

Energy Efficiency  
Portfolio Application  
of the

# Rural Regional Energy Network



*Cover art by Keri Davis, SharpEnd Designs*

*Cover photos clockwise from left: Kneeland, California (Nancy Stephenson), Mono Lake, California (c/o Keri Davis), Yokhul Valley (c/o County of Tulare), Big Sur, California (c/o AMBAG)*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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“The Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN) will act as a catalyst to accelerate implementation of the state’s energy efficiency and climate goals in geographically hard-to-reach California. By leveraging rural regional collaboration, our trusted local relationships, and promoting pragmatic responses to community needs the RuralREN will help deliver an equitable and clean energy future.”

### FOR RURAL, BY RURAL, EQUITY-FOCUSED

The Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN) is a steward of the regions we serve, committed to helping our rural communities grow and thrive through the adoption of energy efficiency while promoting clean energy practices and technologies. Part of serving rural communities is understanding the unique perspectives as well as accepting views and opinions that often do not align with California's metropolitan areas. The RuralREN will help our rural communities support California's ambitious greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction policies while achieving the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) energy efficiency savings goals, in terms that rural customers can accept, support, and in time, champion.

We are proud of the RuralREN's efforts to bring clean energy practices and programs to our four regions of California: Central Coast, North Coast, Sierra, and San Joaquin Valley. We are committed to remaining zealous advocates for rural customers while tirelessly sharing our vision. We support the vision of a clean energy future. To achieve this, all Californians must be part of it.

Our portfolio approach builds upon our past energy efficiency program experiences to maximize opportunity, reduce unnecessary costs, and to lessen market confusion. We are poised to continue our focus on helping customers save energy using comprehensive energy

efficiency tactics, increasing awareness of energy efficiency opportunities, and increasing local workforce capabilities and capacity—all largely in rural hard-to-reach, disadvantaged, and underserved communities.<sup>1</sup> Rural California can support the vision for a clean energy California, but will only succeed with the assistance of trusted partners.

*"The heightened economic vulnerability of rural communities has garnered significant attention in recent months, prompting many to call for concentrated fiscal relief to help rural residents, small businesses, and state and local governments weather the COVID-19 crisis. Yet alongside this call, some scholars [...] argue that to lay the groundwork for true rural resilience and chart a more equitable recovery trajectory than the previous one, rural economic development policy requires a fundamental shift—one that recognizes the vast diversity of rural America and invests in local strategies that strengthen community assets and bolster local leadership to promote truly resilient economic opportunity."*<sup>2</sup>

The idea of the RuralREN is a direct response to the unique issues and urgent needs of geographically hard-to-reach California energy customers.

#### Urgent Needs of Geographically Hard-to-Reach Energy Customers

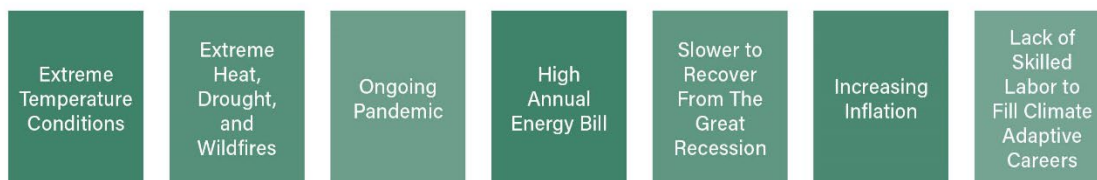


FIGURE 1

Our focus and highest priority objective is to provide energy efficiency services to underserved and hard-to-reach rural ratepayers. Appropriately 78% of our total proposed budget is allocated to the Equity segment. For the RuralREN equity is more than a segment;

<sup>1</sup> D18-05-041, FOF 11. "CalEPA, pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 39711, defines disadvantaged communities as those census tracts scoring in the top 25 percent of census tracts statewide on the set of 20 different indicators in CalEnviroScreen. As part of its definition of disadvantaged communities, CalEPA also finds that an additional 22 census tracts that score in the highest five percent of CalEnviroScreen's Pollution Burden indicator, but that do not have an overall CalEnviroScreen score in the top 25 percent because of unreliable socioeconomic or health data, are also defined as disadvantaged communities."

<sup>2</sup> Love, & Powe. (2020, December 1). Why Main Streets are a key driver of equitable economic recovery in rural America. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/why-main-streets-are-a-key-driver-of-equitable-economic-recovery-in-rural-america/>



it's imbued into our governance and decision making. As rural Californians, we experience firsthand that rural issues are equity issues.

When we look at equity from the rural perspective, it always begins with access. Looking at equity for the purposes of the RuralREN, we look to those who have studied equity in energy efficiency in depth and identify those experts who are uniquely positioned to impact and influence our process: The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) and the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC) Equity Metrics Working Group (EMWG).

The ACEEE, in their *Leading with Equity Initiative*,<sup>3</sup> looks at equity through the lens of “four dimensions of equity”: structural, procedural, distributional, and transgenerational. The CAEECC EMWG set out to consider the new Equity segment and how portfolios could be justifiably designed, budgeted, measured, and evaluated. The ACEEE presented their findings to the EMWG in May 2021 for consideration in their efforts to determine equity metrics.<sup>4</sup>

The ACEEE initiative considers how to include equity-centered metrics in programs. To begin the process of designing and delivering a just and equitable energy system we must consider these four dimensions of equity, their historical legacy, and how we can inclusively overcome them.

Structural Equity recognizes the historical, cultural, and institutional dynamics that led to inequities in clean energy. To address this, decision makers must reform policies and programs that resulted in the inequity and work collaboratively to build policy and programs that are “fair, just, and equitable” for all.

Procedural Equity creates inclusive and accessible processes for developing and implementing clean energy programs. This includes authentic engagement and representation in the process. Our community members must have an active leadership role in this process to ensure that their needs and concerns inform and drive the development and outcomes of programs, goals, and solutions.

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<sup>3</sup> Drenthobl. (2021, December). ACEEE's Leading with Equity Initiative; Key Findings and Next Steps. <https://www.aceee.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Leading%20with%20Equity%20final%201-28-22.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Hayes, & Gerbode. (2021, May 6). Health + Energy Program Design Network [Slides]. California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee. [https://www.caeecc.org/\\_files/ugd/849f65\\_cc09174c1a324b6a8082d3671de1d603.pdf](https://www.caeecc.org/_files/ugd/849f65_cc09174c1a324b6a8082d3671de1d603.pdf)

This process of addressing both structural and procedural equity begins with the RuralREN itself. This coalition of rural energy efficiency program implementers comes to the process with experiences and understanding of our local needs. We deepen this and drive it into our RuralREN process through inclusion and priority placement of the Equity and Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Advisory Committee.

Considering Distributional Equity, we keep at the front of our minds that no one community shoulders an unjust burden. We must consider how to fairly distribute the benefits and burdens across all segments of communities. Our policies and programs—at the RuralREN level but influencing up to the state level—must fairly distribute benefits and burdens.

We contend that the historical importance of cost effectiveness has kept Investor Owned Utilities (IOUs) and third-party providers from being able to tackle this, even if they would like to. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) acknowledges the growing “conflict between cost-effectiveness and other equally or more important policy objectives such as equity and support for the energy efficiency market”<sup>5</sup>. The intent and design of the RENs gives us a unique opportunity to build on our history of working collaboratively with the IOUs and third-parties to tackle distributional equity in our spaces. Together we can design and deliver policies and programs that effectively and equitably reach our community members. Lower energy bills, clean energy jobs, investment dollars and community wealth will build a reimagined future for our rural spaces.

The work we endeavor to do cannot be absent of the impact on future generations. Transgenerational Equity asks us to consider and eliminate practices that could place unfair burdens on our children.

With direction from D.21-05-031, Program Administrators must reconsider their portfolio segmentation through three approaches: resource acquisition, market support, and equity. Equity, in this Decision, is defined as, “programs with a primary purpose of providing energy efficiency to hard-to-reach or underserved customers and disadvantaged communities in advancement of the Commission's ESJ Action Plan. Improving access to energy efficiency

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<sup>5</sup> D. 21-05-031, Page 13. “Overall, we find it important to reduce the conflict between cost-effectiveness and other equally or more important policy objectives such as and support for the energy efficiency market. Furthermore, we acknowledge that while a TRC ratio appropriately compares the benefits and costs of a program targeted primarily at delivering grid benefits, it may not be the most appropriate tool for judging whether energy efficiency funding was prudently spent on programs which support equity or market support goals. The benefits delivered by these types of programs are not assessed using the CET or ACC, and therefore other methods are necessary.”



for ESJ communities, as defined in the ESJ Action Plan, may provide corollary benefits such as increased comfort and safety, improved air quality, and more affordable utility bills, consistent with Goals 1, 2, and 5 in the ESJ Action Plan”<sup>6</sup>.

The work of the CAEECC EMWG sought to set objectives and metrics to Equity programs to ensure portfolio segmentation, design, and budgets are justified, as well as to allow for program tracking and evaluation. When considering a primary objective for the segment, the group concluded, “For hard-to-reach, disadvantaged, and/or underserved individuals, households, businesses, and communities: address disparities in access to energy efficiency programs and workforce opportunities\*; promote resilience, health, comfort, safety, energy affordability\*\*, and/or energy savings; and reduce energy-related greenhouse gas and criteria pollutant emissions\*\*\*.”<sup>7</sup>

The RuralREN equity-focused approach lets us honor the findings of the EMWG as well as the work from ACEEE. By approaching equity not as an afterthought, but the focus point for program design and delivery, we can accelerate the investment in and adoption of energy efficiency policies and practices in our communities. RuralREN is more than just geographically hard-to-reach -- within the population there are many underserved, disadvantaged customers, and it is time to make a concerted effort to serve them.

Through a focused and strategic portfolio of program offerings across the Equity, Market Support, and Resource Acquisition segments, RuralREN will achieve:

**Equity:** Hard-to-reach, disadvantaged and underserved rural customers are provided the same level of services and support of CPUC energy programs as their counterparts in or near metropolitan areas, and are empowered to act.

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<sup>6</sup> Id, Page 14. “Programs with a primary purpose of providing energy efficiency to hard-to-reach or underserved customers and disadvantaged communities in advancement of the Commission’s Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Action Plan;3 Improving access to energy efficiency for ESJ communities, as defined in the ESJ Action Plan, may provide corollary benefits such as increased comfort and safety, improved indoor air quality, and more affordable utility bills, consistent with Goals 1, 2, and 5 in the ESJ Action Plan.”

<sup>7</sup> Equity Metrics Working Group. (2021, October). Report and Recommendations to the California Public Utilities Commission and the Energy Efficiency Program Administrators. California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee. [https://4930400d-24b5-474c-9a16-0109dd2d06d3.filesusr.com/ugd/849f65\\_422f2a5a35bb4bcbbabe50e7ecccf6f2.docx?dn=Final%20EMWG%20Report\\_10.20.2021.docx](https://4930400d-24b5-474c-9a16-0109dd2d06d3.filesusr.com/ugd/849f65_422f2a5a35bb4bcbbabe50e7ecccf6f2.docx?dn=Final%20EMWG%20Report_10.20.2021.docx)

**Reduced Consumption:** Energy consumption, energy cost and GHG emissions are reduced across the region, contributing to California's decarbonization and energy efficiency goals.

**Climate Adaptive Careers:** A trained, local workforce is employed in well-paying careers that provide energy services to rural communities to enable energy and cost savings, and GHG emissions reductions.

## ABOUT RURALREN

The RuralREN is a proposed new Regional Energy Network formed and led by six members of the Rural Hard-to-Reach Working Group (RHTR)<sup>8</sup>. RHTR is an alliance of rural California local governments and non-profits experienced in implementing energy efficiency programs through previous (IOU) Local Government Partnerships (LGP), American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and California's Proposition 39 funding. RHTR has a primary goal of advancing local, regional, and state policy and regulatory decisions in rural California to



FIGURE 2

bring consistent and quality energy services and products necessary to meet the state's energy efficiency and sustainability goals in its represented communities. With an underlying shared vision to bring equity to rural customers, six of the working group members collaborated to form the RuralREN. The partners comprise the RuralREN with their customers spread across four geographically hard-to-reach regions of California. The RuralREN regions, counties, population, and land area are shown above in Figure 2 below in Table 1. The combined RuralREN service territory population of 7 million people represents approximately 17% of California's total population, but its land area of 78,249 square miles is approximately 50% of California's total land area.

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<sup>8</sup> RHTR became a party to CPUC Rulemaking 13-11-005, Order Instituting Rulemaking Concerning Energy Efficiency Rolling Portfolios, Policies, Programs, Evaluation, and Related Issues, to offer its input as a collection of implementers of government and community partnerships for energy efficiency throughout the rural areas of California.



## Rural REN: Regions, Partners, Counties, Square Miles, Population

| RuralREN Region           | RuralREN Partner Organization                         | Counties Served   | Land Area, Sq. Miles | Population       |
|---------------------------|---|---|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>North Coast</b>        | Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA)                 | Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino   | 8,331                | 296,227          |
| <b>Central Coast</b>      | Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)  | Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz  | 5,114                | 774,105          |
|                           | County of San Luis Obispo (SLO)                       | San Luis Obispo   | 3,299                | 282,424          |
| <b>San Joaquin Valley</b> | San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (SJVCEO) | Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare  | 27,262               | 4,313,060        |
| <b>Sierra</b>             | High Sierra Energy Foundation (HSEF)                  | Inyo, Mono  | 13,230               | 32,211           |
|                           | Sierra Business Council (SBC)                         | Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Lassen, Mariposa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra, Sutter, Tuolumne, Yuba | 21,013               | 1,306,482        |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>             |   |   | <b>78,249</b>        | <b>7,004,509</b> |

TABLE 1



The **Redwood Coast Energy Authority** (RCEA) was founded in 2003 as a Joint Powers Agency whose members include the County of Humboldt, the Cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, Trinidad, and the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District. RCEA's purpose is to develop and implement sustainable energy initiatives that reduce energy demand, increase energy efficiency, and advance the use of clean, efficient, and renewable resources available in the region. RCEA currently implements residential and non-residential resource acquisition programs as an elect Program Administer, non-resource programs for public agency, commercial, and residential hard-to-reach customers through its local government partnership with PG&E, as well as other self-funded efforts as a Community Choice Aggregator.



**Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)** was organized in 1968 for the purpose of regional collaboration and problem solving. AMBAG, as it is often referred to, was formed a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) governed by a 24 member Board of Directors comprised of elected officials from each City and County within the region. The AMBAG region includes Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz County. AMBAG serves both as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for all three counties and the Council of Governments (COG) for Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. In 2005, AMBAG established its sustainability program which focuses on the implementation of energy efficiency, zero emissions transportation, and climate action planning initiatives. From 2006 to 2020, AMBAG implemented the AMBAG Energy Watch PG&E local government partnership program. Since 2021, AMBAG has worked as a subconsultant to the SJVCEO as part of the Central California Energy Watch Program.



The **County of San Luis Obispo** has been a program administrator for the Tri-County Regional Energy Network (3C-REN) since 2019 and a was the implementer of the PG&E San Luis Obispo Energy Watch Partnership (SLO Energy Watch) from 2010 through 2019. As a current program administrator, the County of SLO is well versed in developing and delivering programs in rural communities that are effective and tangible for residents, building, professionals, and stakeholders.



The **High Sierra Energy Foundation (HSEF)**, a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit, established in 2005, promotes the culture of energy efficiency and sustainability in the rural Eastern Sierra communities of Inyo and Mono counties. HSEF implemented a Local Government Partnership for over a decade and has provided outreach for statewide programs such as Flex Your Power, Energy Upgrade California and the Residential Energy Efficiency Loan program. In 2019, the organization started implementing the Eastern Sierra Green Business Program, affiliated with the CA Green Business Network. HSEF has worked with Southern California Edison, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the SoCalREN and the California Department of Food and Agriculture on community partnership initiatives, ensuring the communities they serve are aware of, and can benefit from, programs available to other California ratepayers.



The **San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization** (SJVCEO) was founded in 2007 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit to work with cities and counties as well as public and private organizations to demonstrate the benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy throughout the eight-county region of the San Joaquin Valley. SJVCEO's work focuses on regional solutions for various issues, including advancing the use of local renewables, energy efficiency, demand reduction, climate action planning, and alternative transportation. SJVCEO currently implements the Valley Innovative Energy Watch with Southern California Gas Company and the Central California Energy Watch (CCEW) for public agencies with PG&E. The organization serves as a Regional Partner supporting the SoCalREN public agency and multi-family programs, as well as other IOU and non-IOU funded work beyond energy efficiency.



The **Sierra Business Council** (SBC) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose purpose is to pioneer and demonstrate innovative approaches and solutions to increase community vitality, economic prosperity, environmental quality, and social fairness in the Sierra Nevada. SBC is an experienced energy program implementer and has been working with PG&E implementing the Sierra Nevada Energy Watch over the last six years. SBC has also participated in CPUC proceedings bringing a rural equity point of view to the public process.

The RuralREN is particularly well-situated to deliver energy efficiency services to rural Californians. RENs offer an opportunity to regionalize and localize program design and associated service while maintaining the economy of scale necessary to maximize the cost-effective delivery of resources. Regional and local program designs that integrate various locational variables are critical to successful rural implementation. For example, customer locational values, beliefs, and norms must be incorporated into program design; otherwise, long-term social structural barriers to success will emerge—previous local government partnerships practices had filled this niche. As local programs are downsized by budget and scope, we see RuralREN as a practical solution to continue and expand focused effort to bring equitable access and services by and for rural Californians.

## RURALREN'S PROPOSED PORTFOLIO OF PROGRAMS

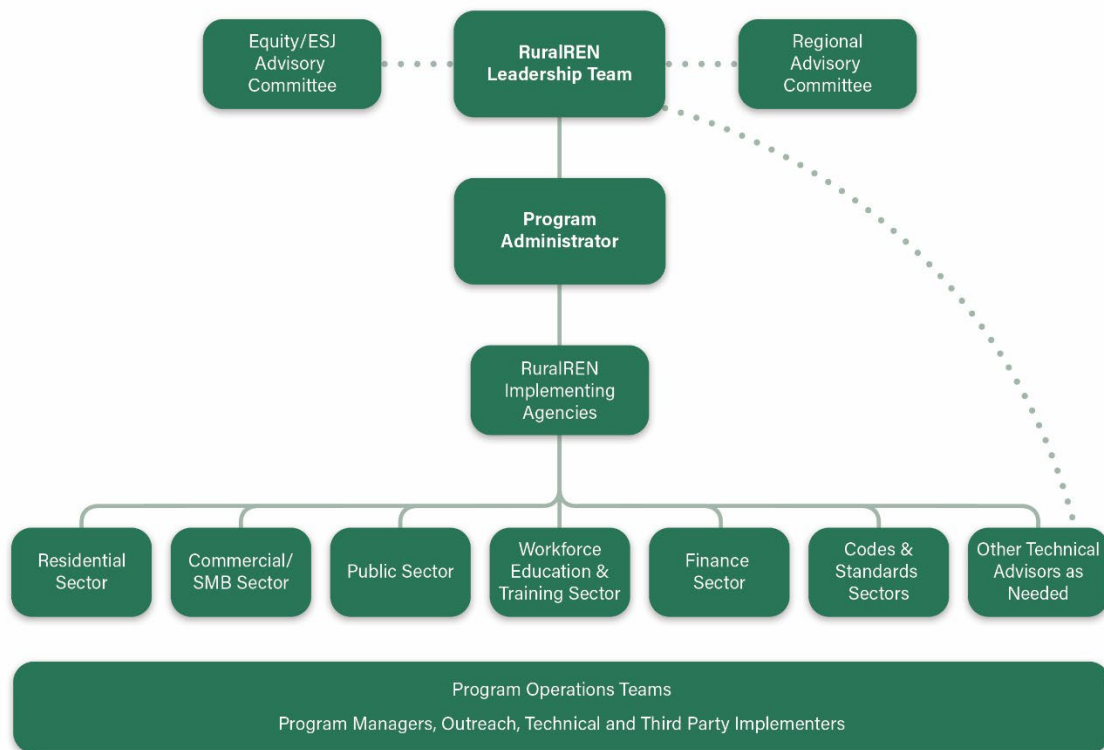
The RuralREN is a direct response to underrepresented rural California energy customers' unique issues and urgent needs. The RuralREN will address the needs of rural California customers with a portfolio focused on Equity and Market Support segments across Public, Residential, Commercial, Workforce Education and Training, Codes and Standards, and Finance sectors. The portfolio will also have limited, pilot-scale "hyper-local" Resource Acquisition programs in the Residential and Small Commercial sectors that emphasize common energy efficiency measures along with strategic decarbonization measures. Sector strategies will include a range of outreach, training, technical and financial assistance, all designed to help rural communities implement energy savings measures as well as build local economies and workforces. A thoughtfully planned, phased portfolio approach offers a mix of flexible programs customized to the needs of local communities that will evolve and expand over the nine-year funding cycle.

## RURALREN GOVERNANCE MODEL

RuralREN's governance model provides strong, centralized fiscal control, management of performance and achievement of goals as well as accomplish with regulatory and policy mandates. The organization includes Implementing Agencies, Technical Advisory Committees, Leadership Team, and an Administrator operating under a decision-making framework that:

- Defines and assigns the multi-levels of governance: local leadership, centralized decision making
- Delineates scopes of authority with a single Program Administrator
- Describes what and how decisions are made at each level of governance
- Establishes channels for effective and transparent communication
- Takes input and advice from multiple stakeholders
- Prioritizes local delivery

Figure 3, the governance model shows the function and relationships of the RuralREN.



**FIGURE 3**

The **Program Administrator**, RCEA, acts as the Lead Agency and is responsible for: filing required regulatory submissions and reporting to the CPUC; representing RuralREN in CPUC proceedings and on committees as necessary; managing portfolio-wide procurement and contracts; providing oversight of budgets; coordinating with IOUs on invoicing and regulatory requirements. The Administrator can delegate roles and responsibilities to members of the Leadership Team.

The **Leadership Team** is RuralREN's Board of Directors and makes portfolio-level strategy, operations, and policy decisions. The Leadership Team is comprised of one representative from each RHTR Agency. Each representative holds one equal vote. To conduct Leadership Team business or hold a vote, a minimum of six (6) Leadership Team members (or alternates) must be present, and a super-majority is required to pass any vote.

**Equity and ESJ Advisory Team** provides input and recommendations regarding opportunities to incorporate and enhance equity and diversity of the organization and its programs. This advisory group will be formed during the first four months of operation and will be comprised



of advocates of diversity, equity and inclusion from local governments, community-based organizations, schools/colleges, and other organizations within rural communities.

**Implementing Agencies** are responsible for engaging the counties they serve and designing and delivering programs that reflect the existing service gaps and needs expressed in those counties. The manner of engagement is within the authority of the Implementing Agencies which makes its own decisions regarding staffing, procurement, etc., and may expand in future portfolio cycles.

**Member Counties** are RuralREN's constituency and have a critical voice in the decision-making process, particularly in terms of articulating service gaps and defining the unique needs of customers in their counties.

**Technical Advisory Committee(s)** includes staff from Implementing Agencies that have expertise in program design, development, implementation, and management. This committee is responsible for helping to define program offerings; monitoring program performance, challenges, and barriers; augmenting, altering, and adapting programs to address problems, and supporting the roll-out of new programs.

**Program Operations Teams** include the sector and program technical and outreach leads, consultants/third parties, and managers who run sector programs.

## DEFINING RURAL CUSTOMERS

The basis of rurality lies in the need to provide all Californians with equal access to energy efficiency programs and services. There is some level of debate about the definition of rural, so for the purposes of the RuralREN, we will rely on the CPUC's

“...Rurality encompasses much more than traditional measures of population, commuting patterns and proximity to urban centers. It is a function of historical and present-day patterns of racism and exploitation that have resulted in the uneven development that characterizes not only California’s rural areas, but its many “rural-connected” cities as well.”

– California Legal Assistance, Inc.

hard-to-reach definition where the CPUC has recognized that geographic location is a barrier to participating in energy efficiency programs for residential and small businesses.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> D. 18-05-041, FOF 14. The CPUC identifies geographic location as barrier to participating in energy efficiency programs for residential and small businesses. The CPUC defines this barrier as: “Businesses or homes in areas other than the United States Office of Management and Budget Combined Statistical Areas of the San Francisco Bay Area, the Greater Los Angeles Area and the Greater Sacramento Area or the Office of Management and Budget metropolitan statistical areas of San Diego County. Businesses or homes in disadvantaged communities, as identified by CalEPA pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 39711.”

RuralREN logically extends this geographic barrier to include all customers in rural areas. The majority of the 31 counties represented by the RuralREN met CPUC's definition of geographically hard-to-reach.<sup>10</sup>

California's rural communities also are home to large populations in other CPUC-defined equity categories, including hard-to-reach, disadvantaged and underserved. Additionally, many rural customers are low-income qualified, or are just above that threshold.<sup>11</sup> Thus, the RuralREN will focus primarily on energy efficiency solutions that are consistent with the CPUC objectives for the newly formed Equity and Market Support program categories.

## LOOKING AHEAD THROUGH THE LENS OF EQUITY

Without a RuralREN, California runs the risk of a wholesale loss of rural and geographically hard-to-reach service capacity built from previous program endeavors funded through the IOU's Local Government Partnerships, (LGPs), American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), Proposition 39, and other state and local sources.



PHOTO 1

While IOUs make efforts to reach rural customers, continued pressure on them and third-parties to improve cost-effectiveness and reduce program delivery costs have led to increased emphasis on California metropolitan areas with abundant and scalable energy savings potential and less emphasis on more costly program delivery to rural markets. Additional cost-effectiveness pressures are expected to continue, which will result in lower levels of participation from rural communities

The time has come for a connected and collaborative rural movement. The RuralREN will help deliver an equitable and clean energy future. When we impact people in their jobs, homes, communities, and their ability to access capital—we change lives. Together we build communities that contribute to regions and those regions all rise together.

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<sup>10</sup> Id., COL 27. "Programs targeted at hard-to-reach customers should prioritize the most underserved customers or customer segments, because they are likely the hardest to reach. There is considerable overlap in the policy objectives for disadvantaged communities and hard-to-reach customers. The definition of hard-to-reach should reflect this overlap by including disadvantaged communities, as identified by CalEPA, as an additional criterion for meeting the geographic component of the hard-to-reach definition."

