



Eastern Sierra Regional Climate and Recreation Jobs Creation

Inyo, Mono

\$143,770

APPLICANT INFORMATION			
Applicant Name	Erin Murphy	County	Mono
Organization	MLTPA		
Phone Number	1-760-934-3154	Email	sjfadmin@mltpa.org
Affiliated Organization Name and Description:			
MLTPA—the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation (MLTPA Foundation)—is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization incorporated in 2007 as a public benefit corporation in the State of California. Its mission is to create sustainable trail and recreation systems that support prosperous economies and healthy communities in Mammoth Lakes, the Eastern Sierra, and beyond. MLTPA will serve as the lead applicant for the Eastern Sierra Regional Climate and Recreation Jobs Creation Catalyst project application. Cerro Coso Community College is one of three colleges in the Kern Community College District. The College is charged with the responsibility of providing educational opportunities for the widely separated desert, mountain, and valley communities within a sweeping 18,000-mile, four-county (San Bernadino, Kern, Inyo, and Mono) region of eastern California. The mission of Cerro Coso Community College is to improve the life of every student it serves by prioritizing equity and supporting the attainment of educational goals. Through innovative delivery methods, Cerro Coso Community College provides transfer preparation, workforce education, degree pathways, and comprehensive student support services to develop ethical and effective citizenry throughout our vast rural and online communities. The United States Forest Service/Inyo National Forest is a federal agency within the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Its mission is to balance the multiple uses of national forests and grasslands while maintaining their ecological integrity and ensuring long-term sustainability for economic and environmental purposes. Columbia College, situated in Tuolumne County, California, is a community college celebrated for its beautiful, forested campus in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Established in 1968, the college provides a serene and inspiring environment conducive to learning, with facilities that blend harmoniously with the natural landscape. Columbia College is committed to student success, offering small class sizes that ensure personalized attention from dedicated and experienced faculty. The college also provides a variety of student services, including counseling, tutoring, and career development programs, to support its diverse student body. While not identified individually, local and regional tribes have important roles to play in this project, and funding has been provided in the project budget for their engagement. Appropriate federal and sovereign representatives will conduct formal nation-to-nation consultations on an as-needed basis. Advice and guidance for tribal engagement will be sought through the Eastern Sierra Jobs First Governing Council's "Tribal Round Table" and the Sierra Business Council's tribal liaison capacity.			
Applicant & Organization experience in the Region:			
For close to two decades, MLTPA has pioneered sustainable recreation efforts in rural eastern California, partnering with a full spectrum of local, state, federal, and tribal entities to produce tangible and measurable outcomes. Our multi-partner efforts include development and funding of the Mammoth Lakes Trail System			

(2006-Present); CALREC Vision and "California's Joint Strategy for Sustainable Outdoor Recreation & Wildfire Resilience" for California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force, the USFS Region 5 Partnership of the Year 2022 (2020-Present); convening, facilitation, and capacity support for the "Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership" (2018-Present); project management for all four tracks of the "Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Initiative," including "Regional Recreation Stakeholder Engagement," "Climate Adaptation and Resilience Assessment," "Connection to the Eastern Sierra Visitor Audience," and "Project Development and Prioritization," funded by Proposition 68 and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (2019-2022); regional trail development through the "Towns to Trails Plan" (2023-Present); the "Buttermilk Infrastructure and Recreation Planning Initiative (BIRPI)" to address resource impacts and plan for sustainable recreation in the Buttermilk region (2022-2023); regional campground restoration efforts with the USFS Washington Office's "Innovative Finance for National Forests" program and the Inyo National Forest (2020-Present); convening, facilitation, and capacity support for "Recreate Responsibly California" in partnership with REI (2020-Present); and the "Eastern Sierra Recreation Collaborative," whose "Citizen Suggested Desired Conditions" informed a new management plan for the Inyo National Forest (2014-2016).

