

WHALE TAIL® GRANTS PROGRAM

EQUITY ANALYSIS Fiscal Year 2023-2024



Figure 1: Surf lessons at Juneteenth celebration with *Paddle for Peace*

Table of Contents

Background	3
Fiscal Year 2023/24 Grant Application Process	4
Outreach.....	5
Selection Criteria and Accepted Proposals.....	8
Fiscal Year 2023/24 Grantees at a Glance (Communities and Demographics)	9
Equity During Grant Management.....	11
New Grantee Orientation Meetings	11
Progress Reporting.....	11
Racial Equity and Cultural Relevancy Trainings and Coaching	11
Survey of Grant Management Experience – Fiscal Year 2022/2023 One Year In	11
Conclusion.....	12

Appendices List

Appendix A: Whale Tail® Grant Scoring Criteria	13
Appendix B: Whale Tail® Grant Awards for FY 2023/2024	14



Figure 2: Visiting Tomales Bay with Audubon Canyon Ranch

Photos in this report highlight FY 2022/23 WHALE TAIL® Grant projects.

Background

The WHALE TAIL® Grants Program started in 1998, after the new WHALE TAIL® License Plate established a funding source for education and stewardship. For the last 26 years, the Coastal Commission's WHALE TAIL® Grants have supported experiential education and stewardship of the California coast and its watersheds, with an emphasis on equity, accessibility, and inclusion, engaging communities that have historically had few such opportunities due to systemic and geographic barriers.

This report presents an overview of recent efforts to advance equity, accessibility, and inclusivity for the WHALE TAIL® Grants Program, with a focus on the Fiscal Year 2023/24 grants round, with additional analysis of the Fiscal Year 2022/23 grant cohort's experience with grant management "one year in."

This work is consistent with, and in furtherance of, the Commission's [Environmental Justice Policy](#), adopted in March 2019, which integrates the principles of environmental justice and social equity into all aspects of the Commission's programs and operations, and was informed by Commission staff participation in the Governmental Alliance on Race and Equity Capitol Cohort and the Commission's Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Action Plan. This report responds to the Commission's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan Objective 5.3.6, which instructs staff to, "Provide an equity analysis of the Commission's existing grant funding and recipients and a discussion of how the Commission is reducing barriers to applicants from marginalized communities in the annual public education report." The report is an appendix to the Public Education Program's annual report for 2024.



Figure 3: Tolowa Dee-ni' staff and youth restore the dunes with *Tolowa Dunes Stewards*

Equity Analysis of WHALE TAIL® Grants for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

The 2023/24 WHALE TAIL® Grants round was one of the largest in the program’s history in terms of funding available and grants awarded. The Fiscal Year (FY) 2021/22 California State budget allocated \$10 million of General Fund local assistance to the Commission for WHALE TAIL® Grants, which must be encumbered by the end of FY 2025. This General Fund allocation has greatly expanded the reach of the grant program. Long-term funding for WHALE TAIL® Grants comes from WHALE TAIL® License Plate sales and renewal fees, and the Protect our Coast and Oceans “check box” on the California State tax form, which allows tax filers to contribute directly to support WHALE TAIL® Grants. In total from 1998 to 2024, the WHALE TAIL® program has distributed \$23.5 million to 1,007 grants.

WHALE TAIL® Grants must relate to the coast and ocean and fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Youth education programs
- Programs for educating the general public or adults
- Climate change education and stewardship
- Shoreline cleanup and enhancement programs with community involvement

Entities eligible to receive WHALE TAIL® Grants are non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, projects of a non-profit fiscal sponsor, schools or districts, Federally Recognized Tribes and other California Native American Tribes as defined by Governor's Executive Order B-10-11, and other government entities. Grant projects must engage audiences in California and can take place anywhere in California.



Figure 4: Stockton Unified Native American Indian Center summer program participants on their way to Alcatraz

Fiscal Year 2023/24 Grant Application Process

Commission staff conducted an extensive review of the entire WHALE TAIL® cycle in 2021, including the application and guidelines, how outreach is conducted, the experience for grant applicants in terms of getting needed information and providing feedback, and the internal process for selecting proposals. Staff continued these efforts in 2022 and FY 2023/24. The ongoing goal is to find new ways to increase accessibility and inclusivity, address unnecessary burdens on applicants, achieve more equitable outcomes, and better align with program goals overall.

Equity Analysis of WHALE TAIL® Grants for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Applicants to the FY 2022/23 grant round completed an anonymous survey to provide feedback on the application materials and submission process. Sixty-eight applicants completed the survey. These respondents' suggestions, as well as staff experiences and ongoing grantee feedback, provided the basis for revisions to the FY 2023-24 [application](#) and [guidelines](#). Revisions included reducing the number of questions, reducing overlap between questions, and clarifying questions where there was confusion. Meal reimbursement was also simplified and increased to \$20 per person per meal.



Figure 5: Summer campers with Boys & Girls Clubs of Sonoma-Marin share their artwork during a trip to the beach

Outreach

Outreach for the FY 2023/24 competitive grants' deadline of November 6, 2023 began in late summer. Much of the promotion was via email, with outreach to hundreds of organizations throughout the state, including the following:

- California Native American Tribes as identified by the Native American Heritage Commission
- American Indian Education Centers
- California schools, from pre-k through adult as identified by California Department of Education
- California public libraries
- Community centers
- After-school/outside-of-school programs
- Service clubs for adults and youth
- Local governments and park districts
- Community colleges in urban and rural regions
- Hundreds of other organizations that work on issues of environmental justice, conservation, outdoor access, and education, collected through staff programs and research, as well as listservs relating to those topics.