<sup>11</sup> California Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool: CalEnviroScreen 4.0, *Updated October 2021*

## EXHIBIT ONE: STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

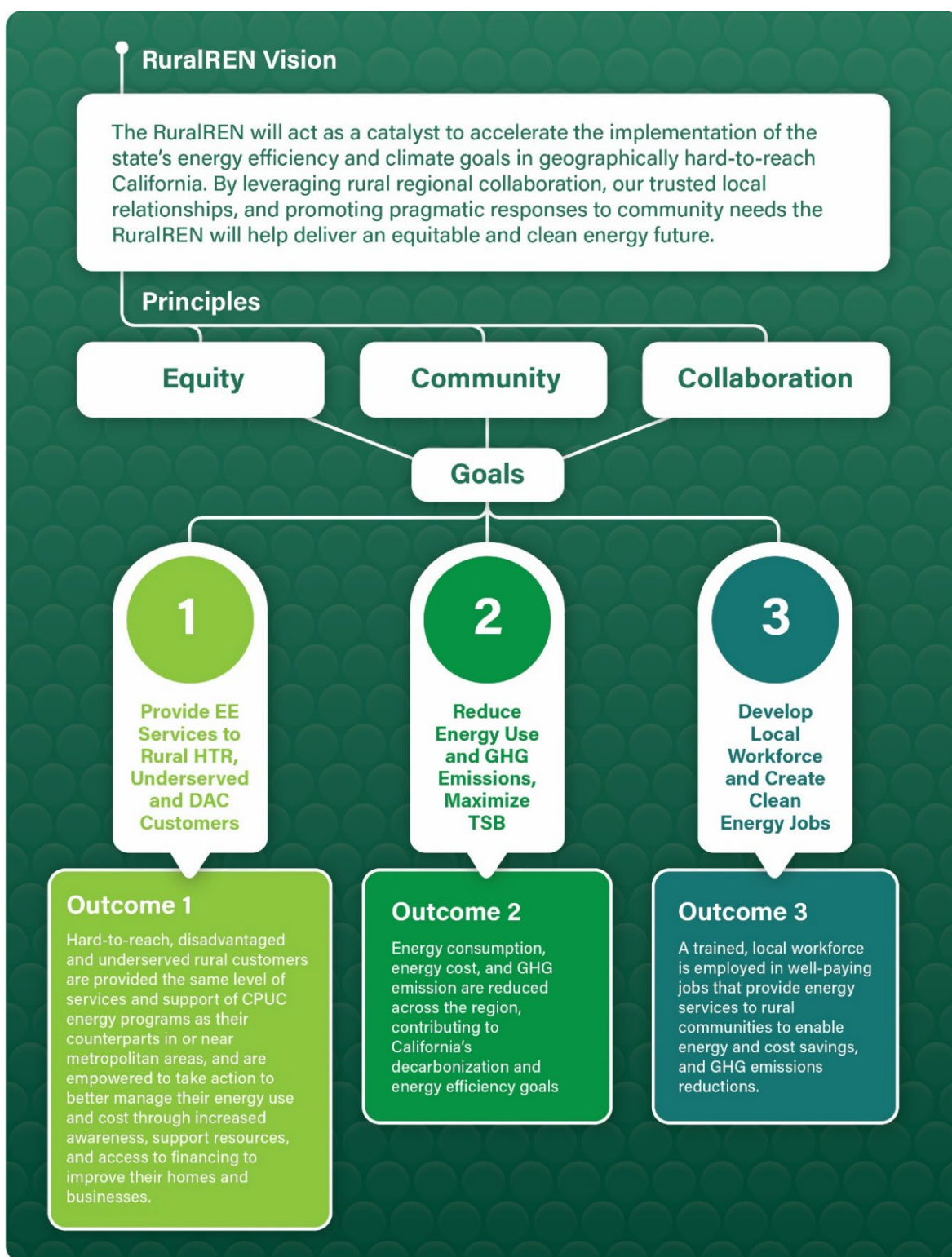


FIGURE 4

## VISION FOR EE IN CA: 2023-2031

The RuralREN approach—for rural, by rural, equity-focused—offers a complementary path to deliver innovative approaches for reducing energy use and expanding adoption of integrated demand resources across California's vast rural community. According to the Berkeley Labor Center, rural counties in California constitute nearly a quarter of the state's electric energy market. Rural California customers can be served best through a locally delivered RuralREN.

While the RuralREN's portfolio will not be held to the same cost-effectiveness requirements as non-REN Program Administrators (PAs),<sup>12</sup> the RuralREN is committed to developing programs that enhance services, realize bill and energy savings, and provide value to IOU ratepayers. The RuralREN will leverage economies of scale and situational similarity to provide services that are additive, rather than duplicative or competitive, to existing IOU, CCA or REN energy efficiency programs.

“The Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN) will act as a catalyst to accelerate implementation of the state’s energy efficiency and climate goals in geographically hard-to-reach California. By leveraging rural regional collaboration, our trusted local relationships, and promoting pragmatic responses to community needs the RuralREN will help deliver an equitable and clean energy future.”

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These principles will guide the RuralREN Business Plan in how we approach the needs and opportunities of rural California.

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<sup>12</sup> D.12-11-015, COL 14 “There should not be a minimum cost-effectiveness threshold for approval of REN or MEA proposals. However, the RENs and MEA should strive to deliver the most cost-effective programs possible. This does not result in the Commission holding RENs and MEA to a different standard than the utilities. Similar programs should be considered similarly, regardless of who is delivering the program. “



*Equity – integrate equity, environmental and social justice principles into RuralREN's decision making and operations.*

*Community – incorporate local needs and wants to ensure solutions meet the needs of the rural communities we serve.*

*Collaboration – work closely with other rural agencies, PAs, and program implementers to improve rural customer program access and participation to avoid duplication and create synergies.*

## **PORTFOLIO OUTCOMES**

Consistent with the RuralREN's Guiding Principles, our proposed portfolio will achieve the following outcomes.

*Outcome 1: Hard-to-reach, disadvantaged and underserved rural customers are provided the same level of services and support of CPUC energy programs as their counterparts in, or near metropolitan areas, and are empowered to take action to better manage their energy use and cost through increased awareness, support resources, and access to financing to improve their homes and businesses.*

The RuralREN will support structural, procedural, distributional, and transgenerational equity for rural California through a multifaceted approach that:

- Places program delivery tasks in the hands of local providers and workers. Third-parties are not motivated to address the rural market due to a focus on program cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency in program delivery. As energy efficiency (EE) increasingly becomes automated we lose local presence. IOUs are steadily reducing their employee footprints resulting in a loss of monetary and community presence.
- Relies on trained local workforce and short-term project financing to increase the number of energy efficiency projects in rural communities.
- Advances California energy policies through direct demonstration to elected officials that local economies directly benefit from an increase in local clean energy investments, careers, and customer bill savings.

*Outcome 2: Energy consumption, energy cost, and GHG emission are reduced across the region, contributing to California's decarbonization and energy efficiency goals*



The RuralREN's proposed portfolio of programs will raise awareness of the benefits of energy efficiency and decarbonization. The programs will provide the necessary information, technical support, financial resources, and actionable recommendations for rural customers to implement energy efficient technologies and practices. When a customer decides to take action to implement energy efficiency measures, they will be guided to the RuralREN's resource acquisition programs, or to an IOU core or third-party resource acquisition programs, to ensure savings are captured and reported. This is consistent with our guiding principle of collaboration. The RuralREN will continue to grow and maintain engagement with energy efficiency industry providers and PAs to ensure the most effective use of resources, avoid duplication, and streamline the customer experience. With its local presence and engagement with customers, the RuralREN will make it easier for these other program providers to identify and complete energy efficiency projects quickly, making rural communities more attractive to serve.

As local needs, policies, or technologies evolve, the RuralREN will design and test complementary program offerings, delivered by local workforces, to uniquely address objectives and barriers. As individual programs prove successful in reducing market barriers and achieving expected outputs and outcomes, the RuralREN will look to offer programs in other rural regions. We expect such sharing of best practices to be adjusted according to the unique challenges and opportunities presented in specific rural areas, such as more focused GHG emission reduction to help mitigate higher level of pollutants in the San Joaquin Valley.

*Outcome 3: A trained, local workforce is employed in well-paying jobs that provide energy services to rural communities to enable energy and cost savings, and GHG emissions reductions.*

The RuralREN will deliver local energy efficiency solutions through a trained workforce. The current IOU Trade Pros in our rural regions provide only 15 out of 154 qualified firms.<sup>13</sup> To overcome such operational barriers, rural California needs trained local workers to better

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<sup>13</sup> Find Trade Professionals. (2022). Pacific Gas and Electric Company. [https://www.pge.com/en\\_US/small-medium-business/building-and-property-management/find-contractors-and-trade-professionals/find-a-service-provider.page](https://www.pge.com/en_US/small-medium-business/building-and-property-management/find-contractors-and-trade-professionals/find-a-service-provider.page); Trade Pro Directory. (2022). Southern California Gas Company. <https://www.socalgas.com/for-your-business/trade-pro/trade-pro-directory>; Find A Vendor. (2022). Southern California Edison. <https://sce-trade-ally-community.force.com/tradeally/s/vendor-search>

educate customers in both energy efficiency and decarbonization to increase awareness and adoption of environmentally-friendly energy efficiency solutions.

People invest in what invests in them. If job and career prospects develop for rural workers, then a community is more likely to embrace clean energy and its supportive policies. The RuralREN will serve discordant political ideologies, but the more that local elected officials and leaders see the positive economic impacts of job creation and direct customer bill savings, the more likely they are to support and advance aggressive energy policies at the local level.

As stewards of the regions we serve, we remain committed to helping our communities grow and thrive through clean energy, while maintaining a rural character. Being able to adapt and respond to local needs is one of our greatest strengths. Part of serving rural spaces is understanding the unique perspectives and accepting their views and opinions that are often not in alignment with the rest of the state. It is our responsibility to help our communities meet California's ambitious energy and climate policy goals, in terms they can accept, support, and in time, champion.

The RuralREN Implementing Agencies have a proven record of:

- Relationships with local governments and trusted, established community-based organizations
- A history of delivering local EE programs
- Collaborative working relationships with IOUs, RENs, CCAs, and third-parties
- Community involvement
- Involvement shaping regulatory and state policies

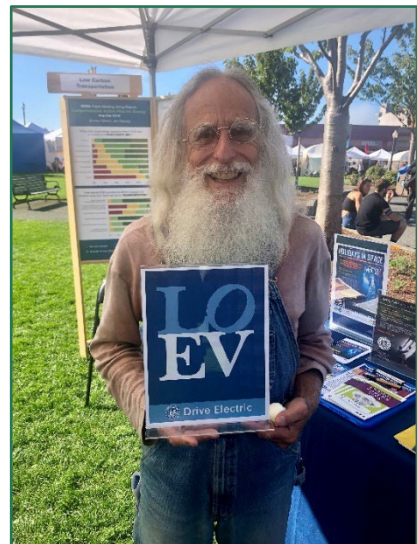


PHOTO 2

## DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE TERRITORY

### GEOGRAPHIC FACTORS

The RuralREN will serve a vast area of California as shown in Figure 5. The region covers approximately 78,000 square miles – about 50% of the state's land area and includes 31 of California's 58 counties. The population of the region is 7 million, just 17.7% of the state's population. Population density of the region is relatively sparse, at 89 people per square mile, which is significantly lower than California's overall population density of 254 people per square mile. In comparison, Table 2 below presents land areas and populations served by other California Regional



FIGURE 5

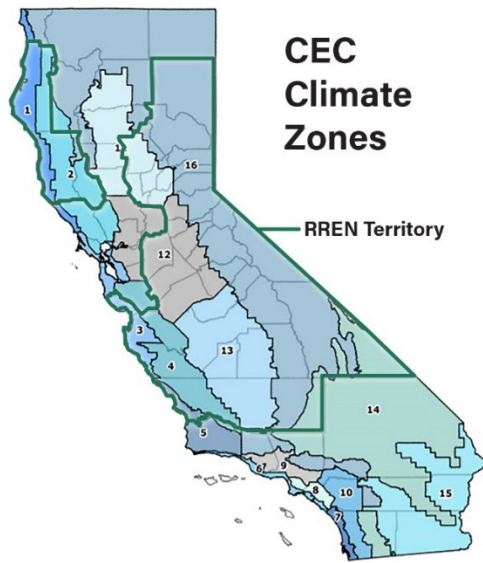
Energy Networks. Clearly, the large land area and diverse geography of the region alone make achieving energy efficiency objectives much more difficult than in metropolitan regions. The RuralREN will rely on its Implementing Agencies, which have decades of experience in energy efficiency programs and deep-rooted relationships with their communities throughout the four regions. The RuralREN Implementing Agencies will be the primary contact for energy efficiency program providers to help them increase rural program participation while tailoring specific and complementary local program offerings of their own.

### California RENs Area and Population Served

| REN Name | Counties | Cities | Population  | Area, Sq. Miles | Population/Sq. Mile |
|----------|----------|--------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| RuralREN | 31       | 115    | 7 million   | 78,249          | 89                  |
| SoCalREN | 12       | 220    | 20 million  | 50,000          | 400                 |
| BayREN   | 9        | 101    | 7.8 million | 6,907           | 1,123               |
| I-REN    | 2        | 52     | 4.5 million | 27,263          | 170                 |
| 3C-REN   | 3        | 25     | 1.6 million | 7,877           | 201                 |

TABLE 2

## CLIMATE ZONES



**FIGURE 6**

The RuralREN region is characterized by diverse geographic areas ranging from northern coastal to central valley to the high, semiarid mountainous region in the eastern part of the state. These areas have climates that include some of the state's most extreme temperature conditions, causing higher than average energy consumption, and energy cost burden. Figure 6 shows the different climate zones across the region. Table 3 shows the average heating and cooling degree days for each climate zone, which are a proxy for heating and cooling energy consumption. Encompassing 10 of the 16 California Energy Commission (CEC) climate zones, the diverse



climates where the RuralREN customers live, present an opportunity for energy savings and system benefits that the RuralREN will address with innovative, focused solutions. The colder climates of the North Coast and Sierra regions suggest good opportunities for weatherization and decarbonization measures, especially electric heating. The hot and dry climate of the San Joaquin Valley region suggests good opportunities for weatherization and high-efficiency air conditioning.

**Heating and Cooling Degree Days in RuralREN Climate Zones**

| Climate Zone | RuralREN Region            | Heating Degree Days | Cooling Degree Days |
|--------------|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1            | North Coast                | 4295                | 15                  |
| 2            | North Coast                | 3144                | 500                 |
| 3            | Central Coast              | 3071                | 183                 |
| 4            | Central Coast              | 2548                | 666                 |
| 5            | Central Coast              | 2654                | 464                 |
| 6            | NA                         | 1383                | 742                 |
| 7            | NA                         | 1497                | 865                 |
| 8            | NA                         | 1481                | 1072                |
| 9            | NA                         | 1460                | 1456                |
| 10           | NA                         | 1685                | 1620                |
| 11           | Sierra                     | 3149                | 1354                |
| 12           | San Joaquin Valley         | 2621                | 1226                |
| 13           | San Joaquin Valley         | 2443                | 1599                |
| 14           | San Joaquin Valley, Sierra | 2422                | 3056                |
| 15           | NA                         | 1177                | 4760                |

**TABLE 3**

## DEMOGRAPHICS

| <div>  <div> <h1>RuralREN</h1> <h2>Demographics</h2> </div>  </div> |  |
|---|--|
| DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY  | REGION AVERAGE STATS   |
| <b>Land Mass</b> (land area in square miles)  | <b>78248.88</b>  |
| <b>Population</b>   |  |
| Percentage of California population in RuralREN territory   | <b>17.7% of California Population</b>  |
| Population Number   | <b>7,004,509</b>   |
| <b>Median Household Income</b>  | <b>\$62,170.94</b>   |
| <b>Education Breakdowns</b>   |  |
| HS Grad or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | <b>80.14%</b>  |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | <b>22.78%</b>  |
| <b>Unemployment Rates (2021)</b>  | <b>10.65%</b>  |
| <b>Age Range</b>  |  |
| Persons under 5   | <b>6.9%</b>  |
| Persons under 18  | <b>25.7%</b>   |
| Persons above 18  | <b>60.1%</b>   |
| Persons 65 or above   | <b>14.2%</b>   |
| <b>Language Other than English spoken</b> (average in RREN counties)  | <b>36.9%</b>   |
| <b>Number of Tribes</b>   | <b>52</b>  |
| <b>Percentage of veterans</b>   | <b>6.34%</b>   |
| <b>Probation</b> (probation caseloads in the state are in RREN territory )  | <b>27%</b>   |
| <b>CalEnviro Unemployment (top 25%)</b>   |  |
| <b>Number of Census Tracts</b>  | <b>500</b>   |
| <b>Number of Zipcodes</b>   | <b>210</b>   |
| Included within definition of "low-income communities" defined by paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 39713 of Health & Safety Code   | <b>90.3% of RREN Counties<br/>28/31 Counties</b>   |
| 75% of public school students in the project area are eligible to receive FRPM  | <b>58.1% of RREN Counties<br/>18/31 Counties</b>   |
| DAC per CalEnviro 4.0 most disadvantaged 25% in the state according to the CalEnviroScreen  | <b>398 Census Tracts in RREN Region out of 1,984 in CA<br/>Roughly 20% of CA disadvantaged census tracts are in RREN territory</b> |
| Disadvantaged community" as defined by subdivision (g) of Section - whose median income is 80% of the state median income (\$75,235 is median income per census quick facts- 2015-2019) 80% of that is \$60,188                         | <b>54.5% of RREN Counties<br/>17/31 Counties</b>   |
| Community located on <b>lands belonging to a federally recognized California Indian tribe</b>   | <b>58.6% of RREN Counties<br/>18/31 Counties</b>   |





# Central Coast Demographics





| DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY  | REGION AVERAGE STATS                               |
|---|--|
| <b>Land Mass</b> (land area in square miles)  | <b>8,413</b>                                       |
| <b>Population</b>   | <b>1,056,529</b>                                   |
| <b>Median Household Income</b>  | <b>\$75,709.41</b>                                 |
| <b>Education Breakdowns</b>   |  |
| HS Grad or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | <b>81.4%</b>                                       |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | <b>31.62%</b>                                      |
| <b>Unemployment Rates (2021)</b>  | <b>9.6%</b>  |
| <b>Age Range</b>  |  |
| Persons under 5   | <b>6%</b>  |
| Persons under 18  | <b>22.2%</b>                                       |
| Persons above 18  | <b>62%</b>   |
| Persons 65 or above   | <b>16%</b>   |
| <b>Language Other than English spoken</b> (average in CC counties)  | <b>38%</b>   |
| <b>Number of Tribes</b>   | <b>0</b>   |
| <b>Percentage of veterans</b>   | <b>5.69%</b>                                       |
| <b>Probation RREN</b> (probation caseloads in RREN territory that are in CC territory)  | <b>8.14%</b>                                       |
| <b>Probation State</b> (probation caseloads in state that are in CC territory)  | <b>2.15%</b>                                       |
| <b>CalEnviro Unemployment (top 25%)</b>   |  |
| <b>Number of Census Tracts</b>  | <b>25</b>  |
| <b>Number of Zipcodes</b>   | <b>12</b>  |
| Included within definition of "low-income communities" defined by paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 39713 of Health & Safety Code   | <b>75% of CC Counties<br/>3/4 Counties</b>         |
| 75% of public school students in the project area are eligible to receive FRPM  | <b>50% of CC Counties<br/>2/4 Counties</b>         |
| DAC per CalEnviro 4.0 most disadvantaged 25% in the state according to the CalEnviroScreen  | <b>4 Census Tracts</b>                             |
| Disadvantaged community" as defined by subdivision (g) of Section - whose median income is 80% of the state median income (\$75,235 is median income per census quick facts- 2015-2019) 80% of that is \$60,188 | <b>0</b>   |
| Community located on lands belonging to a federally recognized California Indian tribe  | <b>No tribal lands in the Central Coast region</b> |




# North Coast Demographics



| DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY  | REGION AVERAGE STATS                        |
|---|---|
| <b>Land Mass</b> (land area in square miles)  | <b>8,331</b>                                |
| <b>Population</b>   | <b>296,227</b>                              |
| <b>Median Household Income</b>  | <b>\$48,829.18</b>                          |
| <b>Education Breakdowns</b>   |   |
| HS Grad or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | <b>88.17%</b>                               |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | <b>25.13%</b>                               |
| <b>Unemployment Rates (2021)</b>  | <b>8.81%</b>                                |
| <b>Age Range</b>  |   |
| Persons under 5   | <b>5.6%</b>                                 |
| Persons under 18  | <b>20.3%</b>                                |
| Persons above 18  | <b>60.1%</b>                                |
| Persons 65 or above   | <b>20%</b>                                  |
| <b>Language Other than English spoken</b> (average in NC counties)  | <b>16%</b>                                  |
| <b>Number of Tribes</b>   | <b>23</b>                                   |
| <b>Percentage of veterans</b>   | <b>8.46%</b>                                |
| <b>Probation RREN</b> (probation caseloads in RREN territory that are in NC territory)  | <b>4.77%</b>                                |
| <b>Probation State</b> (probation caseloads in state that are in NC territory)  | <b>1.26%</b>                                |
| <b>CalEnviro Unemployment (top 25%)</b>   |   |
| <b>Number of Census Tracts</b>  | <b>24</b>                                   |
| <b>Number of Zipcodes</b>   | <b>18</b>                                   |
| Included within definition of "low-income communities" defined by paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 39713 of Health & Safety Code   | <b>100% of NC Counties<br/>3/3 Counties</b> |
| 75% of public school students in the project area are eligible to receive FRPM  | <b>100% of NC Counties<br/>3/3 Counties</b> |
| DAC per CalEnviro 4.0 most disadvantaged 25% in the state according to the CalEnviroScreen  | <b>0</b>                                    |
| Disadvantaged community" as defined by subdivision (g) of Section - whose median income is 80% of the state median income (\$75,235 is median income per census quick facts- 2015-2019) 80% of that is \$60,188 | <b>100% of NC Counties<br/>3/3 Counties</b> |
| Community located on lands belonging to a federally recognized California Indian tribe  | <b>100% of NC Counties<br/>3/3 Counties</b> |

|  <h2 style="text-align: center;">San Joaquin Valley<br/>Demographics</h2>  |   |
|--|---|
| DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY   | REGION AVERAGE STATS                          |
| <b>Land Mass</b> (land area in square miles)   | <b>27,262</b>                                 |
| <b>Population</b>  | <b>4,313,060</b>                              |
| <b>Median Household Income</b>   | <b>\$56,385.45</b>                            |
| <b>Education Breakdowns</b>  |   |
| HS Grad or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)   | <b>75.35%</b>                                 |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)   | <b>17.55%</b>                                 |
| <b>Unemployment Rates (2021)</b>   | <b>11.72%</b>                                 |
| <b>Age Range</b>   |   |
| Persons under 5  | <b>7.70%</b>                                  |
| Persons under 18   | <b>28.50%</b>                                 |
| Persons above 18   | <b>59.70%</b>                                 |
| Persons 65 or above  | <b>12.00%</b>                                 |
| <b>Language Other than English spoken</b> (average in SJV counties)  | <b>45.00%</b>                                 |
| <b>Number of Tribes</b>  | <b>7</b>                                      |
| <b>Percentage of veterans</b>  | <b>5.39%</b>                                  |
| <b>Probation RREN</b> (probation caseloads in RREN territory that are in SJV territory)  | <b>67.02%</b>                                 |
| <b>Probation State</b> (probation caseloads in state that are in SJV territory)  | <b>17.71%</b>                                 |
| <b>CalEnviro Unemployment (top 25%)</b>  |   |
| <b>Number of Census Tracts</b>   | <b>423</b>                                    |
| <b>Number of Zipcodes</b>  | <b>135</b>                                    |
| Included within definition of "low-income communities" defined by paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 39713 of Health & Safety Code  | <b>87.5% of SJV Counties<br/>7/8 Counties</b> |
| 75% of public school students in the project area are eligible to receive FRPM   | <b>100% of SJV Counties<br/>8/8 Counties</b>  |
| DAC per CalEnviro 4.0 most disadvantaged 25% in the state according to the CalEnviroScreen   | <b>385 Census Tracts</b>                      |
| Disadvantaged community" as defined by subdivision (g) of Section - whose median income is 80% of the state median income (\$75,235 is median income per census quick facts- 2015-2019) 80% of that is \$60,188                                | <b>75% of SJV Counties<br/>6/8 Counties</b>   |
| Community located on lands belonging to a federally recognized California Indian tribe   | <b>50% of SJV Counties<br/>4/8 Counties</b>   |



|   |   |
|---|---|
| DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY  | REGION AVERAGE STATS                        |
| Land Mass (land area in square miles)   | 34,243                                      |
| Population  | 1,338,693                                   |
| Median Household Income   | \$70,854.43                                 |
| Education Breakdowns  |   |
| HS Grad or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | 90.8%                                       |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher (percentage of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | 30.27%                                      |
| Unemployment Rates (2021)   | 8.59%                                       |
| Age Range   |   |
| Persons under 5   | 5.20%                                       |
| Persons under 18  | 20.8%                                       |
| Persons above 18  | 59.3%                                       |
| Persons 65 or above   | 20%   |
| Language Other than English spoken (average in Sierra counties)   | 16%   |
| Number of Tribes  | 22  |
| Percentage of veterans  | 9.14%                                       |
| Probation RREN (probation caseloads in RREN territory that are in Sierra territory)   | 17.12%                                      |
| Probation State (probation caseloads in state that are in Sierra territory)   | 4.52%                                       |
| CalEnviro Unemployment (top 25%)  |   |
| Number of Census Tracts   | 78  |
| Number of Zipcodes  | 46  |
| Included within definition of "low-income communities" defined by paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 39713 of Health & Safety Code   | 93.7% of Sierra Counties<br>15/16 Counties  |
| 75% of public school students in the project area are eligible to receive FRPM  | 31.3% of Sierra Counties<br>5/16 Counties   |
| DAC per CalEnviro 4.0 most disadvantaged 25% in the state according to the CalEnviroScreen  | 9 Census Tracts                             |
| Disadvantaged community" as defined by subdivision (g) of Section - whose median income is 80% of the state median income (\$75,235 is median income per census quick facts- 2015-2019) 80% of that is \$60,188 | 50% of Sierra Counties<br>8/16 Counties     |
| Community located on lands belonging to a federally recognized California Indian tribe  | 68.75% of Sierra Counties<br>11/16 Counties |

## ENERGY CHARACTERISTICS

### UTILITIES SERVING RURALREN

The RuralREN service territory is served primary by IOUs Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), Southern California Gas Company (SCG), and Southern California Edison (SCE). Electricity in the RuralREN territory is provided by PG&E and SCE, as well as other Publicly Owned Utilities (POUs). Natural gas is provided by PG&E, SoCalGas, as well as pockets served by other providers and various companies provide unregulated propane to customers in all regions of the RuralREN. Table 4 shows utilities servings the RuralREN regions, while Figure7 shows the RuralREN regions overlaid on a map of all utility service territories. Initially, only customers of at least one of the three IOUs will be eligible for participation in the RuralREN energy efficiency programs. RuralREN will coordinate with utility providers in the region to explore possible collaboration with, and co-funding of programs to include non-IOU customers soon.

Historically, overlapping service providers offering similar, yet different programs lead to customer confusion. When programs are bound by utility provider, and not consistent across a region, customers suffer.

**Utilities Serving Rural REN Customers**

| RuralREN Region           | Electricity Providers   | Natural Gas Providers   |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Central Coast</b>      | PG&E  | PG&E, SoCalGas  |
| <b>North Coast</b>        | PG&E, City of Ukiah, Shelter Cove Resort Improvement District   | PG&E  |
| <b>San Joaquin Valley</b> | PG&E, SCE Lodi Electric Utility, Port of Stockton, Modesto Irrigation District, Turlock Irrigation District, Merced Irrigation District   | PG&E, SoCal Gas, City of Coalinga                             |
| <b>Sierra</b>             | PG&E, SCE, SMUD, LAWPD, Roseville Electric, Lassen Municipal Utility District, Plumas-Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative, Surprise Valley Electrification Corp, Biggs Municipal Utilities, Gridley Electric Utility, Truckee Donner Public Utilities District, Liberty Utilities, NV Energy, Kirkwood Meadows Public Utility District, Valley Electric Association | PG&E, SoCal Gas, Southwest Gas, Tuscarora, City of Susanville |

**TABLE 4**





## ANNUAL ENERGY COST AND ENERGY BURDEN

Annual energy cost and energy burden in the RuralREN regions are higher than non-rural California.

### Annual Energy Cost and Energy Burden - Average

| Region       | Energy Burden | Annual Cost (Electric, Gas & Propane) |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| California   | 3.12          | \$1,764.92                            |
| RuralREN     | 4.95          | \$2,232.49                            |
| Non RuralREN | 3.07          | \$1,669.80                            |

TABLE 5

According to the ACEEE, "rural households in every region of the United States have a higher median energy burden than the median in their region".<sup>14</sup> This is true in the RuralREN service territory as well -- the average energy burden in the RuralREN is 45% higher than the rest of California. This could be attributed to generally larger household sizes and a higher percentage of expensive propane fuel in the RuralREN area. The RuralREN also has more single-family homes than non-rural parts of California and larger households (occupants per housing unit).