PROJECT INFORMATION	
Description of proposed project or program seeking funding:	
Cerro Coso Community College, the U.S. Forest Service, and MLTPA will work together through an innovative partnership to implement recommended actions from "A Changing Climate Vulnerability in California's Eastern Sierra," as developed by the Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Initiative (SRTI) and the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP). Columbia College intends to collaborate through their nationally recognized natural resources, forestry, fire, and hospitality programs. Cerro Coso Community College developed a Sustainable Outdoor Recreation and Forestry, Climate, and Conservation degree pathways program with integrated internships and work experience that will collaborate with the U.S. Forest Service and MLTPA to provide students with experiential learning opportunities and tangible project experience. Field projects include an Asset Inventory of recreation infrastructure and related assets for jurisdictions located within the SRTI Study Area, providing GPS/GIS spatial data and location information for mapping, along with key attribute information regarding individual assets. A Gap Assessment will follow the Asset Inventory to analyze what is currently on the ground and what is needed to meet current and future demands of sustainable recreation activities and climate change in the region. The Inyo National Forest will provide additional public lands stewardship experience via mentorship of Cerro Coso student interns.	
Stage of Project or Program's readiness:	Last Mile
Per Sierra Jobs First Catalyst Fund criteria, the Eastern Sierra Region: Climate and Recreation Jobs Creation project qualifies as a "Ready to Go" project. Cerro Coso has spent three years developing and launching multiple robust curricular pathways that will be leveraged in the project. Partnership agreements, student interest, and necessary pathway development have been completed; the project launch will be accelerated to reach more regional workforce students with Sierra Jobs First Catalyst funding. The recommended actions from "A Changing Climate Vulnerability in California's Eastern Sierra" for implementation were completed in 2022. The USFS Inyo National Forest is prepared to work with project partners to deliver internship/job path opportunities.	
Description of Planned Beneficiaries:	
The immediate beneficiaries of a Sierra Jobs First Catalyst-funded project will be Cerro Coso students, who will experience and develop demonstrable work skills and practical experience in the field of climate-related job functions. Cerro Coso students currently enrolled in Wildland Firefighter courses and other related courses in recreation come from diverse backgrounds and ages that represent our Eastern Sierra communities. The area of focus for this project will serve current and future students from eight regional high schools, four	

regional tribal communities, and Inyo and Mono counties. The ultimate beneficiaries will be those students who can translate their field experiences into climate-related employment.

Priority Sector(s): Sustainable Rec & Tourism,

Foundational Elements: Workforce Development and Education, Physical Infrastructure, Small Business and Entrepreneurship

Describe priority Sector and/or Core issue impacted by the project:

This project will benefit the “Sustainable Recreation and Tourism” sector and address core issues identified as foundational elements in the “Sierra Jobs First Collaborative 2024 Strategic Plan” while establishing a functional model in interagency partnerships and workforce development that can be replicated across the seven-county Sierra Jobs First region. Core issues to be addressed include educating and employing a newly established workforce development program while simultaneously providing tangible project-based outcomes to improve climate resilience in the region.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION: Cerro Coso’s comprehensive pathways project aims to educate and develop the future workforce at the intersection of sustainable recreation, climate impacts, and forest land management techniques to better serve sustainable outdoor recreation, the single largest economic driver in the Sierras.

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE: Implementing recommended actions from “A Changing Climate | Vulnerability in California’s Eastern Sierra” is a critical first step to harden the physical recreation infrastructure upon which the economy of the Eastern Sierra Region depends.

SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: Climate mitigation projects identified through the Gap Assessment following the SRTI Asset Inventory will identify projects to be pursued by small businesses and entrepreneurs to meet current and future demands of sustainable recreation activities and climate change in the region.

FUNDING INFORMATION

Total Award: \$143,770

Budget: See attached

This project has match funding: TRUE

PROJECT ALIGNMENT

Description of proposed project alignment with CA Jobs First Goals related to impact

Explanation of how the proposed project will advance the regional strategy and any externalities or risks for implementation.

The Eastern Sierra Regional Climate and Recreation Jobs Creation project will address OPPORTUNITIES and CHALLENGES/RISKS to creating quality jobs as identified in Chapter 4 (“Sustainable Recreation & Tourism”) of the “Sierra Jobs First Collaborative 2024 Strategic Plan”.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- “Collaborative Support”: Enhance through opportunities for regional public agency partnerships.
- “Economic Impact”: Enhance through internship and employment opportunities and the protection of critical infrastructure assets.
- “Guided Projects”: Enhance through the incorporation of recommended climate resilience actions for recreation infrastructure offering long-term economic benefits.

- “Natural Beauty”: Enhance through sustainable and climate-smart access to national parks, national forests, and public lands and their natural scenic beauty.
- “Sustainability Push”: Enhance initiatives for climate-resilient access to outdoor activities that promote economic development.
- “Varied Visitors”: Enhance visitation through resilient infrastructure to national and state parks, forests, ski resorts, and historic small towns.