Equity Analysis of WHALE TAIL® Grants for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

The grant announcement was sent twice to 45,700 subscribers on the Coastal Commission’s email lists, including approximately 1,000 people who subscribed to receive updates specifically about the WHALE TAIL® Grants. Coastal Commission social media accounts were used to promote the grant opportunity as well as to share grant-funded programming successes of current grant-recipients. The WHALE TAIL® Grant is kept updated on the California State Library’s [California Grants Portal](#), a comprehensive online database of California government grant opportunities, reaching those seeking funding who might not otherwise be aware of the California Coastal Commission.



Figure 6: Families enjoy a community learning workshop with *Sunday Friends Foundation*

On September 20, 2023, staff offered an online presentation for prospective grant applicants to walk through the application process. This pre-application webinar has been a practice since 2017. The presentation assumed no prior knowledge and included substantial time for participants to ask questions. 260 people registered for the webinar, 118 attended, and the video and presentation slides along with presenter script were posted on the WHALE TAIL® Grants webpage. Since posting, the presentation video has been watched 222 times.

The WHALE TAIL® Grants [webpage](#) includes a Frequently Asked Questions section with responses to common questions about the grant program and application process. Prospective applicants are encouraged via the webpage and other grant outreach to contact staff directly to ask questions. Throughout September, October, and up until the deadline on November 6, 2023, Public Education

Equity Analysis of WHALE TAIL® Grants for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

staff were available for and engaged in frequent conversations with prospective grant applicants, explaining the grant priorities, clarifying application questions, and guiding them through the process. During this time, staff conducted 85 consultations with 76 different organizations, by phone, email, and video conference. Of these 85 organizations, 41 followed through to submit a grant proposal, 24 of which were funded. This is a funding rate of 59% compared to a 27% rate of funding in the total pool of applicants.

Staff received 219 grant proposals for the FY 2023/24 WHALE TAIL® Grants cycle, the highest number of proposals ever received. As in the previous year, applicants were invited to complete an anonymous survey on their application experience. Out of 79 responses, 98% agreed or strongly agreed that the application questions were clear and easy to understand, and 95% agreed or strongly agreed that the submission process was clear and easy to do. Many respondents praised the grant process and the support provided to applicants. Suggestions for improvement were incorporated into the FY 2024/25 cycle, such as breaking the scoring criteria into finer point groupings, providing more examples of previously funded projects in the guidelines document, rearranging some of the questions for a more logical order, breaking down multi-part questions into bullet points, creating a simplified document for applicants to type in their responses to the application questions, and emphasizing that applicants can submit the required information in their own formatting and need not use the provided forms if they have any trouble with them.

“We apply to grants from various organizations, and we have to say this is one of the most straightforward processes we have encountered. Very much appreciate the guidance from the staff!”

“The webinar helped tremendously. It was meant to help the applicant focus on the important notes to mention for a strong application. Even after, it was very easy to get in touch with {staff} with questions that came up. This was GREATLY appreciated!”

Were the APPLICATION QUESTIONS clear and easy to understand?

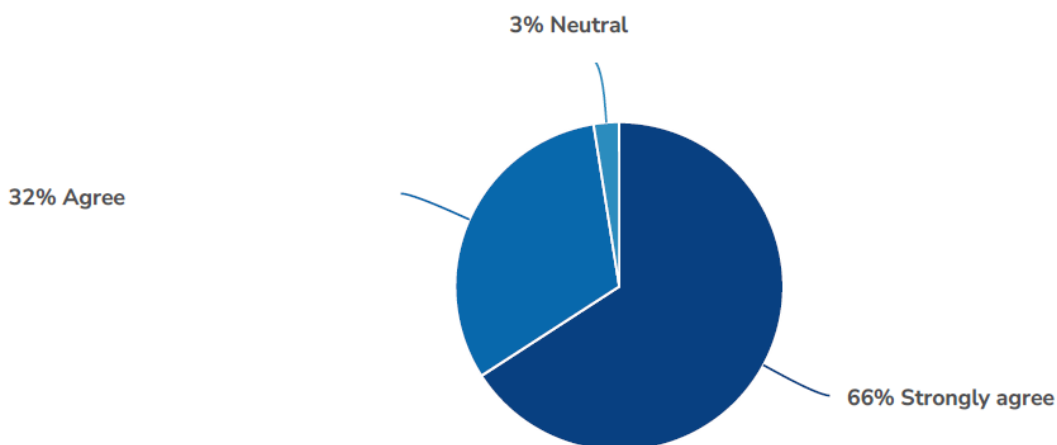


Figure 7: 66% strongly agree application questions were clear and easy to understand, 32% agree, 3% are neutral.

Selection Criteria and Accepted Proposals

Out of the 219 proposals requesting a total of \$8,337,787, sixty proposals were approved for funding, totaling \$2,286,875. Selection criteria included educational and environmental impact, engagement of communities that have historically received fewer marine education and stewardship opportunities, and value of the project to the community being engaged. The complete scoring criteria are listed in [Appendix A](#). Organizations were notified in February 2024 and all contracts were completed by June 1, 2024. With a maximum grant of \$50,000 and a small grants category of \$20,000 or less, 26.7% of recommended grants were small grants. Approximately 62,200 direct participants are anticipated in the implementation of 59 of the programs, with an additional estimate of 1 million viewers or more for the grant project that is producing a television documentary. Brief descriptions of the 60 grant projects are in [Appendix B](#).



Figure 8: Hanford Elementary School District students enjoy the beach after an aquarium visit

FY 2023/2024 Grantees at a Glance

Total number of grants: 60

Participants directly engaged (anticipated): 1,062,205

Projects by County

Some grant projects engage communities in one county, some in more than one county. Below lists the number of projects engaging communities in each county (or region, when there is dispersed outreach for a project).