### Propane Use - Rural vs. Non-Rural Household

| Region       | Residential Propane Therms | Residential Propane Therms per Occupied Household |
|--------------|----------------------------|---|
| California   | 258,474,424                | 19.8  |
| RuralREN     | 118,040,128                | 52.7  |
| Non RuralREN | 140,434,296                | 13.0  |

TABLE 6

<sup>14</sup> Dreihobl, A., L. Ross, and B. Stickles. July 2018. The High Cost of Energy in Rural America: Household Energy Burdens and Opportunities for Energy Efficiency. Washington, DC: American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy

## Housing Types - RuralREN vs. California Average

| Location                                      | Single Detached | Single Attached | Two to Four Units | Five Plus Units | Mobile Homes |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| California                                    | 57%             | 7%              | 8%                | 24%             | 4%           |
| RuralREN                                      | 72%             | 3%              | 8%                | 11%             | 7%           |
| Non RuralREN                                  | 54%             | 8%              | 8%                | 27%             | 3%           |
| Source: California Department of Finance 2020 |                 |                 |                   |                 |              |

TABLE 8

## Average Number of People per Household

| Location  | Occupied Housing Units | Population | Population per Housing Unit | % Living in Unincorporated Areas/Communities | % Occupied Housing Units in Unincorporated Areas/Communities |
|---|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| California  | 13,246,622             | 39,648,938 | 2.99                        | 19%  | 19%  |
| RuralREN  | 2,283,945              | 6,992,814  | 3.06                        | 33%  | 36%  |
| Non RuralREN  | 10,962,677             | 32,656,124 | 2.98                        | 16%  | 16%  |
| Source: Total 2020 population and housing units from CA Dept of Finance (does not match Census exactly) |                        |            |                             |  |  |

TABLE 7

## RURALREN CONSIDERATIONS

### HARD-TO-REACH, DISADVANTAGED AND/OR UNDERSERVED

*RuralREN's customers are largely hard-to-reach, disadvantaged and/or underserved.*

California's rural regions face higher poverty and unemployment rates than their urban and suburban counterparts, and struggle with a lack of well-paying jobs.<sup>15</sup> Rural California continues to suffer disproportionately from the ongoing recession.<sup>16</sup> This is compounded by a recent and dramatic increase in inflation, 7% in 2021, which is the highest jump in 40 years.<sup>17</sup> Rural regions consistently suffer from higher unemployment rates than urban cores, and this is

<sup>15</sup> Ono, How to Spur Prosperity in Overlooked Rural California and Benefit the Entire State, California Forward, October 1, 2018

<sup>16</sup> Koppam, Raksha. "Gaps in U.S. Rural and Urban Economic Growth Widened in the Post-Great Recession Economy, with Implications amid the Coronavirus Recession." Equitable Growth, 6 Aug. 2020, <https://equitablegrowth.org/gaps-in-u-s-rural-and-urban-economic-growth-widened-in-the-post-great-recession-economy-with-implications-amid-the-coronavirus-recession/>.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022, Economic News Release: Consumer Price Index Summary, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm>.

compounded by the number of seasonal jobs in tourism and agriculture in rural areas. The RuralREN's proposed workforce development and career creation efforts help address and bridge this urban/rural divide. Of the RuralREN population, 17% have income below the Federal poverty level, compared to 13% for all of California, and 12% for non-rural areas. Median income of the RuralREN population is \$62,171, 23% below the non-rural median income of \$80,799, and 17% below the median income of \$75,235 for all of California.

#### Percentage of Population Below Federal Poverty Level

| Region       | Percent of Population Below Federal Poverty Level |
|--------------|---|
| California   | 13%   |
| RuralREN     | 17%   |
| Non RuralREN | 12%   |

TABLE 9

#### Median Income, RuralREN vs. California

| Region       | 2015-2019 Median Income Census |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| California   | \$75,235                       |
| RuralREN     | \$62,171                       |
| Non RuralREN | \$80,799                       |

TABLE 10

Table 11 show unemployment rates for California for the past 31 years. The data indicates that, prior to Covid 19, RuralREN communities had consistently higher unemployment rates than the state average, by 1.5% to 3% depending on the season. RuralREN regions have a much larger variability in unemployment rates due to the seasonal nature of jobs in the agriculture and tourism industries.

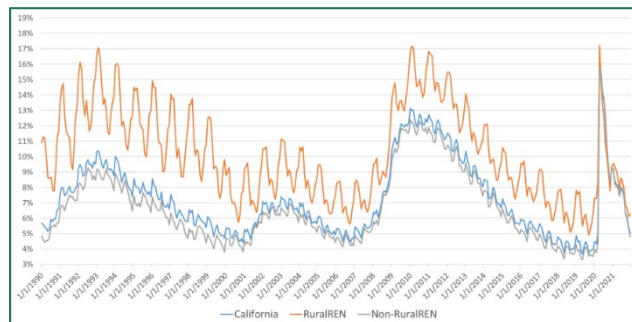


TABLE 11

The data also demonstrates that rural economies respond to job market stressors more severely than the rest of California, as seen in the unemployment trends from the 2008 recession and the recovery from Covid-19. These unemployment trends, over more than three decades, underscore the need for energy-related workforce training and services in rural regions.

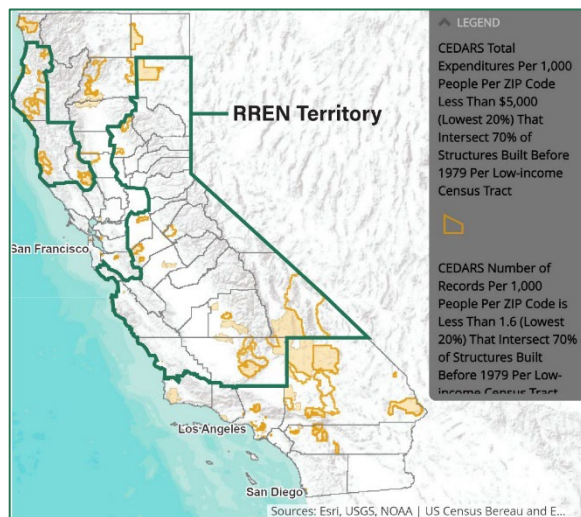


FIGURE 8

The RuralREN's region historically receives fewer economic benefits from CPUC energy efficiency programs. Many regions within the RuralREN area have among the lowest participation rate in California, receiving less than \$5,000 per 1,000 people, the lowest 20% in the state.

The RuralREN will focus much of its attention on equity-targeted communities and customers in all three CPUC-defined equity categories: hard-to-reach, disadvantaged, and underserved. Table 12 shows estimated RuralREN populations that are hard-to-reach and/or disadvantaged.

#### RuralREN DAC, HTR, Underserved Populations

| Region       | Total Population | Number of Counties | Population in Disadvantaged Census Tracts | Population in Low Income Census Tracts | Number of HTR Counties | % Population in Disadvantaged Communities | % of Population in Low Income Communities | % of Population in HTR Areas |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------|---|--|------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|
| California   | 39,538,223       | 58                 | 9,639,418                                 | 18,468,303                             | 32                     | 24.38%                                    | 46.71%                                    | 33.50%                       |
| RuralREN     | 7,004,509        | 31                 | 2,154,586                                 | 3,343,952                              | 21                     | 30.76%                                    | 47.74%                                    | 69.72%                       |
| Non RuralREN | 32,533,714       | 27                 | 7,486,007                                 | 15,121,670                             | 11                     | 23.01%                                    | 46.48%                                    | 25.70%                       |

Calenviroscreen 4.0, census population 2020, climate priorities low income census tracts

TABLE 12

According to the CPUC, disadvantaged communities are identified as those in the top 25% of the list of zip codes created by CalEPA's CalEnviroScreen tool. Figure 9 shows the location of disadvantaged communities in the RuralREN's region. "The definition of hard-to-reach should reflect this overlap by including disadvantaged communities, as identified by CalEPA,



as an additional criterion for meeting the geographic component of the hard-to-reach definition."<sup>18</sup>

Underserved "ESJ communities are commonly identified as those where residents are: predominantly communities of color or low-income; underrepresented in the policy setting or decision-making process; subject to a disproportionate impact from one or more environmental hazards; and likely to experience disparate implementation of environmental regulations and socio-economic investments in their communities."<sup>19</sup>

Hard-to-Reach – "Those customers who do not have easy access to program information or generally do not participate in energy efficiency programs due to a combination of language, business size, geographic, and lease (split incentive) barriers."<sup>20</sup>

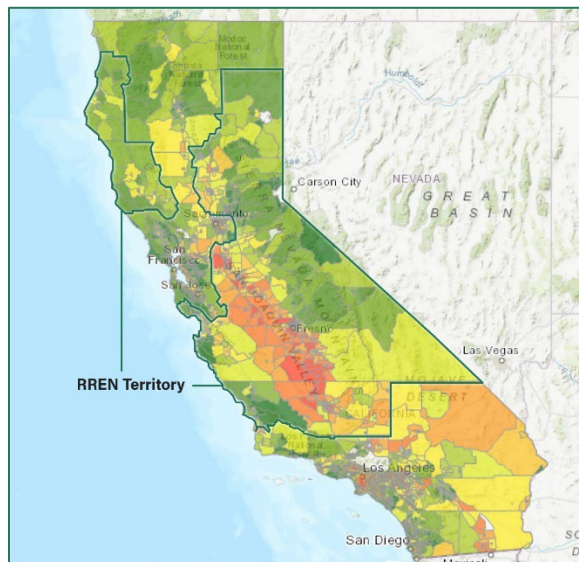


FIGURE 9

### *ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF RECESSION, INFLATION AND ON-GOING PANDEMIC*

Rural economies were the hardest hit by the 2008 recession and the slowest to recover<sup>21</sup>. By 2017, average rural employment was still two percent lower than in 2007. Businesses were hit especially hard—in the first four years of the recovery, counties under 100,000 lost 17,500 businesses, while economies in counties over 1 million people added 99,000 businesses.<sup>22</sup> COVID-19 only exacerbates these pressures: The shutdown of commerce has already put small businesses, a key driver of rural economies, into an economic vise grip, and almost twice as many rural areas rely primarily on the recreation industry as urban areas.<sup>23</sup>

18 D. 18-05-041, COL27

19 Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan (V. 1). (2019, February). California Public Utilities Commission. <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/news-and-outreach/documents/news-office/key-issues/esj/environmental-and-social-justice.pdf>

20 Id, FOF14

21 Koppam, Raksha. "Gaps in U.S. Rural and Urban Economic Growth Widened in the Post-Great Recession Economy, with Implications amid the Coronavirus Recession." Equitable Growth, 6 Aug. 2020, <https://equitablegrowth.org/gaps-in-u-s-rural-and-urban-economic-growth-widened-in-the-post-great-recession-economy-with-implications-amid-the-coronavirus-recession/>.

22 Ferguson, Pipa, Geismar, Redesign required: Principles for reimagining federal rural policy in the COVID-19 era, April 14, 2020

23 IBID

As the global pandemic continues, business and residential customers have altered the ways they use energy.<sup>24</sup> In the energy efficiency industry, programs have responded with modifications to how programs are delivered to customers. The RuralREN will collaborate with program providers to adjust program delivery to the new normal through locally sourced labor. The RuralREN will also work with customers on identifying new barriers and opportunities to energy efficiency caused by the pandemic.

### CAREER DISCONNECT

*Climate Adaptive Careers aren't part of the rural experience because they're not accessible.*

When considering workforce development, environmental justice, clean energy curriculum in schools, and community engagement, these topics come to amalgamize under "climate adaptive career." Rapid changes happening within regulation, policy, industry and in our communities make clear that the scope is beyond just energy efficiency. Climate Adaptive Careers are reactive to climate change and displacement due to climate related events.

"Equity issues, including providing career opportunities to disadvantaged workers, can and should be implemented across the portfolio."<sup>25</sup>

Disadvantaged workers are those who meet one of the five criteria set forth D.18-10-008 ordering paragraph 9<sup>26</sup> defines disadvantaged workers as an individual who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- a. lives in a household where total income is below 50% of Area Median Income
  - is a recipient of public assistance;
  - lacks a high school diploma or GED;
  - has previous history of incarceration for one year or more following a conviction under the criminal justice system;

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24 Motya, Marlene, et al. "Energy Management: Paused by Pandemic, but Poised to Prevail." Deloitte Insights, Deloitte, 8 July 2020, <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/industry/power-and-utilities/energy-study-of-businesses-and-residential-consumers.html>.

25 Zabin, Carol et al, 2014, Workforce Issues and Energy Efficiency Programs: A Plan for California's Utilities, Donald Vial Center on Employment in the Green Economy and the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment. UC Berkeley. <https://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/pdf/2014/WET-Plan14.pdf>.

26 D. 18-10-008, Op 9. "All energy efficiency program administrators shall define "disadvantaged worker," for purposes of their energy efficiency portfolios and tracking metrics or indicators associated with them, as an individual that meets at least one of the following criteria: lives in a household where total income is below 50 percent of Area Median Income; is a recipient of public assistance; lacks a high school diploma or GED; has previous history of incarceration lasting one year or more following a conviction under the criminal justice system; is a custodial single parent; is chronically unemployed; has been aged out or emancipated from the foster care system; has limited English proficiency; or lives in a high unemployment ZIP code that is in the top 25 percent of only the unemployment indicator of the CalEnviroScreen Tool. Personal information about individual workers may only be collected on a voluntary basis, and may not be used as criteria to determine particular workers assigned to projects funded as part of the energy efficiency business plans

- is a custodial single parent;
- is chronically unemployed;
- has been aged out or emancipated from the foster care system;
- has limited English proficiency.

b. lives in a high unemployment ZIP code that is in the top 25 percent of only the unemployment indicator of the CalEnviroScreen Tool.

Given the demographics of the RuralREN programs for disadvantaged workers are needed, but so is a more targeted approach to reach specific populations:

- Returning Citizens
- Veterans
- Opportunity Youth
- Communities of Color
- Women
- Displaced Ag Workers: those whose role in the Ag and Ag-supportive industry have been or will be replaced by automation.

The RuralREN regions have a growing need and opportunity for career building to support our communities through accelerated training (upskilling of existing workers and training for new workers) and an increase in new opportunities for employment. Rural workers can support other RuralREN programs and utility (core and RA) programs which benefits future generations and build community wealth through lower bills, more career opportunities and clean energy investments.

According to the Centers of Excellence, *"Based on a comparison of occupational demand and supply, there is an undersupply of 1,181 trained workers in the subregion [Central Valley/Mother Lode] and 1,949 workers in the region. The Center of Excellence recommends that Fresno City College work with the regional energy, construction and utilities director, the college's advisory board, and local industry in the expansion or development of programs to address the shortage of construction crafts technology workers in the region."*

Broadly, the energy efficiency economy is facing trained worker shortages and traditional education pathways are being rejected by potential program participants. According to John Caresse, director of the Bay Region Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research,

"Clearly there is a pipeline issue keeping up with the demand. We need to be mindful that younger workers are needed as we have an aging workforce in these sectors."<sup>27</sup>

According to the United States Energy & Employment Report 2021,<sup>28</sup> California employers expected to add 15,124 jobs in energy efficiency in 2021, but they report an overall hiring difficulty of 85, with scores above 40 percent in both 'very difficult' and 'somewhat difficult' on a hiring difficulty scale.

In 2020 the ACEEE<sup>29</sup> researchers found, "employers expressed difficulty finding qualified energy efficiency workers, often citing candidates' lack of experience, training, or technical skills," and "According to 92% of our survey respondents, robust Operation and Maintenance technical skills are the most critical for achieving the expected energy efficiency..."

The 2019 Center for Energy Workforce Development Gaps in Workforce Study<sup>30</sup> reported the energy workforce demographics as 1% "Gen Z" (1997-2012), 29% "Millennials" (1981- 1994/6), 37% "Gen X" (1965-1979/80), and 33% "Baby Boomers" (1946-1964). As Baby Boomers and early Gen X'ers retire, the need to attract younger workers grows. However, "In its fourth annual Student Lending Survey,<sup>31</sup> which surveyed current college students and high school juniors and seniors, Citizens found that a majority of both high school (69%) and current college students (70%) said that concerns around college affordability had an impact on their plans post high school and for Fall 2021 college enrollment."

Traditional career pathways programs are less nimble and their ability to be reactive to climate crises and rapidly changing market demands is harder. "Changing, modifying, and updating curriculum in colleges/universities is a slow process. We acknowledge it and are working to improve it... The existing workforce needs to upskill quickly, and schools need to be able to offer 'just-in-time' trainings and faster training modules to keep up to date."<sup>32</sup>

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27 2021 Workforce, Education, and Training Stakeholder Engagement Forum." Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) Energy Efficiency Workforce Education and Training (WE&T) Program Team. 7 Dec. 2021.

28 28 National Association of State Energy Officials, et al. Washington, DC, 2021, United States Energy & Employment Report 2021

29 Shoemaker, M., R. Ayala, and D. York. 2020. Expanding Opportunity through Energy Efficiency Jobs: Strategies to Ensure a More Resilient, Diverse Workforce. Washington, DC: American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. [www.aceee.org/research-report/u2010](http://www.aceee.org/research-report/u2010).

30 Center for Energy Workforce Development, 2019, Gaps in the Energy Workforce 2019 Pipeline Survey Results, <https://cewd.org/documents/surveyreport/2019-GapsintheEnergyWorkforce-SurveyResults.pdf>.

31 Griesmer, Bennett. "Citizens Survey Shows That Affordability Concerns Remain Top of Mind for Students and Families." Citizens Survey Shows That Affordability Concerns Remain Top of Mind for Students and Families – Citizens Bank, Citizens Financial Group, Inc., 4 Aug. 2021, <https://investor.citizensbank.com/about-us/newsroom/latest-news/2021/2021-08-04-130526976.aspx>.

32 "2021 Workforce, Education, and Training Stakeholder Engagement Forum." Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) Energy Efficiency Workforce Education and Training (WE&T) Program Team, 7 Dec. 2021.

Trends in WE&T trend toward programs with career technical training emphasis; K-12 industry exposure; STEM programs focused on prestige careers, i.e., engineers, planners, architects.

A new approach is needed to ensure Climate Adaptive Careers are accessible to rural workers, but also deliver skills sets missing from traditional offerings. Existing programs with career technical training emphasis lack “soft skills” needed for business development and industry understanding. A turn-key training with soft skills, career support, certification and wraparound services built in is needed. Largely, there is a lack of awareness of the California energy efficiency market design, how programs are delivered, and which career opportunities exist. Finally, there is a growing need for career building and upskilling of existing workers in decarbonization.

Due to the lack of opportunities to train in-person in rural areas, trainees miss out on fundamental hands-on experience, creating education gaps and setting them at a disadvantage. While the IOUs have a history of providing quality education through Energy Education Centers in-person and online WE&T programs, neither are necessarily a right fit for hyper-rural communities. The RuralREN WE&T program should collaborate with IOU partners to utilize existing resources and expand the content reach into our communities.

“As historical patterns of exclusion shape housing and workforce disparities everywhere, including in cities, clean energy efforts that don’t intentionally target equity will often exacerbate inequalities and can leave the most marginalized community members vulnerable”<sup>33</sup>

### CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

*The regions comprised of the RuralREN territory are facing increasing threats from climate change and climate-related disasters.*

Climate change manifests in the territory through climate variability which is expanding wildfire seasons and more frequent catastrophic wildfires<sup>34</sup>, continued drought<sup>35</sup>, an increase

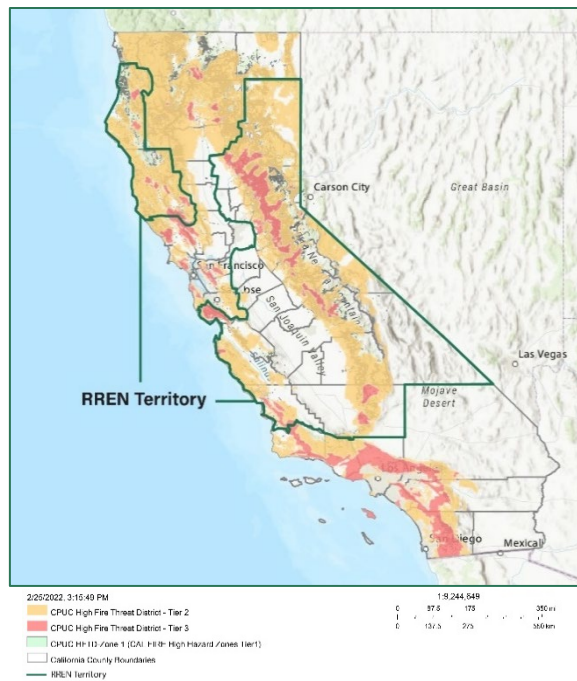
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33 Dewey, A. 2022. Cities’ Clean-Energy Equity Efforts Are Mixed, but Leaders Point the Way Forward. Washington, DC: American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. <https://www.aceee.org/blog-post/2022/01/cities-clean-energy-equity-efforts-are-mixed-leaders-point-way-forward>

34 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). “2021 Incident Archive.” Cal Fire Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, State of California, 2022, <https://www.fire.ca.gov/incidents/2021>.

35 Pugh, Brad. “California | U.S. Drought Monitor.” U.S. Drought Monitor, National Drought Mitigation Center, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2022, <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?CA>.





**FIGURE 10**

in the RuralREN region have a relatively low ability to prepare for anticipated natural hazards, adapt to changing conditions, and withstand and recover rapidly from disruptions when compared to the rest of the U.S.<sup>41</sup>

"Our health and climate are inextricably linked. From polluted air quality to shrinking food and waters supplies, communities across California...are already experiencing climate change's harmful health impacts. The looming effects upon California's communities, particularly those that are disproportionately vulnerable, are becoming increasingly urgent and severe."<sup>42</sup>

in severe storms and precipitation events<sup>36</sup>, record heatwaves,<sup>37</sup> sea level rise<sup>38</sup>, and reduced snowpack and water resources.<sup>39</sup>

Wildfires have increased substantially in rural regions. The RuralREN regions are highly represented in CPUC High Fire Threat Districts, including 57% in Tier 3 and over 80% in Tier 2. Combined, the total number of climate related events, including wildfires, drought, flooding, and temperature variances, from 1999 through 2021 has increased by over 13,000%. All 31 counties show regions of severe drought and

several are suffering from extreme drought conditions.<sup>40</sup> According to FEMA, most counties

36 "Extreme Weather in California and Climate Change: Droughts and Flooding." Institute of the Environment and Sustainability at UCLA, The Regents of the University of California, 1 Apr. 2019, <https://www.ioes.ucla.edu/project/extreme-weather/>.

37 "Climate in California: Temperatures in California Over Time." USAFacts.org, <https://usafacts.org/issues/climate/state/california#climate>.

38 Anderson, Jeffrey K., "Sea-Level Rise in the Humboldt Bay Region - Update 2" (2018). Local Reports and Publications. 5. [https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/hsuslrj\\_local/5](https://digitalcommons.humboldt.edu/hsuslrj_local/5)

39 Berg, N., and A. Hall (2017), Anthropogenic warming impacts on California snowpack during drought, *Geophys. Res. Lett.*, 44, 2511–2518, doi:10.1002/2016GL072104

40 "Current U.S. Drought Monitor Conditions for California." *Drought.gov*, National Drought Mitigation Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and USDA, 2022, <https://www.drought.gov/states/california>.

41 "FEMA: National Risk Index." *FEMA's Natural Hazards Risk Assessment Program*, Department of Homeland Security. <https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/map#>.

42 Scroggins, Jennifer, et al. "6 Ways Climate Change Harms Health in California." *Public Health Institute*, PHI's Center for Climate Change and Health, 23 Apr. 2020, <https://www.phi.org/thought-leadership/6-ways-climate-change-harms-health-in-california/>.

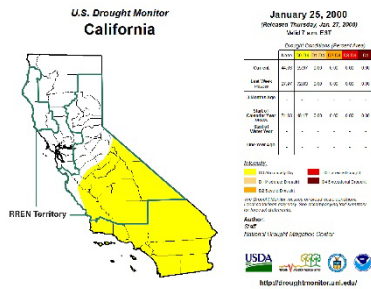


FIGURE 11

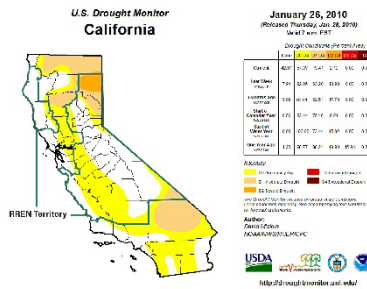


FIGURE 12

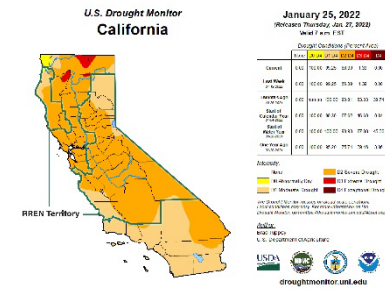


FIGURE 13

Public health impacts from climate change have a large range of impacts and highlight inequities.

- Five of the 10 most polluted cities in the U.S. are located in the Central Valley, which includes more people of color and low-income families.<sup>43</sup>
- According to a 2016 American Lung Association report, counties in the San Joaquin Valley have the nation's highest asthma rate for children<sup>44</sup>
- Increased heat days impact human health, and also increases the chances of vector borne disease.<sup>45</sup>
- Food insecurity from the climate is exacerbated by impacts on food production.<sup>46</sup>

Climate change impacts have, and will continue to, affect the regions in the RuralREN territory, stressing the importance of energy efficiency, awareness of low GWP (is this defined elsewhere) refrigerant, and clean, renewable energy as pathways to address climate change and to advance the state's decarbonization policies.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY STRATEGY

The RuralREN's proposed strategy for energy efficiency in rural communities starts with a core portfolio of programs aimed at addressing barriers that the RuralREN customers face in implementing energy efficiency, including

<sup>43</sup> American Lung Association. (2016). State of the Air 2016. Chicago, IL. Retrieved from <http://www.lung.org/assets/documents/healthy-air/state-of-the-air/sota-2016-full.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> ID page 53

<sup>45</sup> "Impact of Climate on Workers." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), 6 Dec. 2016, <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/climate/how.html>.

<sup>46</sup> Brown, M.E., et al. 2015. *Climate Change, Global Food Security, and the U.S. Food System*. 146 pages. [http://www.usda.gov/oce/climate\\_change/FoodSecurity2015Assessment/FullAssessment.pdf](http://www.usda.gov/oce/climate_change/FoodSecurity2015Assessment/FullAssessment.pdf)

- increasing awareness of the benefits of energy efficiency and providing energy information and tools that will help spur on customer implementation of EE behaviors and measures
- supporting the initial capital outlay required to adopt new energy efficiency technologies and equipment
- training and resources for public agencies to ensure compliance with energy codes and make progress on achieving carbon reduction goals
- ensuring availability of skilled tradesmen and contractors needed to implement energy efficiency upgrades

The RuralREN's energy efficiency strategy incorporates near- and long-term planning and goals. Near-term covers the first five years of operation (2023 – 2027), while longer-term addresses the period 2028 to 2031. Described in this section are strategies that will be implemented during the first five years, along with the general anticipated evolution of the portfolio for the second four-year cycle and beyond. As our rural communities become more aware of basic energy efficiency principles and technologies, the RuralREN programs will incorporate more advanced energy management concepts and technologies, including demand response, load management, normalized metered energy consumption and others.

#### STRATEGY FOR APPLICATION/USE OF VARIOUS AND NEW METHODS FOR SAVINGS FORECASTING AND QUANTIFICATION METHODS (E.G. NORMALIZED METERED ENERGY CONSUMPTION INCLUDING REQUIREMENTS IN PUBLIC UTILITIES CODE SECTION 25310 © (5))

In its initial five-year portfolio, the RuralREN will use the deemed methodology for savings forecasting and quantification. This is appropriate given the equity-focused residential and small business incentive strategy of its Resource Acquisition programs, and the limited past participation in energy efficiency programs in general within this customer sector in rural regions. Over time the RuralREN will explore the feasibility of using NMEC methods at either site or population level to forecast and quantify energy savings and Total System Benefit (TSB).

#### STRATEGIES FOR MARKET INTERVENTION AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY ADOPTION: E.G. TARGETED POINTS OF INTERVENTION; DELIVERY CHANNELS/PLATFORMS/METHODS

The RuralREN will deploy multiple strategies for market intervention and energy efficiency adoption. Strategies have been selected to address common barriers to energy efficiency adoption and tailored to the rural markets to be served within each sector. Strategies incorporate equity principles and needs throughout the portfolio. In future years, the portfolio

strategies will increasingly emphasize equity, resilience, grid management and GHG reduction. Specific market intervention strategies are summarized in Table 13 below and discussed more in Exhibit Two: 2023-2027 Portfolio Plan.