CHALLENGES/RISKS:

- "Climate Risks": Mitigate the long-term effects of climate change through proactive inventories of critical infrastructure.
- "Infrastructure and Environmental Impacts": Mitigate the long-term effects of climate change through an immediate inventory and analysis of critical assets.
- "Land Management Capacity": Mitigate capacity constraints of federal agencies through innovative public agency partnerships and career path employment opportunities in the climate sector.
- "Land Tenure": Mitigate access to recreation destinations and activities on public lands through proactive responses to climate change.
- "Limited Accessibility": Mitigate inaccessible recreation opportunities by providing enhanced access through climate-smart infrastructure design of new facilities.
- "Stagnant Jobs": Provide internship and employment opportunities in the burgeoning climate sector through innovative public education, land management, and NGO partnerships.

Description of proposed projects alignment with CA Jobs First Goals related to economic impact

Explain the economic impact potential for the Sierra Jobs First region (i.e. jobs created or retained, capital attraction, local investment, events, etc). This section may include detailed analysis and quantifiable data supporting the projected economic benefits and enhanced resilience in the region (see exhibits).

The collaboration among Cerro Coso Community College, the U.S. Forest Service, and MLTPA offers a chance to tackle a recognized risk highlighted in Chapter 4 (“Sustainable Recreation & Tourism”) of the “Sierra Jobs First Collaborative 2024 Strategic Plan.” This risk concerns “Land Management Capacity: Budget and capacity constraints, coupled with institutional resistance, restrict the capacity of federal agencies and public land managers to advance recreational initiatives.”

Through their existing authorities, USFS / Inyo National Forest staff are willing to

- 1) participate in Cerro Coso recruiting activities;
- 2) execute a volunteer agreement with Cerro Coso to cover the scope of work for all interns hosted by the Inyo National Forest;
- 3) provide internship placements with Inyo National Forest districts;
- 4) provide mentor/work leader from district staff for each intern;
- 5) provide training, safety equipment, tools for interns; and
- 6) verify that intern work and time requirements are met for Cerro Coso course credit.

With funding secured through this Catalyst application, Cerro Coso could provide up to 30 interns over two summer seasons to participate in the programs offered by the Inyo National Forest as they work to complete data collection and attribution activities associated with the implementation of climate objectives identified in “A Changing Climate | Vulnerability in California’s Eastern Sierra.”

Description of proposed projects alignment with CA Jobs First related to climate goals

Identify the proposed project's impact on sustainability, specifically a carbon neutral, climate-resilient economy that addresses the needs of the region's communities and the innovation ecosystem.

MLTPA managed the “Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Initiative (SRTI)” on behalf of the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership, funded by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and Proposition 68. The SRTI included a climate adaptation and resilience assessment of 17,000 square miles of California’s public landscape, with a specific focus on its sustainable recreation economy, including that of three counties in the

Eastern Sierra region, two regions, and two units of the U.S. Forest Service, the regional field office of the Bureau of Land Management, six units of the National Park Service, and several regional tribes. The final document - "A Changing Climate | Vulnerability In California's Eastern Sierra" - includes this climate adaptation and resilience assessment, conducted following the recommended process in the California Adaptation Planning Guide (APG), the state's guidance for how local communities should conduct climate adaptation planning efforts, including vulnerability assessments. The state's APG and the Fourth Climate Change Assessment—including the Sierra Nevada Regional Report, the Summary Report from Tribal and Indigenous Communities within California, and the Climate Justice Summary Report—provided extensive information about climate-related exposures and vulnerabilities, in addition to federal reports such as the National Climate Assessment. "A Changing Climate | Vulnerability In California's Eastern Sierra" identifies five immediate recommended actions—"Funding Ready Projects," "Regional Asset Inventory," "Gap Assessment," "Sustainable Infrastructure Master Plan," and "Sustainable Recreation Outreach and Education"—of which "Regional Asset Inventory" and "Gap Assessment" will be implemented through this project. The authors conclude: "These project recommendations seek to align the Eastern Sierra with California climate change policy, and in so doing, increase the region's eligibility for state and federal funding to plan for and implement solutions for climate change vulnerabilities and successful adaptation. This report and its recommendations establish the foundation for climate resiliency in California's Eastern Sierra."

Description of proposed projects alignment with CA Jobs First Goals related to equity and long-term sustainability

Explain how this project advances prosperity by creating living wage, benefitted jobs or career pathways for disinvested communities or a path to building wealth through entrepreneurship or related activities.

