2 M
BUSINESS INCOME EARNED

408+
JOBS CREATED



In addition to internship opportunities, The Collective partners with a variety of regional, state and federal agencies. These partnerships support our student's success and the region as a whole.



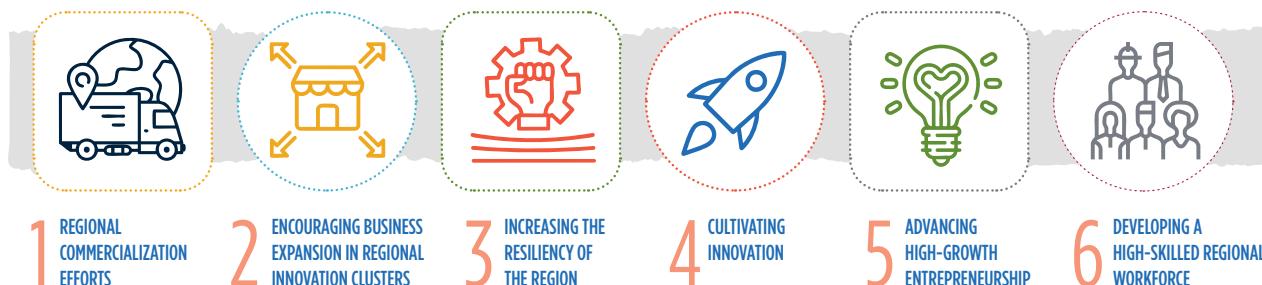
EDA
**UNIVERSITY
CENTER
PROGRAM**



Growing Business as an EDA University Center

Attracting Talent and Exploring Innovative Strategies to Grow Business as an EDA University Center

With an ultimate goal to retain and attract talent throughout the region, thereby strengthening the state's economic base, the Collective serves as one of three U.S. Economic Development Administration university centers in the state of California. Alongside Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, we're exploring innovative strategies to stabilize and grow traditional industries while integrating technology and science and exploring ways to expand high-growth industries and transform workforce opportunities. With a focus on equity, recovery and resilience, manufacturing, workforce development, technology-based economic development, and environmentally-sustainable development, we focus on six primary areas:



\$1 MILLION INVESTMENT OVER 5 YEARS

Partnering on Solutions in Job Creation, Climate Resilience, and Strategic Economic Development

Through initiatives such as the U.S. Economic Development Administration's Good Jobs Challenge Grant and the CA Jobs First initiative in the North State region, we're helping lead the way in supporting job creation and economic development efforts across the region.

Project Highlight: Good Jobs Challenge

In FY 2022–23, the Foundation for California Community Colleges was announced as a recipient of one of 32 grants awarded as part of the \$500 million Good Jobs Challenge funded by President Biden's American Rescue Plan and administered by the Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration. FoundationCCC received \$21.5 million to support its California Resilient Careers in Forestry proposal, which coordinates and expands forestry and fire-safety training programs in the Sierra Nevada and Cascade regions of northeastern California.

Funding supports a four-year project to help scale a system to place qualified workers into high-quality jobs in the forestry sector, responding to urgent needs to build economic and climate resilience in California's forested, rural communities. The project now includes fire recovery training as a result of the 2024 Park Fire.

"We're proud to serve as one of eight partners who collaborated on the grant proposal and received an allocation of the award to conduct important industry work with a significant focus on Tribal partnership engagement," said Courtney Farrell, project manager for the Collective.





Project Highlight: CA Jobs First in the North State Region

In 2021, Governor Gavin Newsom launched the California Jobs First Regional Investment Initiative (Jobs First) to support high-road economic development plans to create equitable access to quality jobs. The initiative strives to create a regional economic and workforce strategy, create high-road transition jobs, establish climate mitigation best practices, foster continued land stewardship, and inform policy and other legislative actions to support and sustain the North State economy across backbone industry sectors. We've served as co-conveners guiding the process, along with Sierra Institute for Community and Environment, for the North State region.

HERE ARE JUST A FEW WAYS WE'VE MADE IMPACT ACROSS THE REGION THIS YEAR:

- Co-facilitated North State regional datasets and strategy plans
- Encouraged and promoted regional, inclusive connectivity across the region through online and in-person input sessions and subcommittees
- Gathered North State regional input regarding identifying project areas of focus for implementation phase
- Encouraged outreach with North State Tribal representatives to increase intentional engagement



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
CALIFORNIA JOBS FIRST

\$600 M
REGIONAL INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

\$9.5 M
IN CATALYST PROJECT FUNDING FOR THE NORTH STATE

\$5 M
IN PLANNING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR THE NORTH STATE

\$150 M
IN IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT FUNDS DEPLOYED STATEWIDE



More than 100 people from across the North State region gathered in Anderson on September 12, 2023, to offer input into the Planning Phase process.