**Strategies for Market Intervention and EE Adoption**

| Sector/<br>Program                  | Common Barrier<br>Addressed  | Intervention   | Delivery<br>Channels   | Platforms/<br>Methods   | Future<br>Enhancements  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Commercial<br/>(SMB)</b>         | -Lack of<br>information<br>-First cost<br>Split incentive                          | -Downstream<br>-Energy audits<br>-Rebates<br>-Financing  | -Direct to<br>customers<br>-Trade Allies<br>-Community<br>Support                  | -Deemed<br>Savings  | -Grid/TOU<br>management<br>-NMEC<br>readiness   |
| <b>CC-Codes &amp;<br/>Standards</b> | -Understanding<br>of codes<br>-Public agency<br>resources<br>stretched too<br>thin | -Training of<br>building<br>officials<br>and design,<br>construction<br>teams<br>-Energy<br>Coaches to<br>support code<br>enforcement<br>staff | -Direct to<br>public staff,<br>design and<br>construction<br>teams                 | -Education &<br>Training<br>-Energy<br>Coaches                                      | -Electrification<br>technologies<br>-Renewable<br>integration<br>-Grid/Load<br>Management |
| <b>CC-Finance</b>                   | -First cost  | -OBF Bridge<br>Loans<br>-Microloans<br>-Electrification  | -Direct to<br>customers<br>-Trade Allies<br>-Energy<br>Advisors                    | -Revolving loan<br>fund<br>-No/low<br>interest<br>-Flexible terms                   | -On bill<br>repayment   |
| <b>CC-WE&amp;T</b>                  | -Availability of<br>skilled trades   | -Training for<br>disadvantaged<br>youth and<br>upskilling for<br>trade workers   | -Community-<br>based<br>organizations<br>-Third party<br>training<br>organizations | -Proven training<br>methods and<br>curriculum<br>-Equity-<br>targeted<br>candidates | -Renewable<br>DG training   |
| <b>Public</b>                       | -Resources/<br>Staffing  | -Benchmarking<br>-Audits<br>-CIP integration<br>-Project<br>implementation<br>support<br>(EE, DR, EV<br>charging)                              | -Energy Advisors   | -Deemed,<br>custom<br>-Shared<br>database/EMIS                                      | -NMEC<br>-Renewable DG<br>and storage<br>support  |
| <b>Residential<br/>(SF)</b>         | -First Cost<br>-Hassle factor<br>-Information                                      | -Virtual and<br>remote audits<br>(EE, DR, EV<br>charging)<br>-Energy Advisor<br>support<br>-Rebates<br>-Financing                              | -Downstream<br>-Trade Allies<br>-Community<br>Based<br>Organizations               | -Deemed<br>Savings  | -TOU rate<br>management<br>-Grid/Load<br>Management<br>-NMEC<br>-Resilience<br>measures   |

**TABLE 13**

#### NEW STRATEGIES FOR SPURRING INNOVATION:

The RuralREN approach—for rural, by rural, equity-focused—encourages rural communities to enter the energy efficiency arena. Through our guiding principles of equity, community, and collaboration we prioritize working closely with other rural agencies, elected and community leaders, community benefit organizations and the broader community to pull

back the curtain on the industry and engage in accelerating the adoption of more climate supportive policies.

The RuralREN Equity and ESJ Advisory Committee is an opportunity for community leader level exposure to the design and implementation process. Through a collaborative structure the RuralREN benefits from our Equity and ESJ colleagues' experiences and input while the RuralREN can provide an understanding of energy efficiency design and implementation. Similarly, the group can cross-share to build policy ideas that can address expanding adoption of GHG reducing technologies by their constituencies. The RuralREN WE&T Regional Community Advisory Committees will provide a similar opportunity for the RuralREN to work with community leaders to make energy efficiency more accessible to our communities.

Throughout all levels of interaction, the RuralREN will seek to increase access points for the rural customer, as well as take in feedback on how to better penetrate the communities that can grow the industry forward more equitably.

### Strategies for Spurring Innovation

| Innovation Channel/Opportunity                                   | RREN Supporting Strategy  |
|--|---|
| <b>New, Diverse Business Entrants to EE Market</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contracting opportunities with RREN emphasize diversity, green economy</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Traditional Actors (Businesses) Moving Into EE Market</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WET upskilling</li> <li>Build awareness of EE business model in other markets</li> <li>Contracting opportunities for EE program implementation scope</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Increase Adoption of New/Evolving GHG Reducing Technology</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Res and SMB Sector Electrification Audit recommendations, incentives and financing</li> <li>Collaborate with Statewide Emerging Technologies Program to deploy new GHG technologies at rural customer sites</li> <li>Leverage non-EE funding for Electrification and GHG RDD to test or deploy new GHG technologies at rural customer sites</li> </ul> |

TABLE 14



## STRATEGY FOR INCORPORATING LOW GLOBAL WARMING POTENTIAL (LOW-GWP) REFRIGERANTS IN THE PORTFOLIO

According to California Air Resource Board (CARB), the most common refrigerant today, R-22, has a 100-year (GWP) of 1,810, almost 2,000 times the potency of carbon dioxide, so just one pound of R-22 is nearly as potent as a ton of carbon dioxide.<sup>47</sup> The RuralREN will act as a trusted advisor to rural customers to advance the State's GWP refrigerant mitigation policies. As part of the RuralREN's energy efficiency offerings, the RuralREN will train and deploy local workforces throughout rural California to increase awareness of alternate refrigerant solutions to enable rural customers to adopt lower and zero-GWP refrigerant applications for all applicable technologies (e.g., electric heat pump water heaters, HVAC systems, refrigeration systems).

### Strategies for Incorporating Low-GWP Refrigerants

| Portfolio Sector/Program                  | RREN Supporting Strategy   |
|---|--|
| <b>Codes &amp; Standards</b>              | Provide information to building code officials, contractors, and designers about CFC phase out and low GWP refrigerant benefits code requirements    |
| <b>Workforce Education &amp; Training</b> | Provide information to WET participants about CFC phase out and low GWP refrigerant benefits and code requirements                                   |
| <b>Residential and Commercial</b>         | Incorporate LGWP spec for rebated equipment (such as HVAC heat pumps, HPWHs; Low GWP Refrigerant information incorporated in audit reports           |
| <b>Public</b>                             | Low GWP Refrigerant information incorporated in audit reports  |
| <b>Finance</b>                            | Minimum technical requirements for financed equipment (such as HVAC heat pumps, HPWHs; Low GWP Refrigerant information incorporated in audit reports |

TABLE 15

## PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

### SEGMENTATION STRATEGY SUMMARY

The RuralREN portfolio will focus on addressing the challenges of rural customers through complementary offerings in each of the three segments with an emphasis on non-resource

<sup>47</sup> *High-GWP Refrigerants*. (2022). California Air Resources Board <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/high-gwp-refrigerants>

Equity and Market Support segments.<sup>48</sup> The following presents an overview of the RuralREN's overarching objectives to guide each portfolio segment to support and advance the CPUC policy objectives.

**Equity** – the RuralREN's focus, and highest priority objective is to provide energy efficiency services to underserved and hard-to-reach rural customers. Appropriately 78% of our total proposed budget is allocated to the Equity segment to fund outreach and education, financing, and workforce education and training to rural hard-to-reach communities. Historically, the residential sector in rural hard-to-reach areas has been underserved by energy efficiency programs, therefore it represents the RuralREN's largest opportunity and portfolio focus.

**Resource Acquisition** – the RuralREN is proposing two Resource Acquisition programs serving the Commercial (SMB) and Residential sectors. While we've classified these programs as primarily Resource Acquisition strategies, they will substantially target hard-to-reach, disadvantaged communities and underserved participants consistent with the RuralREN's equity objectives. These programs will have a goal of at least 70% participation by equity-targeted customers. The proposed budget allocation for the Resource Acquisition segment is 14%.

**Market Support** – Of the RuralREN's portfolio budget, eight percent is allocated to the Market Support segment. This allocation aligns with the RuralREN's main objectives to increase the efficiency of buildings and equip code enforcement agencies in rural hard-to-reach areas to comply with energy codes through our proposed Codes and Standards program.

**Codes and Standards** – The RuralREN includes our Codes and Standards program in the Market Support segment.

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<sup>48</sup> D. 21-05-031, pp. 14-15. "... the Commission's Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Action Plan; 3 Improving access to energy efficiency for ESJ communities, as defined in the ESJ Action Plan, may provide corollary benefits such as increased comfort and safety, improved indoor air quality, and more affordable utility bills, consistent with Goals 1, 2, and 5 in the ESJ Action Plan."

## SECTOR STRATEGY

### COMMERCIAL

The RuralREN's Commercial Sector program will focus on filling the unmet needs from other utility and statewide programs. It will deliver direct-to-customer rebates for energy efficiency and decarbonization upgrades as well as some direct install options.

Also included are Energy Advisor services and financial incentives to small and medium-sized



PHOTO 11

businesses. Region-specific outreach and energy audits will provide specific, actionable recommendations for improving the place of business to reduce energy consumption and guide the customer toward available incentives and financing options offered by the RuralREN or electric and gas utility companies and third-party program implementers. The RuralREN will offer incentives for energy efficiency upgrades and GHG-reducing technologies such as heat pumps. Energy efficiency measures will include a variety of items like controls, HVAC, and plug loads/appliances. The market focus is on small and micro-businesses to address the tenant landlord split incentive barrier that is faced by so many small businesses.

#### Commercial Sector by Region

|               | Central Coast |     | North Coast | San Joaquin Valley | Sierra |     |
|---------------|---------------|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----|
|               | AMBAG         | SLO | RCEA        | SJVCEO             | HSEF   | SBC |
| Commercial RA |               |     | ✓           |                    |        | ✓   |

TABLE 16

## CROSS CUTTING

### CODES & STANDARDS

The RuralREN's Codes and Standards program supports code enforcement agencies and better equips the building design and construction community to implement California's ambitious Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24), helping make buildings more

efficient, paving the way for zero net energy building stock, and reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in rural California's most environmentally challenged regions.

### Codes and Standards Sector by Region

|                   | Central Coast |     | North Coast | San Joaquin Valley | Sierra |     |
|-------------------|---------------|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----|
|                   | AMBAG         | SLO | RCEA        | SJVCEO             | HSEF   | SBC |
| Codes & Standards | ✓             |     | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |

TABLE 17

### FINANCE

Barriers of first cost and access to capital remain as perhaps the biggest impediments to higher adoption rates of energy efficiency, especially in low- and moderate-income areas. RuralREN's Finance program will address two areas of need.

The Bridge Loan program will supplement the IOUs' On-Bill Financing (OBF) loans with short-term loans to cover energy efficiency project costs during



PHOTO 12

construction to “bridge” the time gap between application and funding of the OBF loan. This type of product covers energy efficiency project costs during construction to “bridge” the time gap between the time of application for IOU On-Bill Financing and funding of the OBF loan after construction completion. This gap can be many months, and in some cases a year or more. This type of funding lets non-residential customers implement energy efficiency projects quicker and eliminates the added cost of contractor or bank financing during construction.

The RuralREN also will develop a microloan product that fills gaps in existing financing products such as GoGreen and PACE. The target customer groups would be residential and small to medium-sized businesses in the commercial, industrial, public, and agricultural sectors. The loan amounts are expected to be below currently available financing products (\$5,000) and would carry low or zero interest and fees.

Both loan programs will be fully developed through a competitive solicitation for design with the goal of creating products that meet needs of customers and complement existing offerings and avoiding conflict with the outcomes of the CPUC's ongoing Order Instituting Rulemaking to Investigate and Design Clean Energy Financing Options for Electricity and Natural Gas Customer R.20-08-022.

By removing first cost barriers, the RuralREN anticipates its finance strategy will 1) increase in Resource Acquisition program participation; 2) increase IOU On-Bill Finance participation; 3) reduce turn over from project ideation to completion; and 4) drive more comprehensive energy projects.

#### Finance Sector by Region

|         | Central Coast |     | North Coast | San Joaquin Valley | Sierra |     |
|---------|---------------|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----|
|         | AMBAG         | SLO | RCEA        | SJVCEO             | HSEF   | SBC |
| Finance | ✓             | ✓   | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |

TABLE 18

#### WORKFORCE, EDUCATION & TRAINING

The RuralREN's WE&T program accelerates training (upskilling of existing workers and training for new workers) and increases new opportunities for employment in geographically hard-to-reach places to meet immediate needs. Seeking to address equity issues in access to and awareness of energy related careers, the RuralREN WE&T offering presents pathways to diffuse program

benefits more equitably for rural Californians. While the program pathways—the Clean Energy Academy and Climate Careers—are targeted broadly for disadvantaged workers, they specifically target returning citizens, veterans, Opportunity Youth, women, communities of color, and displaced Ag workers. The program addresses skills training, trades advancement, pre-apprenticeship placement and supports building professionals, while coordinating with third-party program implementers and local employers to increase

“Energy efficiency workforce development programs cultivate the hard and soft skills necessary for success in the clean energy economy. Inclusive training programs prepare underrepresented individuals such as women, veterans, and the previously incarcerated for high-road careers in energy efficiency. By designing these programs to meet the needs of rural and disadvantaged community members, the RuralREN can ensure the readiness of local workers to deliver technologies that lower energy costs and keep dollars local.”

—Mary Shoemaker, Senior Research Analyst, ACEEE



opportunities. It will support training and employ Energy Advisors to deliver parts of the RuralREN Residential program, as well as upskill trades in the regions. The RuralREN can promote specific courses and hold seats for those in the trade ally network, allowing local contractors the ability to upskill through specific certifications and training. The benefit being received by the contractor, the program will offer customized versions of in-person and virtual training curriculum to best serve the populations in each specific region. Individuals are enrolled into the program pathway that is best suited for them, and training is delivered directly and/or in coordination with the RuralREN's community partners. The result ensures development of a well-trained and knowledgeable workforce that reflects the communities they live in.

### Workforce, Education, and Training Sector by Region

|      | Central Coast |     | North Coast | San Joaquin Valley | Sierra |     |
|------|---------------|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----|
|      | AMBAG         | SLO | RCEA        | SJVCEO             | HSEF   | SBC |
| WE&T | ✓             |     | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |

TABLE 19

### PUBLIC

The RuralREN's Public Sector program will offer a suite of expert services to rural public agencies. Services will identify, develop, track, and implement energy savings opportunities in their buildings and facilities on the path to meeting mandates for GHG reduction and Zero Net Energy. Energy efficiency projects developed using the RuralREN's support services will be tracked in a pipeline queue and handed off to applicable IOU or other PA incentive programs and/or financing



PHOTO 13

programs, including the RuralREN's Bridge Loan Program. In addition to providing much-needed project services, the program will increase awareness and expertise of public agencies, improve information sharing among them and demonstrate leadership in energy

efficiency within their local communities. The Public Sector program will focus on public agencies that are not part of an LGP or represented by a SoCalREN Regional Partnership.

### Public Sector by Region

|        | Central Coast |     | North Coast | San Joaquin Valley | Sierra |     |
|--------|---------------|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----|
|        | AMBAG         | SLO | RCEA        | SJVCEO             | HSEF   | SBC |
| Public | ✓             |     | ✓*          |                    |        | ✓   |

\*Lake and Mendocino counties only

TABLE 20

### RESIDENTIAL

The RuralREN is proposing two programs in the Residential Sector – an Equity Segment element offering Energy Advisor audits and do-it-yourself energy efficiency kits, and a Resource Acquisition element offering incentives for whole-house energy efficiency and electrification measures.

The Residential Equity Segment Program will provide outreach and energy awareness



PHOTO 14

information targeting primarily low to moderate income rural service workers and retirees. It involves a community-based approach to raise the “energy literacy” of rural residential customers, including general awareness campaigns, simple energy efficiency do-it-yourself kits, and in-home Green House Call services provided by the RuralREN WE&T Energy Advisors, as a pathway to adoption of more comprehensive and advanced energy upgrades. The RuralREN programs will guide customers toward available incentives and financing options offered by the RuralREN or electric and gas utility companies and third-party program implementers. The program will provide entry-level employment opportunities for individuals trained through the RuralREN WE&T program. A small, innovative virtual home audit platform that provides customized recommendations and models the impact of ZNE/ZNC strategies will be tested in a limited area of the Central Coast region.

The Residential Resource Acquisition Segment Program will focus on filling the unmet needs from other utility and statewide programs. It will deliver direct-to-customer rebates for energy efficient and decarbonization upgrades as well as some direct install options.

The program will offer incentives for common home energy upgrades and decarbonization measures including HVAC and water heating heat pumps, and electric cooktops. Energy efficiency measures will include a variety of “whole home” items like weatherization, HVAC, and plug loads/appliances. The market focus is single-family homeowners and renters, consistent with the prevalence of single-family homes in rural areas.

#### Residential Sector by Region

|                    | Central Coast |     | North Coast | San Joaquin Valley | Sierra |     |
|--------------------|---------------|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----|
|                    | AMBAG         | SLO | RCEA        | SJVCEO             | HSEF   | SBC |
| Residential RA     |               |     | ✓           |                    |        | ✓   |
| Residential Equity | ✓             |     | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |

TABLE 21

#### VERY HIGH-LEVEL DISCUSSION OF STRATEGIES DRIVING DISTRIBUTION OF BUDGET AMONG SECTORS AND SEGMENTS

Strategies driving distribution of the budget and alignment with broader portfolio objectives are described below.

**Equity** – A large portion of the RuralREN's customer base falls into one or more of the CPUC's three Equity-Targeted categories of hard-to-reach, underserved or disadvantaged. The RuralREN's Vision and goals focus on bringing energy efficiency programs and services to this rural customer base. Appropriately 78% of our total proposed budget is allocated to the Equity segment to fund outreach and education, incentives, financing, and workforce education and training to rural customers.

**Resource Acquisition** – The RuralREN is proposing two Resource Acquisition programs serving the Commercial (SMB) and Residential sectors. While these programs are primarily classified as Resource Acquisition strategies, they will substantially target hard-to-reach, DAC and underserved participants consistent with RuralREN's equity objectives.

The Resource Acquisition segment budget is \$13,745,140, which is 14% of the total RuralREN proposed five-year budget. This budget is further divided among the Residential and Commercial Sectors. Resource Acquisition programs are offered only in the North Coast and Sierra regions of the RuralREN territory.

**Market Support** – The RuralREN's main objective of the Market Support segment is to increase the efficiency of buildings and equip code enforcement agencies in rural, hard-to-reach areas to comply with energy codes through our Codes and Standards program. The budget reflects the market size for the service over the five-year cycle.

The Market Support segment budget for 2023 – 2027 is \$7,395,202, which is 8% of the total RuralREN proposed budget. All of the Market Support budget is allocated to RuralREN's Codes and Standards program. The Codes and Standards program will provide support to the local rural building officials as well as the building design and construction industry to aid understanding of and compliance with energy codes.

Sector budgets are established to achieve overall portfolio goals, which are in turn based on the needs of our rural customer base. Past program participation, equity factors, and current and planned IOU and other PA-proposed program offerings in the region helped determine sector focus and level of effort needed. For example, RuralREN is not proposing to serve the Agriculture Sector because all three of the IOUs serving RuralREN's region have large Resource Acquisition programs that will target the Ag Sector in regions served by RuralREN.

Table 22 below shows the Sectors the RuralREN proposes to serve, and regions where the Sector programs will be offered. As shown in the table, not all sectors/programs will be offered

|                    | Central Coast |     | North Coast | San Joaquin Valley | Sierra |     |
|--------------------|---------------|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----|
|                    | AMBAG         | SLO | RCEA        | SJVCEO             | HSEF   | SBC |
| Commercial RA      |               |     | ✓           |                    |        | ✓   |
| Residential RA     |               |     | ✓           |                    |        | ✓   |
| Public             | ✓             |     | ✓*          |                    |        | ✓   |
| Codes & Standards  | ✓             |     | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |
| Finance            | ✓             | ✓   | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |
| WE&T               | ✓             |     | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |
| Residential Equity | ✓             |     | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |

TABLE 22

in all four RuralREN Regions. Our flagship programs are Res-Equity, Workforce Education and Training, and Finance because we believe these will have the biggest impacts on individual customers and rural communities by providing support in the areas of energy burden, jobs, and financial resources.

*Reduce Energy Burden:* We help reduce energy burden by helping customers identify and implement ways to reduce energy consumption, which then creates a more robust pipeline of projects for the RuralREN, IOU or third-party resource programs.

*Increase Employment:* We create opportunities for Climate Adaptive Careers, and we train and place for those careers. We can improve career prospects by offering Climate Adaptive career training; career opportunities can be increased by driving more project opportunities and sending a pipeline to IOU, third-party, and RuralREN Resource Acquisition programs.

*Bring Capital for EE Investments:* We bring needed capital to our rural communities in the form of bridge financing and potentially micro-lending for customers to adopt more comprehensive, costly energy efficiency and decarbonization measures.

The Codes and Standards sector is important because rural counties are notorious for lagging in code compliance, and as more and more customers migrate from urban and suburban areas to rural areas new construction and home renovations will increase. The result will increase the demand for knowledgeable code enforcement officials and designers and builders. It is a challenge to achieve Title 24 compliance—the achievement of decarbonization and EE goals can be sped up by taking local action to ensure rural communities are not unprepared or left behind when pursuing these goals.

The Public program, offered in San Benito, Santa Cruz, Lake, and Mendocino counties, fills a gap in service of PG&E's Local Government Partnership programs working in the regions. The RuralREN will coordinate with these programs to ensure consistency.

The Commercial and Residential Resource Acquisition programs fill gaps by serving the most remote areas of rural California, continuing and building upon Resource Acquisition programs that have been implemented by RCEA and SBC through LGPs.

Budgets were determined through a zero-based budgeting approach and achieved by a combination of factors including the needs and market opportunities within regions and the gaps in services of other PAs being filled as described in the previous sections.



## PORTFOLIO COORDINATION

### OTHER PAs

The RuralREN understands the critical importance of coordinating its portfolio and program operations with other PAs operating in the same areas to achieve goals, avoid duplication, and provide customers with consistent communications to avoid confusion. Coordination processes and interfaces will be memorialized in Joint Cooperation Memos between the RuralREN and each PA active in the RuralREN's service territory. Another effective venue for coordination with other PAs will be in regulatory proceedings and policy forums. The RuralREN's implementing agencies have been, and will continue to be, active participants in CPUC proceedings and CAEECC and its working groups as a way of coordinating with other PAs and stakeholders.

### STATEWIDE PROGRAMS

The RuralREN will actively coordinate with all applicable statewide programs, including New Construction, Codes and Standards, Workforce Education and Training and Market Transformation. The result will complement their offerings and accelerate the RuralREN's tailored solutions for rural hard-to-reach customers.

### OTHER DEMAND SIDE MANAGEMENT (DSM) PROGRAMS

The RuralREN will help advance rural customer adoption of other DSM programs, including Demand Response (DR), Technology and Equipment for Clean Heating (TECH) and Building Initiative for Low Emission Development (BUILD), Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP), Electric Vehicle Charging and other DSM and Distributed Energy Resources (DER) offerings.

The RuralREN recognizes and respects the role and importance of the Energy Savings Assistance (ESA) programs and the value offered within our communities. Our offerings should enhance and expand, but never duplicate or overlap with ESA programs. The intention is to augment gaps, and ensure customers are holistically served. The RuralREN Residential programs will coordinate outreach and implementation with the ESA Programs.

### EVALUATION, MEASUREMENT AND VERIFICATION (EM&V)

The RuralREN will collaborate with the CPUC and stakeholders to ensure that data collection activities are embedded across the RuralREN program portfolio to capture the information necessary to meet evaluation requirements and help expand the understanding of energy efficiency potential and best practices in this relatively new sector. The RuralREN's EM&V

considerations for its program portfolio include data collection to inform CPUC evaluation activities and support internal program performance tracking and continuous improvement.

#### ALIGNMENT WITH LEGISLATIVE AND CPUC REQUIREMENTS AND RELEVANT ACTION PLANS

The RuralREN's Business Plan strategies and outcomes align with CPUC regulatory requirements, applicable legislation, and the various action plans that guide implementation of California's energy policies, as summarized in the following paragraphs.

#### CPUC REQUIREMENTS

The RuralREN's Business Plan is offered as a formal proposal to form a REN. CPUC policies allow RENs the flexibility to adapt innovative program design and deliver to serve identified gaps in IOU program portfolios that provide significant value to the ratepayer, albeit not one that is not solely captured within the resource acquisition program segment. RENs provide an appropriate and viable vehicle to serve those who would not be served otherwise due to cost-effectiveness requirements, while filling programmatic gaps and acting as incubators for new, innovative, and effective program design that can be scaled and replicated throughout the state.

The RuralREN proposal to form a REN is consistent with the CPUC requirements associated with forming a new REN. The CPUC, in D.19-12-021, reconfirmed, with adjustments, the three criteria by which a new REN would be considered:

- Activities that utility or community choice aggregator (CCA) program administrators cannot or do not intend to undertake.
- Pilot activities where there is no current utility or CCA program offering, and where there is potential for scalability to a broader geographic reach, if successful.
- Activities serving hard-to-reach markets, regardless of whether there is another utility or CCA program that may overlap.<sup>49</sup>

RENs are uniquely situated to advance regionalized innovative program designs that create an economy of scale. The RuralREN will be an important energy efficiency delivery vehicle

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<sup>49</sup> D. 19-12-021, OP 4. "To be approved by the Commission, a regional energy network business plan must propose activities that meet at least one of the following criteria: (a) Activities that utility or community choice aggregator (CCA) program administrators cannot or do not intend to undertake. (b) Pilot activities where there is no current utility or CCA program offering, and where there is potential for scalability to a broader geographic reach, if successful. (c) Activities serving hard-to-reach markets, whether or not there is another utility or CCA program that may overlap."

for years to come. The main objectives, strategies, and outcomes of the RuralREN align well with important legislative and CPUC requirements including the RuralREN's focus to:

- Reduce energy use and GHG emissions in rural California
- Increase rural hard-to-reach access to energy efficiency programs and policies
- Promote innovative programs that respond to the needs of the rural customer
- Cultivate locally trained workforces that meet the needs of the rural, hard-to-reach, underserved, and disadvantaged communities
- Build long-term career opportunities in the energy efficiency and clean energy sector for rural Californians.

The Business Plan identifies existing gaps and minimal services currently offered in these rural communities. The RuralREN will complement existing offerings by directly connecting programs with rural customers for a broader geographic reach and focusing on serving hard-to-reach markets throughout the RuralREN regions.

The RuralREN is borne from the local communities it will serve. These communities are represented by the long-standing Rural HTR Working Group that has advocated, in CPUC energy efficiency proceedings, for equal access to energy-efficiency programs services across California's rural spaces. As preferred by the CPUC, the RuralREN will collaborate and coordinate with program administrators and program implementers to serve the best interests of customers.<sup>50</sup> The RuralREN will help PAs and implementers more effectively serve geographically hard-to-reach rural customers while providing locally delivered programs tailored to better serve the needs of hard-to-reach customers. Such programs include training and providing jobs for local workers to support RuralREN program delivery.

To gain feedback from PAs in overlapping service territories and other stakeholders, the RuralREN has conducted the following:

- Met with SCE, SoCalGas, PG&E, SoCalREN and 3CREN to discuss the proposed RuralREN and ways to ensure coordination in shared regions.
- Received an individual "letter of commitment" from every program administrator that has overlapping operation in the same geographic area as the RuralREN as presented in this Business Plan.

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<sup>50</sup> Id, p. 26. "Coordination and cooperation is in the interest of all program administrators and/or implementers, as well as the Commission and the customers being served."

- Received “letters of support” from various local governments and community organizations for the creation of the new RuralREN.
- Regularly participated in CAEECC and its various Working Group meetings (RCEA holds a CAEECC member seat)
- Presented initial plan for the RuralREN and the Draft Business Plan to the Full California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC) on February 16, 2022.
- Responded to feedback from CAEECC stakeholders which is reflected in the Business Plan.
- Coordinated with CPUC Energy Division Staff to present the initial proposed RuralREN and discuss the Business Plan submittal.

A summary of RuralREN's compliance with the CPUC's REN requirements is shown in Table 23

.