- Statewide - 2
- Northern California - 2
- Alameda County – 3
- Alpine County – 1
- Colusa County - 1
- Contra Costa County - 3
- Del Norte County – 2
- Fresno County - 1
- Humboldt County – 5
- Kern County – 1
- Kings County - 1
- Lake County - 1
- Los Angeles County – 8
- Marin County – 3
- Mendocino County - 2
- Monterey County – 2
- Nevada County - 1
- Orange County - 3
- Riverside County - 1
- Sacramento County – 1
- San Bernardino County - 1
- San Diego County – 7
- San Francisco County - 4
- San Joaquin County - 1
- San Luis Obispo County - 1
- San Mateo County - 2
- Santa Barbara County - 3
- Santa Clara County - 2
- Santa Cruz County – 1
- Siskiyou County - 1
- Sonoma County – 3
- Sutter County - 1
- Ventura County - 2

Types of Grantee Organizations

- Local Education Agency (school, district, county office of education) - 11
- College/University - 1
- California Native American Tribe - 2
- Other government entity - 1
- Project of a nonprofit fiscal sponsor - 7
- Nonprofit 501(c)(3) - 38

Projects engaging Inland Communities: 14

Projects engaging a Designated Rural Region: 16

Focus Demographics (# of grant projects focused on this audience)

- Low income - 50
- Youth - 48
- BIPOC - 43
- Dual language learners - 24
- Newcomers and migrant communities - 11
- Families - 11
- Tribal communities - 8
- People with disabilities - 6
- Unhoused communities - 6

Other identified focus demographics include teachers (4), foster and child welfare system impacted (3), elders (3), LGBTQ2S+ (2), carceral system impacted (2), and property service workers.

Projected participant demographics, based on funded grant proposals:

Note: In the following chart, each grant project is weighted equally, despite a different number of anticipated attendees per project.

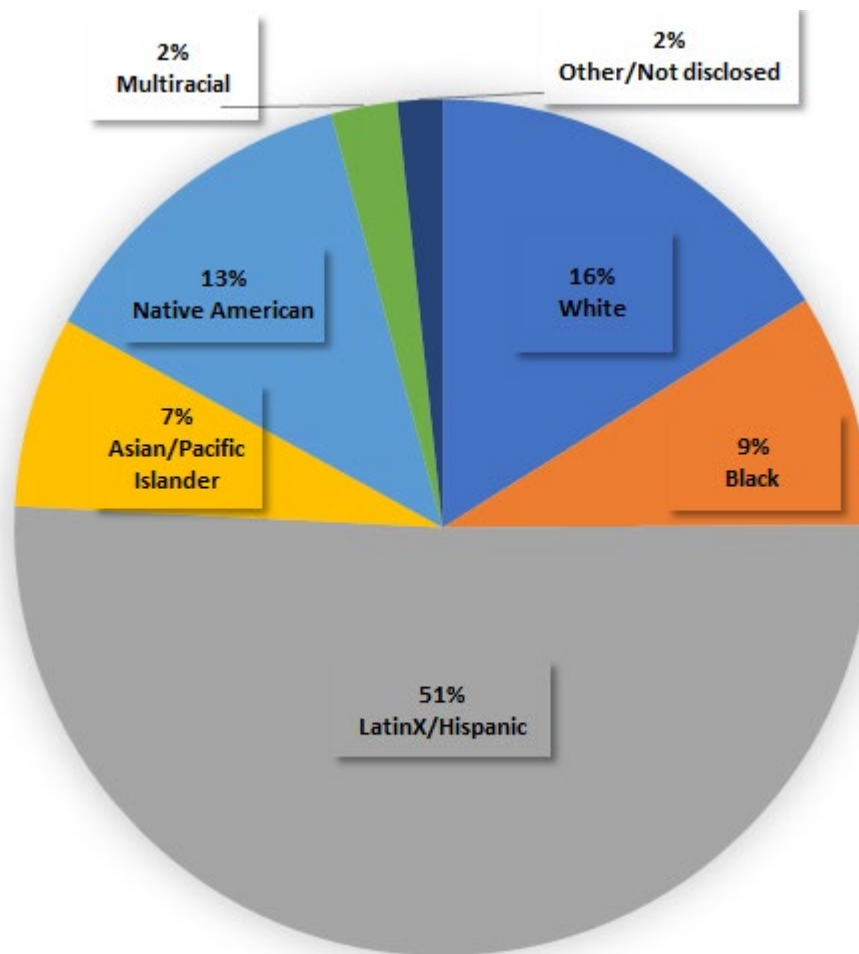


Figure 9: 51% LatinX/Hispanic, 16% white, 13% Native American, 9% Black, 7% Asian/Pacific Islander, 2% multiracial, 2% other/not disclosed

Equity during Grant Management

Advancing equity and supporting grantees is a priority in the ongoing administration of the approved WHALE TAIL® Grants. The following section discusses efforts made by staff during the grant cycle to support grantees, from providing many opportunities to ask questions, to reducing reporting burdens and offering trainings on equity and capacity building.

New Grantee Orientation Meetings

Two introductory online meetings were held in April 2024 for new grant recipients to go over the contracting process, invoicing procedures, and reporting, as well as to reinforce a relationship that welcomes questions and fosters ongoing communication in both directions. Part of each meeting was reserved for breakout room discussions among the grantees.

Progress Reporting

In 2021, staff began offering grantees the option to submit progress reports as a conversation rather than as a written document, and that continued for the FY 2023/24 grantees. In addition to a check-in on compliance with grant scope and timeline, these conversations are an opportunity to work through any challenges, share successes, and ask for assistance if needed. The Grant Manager files their notes from the conversation. A written submission is required for final grant reports.