07:36



Connecting Students to Healthcare Career Options

Project Highlight: K-16 Collaborative

The Collective is serving as the coordinator and fiscal agent for Building Butte, the Butte County chapter of the collaborative. The purpose of the county network is to build inclusive, supportive pathways to connect Butte County students to quality, well-paying healthcare careers focused on two pathways: allied health/nursing and mental health. The Network is responsive to local needs and aims to retain talent in our region by sharing resources, centering equitable strategies, promoting sustainability, and building lasting partnerships across sectors and geography.

The Building Butte steering committee includes members from Butte College, Career Technical Education at Butte County Office of Education, Chico Unified School District, Chico State, Enloe Hospital, Rural Healthy California, Tribal Health Representative, and Youth for Change. The Building Butte network has begun the process of conducting an inventory of health educational programs and workforce needs in Butte County to identify assets and gaps.

Collaborating with Education and Tribal Partners on Resiliency Curriculum Development

Along with the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve and our community college and Tribal partners, we've been hard at work on the Local Capacity-Building for Planning Fire Resiliency Project. Funded by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, the project develops and pilots new curriculum to train students to plan and complete environmental compliance for fuel reduction projects. New curriculum will be adopted and implemented at two community colleges in the North State, including a field work component that gets students hands-on experience with environmental compliance for fire projects.



In FY 2023-24, the Collective continued its partnership with **North State Together** at Shasta College, which was awarded \$18.3 million to serve as the convener of the K-16 Collaborative Grant program.

Learn more at:
northstatetogether.org



Upcoming activities include creating an inventory of local healthcare programs, degrees, and certifications, including cost, timeline, and career outcomes, and making it accessible to students and employers alike.



Convening the Region and Driving Change Through Impactful Events

Project Highlight: 24th Annual Economic Forecast Conference

For 24 years, the Collective has brought together the North State for its Annual Economic Forecast Conference. The 2024 event featured Economist Robert Eyler, who provided the latest trends and outlook for the region, plus impactful panels on North State economic development success stories. A keynote by State of California Director of Conservation David Shabazian looked at the critical role of natural resources in economic development. Chico State students and staff helped coordinate the day.

Project Highlight: 5th Annual Broadband Summit

"Broadband is critical to the way we live, learn and do business," said Jason Schwenkler, Executive Director for the Collective and Manager of the Northeastern and Upstate California Connect Broadband Consortia. "Our Broadband Summit allows us the opportunity to hear from experts in the broadband space about how we can—and are—bridging the digital divide in the rural North State."

On August 1, 2023, representatives from across the University's 12-county service region attended this 5th annual virtual event. Speakers and topics included an overview of Consortia activities, Broadband for All and Middle Mile updates from the California Department of Technology, policy updates from the California Public Utilities Commission, and an update on the Golden State Connect initiative from Rural Counties Representatives of California.



"This conference is always on our calendars to attend. Great speakers, fantastic connections, and information relevant to the North State region."

—KORY HAYDEN, Siskiyou Economic Development

310

LEADERS

13

COUNTIES

11

INDUSTRY SECTORS
REPRESENTED:

AGRICULTURE
BUSINESS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATION
GOVERNMENT
HEALTH CARE
HOUSING
NATURAL RESOURCES
NON-PROFIT
TRIBAL
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Whether we're gathering the region online for our annual Broadband Summit or convening in person for our Economic Forecast Conference, our events are designed to unite the North State for a better tomorrow.

“

Our ongoing collaboration with Chico State Enterprises focuses on rehabilitating salmonid habitats in the Sacramento River Watershed. Playing a pivotal role alongside the Yurok Tribe, Sacramento River Forum, and state and federal fisheries partnerships, Chico State Enterprises plays a critical lead role in successful delivery of these projects. The projects completed through this partnership are impressive and actively contributing to significant improvements in the Sacramento River.”

RADLEY OTT, Supervising Engineer, Water Management Branch/Northern Region Office, Department of Water Resources.



Protecting And Preserving The Region's Natural Resources

Project Highlight: Sacramento River Salmonid Habitat Restoration Projects

In an ongoing, multimillion-dollar effort to save California's endangered Chinook salmon population, we've been hard at work with project partners on a series of habitat restoration sites on the upper Sacramento River and Battle Creek. The project establishes new spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids, with a focus on critical habitat for the endangered winter-run population.

Last year, the Kapusta Open Space Side Channel Project in Redding was completed—the first of five restoration projects constructed under funding to Chico State Enterprises under the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) and technical assistance from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. That award brings investments in salmonid habitat restoration to \$27 million through the University since 2016. The award is managed by Collective staff, and the projects are implemented through a collaborative partnership which includes the Sacramento River Forum, California Department of Water Resources, Division of Local Assistance, River Partners, Yurok Tribe, Chico State, Tussing Ecological Sciences Design, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, and the Wintu Tribe of Northern California.

