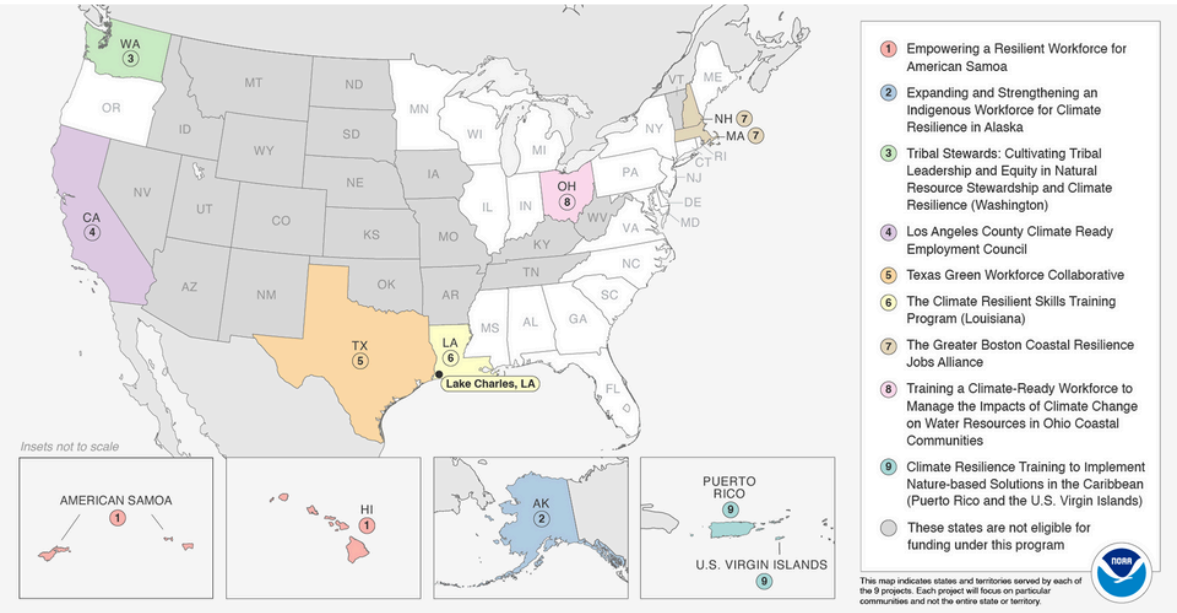
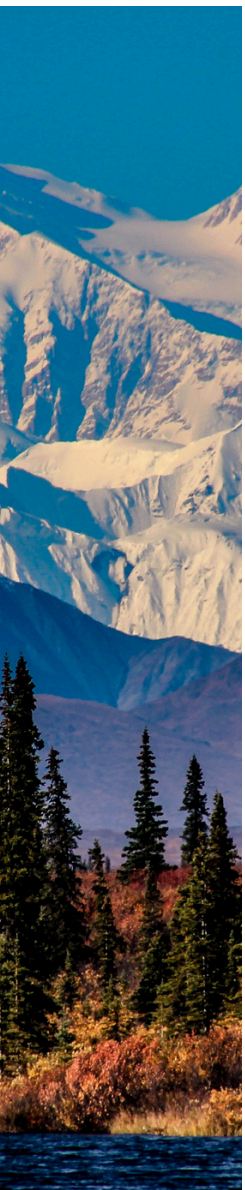
INFLATION REDUCTION ACT CLIMATE-READY WORKFORCE INITIATIVE

In fiscal year 2024, as a part of NOAA's investment in creating a Climate-Ready Nation, $60 million was awarded through the Climate-Ready Workforce for Coastal and Great Lakes States, Tribes, and Territories Initiative. Nine selected projects, across Alaska, American Samoa, California, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Ohio, Puerto Rico, Texas, US Virgin Islands and Washington, received $50 million to establish programs that place people across the country into good jobs that advance climate resilience and assist employers in developing a 21st-century workforce that is climate literate, informed by climate resilience and skilled at addressing consequent challenges. Another $10 million was provided for technical assistance to support applicants and grantees.



Download a full version of the project map here.