Racial Equity and Capacity Building Trainings and Coaching

Through a targeted grant to [Justice Outside](#), the Coastal Commission funded racial equity and capacity building trainings for the FY 2023/24 WHALE TAIL® Grant recipients. Trainings have been available to each cohort of grant recipients since FY 2017/18. Justice Outside conducted a brief survey of the grantees' interests and needs and offered four, three-hour online trainings based on the responses. The following training topics were offered:

- Equity centered curriculum and program development
- Program evaluation and impact assessment
- Leadership styles and structures
- Board development: Recruitment and selection

Stipends were distributed to the grantees that participated in these optional trainings. Thirty-two grantee organizations participated in at least one of the training sessions.



Figure 10: Roosevelt Middle School students learning about sea level rise visit the coast

Survey of Grant Management Experience – FY 2022/2023 One Year In

One year after their grants were issued, FY 2022/23 grantees were surveyed for feedback and suggestions for improvement. Out of 37 respondents, 89% said that support they received during contract initiation was clear (with 8% of respondents not personally involved in that part of the grant cycle, so unable to respond); 100% said that support they received for invoicing and reporting was clear; and 97% said that over the course of their grant their Grant Manager was very available to them. Based on feedback from this survey, a grantee networking event was organized on October 9, 2024 to provide more opportunity for organizations to learn from and connect with each other. Grant recipients from FY 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 were invited, with 55 individuals participating. Staff will continue to refine and improve the resources available for grantees based on ongoing feedback.

“The prompt and consistent assistance in all phases of the grant was outstanding, thoughtful and clear. No other grant has offered the genuine support of Whale Tail. It was rewarding.”

“The grant management process of invoicing and reporting was very simple yet efficient, and we experienced minimal overhead. We could divert most of our time and energy into implementing the project.”

“{Staff} was not only responsive but extremely patient and helpful during the grant process and management. {The Grant Manager} really taught us a lot in the process and was very encouraging which truly makes a difference because writing grants can be scary...The Coastal Commission really puts forth their best foot to ensure small organizations have a chance at truly making a difference in the coastal space.”

Conclusion

A key element of the WHALE TAIL® Grants program is a focus on reaching communities that have historically received fewer marine education and stewardship opportunities. Each year, staff systematically review grant processes and implement improvements to further this goal. Recent changes include modifications to the application materials and selection criteria, increased outreach, development of more resources and methods of support for grant recipients, and adjustments to applicant and grantee rules and requirements. These changes, and the generous General Fund allocation in FY 2021, have supported implementation of more equitable coastal and marine education programs and increased the grant program’s reach and impact throughout California. Looking forward to the FY 2024/25 grant cycle, an overarching goal remains to remove unnecessary barriers and create a program that is accessible and welcoming to a wide range of entities, including those without deep organizational resources or prior experience with government grants. Coastal Commission staff are committed to the ongoing work of equity and are honored to manage the WHALE TAIL® Grants Program for the people of California.

Appendix A: Whale Tail® Grant Scoring Criteria from the FY 2023/2024 Grant Guidelines

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING GRANT RECIPIENTS (out of 100 points)

Grant proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria, using the information you provide in your application.

1. Educational Impact and/or Environmental Improvement (25 points): Strong proposals will demonstrate educational impact featuring the marine or coastal environment and/or improvement of coastal or marine habitats through community involvement. Strong proposals may include multiple methods and pathways for achieving positive outcomes. Examples include experiential, hands-on learning and stewardship; positive nature experiences; longer and/or repeated experiences with opportunities for reflection; age-appropriate content and delivery; strategies for long-term positive impact (which might stem from educational outcomes, or aspects such as leadership development opportunities or family involvement); and/or strong evidence for ecological need and projected improvement.

2. Purpose and Audience (25 points): Projects will be assessed on the degree to which they are connected to a specific issue, interest, and/or need (which might be educational, ecological, social, cultural, etc.). Proposals should explain the issue, interest, and/or need, and how it was identified for the project audience. Strong proposals will engage communities that have historically received fewer marine education and stewardship opportunities, such as communities with low incomes; Black communities; Indigenous communities; communities of color; speakers of languages other than English/dual language learners; people with disabilities; foster and transition age youth; LGBTQ2S+ communities; and residents of under-resourced rural and/or inland areas.

3. Project Concept (20 points): Strong proposals will demonstrate that the project is relevant and appropriately designed for the project audience or participants and will have a reasonable budget that is clearly connected to the project goals. Projects should be ecologically responsible. The degree to which a project could potentially be continued after the grant ends, build organizational capacity, build lasting collaborations, and/or create useful tools for others in the field will be considered, as will whether it uses new or creative approaches.

4. Proposal Content and Project Implementation (30 points): Proposals should demonstrate that the concept has been fully thought out and developed into a feasible project with clear, realistic goals and objectives; a plan for reaching the intended audience; a workable project design; a clear plan for implementation; and appropriate staffing. The proposal should explain how the organization and staff is particularly suited to carrying out the project and working with the audience. A plan for tracking and assessing the project's success should be included, as should detailed and accurate cost information. A strong proposal will demonstrate how the project objectives and goals will be successfully achieved. All requested elements of the application packet, as applicable, should be included in the proposal.

Appendix B: Whale Tail® Grant Awards for FY 2023/2024

1. **Acta Non Verba, \$50,000**

Project Title: Coastal Education at Camp ANV: Ocean Week & Water Safety

Engaging Communities in: East and West Oakland

Youth aged 5-11 will enjoy weekly swim lessons, coastal art projects, marine science lessons, and a field trip to the coast during a six-week summer camp in 2024 and 2025.