## CPUC Compliance Requirements

| No. | Compliance Directive  | Business Plan Section/Compliance Documentation   |
|-----|---|--|
| 1   | 2. A proposal for a new regional energy network (REN) may be brought to the Commission at any time via a motion in the open energy efficiency rulemaking. A proposed REN is required to represent more than one local government entity and must present its business plan proposal to at least one meeting of the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC) prior to filing it with the Commission. The REN motion to the Commission must also contain: | Executive Summary<br><br>CAEECC presentation included in Appendix  |
| 2   | a) A description of its new and unique value to contribute to California's energy, climate, and/or equity goals.  | Executive Summary  |
| 3   | (b) A description of its proposed governance structure.   | Executive Summary  |
| 4   | (c) A "letter of commitment to cooperate" from each existing program administrator with whom the new REN's proposed activities will overlap.  | Appendix   |
| 5   | (d) A written summary of feedback received from the CAEECC meeting and any other stakeholder input, along with the response or changes that were made as a result of the input.   | Exhibit 02, Section v.6  |
| 6   | (e) A proposed set of energy savings targets.   | Exhibit 02, Section a.iii  |
| 7   | (f) A proposed set of goals and metrics.  | Exhibit 02, Section c.   |
| 8   | (g) An estimate of benefits and costs according to the Total Resource Cost and Program Administrator Cost tests.  | Exhibit 01, Section b.   |
| 9   | 3. All regional energy networks, once approved by the Commission, shall negotiate and file bilateral Joint Cooperation Memorandums, as defined in Decision 18-05-041, Ordering Paragraph 38, annually, for any activities that overlap with the activities of utility program administrators, community choice aggregators, and other regional energy networks.   | Joint Cooperation Memorandums with other PAs serving the RuralREN territory will be negotiated and filed after CPUC approval of RuralREN   |
| 10  | 4. To be approved by the Commission, a regional energy network business plan must propose activities that meet at least one of the following criteria:  | RuralREN's Business Plan proposes activities that meet each of the required criteria   |
| 11  | (a) Activities that utility or community choice aggregator (CCA) program administrators cannot or do not intend to undertake.   | Residential sector strategy includes direct, in person outreach to residential customers and energy coach service-see Program Card   |
| 12  | (b) Pilot activities where there is no current utility or CCA program offering, and where there is potential for scalability to a broader geographic reach, if successful.  | Residential strategy includes pilot scale deployment of virtual audits based on Net Zero-Carbon and Net Zero-Energy-see Program Card   |
| 13  | (c) Activities serving hard-to-reach markets, whether or not there is another utility or CCA program that may overlap.  | All of RuralREN's activities serve hard-to-reach markets, disadvantaged communities, and underserved rural customers. See Business Plan Exhibit 1 and Exhibit 2, and Program Cards |

**TABLE 23**

The RuralREN will comply with all applicable Commission policies and directives. Recent CPUC decisions have reset prior CPUC policies, which directly reshape how program administrators will design and deliver their energy efficiency portfolios. Recognizing CPUC's



other energy efficiency policies objectives, the Commission “reduce[d] the conflict between cost-effectiveness and other equally or more important policy objectives such as equity and support for the energy efficiency market.” The CPUC’s new approach allows the RuralREN the opportunity to focus efforts on addressing inequities in the program availability facing California’s rural customers.

## LEGISLATION

SB 100: CALLS FOR UTILITIES TO PROCURE 60 PERCENT RENEWABLE ENERGY BY 2030 AND 100 PERCENT CARBON-FREE ENERGY BY 2045, AND TO DOUBLE THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF EXISTING BUILDINGS. The goal to double energy efficiency for existing buildings will be a substantial lift and require coordination and collaboration across the RuralREN implementing agencies and PAs in California’s rural communities. RuralREN’s programs will increase adoption of energy efficiency in rural communities and reduce carbon emissions through energy savings and implementation of decarbonization measures such as electric heat pumps and cooking appliances.

ASSEMBLY BILL (AB) 1482; SB 246; SB 379; AB 2800: CALL FOR PREPARATION OF STATE CLIMATE ADAPTATION STRATEGY, ESTABLISHING THE GOVERNOR’S OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH (OPR) INTEGRATED CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY PROGRAM, REQUIRING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO INCLUDE ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCY STRATEGIES IN GENERAL PLANS, AND REQUIRING STATE AGENCIES TO ACCOUNT FOR CLIMATE CHANGE WHEN PLANNING NEW INFRASTRUCTURE, RESPECTIVELY. The RuralREN will help rural customers facing immediate impacts due to climate change adopt higher levels of energy efficiency and emission reduction through various energy efficiency solutions.

AB 841: AUTHORIZES A ONE-TIME REDIRECTION OF UNSPENT ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUNDS FROM IOUs TO SCHOOLS. PROGRAMS WOULD BE DESIGNED TO UPGRADE HEATING VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING (HVAC) SYSTEMS, INCREASE ENERGY EFFICIENCY, AND ADDRESS POTENTIAL LEAD IN WATER FIXTURES. The RuralREN Public Sector initiatives align well with this new law. Some of the RuralREN Implementing Agencies are already supporting their schools in this effort. The RuralREN will look to build an approach to support this effort either directly or in coordination with PAs.

AB 32/SB 32: CALIFORNIA GLOBAL WARMING SOLUTIONS ACT OF 2006: AB 32/SB 32: SEEK SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTIONS IN CARBON EMISSIONS. THE LATEST EXTENSION OF SB 32 MANDATES THE REDUCTION OF GHG GAS EMISSIONS TO 40 PERCENT BELOW THE 1990 LEVELS BY 2030. RuralREN’s programs provide GHG awareness and mitigation strategies as part of its energy efficiency message, and promote decarbonization measures such as electric heat pumps, water heating and appliances.

SB 350: CLEAN ENERGY AND POLLUTION REDUCTION ACT OF 2015: INCREASE ENERGY EFFICIENCY BY 50 PERCENT IN EXISTING BUILDINGS BY 2030 AND FOCUS ON ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES MORE EFFECTIVELY IN ACCESSING ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SOLAR RESOURCES AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT. All RuralREN's programs contribute to increased adoption of energy efficiency and explicitly targets the 398 census tract level disadvantaged communities within its service territory to provide access to, and assistance with, implementation of energy efficiency and solar resources. Also provided is workforce development training that will increase energy-related skills of the local workforce and create new clean energy careers in disadvantaged communities.

SB 1414: REQUIRES INCREASED CODE COMPLIANCE AND REQUIREMENT FOR CONFIRMATION OF APPROPRIATE PERMITS FOR INSTALLATION OF NEW HVAC AND HEAT PUMPS SYSTEMS. The RuralREN incorporates these requirements into its Workforce Education & Training and Codes and Standards programs and work with local public sector customers (building departments) to establish successful approaches to implement this across the regions.

### **ACTION PLANS**

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTION (ESJ) PLAN: The CPUC's puts forth its vision to advance equity in its programs and policies for ESJ communities. The CPUC defines environmental and social justice as follows:<sup>51</sup>

*Environmental and social justice seeks to come to terms with, and remedy, a history of unfair treatment of communities, predominantly communities of people of color and/ or low-income residents. These communities have been subjected to disproportionate impacts from one or more environmental hazards, socio-economic burdens, or both. Residents have been excluded in policy setting or decision-making processes and have lacked protections and benefits afforded to other communities by the implementation of environmental and other regulations, such as those enacted to control polluting activities*

RuralREN's focus and highest priority objective is to provide energy efficiency services to underserved and hard-to-reach rural communities. Appropriately, 78% of our total proposed budget is allocated to the Equity segment.

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<sup>51</sup> California codified Environmental Justice in GOV § 65040.12: "...the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies."

For the RuralREN Equity is more than a segment; it is imbued into our governance and decision making. The RuralREN Equity and ESJ Advisory Committee will provide input and recommendations regarding opportunities to incorporate and enhance equity and diversity of the organization and its programs. This advisory group will be formed during the startup phase of the RuralREN in 2023 and will be comprised of champions of diversity, equity and inclusion from local governments, community-based organizations, schools/colleges, and other organizations within our communities.

SENATE BILL (SB) 350 SUPPORTING PLANS: The RuralREN has considered the many plans that have been developed to better understand how to achieve the bold goals set forth in SB350. The RuralREN is particularly attuned to those plans that address barriers that impact low-income communities, including the California Energy Commission “SB 350 Low-Income Barriers Study Recommendations.” The RuralREN has considered these plans in the development of this plan and will continue to look for ways to integrate recommendations into program delivery.

EXISTING BUILDINGS ENERGY EFFICIENCY (EBEE) ACTION PLAN: The EBEE Action Plan provides detailed strategies and tactics for increasing energy efficiency in all existing buildings, including all residential buildings. The EBEE Action Plan outlines a series of priorities for local government leadership in energy efficiency, codes, and workforce that have been considered and incorporated when appropriate into this Business Plan.

CALIFORNIA ENERGY EFFICIENCY STRATEGIC PLAN (CEESP) AND THE BIG BOLD GOALS: The CPUC’s 2011 CEESP set forth a framework to make energy efficiency a way of life in California by refocusing ratepayer-funded energy efficiency programs on achieving long-term savings through structural changes in the way Californians use energy. All six of the RuralREN Implementing Agencies received CEESP funding through their former LGPs and were able to support the needs of their local governments through the creation of benchmarking policies, Energy Action Plans, Climate Action Plans and other CEESP initiatives. The RuralREN relies on the CEESP to guide its vision and goals across its portfolio to support the achievement of the Plan’s long-term goals.

## ANNUAL PORTFOLIO BUDGETS

Table 24 below shows proposed annual budgets, savings, cost effectiveness and TSB by segment, by year, for 2023 – 2031. Additional budget tables are provided in the “Exhibit Four: RuralREN Responses, Pursuant To Energy Division Templates”

### RuralREN Proposed Annual Budgets, Savings, Cost Effectiveness, and TSB for 2023-2031

| Year | Segment                | Requested Budget  | TSB              | TRC         | PAC         | kWh              | kW        | Therms (MM)   |
|------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-----------|---------------|
| 2024 | Resource Acquisition   | 2,102,011         | 718,310          | 0           | 0           | 2,007,460        | 22        | 9,118         |
|      | Market Support         | -                 |                  |             |             | -                | -         | -             |
|      | Equity                 | 16,209,937        |                  |             |             | -                | -         | -             |
|      | Codes & Standards      | 1,442,036         |                  |             |             |                  |           |               |
|      | EM&V                   | 207,417           |                  |             |             |                  |           |               |
|      | <b>TOTAL Portfolio</b> | <b>19,961,401</b> | <b>718,310</b>   | <b>0.04</b> | <b>0.04</b> | <b>2,007,460</b> | <b>22</b> | <b>9,118</b>  |
| 2025 | Resource Acquisition   | 2,924,295         | 1,178,191        | 0           | 0           | 3,140,478        | 44        | 13,119        |
|      | Market Support         | -                 |                  |             |             | -                | -         | -             |
|      | Equity                 | 16,362,178        |                  |             |             | -                | -         | -             |
|      | Codes & Standards      | 1,498,271         |                  |             |             |                  |           |               |
|      | EM&V                   | 218,240           |                  |             |             |                  |           |               |
|      | <b>TOTAL Portfolio</b> | <b>21,002,983</b> | <b>1,178,191</b> | <b>0.06</b> | <b>0.06</b> | <b>3,140,478</b> | <b>44</b> | <b>13,119</b> |
| 2026 | Resource Acquisition   | 3,812,425         | 1,583,116        | 0           | 0           | 4,021,525        | 57        | 17,949        |
|      | Market Support         | -                 |                  |             |             | -                | -         | -             |
|      | Equity                 | 15,953,513        |                  |             |             | -                | -         | -             |
|      | Codes & Standards      | 1,620,119         |                  |             |             |                  |           |               |
|      | EM&V                   | 224,554           |                  |             |             |                  |           |               |
|      | <b>TOTAL Portfolio</b> | <b>21,610,610</b> | <b>1,583,116</b> | <b>0.08</b> | <b>0.08</b> | <b>4,021,525</b> | <b>57</b> | <b>17,949</b> |
| 2027 | Resource Acquisition   | 3,916,230         | 1,742,002        | 0           | 0           | 4,197,385        | 62        | 19,656        |
|      | Market Support         | -                 |                  |             |             | -                | -         | -             |
|      | Equity                 | 15,757,016        |                  |             |             | -                | -         | -             |
|      | Codes & Standards      | 1,736,439         |                  |             |             |                  |           |               |
|      | EM&V                   | 224,802           |                  |             |             |                  |           |               |
|      | <b>TOTAL Portfolio</b> | <b>21,634,486</b> | <b>1,742,002</b> | <b>0.09</b> | <b>0.09</b> | <b>4,197,385</b> | <b>62</b> | <b>19,656</b> |

| Year              | Segment                | Requested Budget   | TSB               | TRC         | PAC         | kWh               | kW         | Therms (MM)    |
|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|
| 2028              | Resource Acquisition   | 4,016,360          | 1,722,985         | 0           | 1           | 4,269,545         | 63         | 20,282         |
|                   | Market Support         | -                  |                   |             |             | -                 | -          | -              |
|                   | Equity                 | 16,229,726         |                   |             |             | -                 | -          | -              |
|                   | Codes & Standards      | 1,788,532          |                   |             |             |                   |            |                |
|                   | EM&V                   | 231,546            |                   |             |             |                   |            |                |
|                   | <b>TOTAL Portfolio</b> | <b>22,266,164</b>  | <b>1,722,985</b>  | <b>0.10</b> | <b>0.10</b> | <b>4,269,545</b>  | <b>63</b>  | <b>20,282</b>  |
| 2029              | Resource Acquisition   | 4,142,523          | 1,713,211         | 1           | 1           | 4,391,203         | 65         | 20,822         |
|                   | Market Support         | -                  |                   |             |             | -                 | -          | -              |
|                   | Equity                 | 16,716,618         |                   |             |             | -                 | -          | -              |
|                   | Codes & Standards      | 1,842,188          |                   |             |             |                   |            |                |
|                   | EM&V                   | 238,492            |                   |             |             |                   |            |                |
|                   | <b>TOTAL Portfolio</b> | <b>22,939,821</b>  | <b>1,713,211</b>  | <b>0.10</b> | <b>0.10</b> | <b>4,391,203</b>  | <b>65</b>  | <b>20,822</b>  |
| 2030              | Resource Acquisition   | 4,257,816          | 1,696,535         | 1           | 1           | 4,482,848         | 67         | 21,449         |
|                   | Market Support         | -                  |                   |             |             | -                 | -          | -              |
|                   | Equity                 | 17,218,116         |                   |             |             | -                 | -          | -              |
|                   | Codes & Standards      | 1,897,453          |                   |             |             |                   |            |                |
|                   | EM&V                   | 245,647            |                   |             |             |                   |            |                |
|                   | <b>TOTAL Portfolio</b> | <b>23,619,033</b>  | <b>1,696,535</b>  | <b>0.10</b> | <b>0.10</b> | <b>4,482,848</b>  | <b>67</b>  | <b>21,449</b>  |
| 2031              | Resource Acquisition   | 4,386,096          | 1,720,179         | 1           | 1           | 4,694,684         | 69         | 22,056         |
|                   | Market Support         | -                  |                   |             |             | -                 | -          | -              |
|                   | Equity                 | 17,734,660         |                   |             |             | -                 | -          | -              |
|                   | Codes & Standards      | 1,954,377          |                   |             |             |                   |            |                |
|                   | EM&V                   | 253,016            |                   |             |             |                   |            |                |
|                   | <b>TOTAL Portfolio</b> | <b>24,328,149</b>  | <b>1,720,179</b>  | <b>0.11</b> | <b>0.11</b> | <b>4,694,684</b>  | <b>69</b>  | <b>22,056</b>  |
| <b>8-Yr Total</b> |                        | <b>177,362,646</b> | <b>12,074,529</b> | <b>0.08</b> | <b>0.08</b> | <b>31,205,130</b> | <b>450</b> | <b>144,450</b> |

TABLE 24

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW OR MODIFIED EE POLICY

### EQUITY-QUALIFIED DEFINITION TO INCLUDE RURAL UNDERSERVED CUSTOMERS

The RuralREN agrees with the CPUC that residential customers and small businesses located in rural areas do not have equal access to energy efficiency programs. The RuralREN believes



this logically extends to all customers located in rural areas. As described throughout this Business Plan, energy efficiency program participation by customers in rural areas is lower than in non-rural areas. Since about 20% of California's population is in rural areas, policy changes are needed to ensure this underserved population is better served. The RuralREN is a step in the right direction towards equity, but more is needed. The RuralREN recommends the CPUC revise its hard-to-reach definition to recognize any customer located in a rural area as geographically hard-to-reach. The RuralREN also requests is that the geographical underserved customer characteristic be enough to consider the customer as Hard-to--Reach without the need for an additional characteristic such as customer size, number of employees, language spoken, and other criteria.<sup>52</sup> This will enable PAs to apply higher-net-gross ratios in their TSB and cost effectiveness calculations reflecting greater ratepayer benefits for energy savings achieved by rural customers.

#### ACCESS TO CUSTOMER DATA BY NON-IOU PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS

To be more effective Program Administrators, RENs need customer data to design, implement and evaluate their program portfolios. Examples of data needs include energy consumption interval data to identify energy efficiency opportunities and to use Normalized Meter Energy Consumption (NMEC) performance-based energy savings approaches, customer program participation records, customers using electric water heating, master metered multifamily facilities, aggregated meter data for individually metered multifamily facilities, customers who have rooftop solar and battery storage, customer locations on circuits or areas that would be candidates for high TSB load reductions, customers located in target marketing regions and many other purposes related to marketing and outreach. Understanding the IOUs are limited by data privacy laws,<sup>53</sup> <sup>54</sup> the RuralREN asks the CPUC to require IOUs provide customer information to Regional Energy Network PAs for specific purposes of designing, implementing, and evaluating their energy efficiency portfolios.

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<sup>52</sup> D.18-05-041 FOF14, "Those customers who do not have easy access to program information or generally do not participate in energy efficiency programs due to a combination of language, business size, geographic, and lease (split incentive) barriers"

<sup>53</sup> California Consumer Privacy Act of 2018 in CIV § 1798.100-1798.199.100

<sup>54</sup> D. 11-07-056, COL 13 "Holding covered entities responsible for meeting the following requirements pertaining to the disclosure of the purposes for which information is collected, used, stored or disclosed is consistent with SB 1476, relevant provisions of the Pub. Util. Code and past Commission policies to protect privacy..."

## EXHIBIT TWO: 2023-2027 PORTFOLIO PLAN

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### PORTFOLIO SUMMARY

The RuralREN has created a portfolio of programs to achieve our main goals, outcomes and vision statement, as summarized in Table 1 below, and described in our Exhibit One: Strategic Business Plan document. The portfolio addresses the fact that geographically remote rural energy users are not as well served by energy efficiency programs as those in closer proximity to metropolitan centers, but also specifically focuses on furthering the CPUC's Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan<sup>55</sup> policies and associated gaps in service for this largely underserved, hard-to-reach, and disadvantaged customer base.

#### **RuralREN Vision Statement**

The RuralREN will act as a catalyst to accelerate the implementation of the state's energy efficiency and climate goals in geographically hard-to-reach California. By leveraging rural regional collaboration, our trusted local relationships, and promoting pragmatic responses to community needs, the RuralREN will help deliver a just and clean energy future.

#### **RuralREN Proposed Outcomes**

Outcome 1: Hard-to-reach, disadvantaged and underserved rural customers are provided the same level of services and support of CPUC energy programs as their counterparts in or near metropolitan areas, and are empowered to take action to better manage their energy use and cost through increased awareness, support resources, and access to financing to improve their homes and businesses.

Outcome 2: Energy consumption, energy cost and GHG emissions are reduced across the region, contributing to California's decarbonization and energy efficiency goals.

Outcome 3: A trained, local workforce is employed in well-paying jobs that provide energy services to rural communities to enable energy and cost savings, and GHG emissions reductions.

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<sup>55</sup> *Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan* (V. 1). (2019, February). California Public Utilities Commission. <https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/-/media/cpuc-website/divisions/news-and-outreach/documents/news-office/key-issues/esj/environmental-and-social-justice.pdf>

## KEY METRICS AND OUTCOMES

**RREN Portfolio Alignment with Goals**

| Segment-Sector   | G1: Provide EE Services to Rural HTR, Underserved and DAC Customers  | G2: Reduce energy use and GHG emissions, maximize TSB   | G3: Develop Local Workforce and Create Clean Energy Jobs   |
|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Resource Acquisition - Commercial</b>               | -EE services and incentives are delivered to HTR rural and equity-targeted SMBs from within their communities  | -Rural SMBs implement a mix of energy efficiency and GHG-reducing electrification measures                          | -Growth of local EE-related contracting and supplier businesses creates new job opportunities in rural regions<br>-Rural EE-related contracting and supplier businesses are boosted by local increased demand for energy services and technologies |
| <b>Equity - Finance</b>                                | -RREN's Finance programs are designed with equity as a primary objective – including micro-loans, low or no cost, easy qualifying/eligibility        | -With RREN Finance programs SMB and residential customers will implement more EE projects and measures              | -RREN's low cost and easy to apply for loan programs will increase local spending on EE goods and services<br>-Increased demand for EE products and services will create local jobs  |
| <b>Equity - WE&amp;T</b>                               | -WE&T programs prioritize underserved, HTR and DAC communities and individuals   | -Availability of skilled workers helps increase implementation of energy efficiency measures                        | -WE&T directly develops a local skilled workforce<br>-Local skilled workforce keeps EE spending local  |
| <b>Market Support - Codes &amp; Standards</b>          | -Code education and enforcement support provided to rural HTR building officials, with a focus on serving rural underserved, HTR and DAC communities | -More buildings will comply with energy codes, and as a result will use less energy and emit less GHG pollutants    | -C&S training provided by the program increases the skills and value of building officials, trades and designers   |
| <b>Equity - Public</b>                                 | -Project development support is provided to local government and agencies serving rural HTR, DAC and underserved communities                         | -Local government and public agencies implement energy savings upgrades using RREN technical services and financing | -Public facility operation staff are trained to understand and operate energy efficient systems and equipment  |
| <b>Equity &amp; Resource Acquisition - Residential</b> | -Program focuses outreach and program participation to equity-targeted customers   | -Outreach, Education, Technical Support and Incentives drive implementation of energy savings upgrades              | -Increased demand for energy technologies and services supports the local trades<br>-RREN program implementers hire local workers  |

**TABLE 25**

### NARRATIVE ON PORTFOLIO GOALS AND PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE METRICS TO BE ACHIEVED IN FIVE YEARS

Portfolio performance metrics and goals have been selected to ensure performance to goals, both near- and long-term, and to provide the highest degree of accountability to the CPUC and all California ratepayers. The RuralREN's proposed set of metrics ensure performance and accountability at the program, sector, segment, and portfolio level, as summarized in Table 2 below. Portfolio performance metrics are aligned with RuralREN's

overarching goals of equity, energy savings, and building local workforce. Key metrics at the sector and segment level roll up to the portfolio level for reporting, but close management at the program/sector level ensures portfolio goals are achieved. Portfolio metrics for Resource Acquisition segment programs have targets listed for the five-year cycle. Portfolio metrics for Equity and Market Support segment programs indicate a target where one has been established or indicate that baselines and targets will be established once detailed program designs are complete, after CPUC approval of a new RuralREN. This is also consistent with non-consensus recommendation Option 2 of the CAEECC Market Support and Equity Working Group Final Reports.<sup>56</sup>

The RuralREN's proposed portfolio includes strategies and programs within all three segments, but appropriately focuses on the Equity segment because of the high percentage of hard-to-reach, underserved and disadvantaged customers in the region. Our selection of metrics reflects this mix of programs using existing metrics, CAEECC Equity and Market Support Working Group recommended metrics, and custom metrics tailored to the specific strategies and tactics within programs.

**Resource Acquisition Metrics** – In addition to the standard energy savings metrics used in the past, we've added Total System Benefits as the primary metric for our Resource Acquisition portfolio at the segment, sector and program level. Since all of the RuralREN's programs target hard-to-reach, underserved and disadvantaged customers, equity metrics are also included in the Resource Acquisition segment programs.

**Equity Metrics** – The RuralREN proposes using a tailored subset of the CAEECC EMWG recommended metrics for its Equity segment programs. The RuralREN programs in the Resource Acquisition and Market Support segment also have Equity metrics, again because of the large population of hard-to-reach, underserved and/or disadvantaged customers and communities. Equity segment programs make up almost 80% of RuralREN's total portfolio budget so it will be important to ensure that our metrics and Equity-targeted customer definitions align with CAEECC/CPUC definitions that are expected to be refined after submittal of PA business plans.

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<sup>56</sup> Equity Metrics Working Group. (2021, October). Report and Recommendations to the California Public Utilities Commission and the Energy Efficiency Program Administrators. California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee. [https://4930400d-24b5-474c-9a16-0109dd2d06d3.filesusr.com/ugd/849f65\\_422f2a5a35bb4bcbababe50e7ecccf6f2.docx?dn=Final%20EMWG%20Report\\_10.20.2021.docx](https://4930400d-24b5-474c-9a16-0109dd2d06d3.filesusr.com/ugd/849f65_422f2a5a35bb4bcbababe50e7ecccf6f2.docx?dn=Final%20EMWG%20Report_10.20.2021.docx)

**Market Support Metrics** – The RuralREN proposes using a tailored subset of the CAEECC Market Support Metrics Working Group recommended metrics. Many of the RuralREN Market Support segment strategies include portfolio level Equity metrics as well. The only program the RuralREN has classified in the Market Support segment is Codes and Standards.

**Summary of Portfolio Level Metrics Aligned with Goals**

| Portfolio Metric   | G1: Provide EE Services to Rural HTR, Underserved and DAC Customers | G2: Reduce energy use and GHG emissions, maximize TSB | G3: Develop Local Workforce and Create Clean Energy Jobs |
|--|---|---|--|
| Number of Customers Receiving RREN Services                                    | ✓   |   | ✓  |
| Number and Percentage of Equity-Targeted Customers Receiving Services          | ✓   | ✓   | ✓  |
| Total System Benefits (TSB), \$  |   | ✓   |  |
| Energy Savings, ex ante, net   |   | ✓   |  |
| GHG Reductions, ex ante, net   |   | ✓   |  |
| Estimated Energy savings and GHG reductions supported by Non-Resource Programs |   | ✓   |  |
| Workers Trained in WE&T Programs   | ✓   |   | ✓  |
| Construction-related jobs created through EE program expenditures              | ✓   |   | ✓  |
| Total EE Expenditures in the local regions                                     | ✓   |   | ✓  |
| Estimated Value of EE Projects   | ✓   | ✓   | ✓  |

**TABLE 26**



## Portfolio Performance Metrics

Table 27 below lists the RuralREN's proposed portfolio-level performance metrics and indicators.