Implementing key recommendations from a state-funded climate adaptation and resilience assessment of 17,000 square miles of California's public landscape through an innovative state/federal/NGO partnership will address several California Jobs First equity and long-term sustainability goals, as framed by the introduction to Chapter 4 of the Sierra Jobs First Regional Plan: "The strategic opportunity for the Sierra region is to manage land over which it has jurisdiction, especially its natural systems, toward long-term environmental sustainability while leveraging the economic value of natural beauty and these natural systems for shared economic prosperity." California Jobs First equity goals include: "Environmental Equity: All people of the State have equal protection from the impacts of environmental degradation and climate change, as well as equal access to natural resources and recreational opportunities in a clean, healthy environment," and "Targeting underserved areas with infrastructure investments improves access to essential services, bridges gaps, and fosters inclusive economic growth." The implementation of the "Regional Asset Inventory" and "Gap Assessment" recommendations from "A Changing Climate | Vulnerability In California's Eastern Sierra," through Cerro Coso Community College's comprehensive Sustainable Outdoor Recreation and Forestry, Climate, and Conservation degree pathways program, will provide students with real-world experiential learning opportunities and tangible project experience in the climate field. Integrated internships and work experience courses in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service demonstrate the type of critical interagency collaboration essential to achieving the sustainability goals of the Sierra Jobs First Regional Plan. Project identification through the "Gap Assessment" can create opportunities for entrepreneurs and infrastructure jobs for construction workers, electricians, plumbers, and other skilled tradespeople. The internships provided by Cerro Coso Community College and the U.S. Forest Service can generate career pathways into these fields, and leadership roles in the internship program can provide opportunities for career advancement.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Project team

Provide information on roles, responsibilities, and prior experience. For partnerships, provide evidence of commitment or MOU explain your long-term strategy for collaboration with local organizations and community stakeholders. Clearly define their scope of work, detailing their respective activities.

The Eastern Sierra Regional Climate and Recreation Jobs Creation project has been developed by Cerro Coso Community College, the Inyo National Forest, and MLTPA over several months through their ongoing engagement with the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership. This Catalyst application will focus on specific tasks aimed at integrating Cerro Coso Community College's comprehensive "Sustainable Outdoor Recreation and Forestry, Climate, and Conservation" degree pathways program with US Forest Service internship opportunities. The existing "Pathways Student Internship Program" of the US Forest Service is designed to provide students enrolled in educational institutions with opportunities to work in Federal agencies and explore careers while still in school. This program is tailored for students from a wide range of educational backgrounds, from technical degrees to graduate school. As the project manager and administrator of the Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Initiative (SRTI) responsible for producing "A Changing Climate | Vulnerability In California's Eastern Sierra" and its five immediate recommended actions, MLTPA will collaborate with both Cerro Coso Community College, the US Forest Service, and Columbia College to design and support the program, ensuring that on-the-ground efforts occur in the summer of 2025 and 2026. This will involve technical support through MLTPA's Data Management capabilities, along with project management skills. Additionally, MLTPA will play a key administrative role as an NGO, alleviating the burden on both Cerro Coso Community College and the US Forest Service, which are public agencies. This aligns with the "CA Jobs First Goals related to Impact" cited earlier, which aims to mitigate capacity constraints of federal agencies through innovative partnerships and career path employment opportunities in the climate sector. As an NGO, MLTPA serves as a neutral party capable of coordinating the limited capacities of a federal land manager—the US Forest Service—and a California public educational institution—Cerro Coso Community College—to facilitate and maximize opportunities for program implementation. MLTPA performs a similar function in a 2023 Sierra Nevada Conservancy-funded project, "Eastern Sierra Campground Improvements," where it acts as a critical fiscal intermediary, leveraging California state bond funds—Proposition 68—alongside congressionally appropriated federal funding—the Great American Outdoors Act—to provide over \$385,000 for campground improvements in the disadvantaged Eastern Sierra counties of Mono and Inyo. Columbia College will participate through its nationally recognized natural resources, forestry, fire, and hospitality programs via a trans-Sierra collaboration that benefits all seven counties of the California Jobs First Eastern Sierra Region.

Declaration of ability to meet expenditure deadline of September 2026

The project partners—MLTPA, the US Forest Service, and Cerro Coso Community College—are well-positioned to meet the expenditure deadline as they are all well-versed in timeline-based grant projects. Cerro Coso Community College operates numerous categorical budget programs and has staffing in place to receive and expend funds. The College's current curricular structure was established with project-based funding programs as a primary method of funding collaborative partnership projects. The Career Technical Education division of the college (where the curricular programs reside) is funded through cyclical grant and categorical funding mechanisms managed by the Dean, Department Chair, Departmental Assistants, and others. The organization prides itself on effectively and responsibly expending grant funds to serve students to the highest degree possible with instructional materials, reduced tuition costs, and serving students equitably with funds.

Evidence of partnership from a "Disinvested Community" – See attached

Letters of support from community members – See attached

This project has Tribal leadership or partnership: FALSE

This project has a Tribal letter of support: FALSE