2. **Alpine Watershed Group, \$18,787**

Project Title: Enhancing Environmental Education in Alpine County

Engaging Communities in: Markleeville, Woodfords, and Bear Valley

K-8 students will experience classroom lessons about watersheds and their connection to the coast, climate change, and wildfire, and take two local field trips for nature exploration and stewardship activities. In partnership with Alpine County Library, a summer reading program will focus on coastal issues, and a nature investigation kit lending program will be established.

3. **Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education, \$19,998**

Project Title: Diversifying Environmental Leadership in California

Engaging Communities: Statewide

A diverse group of early career environmental educators will complete California's Environmental Educator Certification Program, receive training on water and climate science education, and design and conduct meaningful environmental action projects in their communities as part of the program.

4. **Audubon Canyon Ranch, \$35,962**

Project Title: Hugging the Shoreline - Connecting Tomales Youth to the Bay in their Backyard

Engaging Communities in: West Marin County

Rural elementary and high school students will enjoy day and overnight trips to the coast to learn about coastal species, geography, history, and stewardship during the 2024 and 2025 school years. High school students will collect geospatial data and work with scientists on GIS applications and present their own research during a coastal watershed science symposium.

5. **Big Lagoon Union School District, \$37,729**

Project Title: Big Lagoon Coastal Camp

Engaging Communities in: Northern Humboldt and southern Del Norte Counties

Native students will enjoy an immersive three-day coastal summer camp that celebrates the connection between the Yurok people and the surrounding land and ocean, by exploring a coastal sitka spruce forest, visiting Sue-meg Village, paddling lagoons, and learning from indigenous interpreters about Yurok life.

6. **Blue Lake Union Elementary School District, \$8,000**

Project Title: Environmental Stewardship & Indigenous Education Program

Engaging Communities in: Blue Lake, Humboldt County

Appendices for Equity Analysis of WHALE TAIL® Grants for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Sixth and seventh graders will take part in kayaking, camping, hiking, and lessons in Traditional Ecological Knowledge from local interpretive rangers and Indigenous leaders during the 2024 and 2025 school years.

7. Boys & Girls Clubs of Sonoma-Marin, \$50,000

Project Title: Under the Sea Program

Engaging Communities in: Eastern Sonoma County

At eight summer camps in both 2024 and 2025, a five-day program will include fun, ocean-related activities and a field trip to the Sonoma Coast.

8. Boz Life Science Research and Teaching Institute, \$50,000

Project Title: Tijuana River Estuary Environmental Protection Student Ambassador Program

Engaging Communities in: Imperial Beach, National City, and greater San Diego region

High school and college students will engage in an 11-week scientific research immersion project centered on environmental health risk assessment of Tijuana River Estuary water quality, including a formal presentation of their findings and recommendations for solutions.

9. Bret Harte Preparatory Middle School/Los Angeles Unified School District, \$48,564

Project Title: Fostering Awareness in Sustainability among Underserved Urban Corridor Youth
Engaging Communities in: South Central corridor of Los Angeles

Middle school teachers will plan and lead lessons in climate science and coastal stewardship in their classrooms, followed by their students taking part in a local beach cleanup and visiting Catalina Island for a three-day coastal science program during the 2024 school year.

10. Building Skills Partnership, \$30,000

Project Title: Environment, Exploration, and Wellness Project

Engaging Communities in: Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Clara, San Mateo, & Orange Counties

Two coastal community stewardship events and six bilingual interpretive outings, including aquarium visits and nature walks, will engage the mostly immigrant communities of property service workers in both northern and southern California.

11. Cabrillo High School Aquarium/Lompoc Unified School District, \$50,000

Project Title: Coastal Gallery Expansion – Phase 2 Gallery Annex

Engaging Communities in: Lompoc Valley, Vandenberg, Santa Maria Valley, Santa Ynez Valley

The student-run aquarium will expand exhibit space by nearly 50% and add eight new displays focusing on climate change impacts, as they lead programming for schools throughout the region and half of the Lompoc USD student body every year, as well as for the broader community during monthly open house events.

12. Canal Alliance, \$42,700

Project Title: Canal Alliance Whale Tail

Engaging Communities in: San Rafael's Canal District

In partnership with One Tam, middle and high school students in Canal Alliance's college-readiness program will engage in seven coastal field trips, including facilitated personal

storytelling and education on conservation, climate change, and outdoor access equity, with the final trip including a family celebration.

13. Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy, \$11,666

Project Title: CAUSE Building Coastal Stewardship of Youth

Engaging Communities in: Santa Maria, Oxnard, Santa Paula, Ventura

Three trips to Ormond Beach wetlands and Guadalupe Dunes will engage high school-aged youth in cultural history, natural systems, and ecological restoration, and a day trip to the Channel Islands will offer learning in island history and Chumash and Limu traditions while enjoying a boat ride and island hike.

14. Children's Lifesaving Foundation, \$50,000

Project Title: Coastal Eco-Mariners Surf Camp Program

Engaging Communities in: Los Angeles, Mar Vista, Palms, Culver City, Pacoima

A day camp at the beach during summer 2024 will engage youth aged 8-12 years in guided surf therapy, art projects, boogie-boarding, and ocean education. LAUSD students will take part in school-year field trips to Malibu Lagoon State Beach in partnership with the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains to explore coastal habitats and marine science.

15. Cigarette Surfboard LLC / International Documentary Association, \$20,000

Project Title: From Waste to Waves: The Cigarette Surfboard Educational Outreach Program

Engaging Communities in: Northern California

An educational outreach program for a new documentary about cigarette litter, ocean mindfulness, stewardship, and surfing will visit 15 universities and community colleges for screenings and discussion.