### Portfolio Level Metrics and Indicators

| Metric or Indicator | Metric/Indicator Description  | 2023  | 2024      | 2025        | 2026        | 2027        |
|---------------------|---|---|-----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| M                   | Total projects completed/ measures installed and dollar value of consolidated projects[1] | \$188,662   | \$718,310 | \$1,178,191 | \$1,583,116 | \$1,742,002 |
| I                   | CO2-equivalent of net annual kWh savings  | Indicators  |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | First year annual kW gross  |   |           |             |             |             |
| M                   | First year annual kW net  | 8   | 22        | 44          | 57          | 62          |
| I                   | First year annual kWh gross   | Indicators  |           |             |             |             |
| M                   | First year annual kWh net   | 724,972   |           | 3,140,478   | 4,021,525   | 4,197,385   |
| I                   | First year annual Therm gross   | Indicators  |           |             |             |             |
| M                   | First year annual Therm net   | 3,944   | 9,118     | 13,119      | 17,949      | 19,656      |
| I                   | Lifecycle ex-ante kW gross  | Indicators  |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | Lifecycle ex-ante kW net  |   |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | Lifecycle ex-ante kWh gross   |   |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | Lifecycle ex-ante kWh net   |   |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | Lifecycle ex-ante Therm gross   |   |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | Lifecycle ex-ante Therm net   |   |           |             |             |             |
| M                   | % customer participants in Disadvantaged Communities                                      | TBD based on further coordination with CPUC/CAEECC Equity Metrics WG. Programs will target 50-75% total Equity-targeted participation |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | First year annual kW gross in Disadvantaged Communities                                   | Indicators  |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | First year annual kW net in Disadvantaged Communities                                     |   |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | First year annual kWh gross in Disadvantaged Communities                                  |   |           |             |             |             |
| I                   | First year annual kWh net in Disadvantaged Communities                                    |   |           |             |             |             |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| I | First year annual Therm gross in Disadvantaged Communities | Indicators   |
| I | First year annual Therm net in Disadvantaged Communities   |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kW gross in Disadvantaged Communities    |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kW net in Disadvantaged Communities      |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kWh gross in Disadvantaged Communities   |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kWh net in Disadvantaged Communities     |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante Therm gross in Disadvantaged Communities |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante Therm net in Disadvantaged Communities   |  |
| M | % customer participants in Hard-to-Reach Markets           | TBD based on further coordination with CPUC/CAEECC Equity Metrics WG. Programs will target 50-75% total Equity-targeted participation. |
| I | First year annual kW gross in Hard-to-Reach Markets        | Indicators   |
| I | First year annual kW net in Hard-to-Reach Markets          |  |
| I | First year annual kWh gross in Hard-to-Reach Markets       |  |
| I | First year annual kWh net in Hard-to-Reach Markets         |  |
| I | First year annual Therm gross in Hard-to-Reach Markets     |  |
| I | First year annual Therm net in Hard-to-Reach Markets       |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kW gross in Hard-to-Reach Markets        |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kW net in Hard-to-Reach Markets          |  |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kWh gross in Hard-to-Reach Markets   | Indicatorst  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kWh net in Hard-to-Reach Markets     |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante Therm gross in Hard-to-Reach Markets |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante Therm net in Hard-to-Reach Markets   |  |
| I | % customer participants in Underserved Markets         | TBD based on further coordination with CPUC/CAEECC Equity Metrics WG. Programs will target 50-75% total Equity-targeted participation  |
| I | First year annual kW gross in Underserved Markets      | Indicators   |
| I | First year annual kW net in Underserved Markets        |  |
| I | First year annual kWh gross in Underserved Markets     |  |
| M | % customer participants in Hard-to-Reach Markets       | TBD based on further coordination with CPUC/CAEECC Equity Metrics WG. Programs will target 50-75% total Equity-targeted participation. |
| I | First year annual kWh net in Underserved Markets       | Indicators   |
| I | First year annual Therm gross in Underserved Markets   |  |
| I | First year annual Therm net in Underserved Markets     |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kW gross in Underserved Markets      |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kW net in Underserved Markets        |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kWh gross in Underserved Markets     |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante kWh net in Underserved Markets       |  |
| I | Lifecycle ex-ante Therm gross in Underserved Markets   |  |

|      |   |  |
|------|---|--|
| I    | Lifecycle ex-ante Therm net in Underserved Markets  | Indicators   |
| I    | PAC Levelized Cost (\$/kW)  |  |
| I    | PAC Levelized Cost (\$/kWh)   |  |
| I    | PAC Levelized Cost (\$/therm)   |  |
| I    | TRC Levelized Cost (\$/kW)  |  |
| I    | TRC Levelized Cost (\$/kWh)   |  |
| I    | TRC Levelized Cost (\$/therm)   |  |
| M    | Total # of contractors/workers served by Equity Segment Programs  | TBD based on further coordination with CPUC/CAEECC Equity Metrics WG. Programs will target 50-75% total Equity-targeted participation. |
| M, I | Total # and % of contractors and/or workers that are disadvantaged workers or otherwise underrepresented, who are directly involved in implementing Equity Segment programs |  |
| M, I | Total # and % of companies/ non-profits who are Diverse Business Enterprises or otherwise underrepresented with contracts to implement Equity Segment programs              |  |
| I    | Expected first-year bill savings in total \$ for equity-targeted program participants   |  |
| I    | GHG reductions (tons) - EquityAll   |  |
| I    | GHG reductions (tons) - EquityDAC   |  |
| I    | GHG reductions (tons) - EquityHTR   |  |
| I    | GHG reductions (tons) - EquityUnderserved   |  |
| I    | Total kWh savings - EquityAll   |  |

|  |  |            |
|--|--|------------|
|  | Total kWh savings - EquityDAC  | Indicators |
|  | Total kWh savings - EquityHTR  |            |
|  | Total kWh savings -EquityUnderserved   |            |
|  | Total kW savings - EquityAll   |            |
|  | Total kW savings - EquityDAC   |            |
|  | Total kW savings - EquityHTR   |            |
|  | Total kW savings - EquityUnderserved   |            |
|  | Total Therm savings - EquityAll  |            |
|  | Total Therm savings - EquityDAC  |            |
|  | Total Therm savings - EquityHTR  |            |
|  | Total Therm savings - EquityUnderserved  |            |
|  | Community engagement activities during program implementation  |            |
|  | Energy and climate benefits (monetized within TSB)   |            |
|  | Health – “non-energy benefits” in “counts of participants receiving this benefit” until we can monetize. Reporting at least one of: Indoor air quality, Outdoor air quality (e.g., reduction in emissions from gas combustion appliances that vent to nearby outdoor air), Reduction in interior contaminants/biologics, other | Indicators |
|  | Comfort - “non-energy benefits” in “counts of participants receiving this benefit” until we can monetize. Reporting at least one of: reduced drafts, quieter interior, managed interior temp, other  |            |



|   |   |            |
|---|---|------------|
| I | Safety -"non-energy benefits" in "counts of participants receiving this benefit" until we can monetize. Reporting at least one of: improved safety of appliances, other | Indicators |
| I | Economic or other "non-energy benefits" (as proposed by the PAs or program) in dollars or "counts of participants receiving this benefit" until we can monetize         |            |

TABLE 27

## PORTFOLIO STRATEGIES

STRATEGY FOR APPLICATION/USE OF VARIOUS AND NEW METHODS FOR SAVINGS FORECASTING AND QUANTIFICATION METHODS (E.G. NORMALIZED METERED ENERGY CONSUMPTION INCLUDING REQUIREMENTS IN PUBLIC UTILITIES CODE SECTION 25310 (C)(5))

In its initial five-year portfolio, the RuralREN will use the deemed methodology for savings forecasting and quantification. This is appropriate given the equity-focused residential and small business incentive strategy of its Resource Acquisition programs, and the limited past participation in energy efficiency programs within this customer sector in rural regions. Over time, the RuralREN will explore the feasibility of using NMEC methods at either a site-or population-level to forecast and quantify energy savings and TSB.

STRATEGY FOR INCORPORATING LOW GLOBAL WARMING POTENTIAL (LOW-GWP) REFRIGERANTS IN THE PORTFOLIO

Low GWP refrigerants will be incorporated in the portfolio as described below in Table 28.

### Strategies for Incorporating Low GWP Refrigerants in the Portfolio

| Portfolio Sector/Program                  | Low GWP Refrigerant Strategy   |
|---|--|
| <b>Codes &amp; Standards</b>              | Provide information to building code officials, contractors, and designers about CFC phase out and low GWP refrigerant benefits code requirements    |
| <b>Workforce Education &amp; Training</b> | Provide information to WET participants about CFC phase out and low GWP refrigerant benefits and code requirements                                   |
| <b>Residential and Commercial</b>         | Incorporate LGWP spec for rebated equipment (such as HVAC heat pumps, HPWHs; Low GWP Refrigerant information incorporated in audit reports           |
| <b>Public</b>                             | Low GWP Refrigerant information incorporated in audit reports  |
| <b>Finance</b>                            | Minimum technical requirements for financed equipment (such as HVAC heat pumps, HPWHs; Low GWP Refrigerant information incorporated in audit reports |

**TABLE 28**

### NEW STRATEGIES FOR SPURRING INNOVATION

The RuralREN will incorporate strategies to spur innovation throughout its portfolio, consistent with our key business principles related to equity, customer focus, and collaboration, as well as our primary goals. Table 29 below describes these strategies.

### Strategies for Spurring Innovation

| Innovation Channel/Opportunity                                   | RREN Supporting Strategy  |
|--|---|
| <b>New, Diverse Business Entrants to EE Market</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contracting opportunities with RREN emphasize diversity, green economy</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Traditional Actors (Businesses) Moving Into EE Market</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ WET upskilling</li> <li>▪ Build awareness of EE business model in other markets</li> <li>▪ Contracting opportunities for EE program implementation scope</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Increase Adoption of New/Evolving GHG Reducing Technology</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Res and SMB Sector Electrification Audit recommendations, incentives and financing</li> <li>▪ Collaborate with Statewide Emerging Technologies Program to deploy new GHG technologies at rural customer sites</li> <li>▪ Leverage non-EE funding for Electrification and GHG RDD to test or deploy new GHG technologies at rural customer sites</li> </ul> |

**TABLE 29**

## STRATEGIES FOR MARKET INTERVENTION AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY ADOPTION

The RuralREN will deploy multiple strategies for market intervention and energy efficiency adoption. Strategies have been selected to address common barriers to energy efficiency adoption and tailored to the rural markets to be served within each sector. Strategies incorporate equity principles and needs throughout the portfolio. In future years, the portfolio strategies will increasingly emphasize equity, resilience, grid management and GHG reduction. Table 30 below summarizes barriers and intervention strategies by sector.

**RREN Portfolio Market Intervention Strategies**

| Sector/<br>Program                  | Common Barrier<br>Addressed  | Intervention   | Delivery<br>Channels   | Platforms/<br>Methods   | Future<br>Enhancements   |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Commercial<br/>(SMB)</b>         | -Lack of<br>information<br>-First cost<br>Split incentive                          | -Downstream<br>-Energy audits<br>-Rebates<br>-Financing  | -Direct to<br>customers<br>-Trade Allies<br>-Community<br>Support                  | Deemed<br>Savings   | -Grid/TOU<br>management<br>-NMEC<br>readiness  |
| <b>CC-Codes &amp;<br/>Standards</b> | -Understanding<br>of codes<br>-Public agency<br>resources<br>stretched too<br>thin | -Training of<br>building<br>officials<br>and design,<br>construction<br>teams<br>-Energy<br>Coaches to<br>support code<br>enforcement<br>staff | -Direct to<br>public staff,<br>design and<br>construction<br>teams                 | Education &<br>Training Energy<br>Coaches   | Electrification<br>technologies<br>Renewable<br>integration<br>Grid/Load<br>Management |
| <b>CC-Finance</b>                   | -First cost  | -OBF Bridge<br>Loans<br>-Microloans<br>-Electrification  | -Direct to<br>customers<br>-Trade Allies<br>-Energy<br>Advisors                    | -Revolving loan<br>fund<br>-No/low<br>interest<br>-Flexible terms                   | -On bill<br>repayment  |
| <b>CC-WE&amp;T</b>                  | -Availability of<br>skilled trades   | -Training for<br>disadvantaged<br>youth and<br>upskilling for<br>trade workers   | -Community-<br>based<br>organizations<br>-Third party<br>training<br>organizations | -Proven training<br>methods and<br>curriculum<br>-Equity-<br>targeted<br>candidates | -Renewable<br>DG training  |
| <b>Public</b>                       | -Resources/<br>Staffing  | -Benchmarking<br>-Audits<br>-CIP integration<br>-Project<br>implementation<br>support<br>(EE, DR, EV<br>charging)                              | -Energy Advisors   | -Deemed,<br>custom<br>-Shared<br>database/EMIS                                      | -NMEC<br>-Renewable DG<br>and storage<br>support                                       |
| <b>Residential<br/>(SF)</b>         | -First Cost<br>-Hassle factor<br>-Information                                      | -Virtual and<br>remote audits<br>(EE, DR, EV<br>charging)<br>-Energy Advisor<br>support<br>-Rebates<br>-Financing                              | -Downstream<br>-Trade Allies<br>-Community<br>Based<br>Organizations               | -Deemed<br>Savings  | -NMEC<br>-Resilience<br>measures   |

**TABLE 30**

## APPLICATION SUMMARY TABLES COVERING THE FIVE-YEAR BUDGET REQUEST

### ANNUAL BUDGET REQUEST OVER FIVE YEARS

The RuralREN's annual budget request for the period 2023-2027 is shown in Table 31 below. As a new REN, the RuralREN is requesting a five-year budget approval starting in 2023 in order to begin implementation in 2023.

#### Annual Budget, 2023 – 2027

| Budget Category                              | 2023         | 2024         | 2025         | 2026         | 2027         | Total        |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Administration</b>                        | \$993,728    | \$1,702,930  | \$1,791,788  | \$1,843,626  | \$1,845,662  | \$8,177,734  |
| <b>Marketing and Outreach</b>                | \$596,237    | \$1,021,758  | \$1,075,073  | \$1,106,175  | \$1,107,397  | \$4,906,640  |
| <b>Direct Implementation - Non-Incentive</b> | \$9,723,901  | \$16,410,481 | \$16,859,730 | \$17,009,258 | \$16,932,070 | \$76,935,440 |
| <b>Direct Implementation - Incentive</b>     | \$213,379    | \$618,815    | \$1,058,153  | \$1,426,997  | \$1,524,555  | \$4,841,899  |
| <b>EMV</b>                                   | \$121,036    | \$207,417    | \$218,240    | \$224,554    | \$224,802    | \$996,048    |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | \$11,648,281 | \$19,961,401 | \$21,002,983 | \$21,610,610 | \$21,634,486 | \$95,857,761 |

TABLE 31

### DISTRIBUTION OF EFFORT (BUDGET) ACROSS SEGMENTS AND SECTORS

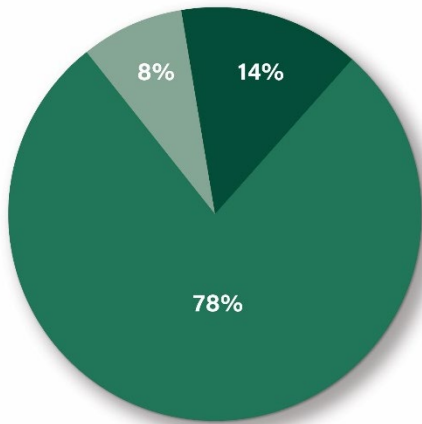
#### Distribution of 2023-2027 Budget by Sector

| Sector                            | Portfolio Segment    |                |              | Total        |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
|                                   | Resource Acquisition | Market Support | Equity       |              |
| <b>Commercial</b>                 | \$5,459,032          | \$0            | \$0          | \$5,459,032  |
| <b>CC - Finance</b>               | \$0                  | \$0            | \$17,026,311 | \$17,026,311 |
| <b>CC - WE&amp;T</b>              | \$0                  | \$0            | \$23,522,282 | \$23,522,282 |
| <b>CC - Codes &amp; Standards</b> | \$0                  | \$7,395,202    | \$0          | \$7,395,202  |
| <b>Public</b>                     | \$0                  | \$0            | \$2,776,345  | \$2,776,345  |
| <b>Residential</b>                | \$8,286,107          | \$0            | \$30,396,434 | \$38,682,541 |
| <b>EMV</b>                        | \$144,324            | \$77,650       | \$774,074    | \$996,048    |
| <b>Total</b>                      | \$13,889,463         | \$7,472,852    | \$74,495,446 | \$95,857,761 |

TABLE 32

**RREN 2023-2027 Budget Allocation by Segment**

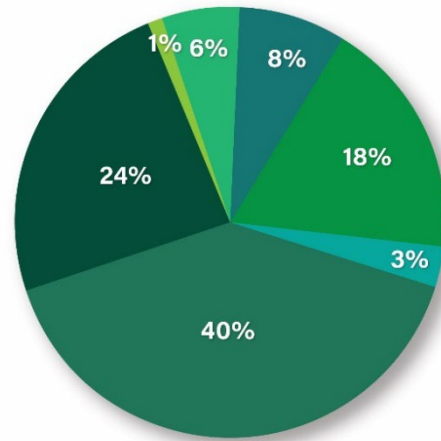
Resource Acquisition Equity Market Support



**FIGURE 14**

**RREN 2023-2027 Budget Allocation by Sector**

Residential WE&T EM&V Commercial  
Codes & Standards Finance Public



**FIGURE 15**

FOR ALL SEGMENTS: PROJECTED SECTOR-LEVEL AND PORTFOLIO-LEVEL COST EFFECTIVENESS  
(TOTAL RESOURCE COST AND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR COST)

**Portfolio, Segment and Sector Level Cost Effectiveness**

| Portfolio/Segment/Sector                         | TRC, no Admin | TRC, w Admin | PAC, no Admin | PAC, w/ Admin |
|--|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Portfolio</b>                                 | 1.08          | 0.06         | 1.17          | 0.06          |
| <b>Resource Acquisition Segment</b>              | 1.08          | 0.42         | 1.17          | 0.43          |
| <b>Residential Sector</b>                        | 0.6           | 0.24         | 0.61          | 0.24          |
| <b>Commercial Sector</b>                         | 1.92          | 0.7          | 2.28          | 0.74          |
| <b>Market Support Segment</b>                    | 0             | 0            | 0             | 0             |
| <b>Codes &amp; Standards Sector</b>              | 0             | 0            | 0             | 0             |
| <b>Equity Segment</b>                            | 0             | 0            | 0             | 0             |
| <b>Workforce Education &amp; Training Sector</b> | 0             | 0            | 0             | 0             |
| <b>Residential Sector</b>                        | 0             | 0            | 0             | 0             |
| <b>Public Sector</b>                             | 0             | 0            | 0             | 0             |
| <b>Finance Sector</b>                            | 0             | 0            | 0             | 0             |

**TABLE 33**



FOR RESOURCE ACQUISITION SEGMENT: FORECASTED PROGRAM-, SECTOR-, AND PORTFOLIO-LEVEL COST EFFECTIVENESS OVER FIVE-YEAR PERIOD

**Resource Acquisition Segment Cost Effectiveness**

| Portfolio/Segment/Sector               | TRC, no Admin | TRC, w Admin | PAC, no Admin | PAC, w/ Admin |
|--|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Segment: Resource Acquisition</b>   | 1.08          | 0.42         | 1.17          | 0.43          |
| <b>Sector: Residential</b>             | 0.6           | 0.05         | 0.61          | 0.05          |
| <b>Program: Residential Incentives</b> | 0.6           | 0.24         | 0.61          | 0.24          |
| <b>Sector: Commercial</b>              | 1.92          | 0.7          | 2.28          | 0.74          |
| <b>Program: SMB Incentives</b>         | 1.92          | 0.7          | 2.28          | 0.74          |

**TABLE 34**

FOR ALL SEGMENTS: FORECASTED ANNUAL PROGRAM-, SECTOR-, AND PORTFOLIO-LEVEL TOTAL SYSTEM BENEFIT (TSB), KILOWATT-HOURS, KILOWATTS, THERMS, AND CO<sub>2</sub>E.

**TSB and Energy Savings**

| Portfolio/Segment/Sector            | TSB, \$     | kWh, net   | kW, net | Therms, net | CO <sub>2</sub> e, tons |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------|---------|-------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Portfolio</b>                    | \$5,410,281 | 14,091,820 | 194     | 63,786      | 3,572                   |
| <b>Resource Acquisition Segment</b> | \$5,410,281 | 14,091,820 | 194     | 63,786      | 3,572                   |
| <b>Residential Sector</b>           | \$1,368,685 | 4,115,269  | 120     | 28,586      | 986                     |
| <b>Commercial Sector</b>            | \$4,041,595 | 9,976,551  | 74      | 35,200      | 2,585                   |
| <b>Market Support Segment</b>       | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0                       |
| <b>Codes &amp; Standards Sector</b> | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0                       |
| <b>Equity Segment</b>               | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0                       |
| <b>WE&amp;T Sector</b>              | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0                       |
| <b>Residential Sector</b>           | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0                       |
| <b>Public Sector</b>                | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0                       |
| <b>Finance Sector</b>               | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0                       |

**TABLE 35**

### INCLUDE COMPARISON OF PROJECTED TSB TO ADOPTED TSB GOALS

The total projected TSB of the RuralREN's five-year (2023-2027) portfolio is \$5,410,281. In comparison to the adopted TSB goal for all of California, which is almost two billion dollars<sup>57</sup>, RuralREN's contribution is small, due to its relatively small fraction of the total California energy efficiency budget, and because its portfolio appropriately focuses on providing much-needed non-resource equity and market support services to rural hard-to-reach customers. While our resource acquisition segment programs fill a gap in regions not well served by other resource acquisition programs, our non-resource programs support other programs in achieving TSB benefits. For example, our Residential Equity program will provide customers with actionable information about how to deal with TOU rates, why they help reduce GHG emissions, and what strategies and technologies can be used to help, including RuralREN and IOU residential resource acquisition program. Our Finance program will help customers equip their homes and businesses to reduce GHG emissions and energy use.

### FORECAST METHODOLOGY

See attached files "Exhibit Four: RuralREN Responses, Pursuant To Energy Division Templates"

### PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS FROM 2023 PORTFOLIO DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS (E.G., CATEGORIZATION CHANGES OR SIGNIFICANT BUDGET SHIFTS), NEW PROGRAMS AND DISCONTINUATION OF EXISTING PROGRAMS FROM CURRENT PORTFOLIO

As a new PA, the RuralREN's proposed portfolio is all new as described in this Business Plan/Application, thus there are no program modifications to describe.

### PORTFOLIO ADMINISTRATION VS PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

The RuralREN's proposed budget conforms to the CPUC-mandated 10% limit on Portfolio Administration costs. See attached files "Exhibit Four: RuralREN Responses, Pursuant To Energy Division Templates" for a detailed showing and justification for each year of the RuralREN's proposed five-year portfolio budget.

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<sup>57</sup> D.21-09-037, p.19-21

## SEGMENTATION STRATEGY

### STRATEGIES DRIVING DISTRIBUTION OF BUDGET AMONG SEGMENTS AND ALIGNMENT WITH BROADER PORTFOLIO OBJECTIVES

Table 36 and Figure 16 show the distribution of the 2023 – 2027 budget by segment. Strategies driving distribution of the budget and alignment with broader portfolio objectives are described below.

**Equity** – A large portion of the RuralREN's customer base falls into one or more of the CPUC's three Equity-Targeted categories of hard-to-reach, underserved or disadvantaged. The RuralREN's vision and goals focus on bringing energy efficiency programs and services to this rural customer base. Appropriately 78% of our total proposed budget is allocated to the Equity segment to fund outreach and education, incentives, financing and workforce education and training to rural communities.

**Resource Acquisition** – The RuralREN is proposing two Resource Acquisition programs serving the Commercial (SMB) and Residential sectors. While we've classified these programs as primarily Resource Acquisition strategies, they will substantially target hard-to-reach, disadvantaged and underserved participants consistent with the RuralREN's equity objectives. Our proposed budget allocation for the Resource Acquisition segment is 14%.

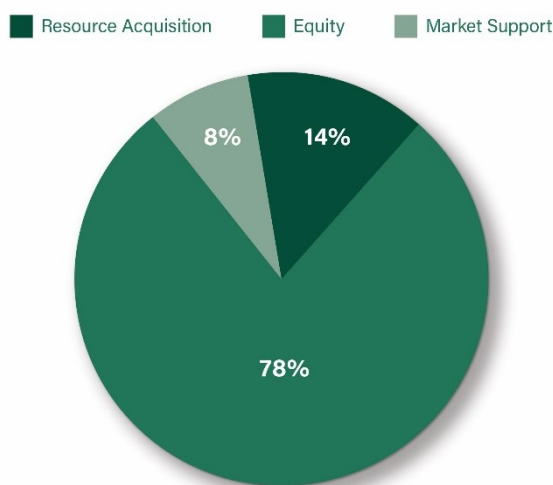
**Market Support** – The RuralREN is allocating 8% of its portfolio budget to the Market Support segment. This allocation aligns with the RuralREN's main objectives to increase the efficiency of buildings and to equip code enforcement agencies in rural hard-to-reach areas to comply with energy codes through our Codes and Standards program. The budget reflects the market size for the service over the five-year cycle.

**Codes and Standards** – The RuralREN includes our Codes and Standards program in the Market Support segment.

**Allocation of Budget by Segment (5 Year Budget)**

|                             |                     |            |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|------------|
| <b>Resource Acquisition</b> | <b>\$13,745,140</b> | <b>14%</b> |
| <b>Market Support</b>       | <b>\$7,395,202</b>  | <b>8%</b>  |
| <b>Equity</b>               | <b>\$73,721,371</b> | <b>78%</b> |
| <b>Total w/o EM&amp;V</b>   | <b>\$94,861,714</b> |            |
| EM&V                        | \$996,048           |            |
| <b>Total w/ EM&amp;V</b>    | <b>\$95,857,762</b> |            |

**RREN 2023-2027 Budget Allocation by Segment**



**TABLE 36**

**FIGURE 16**

## RESOURCE ACQUISITION

### *PRELIMINARY RESUOURCE ACQUISITION BUDGET FOR 2023-2027, AND RATIONALE FOR THE DISTRIBUTION*

The Resource Acquisition segment budget is \$13,745,140, which is 14% of the total RuralREN proposed five-year budget. This budget is further divided among the Residential and Commercial Sectors as shown in Table 37 below. Resource Acquisition programs are offered only in the North Coast and Sierra regions of the RuralREN territory. While Resource Acquisition segment is not a primary emphasis for RuralREN, residential and SMB sectors in these regions continue to need access to incentive programs for comprehensive retrofits because these are the most remote regions in California and thus are “end of the line” for other programs, third-party implementers, and trade allies. Once RuralREN is established and operating, we will reassess the need for Resource Acquisition programs in each region and adjust segment and sector budgets accordingly.

#### **Resource Acquisition Segment Budget**

| <b>Sector</b>      | <b>2023</b> | <b>2024</b> | <b>2025</b> | <b>2026</b> | <b>2027</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Residential</b> | \$589,849   | \$1,147,168 | \$1,697,368 | \$2,362,202 | \$2,489,518 | \$8,286,105  |
| <b>Commercial</b>  | \$400,329   | \$954,842   | \$1,226,927 | \$1,450,222 | \$1,426,712 | \$5,459,032  |
| <b>Total</b>       | \$990,179   | \$2,102,011 | \$2,924,295 | \$3,812,425 | \$3,916,230 | \$13,745,140 |

**TABLE 37**

## RESOURCE ACQUISITION SEGMENT-SPECIFIC STRATEGIES, GOALS, AND OUTCOMES

### Resource Acquisition Segment Strategies, Goals, Outcomes

| Strategy   | Goals  | Outcomes  |
|--|--|---|
| Incentives for Residential EE and electrification measures | Residential customers implement energy efficiency and electrification measures in their homes. | Residential customers save energy and reduce GHG emissions, and reduce their energy bills                                   |
| Incentives for SMB electrification measures                | Customers upgrade their homes and businesses   | Small and medium business owners save energy and reduce GHG emissions, reduce their O&M costs and improve their bottom line |

TABLE 38

## RESOURCE ACQUISITION PORTFOLIO AND SECTOR LEVEL METRICS

### Resource Acquisition Segment Metrics - Residential Sector

| Metric or Indicator | Metric/Indicator Description   | 2023     | 2024      | 2025      | 2026      | 2027      |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| M                   | Total System Benefit (TSB), \$ | \$56,309 | \$154,483 | \$265,482 | \$412,927 | \$479,483 |
| M                   | GHG Reduction, ex ante, net    | 40       | 125       | 200       | 296       | 325       |
| M                   | kWh Savings, ex ante, net      | 196,092  | 541,759   | 840,160   | 1,206,802 | 1,330,456 |
| M                   | KW Savings, ex ante, net       | 4        | 11        | 24        | 38        | 43        |
| M                   | Therm Savings, ex ante, net    | 662      | 2,575     | 5,451     | 9,408     | 10,490    |

TABLE 40

### Resource Acquisition Segment Metrics - Commercial Sector

| Metric or Indicator | Metric/Indicator Description   | 2023      | 2024      | 2025      | 2026        | 2027        |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
| M                   | Total System Benefit (TSB), \$ | \$132,352 | \$563,827 | \$912,709 | \$1,170,188 | \$1,262,519 |
| M                   | GHG Reduction, ex ante, net    | 122       | 392       | 597       | 728         | 747         |
| M                   | kWh Savings, ex ante, net      | 528,879   | 1,465,701 | 2,300,318 | 2,814,723   | 2,866,929   |
| M                   | KW Savings, ex ante, net       | 5         | 11        | 19        | 19          | 19          |
| M                   | Therm Savings, ex ante, net    | 3,282     | 6,543     | 7,668     | 8,541       | 9,166       |

TABLE 39



### RESOURCE ACQUISITION SEGMENT COORDINATION

The RuralREN will coordinate its Resource Acquisition segment strategies as necessary with IOUs, third-party programs and other RENs to avoid potential overlap/competition among programs, and wherever possible, will collaborate to increase customer participation in all programs in the region, to streamline delivery and enhance the customer experience. As a member of the CAEECC Coordinating Committee and CAEECC Working Groups on Underserved, Composition, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Market Support Metrics, Equity Metrics, and the EE Filing Process, the RuralREN representatives will continue to work collaboratively with all Program Administrators and stakeholders to improve coordination and effectiveness of California's energy efficiency policies and programs. Sector level (and program level) coordination needs are discussed in the Sector Strategy section of this document.