Project Highlight: Reading Island Boat Ramp Planning Project



The Reading Island Boat Ramp Planning Project is a recreation improvement planning project funded by the State of California Wildlife Conservation Board. As project lead, the Collective manages the budget, scope, and subcontracts. The project will complete planning, design, environmental review, and permitting for rehabilitation of an existing but dilapidated and inaccessible motorized boat ramp on Anderson Creek near its confluence with the Sacramento River. The project site is owned by the Bureau of Land Management.

This project is many years in the making. In 2019, the Collective served as project lead for the Reading Island restoration project that excavated 4,000 linear feet of side channel upstream, connecting the Sacramento River with Anderson Creek to restore juvenile salmonid rearing habitat. The restored side channel has increased flows and decreased temperatures, which has resulted in a reduction of invasive species and makes boating access feasible again.

"The site is in a severely disadvantaged community near popular salmon and trout fishing locations and will provide economic benefit to the community by increasing fishing use from the ramp."—Rebekah Casey, Project Manager for the Collective.

Project partners include California Department of Water Resources, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Western Shasta Resource Conservation District, and the Sacramento River Forum.

3

THREE RESTORATION SITES
COMPLETED IN FY 2023-24

25.31

ACRES OF INSTREAM HABITAT

1.83

ACRES OF SPAWNING HABITAT

2

RESTORATION SITES ON BATTLE CREEK CURRENTLY UNDER DESIGN

\$27M

TOTAL INVESTMENT IN
SALMONID HABITAT
RESTORATION THROUGH
CHICO STATE SINCE 2016



Arthur Garcia, Cultural Resource Manager and Tribal Elder of the Wintu Tribe of Northern California gives a blessing over the Kapusta 1B project in the City of Redding's Kapusta Open Space, a new Sacramento River side channel for salmonid spawning habitat.



Supporting Broadband Equity And Access

Project Highlight: Access Points Digital Literacy Project

In partnership with the Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC), we're providing digital literacy to disadvantaged households, with a priority to English language learners and justice-involved individuals. Through this program, we have been able to train 136 people who have recently lost employment access workforce digital skills such as job search and networking. Through this program, we're also providing free LinkedIn premium subscriptions to justice-involved individuals who are searching for a job.

Project Highlight: Tribal Broadband Equity & Access Program

We're connecting Tribes with resources and information regarding broadband programs and creating spaces for Tribes to connect with ISPs, state program administrators, and county stakeholders to bring broadband to their rural communities.

Project Highlight: Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program

In conjunction with Merced College and Sacramento State University, we're expanding adoption, access, and literacy training to communities that are often underserved or unserved. Increasing adoption, access, and literacy training is integral to the economic resilience, community development, and individual prosperity. Chico State students gained hands-on experience conducting research and analyzing survey data. Data collected will serve as a model for other communities to use in their efforts to expand access to literacy training, access, and adoption.



CMC AWARDS
CONNECTING MINORITY
COMMUNITIES PROGRAM:

\$5.5+ M

GRANT FUNDING AWARDED
TO MERCED COLLEGE AND
SACRAMENTO STATE UNIVERSITY
TO SUPPORT DIGITAL LITERACY

200

SURVEYS COMPLETED
IN MERCED

200

SURVEYS COMPLETED
IN SACRAMENTO

10

PARTICIPANTS IN EACH
COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP



The **Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program** provides grant funding for institutions to positively impact the broadband capacity of their campuses, students, faculty, and to enhance surrounding communities, helping to close the digital divide.

Building A Strong Economic Base By Providing Access To Training And Resiliency Tools For Small Business

Project Highlight: USDA Smart Farm Project

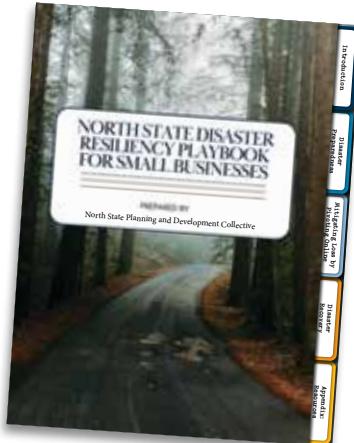
This three-year project aims to foster the long-term growth and sustainability of the agricultural sector in the North State through providing technical assistance, education, and training to 45 rural farmers and ranchers with an emphasis on socially disadvantaged populations and veterans each year.

Project Highlight: SW Regional Food Business Center

Connects small food and farm businesses to resources, including technical assistance and funding impact: The program will provide at least 48 businesses with direct technical assistance and connect at least 96 businesses to the SW business center to access the program wide resources and funding.