16. City of Huntington Beach Fire Department, \$50,000

Project Title: Beach Ranger Coastal Education Program

Engaging Communities in: Oak View neighborhood of Huntington Beach

A four-week program will engage youth ages 9-17 in beach and ocean education, safety, and recreation in a version of the Huntington Beach Junior Lifeguards program without a swimming skill prerequisite.

17. City Surf Project, \$50,000

Project Title: Youth Surfing

Engaging Communities in: San Francisco

Youth will enjoy one-day introductory surf experiences, week-long summer surf camps, and semester-long surf courses while developing a sense of belonging and responsibility for the coast, practicing social-emotional skills, and improving physical fitness.

18. Coalinga Huron Unified School District, \$33,300

Project Title: Oceans are for Everyone

Engaging Communities in: Huron and Coalinga, Fresno County

Appendices for Equity Analysis of WHALE TAIL® Grants for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Coalinga High School students will engage in classroom learning about the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary and then travel to the Islands for three days to camp, hike, snorkel, kayak, and learn about the islands' history and ecology, and then create a visual presentation on their experience.

19. Coastside Land Trust, \$40,165

Project Title: Junior Land Stewards

Engaging Communities in: Coastal San Mateo County between Half Moon Bay and Montara

An outdoor education and stewardship program will engage all Cabrillo Unified School District 4th graders during the 2024 school year with weekly in-class lessons and four walking field trips to coastal bluffs for habitat restoration and nature journaling. Educators will receive training in nature journaling and two high school classes will be trained to assist in field trip instruction for the 4th graders.

20. Colusa Indian Community Council, \$50,000

Project Title: Wintun Waves

Engaging Communities in: Colusa Rancheria

Students in the Council's afterschool program will enjoy three field trips from the Sacramento River to the California Coast, including a three-day camping trip in Point Reyes National Seashore, with multiple interdisciplinary learning opportunities both in the classroom and during outings to understand the importance of the river and watershed and how to be stewards of their land.

21. County Park Friends/Friends of Santa Cruz County Parks, \$42,959

Project Title: BIPOC on the BEACH!

Engaging Communities in: Santa Cruz County

Twelve bonfire events and four "coastal adventures" will build community alongside Monterey Bay while participants connect to coastal systems and watersheds, build outdoor skills, and learn cultural history from local community leaders.

22. Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, \$50,000

Project Title: Pomo Indigenous Food Sovereignty Alliance

Engaging Communities in: Sonoma, Mendocino, and Lake Counties

Youth in Pomo and other California Native American communities will learn about coastal stewardship from an indigenous perspective through interpretive events focused on traditional harvesting, wetland restoration, ecology, and sea level rise, and through community film screenings and discussions.

23. Earth Equity, \$50,000

Project Title: Kelp Restoration from the Inside Out

Engaging Communities in: San Quentin, Eureka, and Arcata

Incarcerated adults will have weekly ocean stewardship lessons over a six-month period while a Humboldt County cohort of formerly incarcerated adults will engage in a year of weekly meetings about kelp restoration, including engaging in stewardship work, learning sustainable kelp farming job skills, and creating a business plan for an environmental justice and ocean

stewardship co-op. Monthly educational workshops will engage the cohort and a wider audience of carceral system-impacted community members.

24. Elk Grove Unified School District/Monterey Trail High School, \$47,847

Project Title: Catalina Island Marine Institute Field Trips

Engaging Communities in: Elk Grove and South Sacramento

During two school years, upper division high school biology and environmental science students will attend a three-day program on Catalina Island to learn about marine ecosystems through labs, hikes, and snorkeling, followed by presentations to freshman biology classes to inspire them to continue their science education and care for the coast and ocean.

25. Escondido Creek Conservancy, \$18,965

Project Title: Interactive Watershed Model

Engaging Communities in: Escondido, San Diego County

An interactive model of the Escondido Creek watershed will be used during field trip programs with all 3rd grade students in Escondido USD and by other grade levels participating in Trout in the Classroom programming, by elementary-age summer camp attendees, and by the broader community while on exhibit at the Elfin Forest Interpretive Center year-round.

26. Explore Ecology, \$47,512

Project Title: Flows to the Ocean Project

Engaging Communities in: South Santa Barbara County

Fifth graders in Goleta and Santa Barbara Unified School Districts will participate in in-class lessons, beach and campus cleanups, action projects, and immersive field experiences about watershed issues, including a boat trip through Santa Barbara Channel.

27. Friends of the Dunes, \$20,000

Project Title: Inspiring Coastal Connections

Engaging Communities in: Humboldt County

Classroom presentations and field trips to coastal wetlands and dunes will teach students about coastal biodiversity, natural history, and Wiyot language and stories.

28. Hanford Elementary School District/Jefferson Academy School, \$18,029

Project Title: Be the Author of the Change You Wish to See in the World

Engaging Communities in: Hanford, Kings County

Third graders will conduct research, visit the coast on two field trips, and collectively publish a bilingual book about animal and plant life on the California coast. Students will host a publishing event to inspire the local community to care for the coast and its inhabitants.

29. Headwaters Science Institute, \$50,000

Project Title: Hands-On Marine Research Experience for East Bay Students

Engaging Communities in: Oakland and Richmond

Ninth grade classes will take part in supported, self-directed marine research projects, including a three-day research trip to Monterey Bay.

30. Inland Empire Waterkeeper, \$45,863

Project Title: Santa Ana River Watershed Education Program

Engaging Communities in: Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties

Junior high and high school students will take part in in-class workshops and a series of three field trips to explore natural spaces within the Santa Ana River watershed, including guided hikes, scientific research, and restoration activities.