### CODES AND STANDARDS

See Market Support Segment for the RuralREN Cross-Cutting Codes and Standards Sector/Program Details

### MARKET SUPPORT SEGMENT

#### PRELIMINARY MARKET SUPPORT BUDGET FOR 2023-2027, AND RATIONALE FOR THE DISTRIBUTION

Table 41 shows RuralREN's proposed Market Support segment budget for 2023 – 2027. The proposed budget is \$7,395,202, which is 8% of the total RuralREN proposed budget. All of the Market Support budget is allocated to the RuralREN's Codes and Standards program. The Codes and Standards program will provide support to the local rural building officials and building design and construction industry to aid in understanding of and compliance with energy codes.

#### Market Support Budget

| Sector              | 2023        | 2024        | 2025        | 2026        | 2027        | Total       |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Codes and Standards | \$1,098,338 | \$1,442,036 | \$1,498,271 | \$1,620,119 | \$1,736,439 | \$7,395,203 |
| Total               | \$1,098,338 | \$1,442,036 | \$1,498,271 | \$1,620,119 | \$1,736,43  | \$7,395,203 |

TABLE 41

## MARKET SUPPORT STRATEGIES, GOALS, AND OUTCOMES

### Market Support Segment Strategies, Goals, Outcomes

| Strategy  | Goals   | Outcomes   |
|---|---|--|
| Training for code enforcement officials                     | Increase code compliance  | The majority of permits issued comply with energy codes  |
| Training for building design and construction professionals | Increase understanding and support compliance of design and construction of projects                        | Increased energy code compliance of design and construction first time through, without rework |
| Technical support for code enforcement officials            | Provide resources to support local code authorities review and approval of building design and construction | Increased accuracy and reduced turnaround time of energy code compliance checks                |

TABLE 42

## MARKET SUPPORT PROJECTED ANNUAL PORTFOLIO AND SECTOR-LEVEL METRICS

### Market Support Segment - Portfolio and Sector Level Metrics - Codes and Standards Sector

| Metric or Indicator | Metric/Indicator Description  | 2023   | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|---------------------|---|--|------|------|------|------|
| M                   | Number of training activities (classes, webinars) held, number of market actors participants by segment (e.g. building officials, builders, architects, etc.) and the total size (number of the target audience) by sector. (M) Number of training activities | TBD after award of contract to implementation consultant |      |      |      |      |
| M                   | Number of training activities (classes, webinars) held, number of market actors participants by segment (e.g. building officials, builders, architects, etc.) and the total size (number of the target audience) by sector. (M) Number of participants        |  |      |      |      |      |
| M                   | Increase in code compliance knowledge pre/post training   |  |      |      |      |      |
| M                   | The percentage increase in closed permits for building projects triggering energy code compliance within participating jurisdictions  |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Number and percent of jurisdictions with staff participating in an Energy Policy Forum  |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Number and percent of jurisdictions with staff participating in an Energy Policy Forum  |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Number and percent of jurisdictions receiving Energy Policy technical assistance  |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Number and percent of jurisdictions receiving Energy Policy technical assistance  |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Buildings receiving enhanced code compliance support and delivering compliance data to program evaluators   |  |      |      |      |      |

TABLE 43

### *MARKET SUPPORT SEGMENT COORDINATION*

The RuralREN will coordinate its Market Support segment strategies as necessary with IOUs, third-party programs or other RENs to avoid potential overlap/competition among programs, and wherever possible, will collaborate to increase participation in all programs in the region to streamline delivery and enhance the customer experience. As a member of the CAEECC Coordinating Committee and CAEECC Working Groups on Underserved, Composition, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Market Support Metrics, Equity Metrics, Market Transformation, and the EE Filing Process, the RuralREN representatives will continue to work collaboratively with all Program Administrators and stakeholders to improve coordination and effectiveness of California's energy efficiency policies and programs. Sector level (and program level) coordination needs are discussed in the Sector Strategy section of this document.

### *MARKET SUPPORT SEGMENT INTERACTION WITH MARKET TRANSFORMATION ACTIVITIES*

When specific activities or Market Transformation Initiatives of the CPUC's Market Transformation program are underway, the RuralREN will be prepared to participate in their planning and operation to ensure coordination. We anticipate there may be coordination opportunities in electrification strategies, codes and standards, workforce development, and NMEC applications.

## *EQUITY*

### *PRELIMINARY EQUITY SEGMENT BUDGET FOR 2023-2027, AND RATIONALE FOR THE DISTRIBUTION*

The proposed Equity segment budget is shown in Table 44. Consistent with the RuralREN's Vision and primary goals, providing EE services to Equity-targeted customers and communities is our highest priority and thus, budget focus. A large portion of the RuralREN's customer base falls into one or more of the CPUC's three Equity-Targeted categories of hard-to-reach, underserved or disadvantaged. Appropriately, 78% of our total proposed budget is allocated to the Equity segment to fund outreach and education, incentives, financing and workforce education and training to rural communities.

## Equity Segment Budget

| Sector             | 2023        | 2024         | 2025         | 2026         | 2027         | Total        |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Residential</b> | \$3,062,112 | \$6,827,84   | \$6,752,967  | \$6,861,939  | \$6,891,566  | \$30,396,433 |
| <b>Public</b>      | \$546,903   | \$578,553    | \$581,413    | \$534,954    | \$534,522    | \$2,776,345  |
| <b>CC-Finance</b>  | \$2,867,047 | \$3,695,941  | \$3,889,106  | \$3,406,666  | \$3,167,551  | \$17,026,311 |
| <b>CC-WE&amp;T</b> | \$2,962,667 | \$5,107,594  | \$5,138,691  | \$5,149,953  | \$5,163,377  | \$23,522,282 |
| <b>Total</b>       | \$9,438,729 | \$16,209,937 | \$16,362,177 | \$15,953,512 | \$15,757,016 | \$73,721,371 |

TABLE 45

## EQUITY SEGMENT STRATEGIES, GOALS, AND OUTCOMES

### Equity Strategies, Goals, and Outcomes

| Strategy                               | Goals   | Outcomes   |
|--|---|--|
| P1: Residential Outreach and Education | Rural HTR and equity-targeted customers understand energy usage information and act on energy saving recommendations  | Residents and businesses implement energy savings upgrades in RREN and IOU Resource Acquisition programs   |
| P2: Financing for energy upgrades      | Rural HTR and equity-targeted customers use financing to pay for energy upgrades in their homes and businesses  | Energy and GHG emissions are reduced<br>Rural communities become more resilient  |
| P3: Workforce Training                 | Equity-targeted rural youth and disadvantaged workers learn clean energy job skills   | Capacity for energy improvements is increased in the region  |
| P4: Public Agency EE Support           | Rural public agencies have the technical information and support to undertake energy efficiency projects, including support for financing and incentives needed to do EE projects | Public agencies in rural areas implement EE projects, save energy and reduce GHG emissions, reduce O&M costs, and provide showcase opportunities for the local community |

TABLE 44

## EQUITY SEGMENT PORTFOLIO- AND SECTOR-LEVEL METRICS

### Equity Segment - Finance Sector Metrics

| Metric or Indicator | Metric/Indicator Description  | 2023   | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|---------------------|---|--|------|------|------|------|
| I                   | Total projects completed/measures installed and dollar value of consolidated projects[1]  | Track Only   |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Differential of cost defrayed from customers (e.g., difference between comparable market rate products and program products)                                      |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | % of market participants aware of capital access opportunities for investments in energy efficient projects, products, and/or services (awareness)                |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | % of market participants knowledgeable about capital access opportunities for investments in energy efficient projects, products, and/or services (knowledge)     |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | % of market participants interested in leveraging capital access opportunities for investments in energy efficient projects, products, and/or services (attitude) |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | % of market participants that were unable to take action due to access to capital or affordability of energy efficient projects, products, or services (behavior) |  |      |      |      |      |
| M                   | Total # residential (SF or MF unit) equity-targeted households (HHs) served by the Equity programs  | Metrics TBD after award of program design contract |      |      |      |      |
| M                   | Total # equity-targeted public facilities and equipment or community projects served by the Equity programs   |  |      |      |      |      |
| M                   | Total # small and medium business (SMB) equity-targeted participants served by the Equity programs  |  |      |      |      |      |
| M                   | Total # of companies/non-profits served by the Equity Segment programs  |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Expected first-year bill savings in total \$ for equity-targeted program participants   | Track Only   |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Number of project feasibility analyses performed by Energy Coach  |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Number of loan applications submitted   |  |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | % of loans successfully repaid, on-time and in-full   |  |      |      |      |      |

TABLE 46



#### Equity Segment - Public Sector Metrics

| Metric or Indicator | Metric/Indicator Description  | 2023       | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|---------------------|---|------------|------|------|------|------|
| M                   | Equity-targeted public facilities and equipment or community projects served by the Equity programs | 7          | 10   | 15   | 20   | 20   |
| I                   | Expected first-year bill savings in total \$ for equity-targeted program participants               | Track Only |      |      |      |      |
| M                   | Public Agencies Participating in Program  | 10         | 15   | 20   | 25   | 25   |
| M                   | ERRs and Benchmarking Reports Completed/Delivered   | 5          | 10   | 15   | 20   | 25   |
| M                   | Public Agencies Utilizing Database  | 5          | 8    | 10   | 15   | 20   |
| M                   | Public Buildings benchmarked  | 10         | 20   | 20   | 40   | 40   |
| M                   | Energy Audits Conducted Annually  | 5          | 15   | 20   | 25   | 25   |
| M                   | Projects referred to other programs   | 5          | 15   | 20   | 20   | 30   |
| I                   | kWh savings referred to other programs (or implemented)   | Track Only |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | kW savings referred to other programs (or implemented)  |            |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | Therm savings referred to other programs (or implemented)   |            |      |      |      |      |
| I                   | GHG reductions referred to other programs (or implemented)  |            |      |      |      |      |

TABLE 47

#### Equity Segment - Residential Sector Metrics

| Metric or Indicator | Metric/Indicator Description  | 2023       | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|---------------------|---|------------|------|------|------|------|
| M                   | Percent of total residential (SF or MF unit) equity-targeted households (HHs) served by the Equity programs | 70         | 70   | 70   | 70   | 70   |
| I                   | Expected first-year bill savings in total \$ for equity-targeted program participants (metric)              | Track Only |      |      |      |      |
| M                   | In person outreach events conducted   | 50         | 65   | 75   | 75   | 75   |
| M                   | Digital media offerings   | 40         | 40   | 40   | 40   | 40   |
| M                   | EE kits distributed   | 575        | 3100 | 3100 | 3100 | 3100 |
| M                   | In-home energy audits conducted   | 800        | 950  | 1000 | 1150 | 1150 |
| M                   | Online energy audits conducted  | 25         | 150  | 300  | 500  | 800  |

TABLE 48

#### Equity Segment - Workforce, Education and Training Sector Metrics

| Metric or Indicator                                | Metric/Indicator Description   | 2023   | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 |
|--|--|--|------|------|------|------|
| M  | Number of collaborations by Business Plan sector to jointly develop or share training materials or resources                       | TBD after award of WE&T implementation contracts |      |      |      |      |
| M  | Number of participants by sector   |  |      |      |      |      |
| M  | Percent of participation relative to eligible target population for curriculum   |  |      |      |      |      |
| M  | Percent of total WE&T training program participants that meet the definition of Disadvantaged Worker                               |  |      |      |      |      |
| M  | Percent of incentive dollars spent on contracts with a demonstrated commitment to provide career pathways to Disadvantaged Workers |  |      |      |      |      |
| M  | Number Career & Workforce Readiness (CWR) participants who have been employed for 12 months after receiving the training           |  |      |      |      |      |
| I  | Number of program participants (students) who meet the definition of Disadvantaged Workers   | Track Only                                       |      |      |      |      |
| M  | Number of CEA cohorts (90 hour) *  | 2  | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    |
| M  | Number of CEA cohorts (120 hour)   | 0  | 2    | 2    | 2    | 2    |
| M  | Number of CEA participants   | 80   | 160  | 160  | 160  | 160  |
| M  | Number of Climate Career Energy Specialists employed   | 45   | 45   | 45   | 45   | 45   |
| M  | Number of Climate Career Offices opened  | 1  | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| *TBD after award of contracts to WE&T implementers |  |  |      |      |      |      |

TABLE 49

#### SEGMENT-SPECIFIC COORDINATION

The RuralREN will coordinate its Equity segment strategies as necessary with IOUs, third-party programs or other RENs to avoid potential overlap/competition among programs, and wherever possible, will collaborate to increase equity-targeted customer participation in all programs in the region to streamline delivery and enhance the customer experience. As a member of the CAEECC Coordinating Committee and CAEECC Working Groups on Underserved, Composition, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Market Support Metrics, Equity Metrics, and the EE Filing Process, the RuralREN representatives will continue to work collaboratively with all Program Administrators and stakeholders to improve coordination and effectiveness of California's energy efficiency policies and programs. Sector level (and

program level) coordination needs are discussed in the Sector Strategy section of this document.

## SECTOR STRATEGY

### STRATEGIES DRIVING DISTRIBUTION OF BUDGET AMONG SECTORS, AND ALIGNMENT WITH BROADER PORTFOLIO OBJECTIVES

Sector budgets are established to achieve overall portfolio goals, which are in turn based on the needs of our rural customer base. Past program participation, equity factors, and current and planned IOU and other PA proposed program offerings in the region helped determine sector focus and level of effort needed. For example, the RuralREN is not proposing to serve the Agriculture Sector because all three of the IOUs have large Resource Acquisition programs that will target the Ag Sector in regions served by RuralREN.

### DESCRIPTION OF SECTORS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR PROPOSES TO SERVE

Table 50 shows the sectors the RuralREN proposes to serve, and the regions where the sector programs will be offered. As shown in the table, not all sectors/programs will be offered in all four RuralREN regions. Our flagship programs are Residential-Equity, Workforce Education and Training, and Finance because we believe we can have the biggest impact on individual customers and rural communities by providing support in the areas of energy burden, jobs, and financial resources.

*Reduce Energy Burden:* We help reduce energy burden by helping customers identify and implement ways to reduce energy consumption, which then creates a more robust pipeline of projects for Resource Programs.

*Increase Employment:* We create opportunities for climate adaptive careers, and we train and provide job placement. We can improve career prospects by offering climate adaptive career training; we can increase career opportunities by driving more project opportunities and sending a pipeline to IOU and third-party Resource Acquisition programs.

*Bring Capital for Energy Efficiency Investments:* We bring needed capital to our rural communities in the form of bridge financing and micro-lending for customers to adopt more comprehensive, costly energy efficiency and decarbonization measures.

The Codes and Standards sector is important because rural counties are notorious for lagging in code compliance, and as more customers migrate from urban and suburban areas to rural areas, new construction and home renovations will increase, placing additional burden on

the demand for knowledgeable code enforcement officials and designers and builders. It is a challenge to achieve Title 24 compliance—we can speed up achievement of decarbonization and energy efficiency goals by taking local action to ensure rural communities aren't unprepared or left behind as they pursue these goals.

The Public program, offered in San Benito, Santa Cruz, Lake and Mendocino counties, fills a gap in service of PG&E's Local Government Partnership programs working in the regions. RuralREN will coordinate with these programs to ensure consistency.

The Commercial and Residential Resource Acquisition programs fill gaps by serving the most remote areas of rural California, continuing and building upon Resource Acquisition programs that have been implemented by RCEA and SBC through their LGPs.

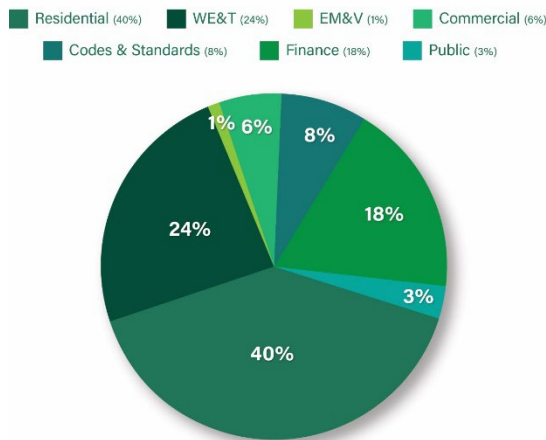
|                                   | Central Coast |     | North Coast | San Joaquin Valley | Sierra |     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----|
|                                   | AMBAG         | SLO | RCEA        | SJVCEO             | HSEF   | SBC |
| <b>Commercial RA</b>              |               |     | ✓           |                    |        | ✓   |
| <b>Residential RA</b>             |               |     | ✓           |                    |        | ✓   |
| <b>Public</b>                     | ✓             |     | ✓*          |                    |        | ✓   |
| <b>Codes &amp; Standards</b>      | ✓             |     | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |
| <b>Finance</b>                    | ✓             | ✓   | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |
| <b>WE&amp;T</b>                   | ✓             |     | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |
| <b>Residential Equity</b>         | ✓             |     | ✓           | ✓                  | ✓      | ✓   |
| *Lake and Mendocino counties only |               |     |             |                    |        |     |

TABLE 50

## PRELIMINARY DISTRIBUTION OF BUDGET AMONG SECTORS FOR 2023-2027, AND RATIONALE FOR THE DISTRIBUTION

Figure X shows the distribution of budget among sectors for 2023 – 2027. Budgets were determined by a combination of factors including the needs and market opportunities within regions and the gaps in services of other PAs being filled as described in the previous sections.

**RREN 2023-2027 Budget Allocation by Sector**



**FIGURE 17**

**Distribution of 2023-2027 Budget by Sector**

| Sector                 | Portfolio Segment    |                |              | Total        |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
|                        | Resource Acquisition | Market Support | Equity       |              |
| Commercial             | \$5,459,032          | \$0            | \$0          | \$5,459,032  |
| CC - Finance           | \$0                  | \$0            | \$17,026,311 | \$17,026,311 |
| CC - WE&T              | \$0                  | \$0            | \$23,522,282 | \$23,522,282 |
| CC - Codes & Standards | \$0                  | \$7,395,202    | \$0          | \$7,395,202  |
| Public                 | \$0                  | \$0            | \$2,776,345  | \$2,776,345  |
| Residential            | \$8,286,107          | \$0            | \$30,396,434 | \$38,682,541 |
| EMV                    | \$144,324            | \$77,650       | \$774,074    | \$996,048    |
| Total                  | \$13,889,463         | \$7,472,852    | \$74,495,446 | \$95,857,761 |

**TABLE 51**

## AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

The RuralREN's portfolio does not include specific Agricultural Sector programs, however the Finance and Workforce, Education and Training cross-cutting programs will be marketed and available for Agricultural businesses.

## COMMERCIAL SECTOR

The RuralREN's Commercial Sector program will offer Energy Advisor services and financial incentives to small- and medium- businesses in the Sierra and North Coast regions of RuralREN's service area. Regionally-tailored outreach and energy audits will provide specific, actionable recommendations for making energy related improvements to reduce energy consumption and will guide the customer toward available incentives and financing options offered by RuralREN, electric and gas utility companies and third-party program implementers. Incentives will be offered for common energy efficiency measures and GHG reducing technologies such as heat pumps. EE measures will include a variety of items like controls, HVAC, and plug loads/appliances. Financing will be made available to enable customers to implement energy projects with no capital outlay. Finance offerings are described in the cross-cutting Finance Sector section of this business plan.

## COMMERCIAL SECTOR GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

### Commercial Sector Specific Goals, Objectives and Strategies

| Goal   | Strategy  | Objective  |
|--|---|--|
| G1-Increase customer awareness and knowledge of energy efficiency benefits, including GHG reduction strategies | -Provide basic energy efficiency information to raise awareness<br>-Energy Coaches conduct surveys to identify actionable recommendations               | Achieve program metric targets related to outreach and recommendations |
| G2-Increase customer implementation of energy efficiency measures  | -Address first cost barrier by providing incentives and easy financing<br>-Energy Coaches provide support during implementation to reduce hassle factor | Achieve kWh, kW, and Therm energy savings goals                        |
| G3-Increase depth of energy efficiency retrofits in small and medium businesses                                | -Leverage incentives from other sources, and encourage financing to pay for GHG reducing capital equipment such as HVAC and water heating heat pumps    | Achieve electrification equipment sales metrics                        |
| G4-Increase participation of equity-targeted small and medium businesses                                       | -Focus outreach to hard-to-reach, DAC and underserved SMBs, provide increased incentive levels  | Achieve equity-targeted customer participation metrics                 |

TABLE 52

### COMMERCIAL SECTOR COORDINATION

The RuralREN's Commercial Sector program will coordinate with IOU, CEC, CPUC Energy Efficiency, Demand Response, Electrification and Market Transformation programs targeting small- and medium-commercial customers to leverage funding and services, especially in the area of decarbonization and EV charging station siting. The RuralREN will coordinate closely with PG&Es planned third-party Micro and Small Business Equity Program, which is currently in the solicitation phase.

### CATEGORIZATION BY SEGMENT

#### Commercial Categorization by Segment

| Sector     | Program        | Segment              | Rationale  |
|------------|----------------|----------------------|--|
| Commercial | SMB Incentives | Resource Acquisition | Primary focus of the program is to achieve energy and GHG reductions |

TABLE 53



## PROGRAM DETAILS

| Program Name: RuralREN Commercial Resource Acquisition Program   |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Program ID:</b> RREN-02</p> <p><b>New / Existing:</b> NEW</p> <p><b>Link to implementation plan if existing (see D.21-05-031):</b> IP to be developed after CPUC approval of the new RuralREN</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Portfolio Segment:</b></p> <p>RESOURCE ACQUISITION</p>   | <p><b>Implementation Party:</b></p> <p>RuralREN</p>  |
| <p><b>Applicable Sector:</b></p> <p>Commercial</p>   | <p><b>Market Sub-Sector:</b></p> <p>Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Businesses</p>  |
| <p><b>Sector Challenge:</b> Energy efficiency resource acquisition programs in rural communities face the following challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Geographic isolation: business density in rural areas is much lower than the California average</li> <li>-Lack of energy efficiency awareness</li> <li>-High first-cost of energy efficiency, especially for small businesses struggling to stay afloat during pandemic, wildfire impacts and record inflation</li> <li>-Low engagement by rural HTR businesses in energy efficiency programs that are perceived as more suited for urban/suburban residents</li> <li>-Low cost effectiveness and high delivery cost of resource acquisition programs in the SMB sub-sector because of high cost to serve and lack of approved deemed measures suitable for small businesses, such as LED lighting.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Sector Opportunity:</b> With relatively low awareness and participation in EE programs comes an opportunity for a locally-based, regional approach to raise awareness and increase small business adoption of EE practices and measures. With customers in need of strategies for adapting to TOU rates and the market at an inflection point with regard to decarbonization strategies, the timing is ideal for a tailored resource acquisition program to drive new and deep energy savings in rural small businesses. High energy burden, extreme weather conditions, and high inflation will motivate business owners to seek out ways to reduce their operating cost and improve the safety and comfort of their facilities for customers and employees by taking advantage of low- and no-cost energy efficiency services.</p> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Known Equity Concerns in the Selected Markets:</b></p> <p>A large portion of RuralREN's small businesses are located in low-income communities, and are hard-to-reach due to the combination of rural location, number of employees, and/or in leased spaces. Energy burdens are on average, much higher than the state average, and counterparts in urban/suburban areas. SMBs in rural areas employ a higher portion of workers than large businesses, highlighting the importance of SMBs to the economic health of rural communities.</p>  | <p><b>Proposed Solutions to Equity Concerns:</b></p> <p>RuralREN's Commercial Resource Acquisition program will focus its efforts on achieving a high percentage of participation from targeted equity customers. Outreach and messaging strategies will drive equity customers to implement energy efficiency upgrades to their businesses using incentives and direct install services. RuralREN's cross-cutting Finance program will also support HTR businesses with bridge loans to supplement IOU OBF financing with no out-of-pocket cost to the business owner. We estimate that up to 75% of participating businesses will be classified HTR.</p> |
| <p><b>Program Description:</b></p> <p>RuralREN's Commercial Resource Acquisition program is a comprehensive EE and decarbonization program offering technical services, incentives, and direct installation of select measures all aimed at reducing energy usage, on-peak load and GHG emissions in rural micro, small and medium-sized businesses. The program will be offered in RuralREN's Sierra and North Coast regions, filling a gap in services to the most remote and sparsely populated areas of RuralREN's service territory and those most in need of a customized local delivery offering. The program uses a comprehensive approach to increase adoption of EE, demand response, and decarbonization measures, while providing operating cost savings and added non-energy benefits of safety, resilience and occupant comfort for local businesses. While not categorized as an Equity segment program, a high proportion of the businesses served will be hard-to-reach and located in or near rural underserved communities. The program encourages use of financing to enable more costly comprehensive retrofits, including RuralREN's cross-cutting Finance program (RREN-07) which will offer bridge loans to supplement IOU On-Bill Financing programs.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Intervention Strategy:</b></p> <p>-Leverage RREN-04 Residential Equity program marketing, education and outreach campaigns via</p>   | <p><b>Program Metrics:</b></p> <p>As a resource acquisition program with an equity emphasis, metrics include resource and non-resource measures, including:</p>  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>digital (email, social media), direct mail, local print, radio and television media, community events, utilizing local elected officials, agency staff, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) tailored regionally, and other Equity program services that can drive customers to the Residential Resource Acquisition program</p> <p>-Energy Advisors act as customer's single-point-of-contact. An Energy Advisor will provide home evaluations of single measures all the way up to a full home performance report, depending on the customer's needs and situation, and guide the customer through implementation options.</p> <p>Energy Reports</p> <p>-Deemed incentives for appliances, insulation, water heaters, heat pumps, duct sealing, pipe wrap, faucet aerators</p> <p>-Custom incentives for popular and cost-effective LED lighting measures</p> <p>-Direct installation of certain measures, with incentives high enough to cover 100% of the measure cost using trade allies who have been qualified and agree to RuralREN pricing with zero or low customer co-pay.</p> | <p>-Equity-targeted customer participation, percentage</p> <p>-Hard-to-reach customer participation</p> <p>-Underserved customer participation</p> <p>-Disadvantaged community customer participation</p> <p>-TSB: \$4,041,595</p> <p>-Net kWh: 9,976,551</p> <p>-Net kW: 74</p> <p>-Net Therms: 35,200</p> <p>-CO<sub>2</sub>e, tons: 2,585</p> <p>Targets for each metric will be confirmed (or established after baseline determination) after CPUC approval of RuralREN formation.</p> |
| <p><b>High-level description of delivery workforce including necessary scale and its risks:</b></p> <p>Delivery workforce will include staff of RuralREN's Sierra and North Coast Implementation Partners, including new hires dedicated to program implementation and graduates of RuralREN's cross-cutting WE&amp;T program, RREN-05. Local direct install contractors and market-based trade allies will be needed to meet customer demand for measures. Availability and scale of the workforce needed for successful implementation of the program will not present a risk.</p>   |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Market Actors necessary for success:</b> Local contractors, trade allies, wholesale suppliers, and retailers must be able to support the increase in demand for the promoted EE measures.   |  |
| <b>Solicitation Strategy:</b> Portions of the program may be outsourced, such as installation contractor services. Supplier diversity will be incorporated into RuralREN's solicitation strategy.  | <b>Transition Plan:</b><br><br>Not applicable  |
| <b>Expected Program Life:</b><br><br>Rollout will begin in 2023 and continue through the nine year cycle and beyond. RuralREN will implement continuous improvements and refinements in program design, delivery strategies and tactics throughout the life of the program, and consider expanding geographic coverage to other RuralREN regions to fill gaps if needed. | <b>Short Term Plan</b><br><br>Launch program in 2023 and begin full-scale implementation in Sierra and North Coast RuralREN regions in 2024.   |
| <b>Cost Effectiveness</b><br>TRC w/o admin: 1.92<br>TRC w/admin: 0.70<br>PAC w/o admin: 2.28<br>PAC w/admin: 0.74  | <b>Long Term Outlook</b><br><br>EE fluency and measure adoption rates of rural small businesses and energy savings in the region increase, and significant energy operating cost savings are realized, especially for equity-targeted small businesses. Other RuralREN regions implement resource acquisition programs as gaps develop, and TSB and cost-effectiveness increase over time. |
| <b>Proposed Annual Budgets for 2023-2027:</b><br>2023: \$.400 million<br>2024: \$.954 million<br>2025: \$1.23 million<br>2026: \$1.45 million<br>2027: \$1.43 million  | <b>Anticipated directional and scale changes in budget for years 2028-2031:</b> Budgets are anticipated to increase slightly over the last four years of the Business Plan period.   |

**Implementation Plan:** Implementation Plans for all RuralREN programs will be developed after CPUC approval of RuralREN's Application and before implementation begins.