Project Highlight: Disaster Recovery Playbook

Small businesses are a pillar of local communities, and they play a key role in determining how their respective communities confront disasters. The Collective created the North State Disaster Resiliency Playbook for Small Businesses to provide guidance, tools, and resources as support mechanism, thereby strengthening their broader communities. The playbook contains resources to assist small businesses in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters that may disrupt business operations.



Supporting Land Managers And Agencies Through Vegetation Monitoring And Data Collection

Project Highlight: Sierra Nevada Mountains, Mono and Great Basin Data Collection

Our expert teams of biologists have been working on vegetation data collection on 5.3 million acres in the Southern Sierra Nevada Mountains ecoregion, and more than 2.7 million acres in the Mono and Great Basin ecoregion. This includes parts of Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kern, Alpine, Mono, Inyo, and San Bernardino Counties. The data collected during this project will be used by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop a classification system for the vegetation in the area. This information will be used to assist land managers and agencies in several important ways including invasive species management, fire management and prescribed burns, restoration, migration corridor connectivity for wildlife, sustainable agricultural practices, maintaining population goals for fishing and hunting, and protecting and preserving sensitive plant and animal communities.

Our partnership with the US Forest Service includes the production of data indices that rank demographic, economic, and social conditions for all forest-bordering areas in California (USFS Region 5). In addition, our team produces in-depth profiles for nearly 70 communities throughout the state that have held varying relationships to National Forest resources, such as tourism gateways, current and former logging towns, and the locations of Forest Service operations centers. With additional funding provided by the Sustainable Forest Action Coalition, we're conducting a global survey of businesses in these same communities to more precisely estimate the past and current impacts of forest management practices on local business.



Creating Tools To Answer Some Of The Most Demanding Water Resource Questions

Project Highlight: National Hydrography Data and Tool Development

Our development team is building a suite of publicly available tools to derive hydrography from 3D Elevation Program (3DEP) LiDAR. These tools will allow anyone to produce USGS compliant data internally without the need to contract with vendors. At the same time, we're producing compliant data for California Department of Water Resources to contribute to the national 3DHP for areas within California. The total spatial extent of this project is still being determined with a new contract in development. The implementation of 3D National Hydrography Program (3DHP) marks the start of a new era of water data—the first systematic remapping of the nation's hydrography since the original USGS 1:24,000-scale topographic mapping program was active. Community-wide coordinated investments will contribute toward a consistent set of national water data to answer the most demanding water resource questions.



Thank you to our local, state and federal partners:

3CORE, Inc.
Action News Now
Agricultural Research Institute, Chico State
Associated Students, Chico State
Banet Lab, Chico State
Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve
Bonneville Environmental Foundation
Butte College
Butte County
Butte County Association of Governments
Butte County Fire Safe Council
Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Department of Parks and Recreation
California Department of Technology
California Department of Transportation
California Emerging Technology Fund
California Employment Development Department
California Forward (CAFWD)
California Manufacturing Technology Consulting
California Public Utilities Commission
California Stewardship Network
California Wildlife Conservation Board
California Labor Workforce Development Agency
Central Sierra Economic Development District
Chico Chamber of Commerce
Center for Regenerative Agriculture and Resilient Systems
Chico State College of Agriculture
Chico State College of Business
Chico State College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
Department of Economics
Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
Chico State Office of the President
Chico State Office of the Provost
Chico State Office of Tribal Relations
Chico State Enterprises
Cisco
City of Biggs
City of Chico
City of Orland
City of Red Bluff
City of Redding
Colusa County
Colusa County Chamber of Commerce
Comcast
Deer Creek Broadcasting
Feather River Community College
Foundation for California Community Colleges
Fresno State
Glenn County
Governor's Office of Business & Economic Development (GO-Biz)
Governor's Office of Planning & Research (OPR)
KZFR Radio
Lake Almanor Area Chamber of Commerce
Lake County
Lassen Area Chamber of Commerce
Lassen Community College
Lassen County
Mechoopda Tribe
Merced Community College
Modoc County
Morrison
NoRTEC
North State Public Radio
North State Together
Northern California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Oroville Chamber of Commerce
Paradise Chamber of Commerce
PepsiCo
Plumas County
Red Bluff-Tehama County Chamber of Commerce
Redding Chamber of Commerce
River Partners
Rural Counties Representatives of California
Sacramento River Forum
Shasta College
Shasta County
Shasta County Office of Education
Shasta Economic Development Corporation
Shasta-Trinity Joint Community College District
Sierra Business Council
Sierra Institute for Community and Environment
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Sierra Pacific Industries
Siskiyou County
Siskiyou Economic Development Council
State Water Resources Control Board
Superior California Economic Development
Sutter County
Tehama County
Tehama County Transportation Commission
Town of Paradise
Tri Counties Bank
Tussing Environmental Services
U.S. Department of Agriculture, AMS
U.S. Economic Development Administration
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
Wintu Tribe of Northern California
Yurok Tribe



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