31. Kashia School District, \$36,097

Project Title: World and Wilderness Youth Leadership Development Project

Engaging Communities in: Kashia Rancheria Reservation, Stewarts Point, Sonoma County

In collaboration with the Kashia Tribal Office, a year-round environmental education and service-learning program will connect K-8 students to the coast and Kashia lands, including three multi-day outdoor education trips. Fifth through 12th graders will take part in a five-day summer camping program on the coast.

32. Kern Environmental Education Foundation, \$43,878

Project Title: Camp KEEP Sustainability & Climate Justice Project

Engaging Communities in: Kern County

This outdoor school program serving 35 districts in Kern County will integrate climate change, environmental justice, human impact on natural cycles, trauma-informed and culture-sustaining practices into existing programming, including teacher training. Learning stations and interpretive signs will be created on the Los Osos campus to model watershed health, sustainable agriculture practices, and climate connections.

33. Kids for the Bay/Earth Island Institute, \$50,000

Project Title: Watershed Action - Ocean Stewards Program

Engaging Communities in: Richmond and San Pablo, Contra Costa County

In-class lessons, community cleanups, field trips to local habitats and the ocean, and a student-led family presentation will engage 3rd through 5th graders in watershed stewardship and ocean ecology.

34. Marine Mammal Care Center Los Angeles, \$20,000

Project Title: Marine Mammal Food Chain Discovery

Engaging Communities in: Los Angeles

Development and implementation of pre- and post-trip lessons will enhance a field trip program for Los Angeles USD students to learn about marine mammals and related ecology at the Care Center.

35. MeWater Foundation, \$40,600

Project Title: Surf and Outdoor Education Camps

Engaging Communities in: San Francisco Bay Area

Appendices for Equity Analysis of WHALE TAIL® Grants for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

Over a two-year period, 50 surf and outdoor education camps will engage youth and their families in surfing, ocean safety, mindfulness, beach cleanups, storytelling, and structured discussions.

36. Mission Science Workshop/Community Initiatives, \$15,000

Project Title: Whale on Wheels

Engaging Communities in: San Francisco

In-school programs will bring an interactive whale skeleton to elementary schools to teach about whale anatomy, evolution, and conservation, allowing the students to handle and assemble the skeleton themselves.

37. Monterey Bay Aquarium, \$45,000

Project Title: Ocean Learning Adventures

Engaging Communities in: Monterey County

A five-day camp experience will connect middle school youth to Monterey Bay through kayaking, journaling, labs, and engineering projects.

38. Mujeres de la Tierra, \$17,692

Project Title: Vamos a la Playa

Engaging Communities in: Northeast Los Angeles

Platicas (conversations) will engage participants in topics related to coastal access and ocean health, followed by a fun trip to the beach including surf lessons and environmental education activities.

39. Multicultural Education for Resource Issues Threatening Oceans Foundation, \$49,885

Project Title: ¡Vamos a la playa!

Engaging Communities in: Port Hueneme and Oxnard, Ventura County

Elementary and middle school students will take field trips to the coast to learn about water quality, intertidal species monitoring, and sea level rise impacts; middle school students will receive in-class presentations, participate in an outdoor leadership camp, and complete coastal volunteer work; and teachers and after-school instructors will take part in a series of professional development workshops to integrate climate, ocean, and environmental literacy into their instruction.

40. Nature Collective, \$49,976

Project Title: Student + Family Coastal Learning

Engaging Communities in: Escondido, San Diego County

All Escondido USD 5th graders and their teachers will engage in in-class lessons, a field trip to San Elijo Lagoon, and a conservation action project relating to their watershed and local environmental topics. Four schools will take part in additional field opportunities for students and their families to observe coastal wildlife, restore dune habitat, and explore slot canyons.

41. NatureBridge, \$50,000

Project Title: Youth Marine Science Education in the Marin Headlands

Engaging Communities in: San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento and Central Valley

Repairs and improvements will be made to this outdoor school's Intertidal Lab, and scholarships will support classes to attend a multi-day experience in the Marin Headlands including intertidal education, wildlife observation, and hiking.

42. New Heights Charter School, \$48,400

Project Title: Experiential Learning and Environmental Literacy
Engaging Communities in: South Los Angeles

Across two school years, 3rd through 8th graders will have multiple ocean experiences aligned with in-class learning, including kayaking, a plankton trawl, ocean sailing, a beach cleanup; and plan two ocean-based family events each year.

43. Northcoast Regional Land Trust, \$19,955

Project Title: ¡Exploremos juntos! Let's Explore Together!
Engaging Communities in: Humboldt County

Community members will enjoy structured and unstructured opportunities for hands-on restoration, interpretive tours, recreation, and cultural exchange in an event series with a focus on coastal wetlands, habitat protection, and sea level rise. The Land Trust will partner with other local community organizations and Cal Poly Humboldt students as part of 20 events.

44. Ocean Foundation/Ocean Connectors, \$45,000

Project Title: Connecting Youth for Conservation
Engaging Communities in: National City, San Diego County

Every National City School District school will participate in ocean programming, with classroom presentations and field trips such as whale watching, habitat restoration, and aquarium visits depending on grade. The program will expand into 8th grade for an ocean acidification unit including a kayak trip, and into high school exploring the blue economy and ocean science career pathways.

45. One Cool Earth, \$44,600

Project Title: San Luis Obispo County Watershed Education Program
Engaging Communities in: San Miguel and Shandon, San Luis Obispo County

K-8 students will experience year-round, watershed-focused educational opportunities including outdoor lessons, field trips to the coast, school waste audits, and sustainability leadership training. Teachers will take part in marine debris education workshops, and families and the wider community will be invited to community workdays.