This work is made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act, a historic, federal government-wide investment that advances NOAA's Climate-Ready Coasts Initiative to help American communities prepare, adapt and build resilience to weather and climate events. As part of the Justice40 Initiative, these investments will benefit underserved communities across focus areas of climate change, training and workforce development, energy efficiency, clean water and wastewater infrastructure development, and more. Common themes amongst selected projects include clean energy, nature-based solutions, green infrastructure, water management, and diverse recruitment.



ALASKA

Expanding and Strengthening an Indigenous Workforce for Climate Resilience in Alaska

Principal Investigators: Tribal Government of St. Paul Island
Grant Amount: $2,306,004

The state of Alaska faces a significant need for training and resources to enhance its ability to withstand the impacts of climate change and to establish a workforce that is centered around and led by Indigenous communities. This Tribal Government of St. Paul Island initiative is designed to meet the demand for climate-resilience monitoring programs to produce credible and actionable insights that address community needs and priorities to develop a local workforce. It will accomplish this by making use of the existing capabilities of the Tribal Government of St. Paul Island's Indigenous Sentinels Network, the Bering Sea Research Center, and in partnership with Iḷisaġvik College.

The project will bring together a diverse group of climate service practitioners, including Indigenous community leaders, state agencies, academic institutions and nonprofit organizations, to support the development of a workforce focused on climate resilience that incorporates Indigenous knowledge in climate research. Trained individuals will then be integrated into the Indigenous Sentinels

Network to receive training to meet the demand for monitoring programs and local workforce development. The training programs for community Sentinels and Indigenous Sentinels Network collaborators will focus on activities like data collection, cultural resource monitoring, marine protection, and climate change monitoring. The project will provide course curriculum free to tribal members and will support virtually accessible training designed for underserved communities. The project will benefit the entire community of St. Paul Island as well as other tribal communities across the state of Alaska, establishing Sentinels and place-based jobs that will enhance each region's ability to increase community empowerment, engagement in Indigenous-led research, and climate readiness.

AMERICAN SAMOA

Empowering a Resilient Workforce for American Samoa

Principal Investigators: Hawai'i Sea Grant & American Samoa Community College
Grant Amount: $1,748,942

American Samoa is a true climate frontline community, particularly regarding sea-level rise because American Samoa has experienced one of the highest rates of relative sea level rise in the world and a significant portion of its villages and infrastructure are located along thin strips of coastal land. Hawai'i Sea Grant and American Samoa Community College have partnered to strengthen American Samoa's critical infrastructure by building a resilient workforce through collaboration with the American Samoa Power Authority.

This program will provide training and certifications focused on creating climate-ready positions to address the challenges posed by sea-level rise and other climate hazards. Trained individuals will be placed in vacancies within the American Samoa Power Authority, enhancing the Territory's capacity to manage and adapt to climate-related threats. The project will benefit the entire community of American Samoa, which heavily relies on the American Samoa Power Authority for essential services such as electric power, trash pickup and drinking water, and stands vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles County Climate Ready Employment Council

Principal Investigators: Long Beach City College
Grant Amount: $9,500,000

The Long Beach City College will establish the Los Angeles County Climate Ready Employment Council. The Council's purpose is to bring together parties interested in improving the county's climate resiliency workforce. It will provide expertise to inform the regional workforce needs assessment and develop training and job placement programs in climate resilience occupations, specifically in the solar and water management industries. The council will convene stakeholders who play key roles in improving Los Angeles County's climate resiliency workforce, provide expertise that informs the regional workforce needs assessment and identify the sectors and industries the training should be designed to support.

Trained climate-ready workers will be placed into committed jobs, addressing climate resiliency in Los Angeles County and connecting underserved and under-resourced workers with jobs that align with the Good Jobs Principles. This project aims to benefit individuals from historically underrepresented communities and employers committed to hiring those trained by the program.

LOUISIANA

The Climate Resilient Skills Training Program

Principal Investigators: Flood Mitigation Industry Association
Grant Amount: $6,926,245

The Flood Mitigation Industry Association and strategic partners seek to fill the urgently growing, in-demand workforce required to fill the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Federal Emergency Management Agency-funded projects in Louisiana.

The Climate Resilient Skills Training Program will address the need for coastal communities to develop skilled workers in the flood mitigation industry. This St. Charles, Louisiana pilot program will be translatable to coastal communities around the world.. The program will be offered in multiple languages, starting with Spanish, to increase access.