46. Outdoor Outreach, \$50,000

Project Title: Coastal Education, Access, and Health Promotion for South Bay San Diego Youth
Engaging Communities in: South San Diego Bay

Middle and high school students will take part in a series of 40 coastal recreation experiences, such as biking, camping, and fishing, each with an environmental health component to prepare participants to safely repeat the experience on their own. Staff will be trained to use

environmental health tools to support programs in coastal areas impacted by transboundary pollution.

47. Pacific Environmental Education Center, \$24,756

Project Title: Connecting Students to Their Local Ecosystems

Engaging Communities in: Fort Bragg, Mendocino County

Fort Bragg Middle School 8th graders will attend a four-day overnight environmental education camp to explore their local coastal ecosystems and engage in hands-on comparative ecology.

48. Paddle for Peace, \$50,000

Project Title: Diversify Our Coast

Engaging Communities in: City Heights, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley, National City, Southeast San Diego

In-class lessons and field trips will engage elementary-age students in environmental education and equitable coastal access. Valencia Park Elementary students will take part in a four-week weekend program of surfing and beach activities. High school students will receive mentorship for leadership and surf skill development. A Juneteenth community event will welcome the public for surf lessons, games, and a beach cleanup.

49. Queer Surf/Green Cities Fund, \$50,000

Project Title: Project Ocean Access

Engaging Communities in: Los Angeles County

Scholarships will subsidize low-income adults to participate in single day and overnight surf lessons and beach programs designed for LGBTQ+ sustained ocean belonging and connection.

50. Roosevelt Middle School/Oakland Unified School District, \$46,744

Project Title: Rising Tides, Different Shores

Engaging Communities in: Oakland, Alameda County

Through in-class lessons, guest speaker assemblies, staff workshops, and a field trip to the coast, the middle school will learn about sea level rise and impacts on the local community and on international Pacific Islander communities.

51. Rosie the Riveter Trust, \$20,000

Project Title: Open Outdoors for Kids - Protecting our Waters

Engaging Communities in: Richmond, North Richmond, San Pablo, Contra Costa County

Fourth grade classes will be visited by National Park rangers, followed by a field trip to the Rosie the Riveter WWII/Home Front Historical Park to learn local history, watershed and habitat connections, and impacts on the Bay and its inhabitants caused by the proliferation of plastics during and after the war.

52. Rural California Broadcasting Corporation, \$20,000

Project Title: AWE: Awesome Women Environmentalists

Engaging Communities: Statewide

Appendices for Equity Analysis of WHALE TAIL® Grants for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

A short documentary celebrating Alcatraz Island bird biologist Lydia D'Amico will be produced and then aired on California PBS stations.

53. Scott River Watershed Council, \$20,000

Project Title: Creek to Coast: Salmonid Life History Understanding for Scott Valley Youth
Engaging Communities in: Etna, Siskiyou County

In two summer programs, participants aged 15-18 years will learn about the salmonid life cycle and local riparian restoration, and travel down their watershed to the Klamath estuary to analyze fisheries and wetland habitats.

54. South Yuba River Citizens League, \$26,763

Project Title: Salmon Expeditions
Engaging Communities in: Nevada and Sutter Counties

Third through 5th graders will experience river rafting trips during salmon spawning to learn about salmon lifecycle, watershed science, and impacts of the Gold Rush, with pre- and post-trip in-class lessons.

55. Stockton Unified Native American Indian Center/Stockton Unified School District, \$49,943

Project Title: Sovereignty, Stewardship, and Water
Engaging Communities in: Stockton, San Joaquin County

A four-week summer learning program will engage Native American students in cultural knowledge, water issues, and the interdependence of the Delta and the California coast through guest speakers, hands-on science and art, cultural practices, and field trips around the Delta and to the coast.

56. Sunday Friends Foundation, \$45,237

Project Title: Wellness in Bloom
Engaging Communities in: San Jose and Santa Clara County

A nine-month program will engage participants in predominantly Latino and Vietnamese neighborhoods in monthly education sessions featuring local government and community partners working on environmental conservation topics, a watershed cleanup event, and a family field trip to the coast.

57. Tolowa Dunes Stewards/Friends of the Dunes, \$49,700

Project Title: Reconnection and Stewardship on the Tolowa Coast
Engaging Communities in: Del Norte County

In partnership with Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, tribal youth will participate in education, restoration, and cleanup activities along the Tolowa coast. Summer programs will engage youth and adult volunteers from multiple communities in biodiversity education and removal of European beachgrass and English ivy, and in conservation activities for special status plants and animals.

58. TreePeople, \$49,604

Project Title: Natural Connections for Kids: From Mountains to Sea
Engaging Communities in: Wilmington, Los Angeles County

Appendices for Equity Analysis of WHALE TAIL® Grants for Fiscal Year 2023/2024

A series of three field trips will take middle and high school students from local mountains to the ocean to understand watershed functions, local wildlife, and accessible stewardship actions.

59. University Corporation at Monterey Bay/Habitat Stewardship Project, \$50,000

Project Title: 4th grade - Flows to the Bay

Engaging Communities in: Salinas, Monterey County

Over two years, 4th graders in the Alisal School District will engage in a three-part program of hands-on watershed experiences in their schoolyard, at local creek parks, and on a beach field trip, including nature journaling, neighborhood cleanups, and wildlife observation.

60. Weekend-Adventures/San Francisco Study Center, \$19,999

Project Title: Summer by the Sea

Engaging Communities in: Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco

Eight full-day weekend trips for youth in grades 3-8 will connect them to the coast with environmental education, outdoor skill building, physical activity, and social emotional support.