Project partners will develop an employer-led curriculum training program and recruit and train individuals through partnerships with Louisiana State University/Louisiana Sea Grant, SOWELA Technical Community College, and other NOAA affiliates. Trained recruits will be placed into paid apprenticeships, jobs and career paths in the flood mitigation industry to meet the growing demand for skilled workers. Through this program newly skilled workers will be placed in competitively paying green collar trades jobs that benefit disadvantaged and underserved communities, employers seeking skilled workers for flood hazard mitigation projects, and the broader coastal populations, infrastructure, economies, and ecosystems needing resilience against climate hazards.

MASSACHUSETTS, NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Greater Boston Coastal Resilience Jobs Alliance

Principal Investigators: Economic Development & Industrial Corporation of Boston
Grant Amount: $9,799,687

The Boston Office of Workforce Development, a division of the Economic Development & Industrial Corporation, will implement the Greater Boston Coastal Resilience Jobs Alliance to train individuals to implement Boston's Climate-Ready Boston Coastal Climate Resilience Plan and Massachusetts' ResilientMass Plan. The Boston Office of Workforce Development expects those trained will be placed into good, coastal climate-resilient jobs and will support partner employers who have committed to hiring participants who gain skills in areas ranging from nature-based solutions to emergency preparedness and response.

The region needs a skilled workforce to make Boston climate-ready. The City of Boston will train over 1,000 individuals in nature-based solutions, water utility management, construction, emergency preparedness and response, municipal infrastructure services, and community engagement, outreach and recruitment. Trained individuals will be placed into committed coastal climate-resilient jobs. This project will benefit individuals from historically underrepresented communities and has incorporated wrap-around services like childcare, career coaching and training stipends to ensure their success.

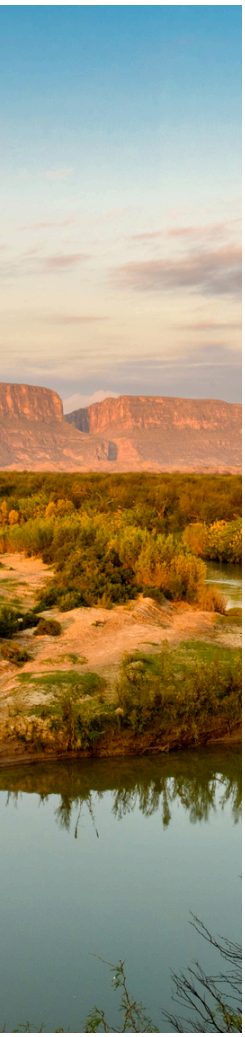
OHIO

Training a Climate-Ready Workforce to Manage the Impacts of Climate Change on Water Resources in Ohio Coastal Communities

Principal Investigators: Ohio State University
Grant Amount: $4,852,566

The coastal areas of the Great Lakes need a specialized workforce to ensure that water resources can support economic and societal needs and withstand the vulnerabilities caused by climate change. There is expected to be significant growth in climate-related jobs across the Great Lakes, including positions for hydrologists, environmental engineers/scientists, and data analytics experts. The Lake Erie watershed provides diverse coastal resources to its 12 million residents and supports more than $11 billion in annual revenue for local businesses. However, coastal communities like Toledo, Lorain, Sandusky, and Cleveland, Ohio are threatened by climate-exacerbated effects such as degraded water quality, excess nutrient loading, toxic algal blooms, reduced ice cover and fluctuating water levels.

To address this need, Ohio State University will implement a program to train climate-ready workers, including technicians, scientists and engineers, to meet the specialized workforce needs of the water industry in the Great Lakes. Participants will undergo a knowledge and skills-building framework, to create a diverse, digitally fluent workforce capable of providing climate-resilient water system services at various career levels for their communities. The program aims to train climate-ready workers, including technicians, scientists and engineers by 2028 to tackle the challenges posed by climate-exacerbated effects such as degraded water quality and toxic algal blooms. The intended beneficiaries of this program include the trainees, residents of the Lake Erie watershed, local businesses relying on coastal resources and the communities threatened by climate-induced water system challenges.



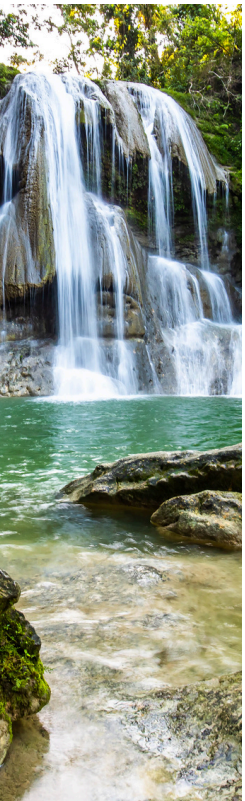
TEXAS

Texas Green Workforce Collaborative

Principal Investigators: EarthShare Texas
Grant Amount: $2,146,559

The Texas Green Workforce Collaborative is dedicated to building a diverse and resilient green workforce in Central Texas. Promoting climate resilience and inclusive economic prosperity can go hand in hand. Texas faces increasing climate challenges such as rising temperatures, droughts, and severe storm events, making it urgent to take proactive steps. However, there is a significant diversity and skills gap in the state's green workforce development efforts, missing opportunities to create well-paying green job opportunities for underserved communities and people of color.

The goal of this project is to create an inclusive model that supports Texans from underserved communities as they pursue well-paying green careers. This initiative will focus on recruitment, skill-building, job training, certification, mentorship, and community engagement in fields such as conservation, renewable energy, urban agriculture, green infrastructure and water management. This project aims to benefit underserved communities and people of color seeking economic security through good jobs.



PUERTO RICO, US VIRGIN ISLANDS

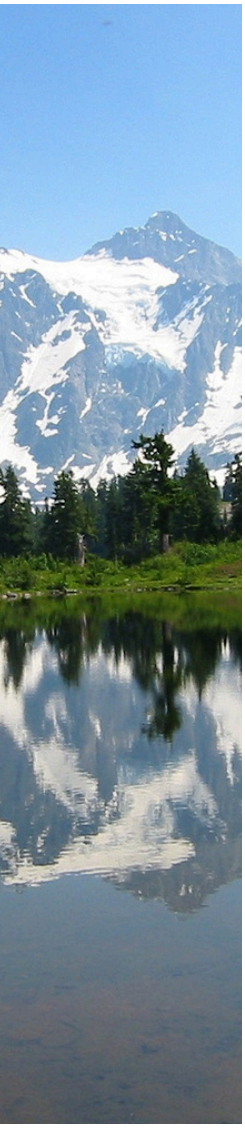
Climate Resilience Training to Implement Nature-Based Solutions in the Caribbean

Principal Investigators: Protectores de Cuencas Inc.
Grant Amount: $3,462,766

Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands are highly vulnerable to sea level rise and the impacts of climate change, such as tropical storms, drought and extreme heat. It is crucial to reduce existing threats to ecological systems and enhance their resilience for climate adaptation. Protectores de Cuencas Inc., a non-profit community-based organization with over ten years of experience in implementing nature-based solutions to increase climate resilience, will work closely with Horsley Witten Group to develop curricula and train new and existing

workers. The goal is to address climate resilience barriers in Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands.

This training will help create a climate-ready workforce to build community capacity to prepare for climate change impacts and increase coastal resilience, while also providing more job opportunities in resilience to historically underrepresented communities. The project's beneficiaries include the program participants and vulnerable communities in Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands.



WASHINGTON

Tribal Stewards: Cultivating Tribal Leadership & Equity in Natural Resource Co-Stewardship & Climate Resilience

Principal Investigators: Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
Grant Amount: $9,257,231

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' Tribal Stewards program, under the direction of the Office of Tribal Government Affairs, is a promising initiative that aims to promote collaboration among community and technical colleges, Tribal nations, employers, the Evergreen State College, NOAA-affiliated University of Washington's Climate Impacts Group, and the State Climatologist. This sector partnership is focused on cultivating a new generation of Tribal leaders and co-stewards who are skilled in integrative natural resources stewardship and climate resilience.

The adverse impacts of climate change disproportionately affect the ecological resilience, cultural practices, and health of Indigenous Tribes. The Tribal Stewards program seeks to integrate Indigenous knowledges and redesign education pathways to support place-based employment and Tribal leadership in natural resources. This initiative will provide training for Tribal and non-Tribal graduates to be leaders in co-stewardship, collaboration, and climate resilience efforts that benefit Tribal communities threatened by climate hazards.

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