### CROSS-CUTTING SECTOR: CODES & STANDARDS (C&S)

The RuralREN's Codes and Standards program supports code enforcement agencies and better equips the building design and construction community to implement California's ambitious Building Energy Efficiency Standards (Title 24), helping make buildings more efficient, paving the way for zero net energy building stock, and reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in rural California's most environmentally challenged regions.

### C&S GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

#### C&S Sector Goals

| Goal  | Strategy  | Objective  |
|---|---|--|
| G1-Increase code compliance   | Training for code enforcement officials   | Increased the percentage of projects that comply with codes  |
| G2-Increase understanding and support compliance of design and construction of projects                         | Training for building design and construction professionals   | Increase the percentage of design and construction projects that comply first time through, without rework |
| G3- Provide resources to support local code authorities review and approval of building design and construction | -Code Coach - technical support for code enforcement officials<br>-Shared Tracker - encourages collaboration among building departments in the region | Reduced plan check and inspection turnaround time  |

**TABLE 54**

### C&S SECTOR COORDINATION

The RuralREN's Codes and Standards program will coordinate with Statewide Codes and Standards program, and Statewide Residential and Non-Residential New Construction programs.

## CATEGORIZATION BY SEGMENT

### C&S Categorization by Segment

| Sector              | Program            | Segment        | Rationale  |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| Codes and Standards | Compliance Support | Market Support | The Codes & Standards program primarily supports the building design and construction industry to comply with energy codes |

TABLE 55

## PROGRAM DETAILS

| Program Name: RuralREN Codes and Standards Market Support Program  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Program ID:</b> RREN-06</p> <p><b>New / Existing:</b> NEW</p> <p><b>Link to implementation plan if existing (see D.21-05-031):</b> IP to be developed after CPUC approval of the new RuralREN.</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Portfolio Segment:</b></p> <p>MARKET SUPPORT</p>   | <p><b>Implementation Party:</b></p> <p>RuralREN</p>   |
| <p><b>Applicable Sector:</b></p> <p>Cross Cutting – Codes and Standards</p>  | <p><b>Market Sub-Sector:</b></p> <p>Local Governments; All customer sectors/sub-sectors</p>   |
| <p><b>Sector Challenge:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Limited staff capacity and energy codes not always a priority in the building permitting and code compliance process</li> <li>-Triennial Code Adoption Cycle leads to the need to inform, educate and enforce newly adopted codes and standards, on a regular basis</li> <li>-Building professionals in rural areas lack access to consistent and regular training.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Sector Opportunity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-For transformative standards to be consequential, they need to be implemented and enforced properly.</li> <li>-Offering regional and climate-zone specific training and information will inform and engage rural building professionals on impactful energy saving tactics.</li> <li>-Codes are a cost-effective way to transform a market, but to be meaningful, they have to be implemented properly and enforced.</li> </ul> |



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| <p>More importantly, they often are not engaged<sup>58</sup></p> <p>-Energy code compliance can be inconsistent, as code enforcement occurs at the local municipality or county level. Many rural building departments are resource constrained.</p> <p>-Upcoming codes are transformational with storage and heat pumps<sup>59</sup></p> <p>-Limited HERS raters in rural areas<sup>60</sup></p> | <p>- There are 2,550,178 total housing units in the RuralREN territory.<sup>61</sup> According to the US Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey Five Year Estimates, (2015-2019), 48.7% of the occupied housing units were built prior to 1979, with the likelihood that very few of those were built abiding by the newly adopted energy codes of 1978. Another 30.9% were built between 1980-1999, for a total of almost 80% of the RuralREN region's housing are potentially candidates for energy efficient upgrades or retrofits.</p> <p>-Coordinate efforts regionally to engage in code cycle updates and adoption to ensure that regional characteristics are being considered in the broader adoption of codes. (Example we discussed, solar requirement in forested areas)</p> <p>-Tool libraries- Provide energy measurement tools and new technologies for use and introduction to local communities (tools and induction stovetops)</p> |
| <p><b>Known Equity Concerns in the Selected Markets:</b></p>  | <p><b>Proposed Solutions to Equity Concerns:</b></p> <p>RuralREN's mission is to equitably serve hard to reach rural customers, with goals and metrics</p>   |

<sup>58</sup> Lui, Adeline, Energy Code Support: The Next Frontier for Residential New Construction Programs September 11, 2020, <https://www.aesp.org/blogpost/1264671/325906/Energy-Code-Support-The-Next-Frontier-for-Residential-New-Construction-Programs>

<sup>59</sup> Leathers, Kelly. "Streamlined Permitting Needed to Scale up California's Energy Storage Capacity." Center for Sustainable Energy, Center for Sustainable Energy, Jan. 2022, <https://energycenter.org/thought-leadership/blog/streamlined-permitting-needed-scale-californias-energy-storage-capacity>.

<sup>60</sup> DNV-GL, September 22, 2017 2014-16 HVAC Permit and Code Compliance Market Assessment for the CPUC

<sup>61</sup> State of California Department of Finance E-5 Population and Housing Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State Retrieved from: <https://www.dof.ca.gov/forecasting/demographics/estimates/e-5/>

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| <p>In general, local governments in rural areas are hard-to-reach, and therefore not as well served by EE programs.</p>   | <p>to ensure the needed focus and dedicated resources</p>  |
| <p><b>Program Description:</b></p> <p>The RuralREN Codes &amp; Standards (C&amp;S) program will provide rural building departments and building professionals with education and technical resources to increase comprehension and compliance in the California Building Energy Efficiency Code (Title 24) and escalate more rapid adoption of new standard technologies. The program is designed to bridge the gaps in current Investor-Owned Utility (IOU) and Statewide offerings, while leveraging those resources, and will serve geographically rural and hard-to-reach areas that have distinct characteristics and needs. The program's goal is to provide offerings that will help those regions reduce energy usage through improved building design and construction and greater code compliance and enforcement. Through this program, RuralREN seeks to increase access and participation among local governments and local building professionals through a multidimensional approach which includes targeted training and professional continuing education opportunities, personalized code coaching, regional tool lending libraries, best practice guides and checklists, aggregated resources and policy support. The program will be implemented in all RuralREN regions except San Luis Obispo County, where similar services are being provided through the 3C REN.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Intervention Strategy:</b></p> <p>-Education: in-person and online training sessions and forums, customized training and online tools and resources to build capacity and awareness, and connect building professionals to California building codes and standards. The program will incorporate International Code Council and American Institute of Architects continuing education units as a way to attract participation.</p>  | <p><b>Program Metrics:</b></p> <p>-Number of participating households, businesses and jurisdictions</p> <p>-Number and percentage of hard-to-reach populations served</p> <p>-Number of training activities (classes, webinars) held, number of market actors participants by segment (e.g. building officials, builders, architects, etc.) and the total size (number of the target audience) by sector.</p> <p>(M) Number of training activities</p> <p>-Increase in code compliance knowledge pre/post training</p> |

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| <p>-In-field Expert Code Support: a network of code experts will be made available to contractors as a proactive measure to clarify and resolve code questions. Through this service, a simple phone call or text from the field will provide contractors with the access to technical information they need to ensure they are complying with California building codes and standards.</p> <p>-Technical Assistance: will provide building professionals with information, consultation, and expert advice needed to streamline and optimize permit submissions and increase code compliance</p> <p>-Engagement with local professionals involved in designing, permitting and constructing new construction, retrofits and remodels of single family and multifamily buildings including architects, engineers, contractors, field inspectors, and building plan reviewers, plus other key stakeholders such as homeowners and owner-builders</p> <p>-Leverage existing tools and resources developed by the IOUs, other RENs, CEC and the Energy Code ACE. Rural regions are too often unaware of these resources or do not have the resources to pursue and utilize them fully and in the most effective manner. To address this, the RuralREN will curate and centralize these resources and will house them on the RuralREN website for</p> | <p>-The percentage increase in closed permits for building projects triggering energy code compliance within participating jurisdictions</p> <p>-Number and percent of jurisdictions with staff participating in an Energy Policy Forum</p> <p>-Number and percent of jurisdictions receiving Energy Policy technical assistance</p> <p>-Buildings receiving enhanced code compliance support and delivering compliance data to program evaluators</p> <p>All final metrics, targets and indicators will be confirmed (or established after baseline determination) after approval of RuralREN and with submittal of full Implementation Plan</p> |
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| <p>easy and simple access. RuralREN will complement these tools and resources with materials that address the regional characteristics of each area. The portal will be home to relevant resources needed by local governments and building professionals including case studies that are relevant to various rural regions, based on local characteristics, such as climate zones, and will include pertinent information for local building officials and those who support code compliance and permit processing. Resources housed on the portal will include other relevant information including fire recovery updates, local standards that adhere to Title 24 updates and zero net energy (ZNE) and ZNE-Ready buildings. Emphasis will be placed on acquiring any available materials in Spanish, and in the future, the RuralREN C&amp;S program will develop and translate materials to Spanish.</p> |  |
| <p><b>High-level description of delivery workforce including necessary scale and its risks:</b></p> <p>Delivery workforce will include staff of RuralREN's Implementation Partners, including new hires dedicated to program implementation, and third-party engineering consultants. Availability and scale of the workforce needed for successful implementation of the program will not present a risk.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Market Actors necessary for success:</b> Local architects, designers, engineering companies, builders, sub-contractors, trade allies, wholesale suppliers</p>   |  |

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| <p><b>Solicitation Strategy:</b> Implementation of portions of the program will be outsourced. Supplier diversity will be incorporated into RuralREN's solicitation strategy.</p>  | <p><b>Transition Plan:</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>   |
| <p><b>Expected Program Life:</b></p> <p>Rollout will begin in 2023 and continue through the nine-year cycle, at a scale to be determined during the first five year period, and depending on performance of third party programs providing similar services in other area of RuralREN's service area. RuralREN will implement continuous improvements and refinements in program design, delivery strategies and tactics throughout the life of the program.</p> | <p><b>Short Term Plan</b></p> <p>Launch the program in 2023 and begin full-scale implementation in 2024</p>  |
| <p><b>Cost Effectiveness</b></p> <p>NA – RREN-06 Codes and Standards Market Support program is a non-resource program</p>  | <p><b>Long Term Outlook</b></p> <p>Rural building officials and the local building design and construction industries are complying at increasingly higher rates, helping rural communities achieve energy and GHG reduction plans. RuralREN continues to be a vital resource for rural communities as they pursue more aggressive decarbonization and energy savings goals.</p> |
| <p><b>Proposed Annual Budgets for 2024-2027:</b></p> <p>2023: \$1.10 million<br/> 2024: \$1.44 million<br/> 2025: \$1.50 million<br/> 2026: \$1.62 million<br/> 2027: \$1.74 million</p>   | <p><b>Anticipated directional and scale changes in budget for years 2028-2031:</b> Budgets are anticipated to increase slightly over the last four years of the business plan period, but will be adjusted as needed based on demand for the program.</p>  |

**Implementation Plan:** Implementation Plans for all RuralREN programs will be developed after CPUC approval of RuralREN's Application and before implementation begins.

#### CROSS-CUTTING SECTOR: FINANCE

The RuralREN's Finance Sector program will address first cost and access to capital barriers that exist in rural California. A bridge loan program will offer a no-cost short-term loan to cover energy efficiency project costs during construction to "bridge" the time gap between the time of application for IOU On-Bill Financing and funding of the loan, after construction completion. This time gap can be many months, and in some cases more than a year. This type of loan allows the customer to implement energy efficiency projects quicker and eliminates the added cost, and barrier to implementation, of having to obtain a separate loan to finance construction, before the OBF loan is funded. A microloan product will fill gaps in existing financing products such as GoGreen and PACE. The target customer segments will be residential and small-to medium-sized businesses in the commercial, industrial, public and agricultural sectors. The loan amounts are expected to be below currently available financing products of \$5,000 and would carry low or zero interest and fees.

Both loan programs will be fully-developed through a competitive solicitation for third-party design, with the goal of creating products that meet needs of the customer and complement existing offerings and avoiding conflict with the outcomes of the CPUC's ongoing Order Instituting Rulemaking to Investigate and Design Clean Energy Financing Options for Electricity and Natural Gas Customer R.20-08-022.



## FINANCE SECTOR GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

### Finance Sector, Goals

| Goal   | Strategy   | Objective  |
|--|--|--|
| G1-Increase customer implementation of energy efficiency measures                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Address first cost barrier by providing financing</li> <li>-Reduce hassle factor by providing Energy Coaches during implementation to help with project scoping, justification and implementation</li> </ul> | -RuralREN customers have a viable option to identify and finance energy efficiency upgrades even if they don't have the capital or access to affordable financing. |
| G2-Increase depth of energy efficiency retrofits                                 | -Use financing to sell higher cost, comprehensive upgrades with no out of pocket cost for customer   | -Customer realizes meaningful bill savings, increased property value, comfort benefits, and energy and GHG impacts of comprehensive energy efficiency upgrades     |
| G3-Increase participation of equity-targeted SMBs, Public agencies and residents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Promote program to equity-targeted customers</li> <li>-Provide concierge service to equity-targeted customers to ensure appropriate scope, cost and savings are realized</li> </ul>                          | -Equity-targeted participants have access to easy to access and affordable capital for deep energy efficiency upgrades   |
| G4-Increase use of IOU's On Bill Financing by rural SMBs and Public Agencies     | -Bridge financing makes OBF more attractive by eliminating the need for the customer to use their own capital to pay for construction, before the OBF loan is funded.  | -Customers and projects that qualify for IOU OBF loans use OBF as the first, best option for financing EE projects.  |

TABLE 56

### FINANCE SECTOR COORDINATION

General coordination will be required with other PAs offering financing products to avoid possible competition or confusion in the marketplace. Since the RuralREN's bridge financing is designed to complement the IOUs' OBF offering, coordination is needed to ensure the two products work together for the customer's benefit as intended. IOUs and the RuralREN ideally will co-market the OBF and bridge loan as a package for customers. The RuralREN will also coordinate with, and actively participate in, the CPUC's Rulemaking 20-08-022 Order Instituting Rulemaking to Investigate and Design Clean Energy Financing Options for Electricity and Natural Gas Customers. Coordination will be required with ESA Administrators to ensure ESA-qualified customers are provided all possible no-cost ESA services before the RuralREN financing is offered to an ESA-qualified customer. Additional coordination may be needed between GoGreen and PACE financing, however in most cases RuralREN microloans

will be below the minimum loan amounts offered in those programs avoiding potential overlap.

## CATEGORIZATION BY SEGMENT

### Finance Categorization by Segment

| Sector                  | Program                       | Segment | Rationale  |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|--|
| Cross Cutting - Finance | RuralREN EE Financing Program | Equity  | RuralREN's Finance offering targets Disadvantaged, Underserved and Hard-to-Reach customers primarily |

TABLE 57

## PROGRAM DETAILS

| Program Name: RuralREN Finance Equity Program  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Program ID:</b> RREN-07<br><b>New / Existing:</b> NEW<br><b>Link to implementation plan if existing (see D.21-05-031):</b> IP to be developed after CPUC approval of the new RuralREN and selection of a third-party implementation contractor who will create a detailed design for the Finance program. |  |
| <b>Portfolio Segment:</b><br><br>EQUITY  | <b>Implementation Party:</b><br><br>RuralREN   |
| <b>Applicable Sector:</b><br><br>Cross Cutting - Finance   | <b>Market Sub-Sector:</b><br><br>Residential, Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Businesses, Public  |
| <b>Sector Challenge:</b><br><br>First-cost remains as one of the most common and persistent barriers to residential, small business and public sector implementation of deep, comprehensive energy efficiency and building decarbonization upgrades. Progress  | <b>Sector Opportunity:</b><br><br>One opportunity is to create financing products that fill gaps, to complement the host of available financing products and also make them more effective. For the OBF program, a short-term construction or bridge loan solves |

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| <p>has been made in developing innovative financing products to address the first-cost barrier, but there are gaps that still exist, including minimum loan amount, high costs (interest rates), high minimum credit score hurdles, and sometimes onerous application processes. One of the most attractive loan programs is the OBF programs offered by all of the IOUs. These programs are only for non-residential customers, have a minimum loan amount of \$5,000, and are funded only after completion of construction, leaving the customer to cover costs during construction or pay additional costs for short term construction financing. Additionally, awareness and support for existing loan products may be lower in rural regions than in urban or suburban regions.</p> | <p>the problem of the customer having to have enough cash to pay for the construction before the OBF loan is funded. While this type of financing may be available in the market from traditional lenders and some contractors, it usually carries high interest, higher qualifying criteria, requires a down payment, and may not be applicable to energy efficiency projects. Another opportunity is micro and small loans that cover the cost of energy efficiency projects for homeowners and small businesses. Loan amounts would be less than existing financing programs such as GoGreen and PACE, and would be lower cost than alternatives such as credit cards or manufacturer financing.</p> |
| <p><b>Known Equity Concerns in the Selected Markets:</b></p> <p>A large portion of RuralREN's homeowners, small businesses and public agencies are located in low-income communities, are hard-to-reach due to the combination of rural location, number of employees, and/or in leased spaces, and in the case of public agencies may be very small and not as well-funded as urban/suburban agencies. SMBs in rural areas employ a higher portion of local workers than large businesses, highlighting the importance of healthy SMBs to the economic health of rural communities. Credit scores may</p>   | <p><b>Proposed Solutions to Equity Concerns:</b></p> <p>RuralREN's Finance Program will focus on developing financing products that specifically address the identified equity concerns. Marketing and outreach will target equity customers. The program will establish targets that will ensure achieving a high percentage of participation from targeted equity customers.</p>  |

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| not be as high in rural areas, and rural areas are served by fewer financial institutions.   |   |
| <p><b>Program Description:</b></p> <p>The cross-cutting RuralREN Finance Program (RRFP) will equitably support the residential, SMB and public sectors in the RuralREN communities through low/no cost loans that will encourage and accelerate the implementation of energy efficiency projects. RRFP loan products will address first-cost and access to capital barriers that exist in rural California and will span gaps in current IOU and other statewide offerings. The RRFP will offer bridge loans to complement and improve the effectiveness of IOU OBF. Micro loans will fill a niche in the realm of currently available financing products for loans for EE upgrades below current minimum loan amounts, with easy qualifying and flexible repayment terms.</p> <p>Bridge loans will provide RuralREN customers a means of covering the cost of energy upgrade projects before other funding is received (which may include OBF, incentives/rebates, or other external loans, grants, or financing programs). In the case of OBF, bridge loans will bridge the time gap between time of approval for an IOU's OBF and the disbursement of OBF funds upon verification of the project installation by the OBF program. This gap, which can be months, or in some cases a year or more, can be a significant financial hardship for cash strapped rural customers. Micro loans will allow customers to implement energy efficiency and decarbonization measures with no out-of-pocket cost.</p> <p>Detailed design and implementation of RRFP will be outsourced to a third-party expert in energy finance and details of the program will be included in the Implementation Plan to be developed by the selected 3P implementer.</p> |   |
| <p><b>Intervention Strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-design and implement an EE bridge loan product</li> <li>-design and implement an EE microloan product</li> <li>-promote financing as a solution to overcome first-cost barriers, focusing on equity-targeted rural customers</li> </ul>   | <p><b>Program Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Equity-targeted customer participation, percentage</li> <li>-Hard to reach customer participation</li> <li>-Underserved customer participation</li> <li>-Disadvantaged community customer participation</li> <li>-# of loan applications submitted</li> <li>-#of loans funded</li> </ul> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-leverage RREN-04 Residential Equity program marketing, education and outreach activities</li> <li>-leverage RREN-01 Residential Resource Acquisition program outreach and incentives</li> <li>-leverage RREN-02 Commercial Resource Acquisition program outreach and incentives</li> <li>-leverage RREN-03 Public program</li> <li>-provide a loan concierge service to help customers select the best financing and incentives for their project and assist with loan and incentive applications.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-energy savings of projects financed</li> </ul> <p>All final metrics, targets and indicators will be confirmed (or established after baseline determination) after selection of third-party program design and implementation contractor.</p> |
| <p><b>High-level description of delivery workforce including necessary scale and its risks:</b></p> <p>Delivery workforce will include staff of RuralREN's Implementation Partners, including new hires dedicated to program implementation, and third-party design and implementation contractor. Local trade allies will also promote the program and assist customers in applying for financing. Availability and scale of the workforce needed for successful implementation of the program will not present a risk.</p>                          |  |
| <p><b>Market Actors necessary for success:</b> Local contractors, trade allies, wholesale suppliers, and retailers must be able to support the increase in demand for the promoted EE measures. Depending on the final program design, local lenders may be needed for underwriting and loan funding.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Solicitation Strategy:</b> Design and implementation of all, or portions of the program, will be outsourced. Supplier diversity will be incorporated into RuralREN's solicitation strategy.</p>   | <p><b>Transition Plan:</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>   |
| <p><b>Expected Program Life:</b></p> <p>Rollout will begin in 2023 and continue through the nine-year cycle and beyond. RuralREN will implement continuous improvements and refinements in program design, delivery</p>   | <p><b>Short Term Plan</b></p> <p>Conduct a solicitation for third party design and implementation, award contract(s), launch the program in 2023 and begin full-scale implementation in at least two RuralREN</p>  |

|  |   |
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| strategies and tactics throughout the life of the program.   | regions in 2024, then roll out to remaining regions.  |
| <b>Cost Effectiveness</b><br>NA – RREN-07 is a non-resource program  | <b>Long Term Outlook</b><br>Rural customers become comfortable using financing to implement energy efficiency and decarbonization measures, and adoption rates and energy savings in the region increase. Loan default rates are low and significant energy cost savings are realized, especially for equity-targeted small businesses. |
| <b>Proposed Annual Budgets for 2024-2027:</b><br>2023: \$2.87 million<br>2024: \$3.70 million<br>2025: \$3.89 million<br>2026: \$3.41 million<br>2027: \$3.61 million        | <b>Anticipated directional and scale changes in budget for years 2028-2031:</b> Budgets are anticipated to increase slightly over the last four years of the business plan period.  |
| <b>Implementation Plan:</b> Implementation Plans for all RuralREN programs will be developed after CPUC approval of RuralREN's Application and before implementation begins. |   |

#### CROSS-CUTTING SECTOR: WORKFORCE, EDUCATION & TRAINING (WE&T)

The RuralREN's cross cutting WE&T program will provide individuals in rural hard-to-reach, underserved, and disadvantaged communities access to career opportunities in clean energy-related markets. The program aims to enhance local knowledge and employment in energy efficiency by providing training pathways to support the regional workforce and the state's energy efficiency goals. The program will offer customized versions of in-person and virtual training curriculum to best serve the populations in each specific region. Individuals are enrolled into the program pathway that is best suited for them, and training is delivered directly and/or in coordination with the RuralREN's community partners to ensure development of a well-trained and knowledgeable workforce that will support increased demand for energy-related systems and technologies in the communities they live.



## WE&T GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

### Workforce, Education, and Training Sector Goals

| Goal   | Strategy  | Objective  |
|--|---|--|
| G1- Rural workers employed in rural communities to install energy efficiency measures offered through RuralREN, IOU, and Resource Acquisition Programs.                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Climate Careers participants employed to conduct RuralREN Green House Calls.</li> <li>- CEA participants supported in career support services, including coaching and job/internship/apprenticeship placement for positions directly supporting energy efficiency.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Increased program participation by both the implementers and the end use customer.</li> <li>-Completed Resource Acquisition program projects RuralREN counties increase.</li> <li>-Benefit future generations and build community wealth through lower bills, career opportunity and clean energy investments.</li> </ul>  |
| G2- Training locations are geographically situated to ensure an equitable distribution of access to disinvested places.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinate with local governments to use public sites for hyper-rural training locations.</li> <li>-Continually assess related offerings by IOUs and non-IOUs to ensure sites exist in unserved communities.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Training sites and hands-on learning sites accessible through confirmed means of public transportation in geographically hard to reach spaces.</li> </ul>  |
| G3- Program pathways are delivered in partnership with rural agencies experienced in implementing EE programs and shared through network of connected sites and content. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Form/convene Regional Community Workforce Advisory Council.</li> <li>-Coordinate with Community College Districts, Trustees and College Presidents on bi-annual basis.</li> <li>-Locally based train-the-trainer for CEA sites.</li> </ul>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Work with County Workforce Investment Boards, Economic Development Departments, Economic Opportunities Commissions, and local employers to actively engage in the program deployment and delivery through Advisory Councils. Regional Planning Units and Building Trades Councils advise on program growth and scaling through Advisory Councils.</li> <li>- RuralREN member agencies work with trusted partners from the EE industry and community groups to adjust design and delivery.</li> </ul> |

### Workforce, Education, and Training Sector Goals (continued)

| Goal   | Strategy  | Objective  |
|--|---|--|
| G4- Coordinate with Resource Acquisition Program implementers to ensure a workers meet program requirements. Support local hiring initiatives and adjust course content to meet new Federal, State, or utility requirements. | -Form/convene IOU and Resource Acquisition Program Implementers Advisory Council. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Third Party Programs and Investor-Owned Utilities advise on program through Advisory Councils.</li> <li>-Local governments support workforce through local hiring policies for public projects</li> <li>- Supply market demanded curriculum and technology necessary to meet regulatory requirements.</li> <li>-RuralREN trainings allow for flexible design and delivery meeting the growing need for shorter-time and just-in-time trainings</li> </ul> |

**TABLE 58**

### WE&T SECTOR COORDINATION

The RuralREN will coordinate with the statewide WE&T program to ensure they are complementary to each other, and that there is no overlap in service, or conflict in messaging and marketing. Coordination with other PAs will also be needed to assist with placement of trained individuals in other energy efficiency programs.

### CATEGORIZATION BY SEGMENT

#### Workforce, Education & Training Categorization by Segment

| Sector                          | Program  | Segment | Rationale   |
|---------------------------------|--|---------|---|
| Workforce, Education & Training | Rural California Pathway for Climate Adaptive Careers (RCPCAC) | Equity  | Provides Disadvantaged Workers, Veterans, Women and Underserved Community members in skills training, certification, and job placement in Climate Adaptive Careers. |

**TABLE 59**

## PROGRAM DETAILS

| Program Name: RuralREN Workforce, Education and Training Equity Program  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Program ID:</b> RREN-05</p> <p><b>New / Existing:</b> NEW</p> <p><b>Link to implementation plan if existing (see D.21-05-031):</b> IP to be developed after CPUC approval of the new RuralREN and selection of third-party implementation partners</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Portfolio Segment:</b></p> <p>EQUITY</p>   | <p><b>Implementation Party:</b></p> <p>RuralREN</p>  |
| <p><b>Applicable Sector:</b></p> <p>Cross Cutting – Workforce, Education and Training</p>  | <p><b>Market Sub-Sector:</b></p> <p>Workforce, Education and Training</p>  |
| <p><b>Sector Challenge:</b></p> <p>Accessibility: hand-on practicums are necessary for a complete skill-set. Training sites are inaccessible to rural and hyper-rural locations.</p> <p>Undersupply of trained workers: Lack of trained new workers and an aging workforce leave gaps in the supply pipeline for energy efficiency and clean energy workers.</p> <p>Alternative to traditional education pathways needed: younger generations are rejecting traditional education pathways and the high costs associated with it.</p> <p>Need soft skills training and wraparound services.</p> <p>Lack of awareness of CA EE industry and career opportunities.</p> | <p><b>Sector Opportunity:</b></p> <p>Programs designed to reach disadvantaged workers, with specific focus on returning citizens, veterans, women, and opportunity youth.</p> <p>Training locally and employing locally.</p> <p>Training that can react quickly and adapt effectively to the needs of energy job markets</p> <p>Programs with career technical training emphasis, plus soft-skills needed for business development and industry understanding</p> <p>Growing need for career building and upskilling of existing workers in building electrification technologies and strategies</p> |

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| Rapidly changing industry, regulatory and policy impacts require just-in time trainings and faster training modules.   |   |
| <p><b>Known Equity Concerns in the Selected Markets:</b></p> <p>The Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) boils down equity into four categories, “equity in sustainability incorporates procedures, the distribution of benefits and burdens, generational impact, and structural accountability”<sup>62</sup> The four dimensions of equity (procedural, distributional, structural, and generational) are centered around the issues that rural communities often face that prevent them from accessing and benefitting from climate adaptive career opportunities.</p>   | <p><b>Proposed Solutions to Equity Concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhancing community wealth through energy project awareness leading to an increased opportunity to train and employ a local workforce</li> <li>-Engaging directly with disadvantaged workers in RuralREN communities by providing training opportunities that are accessible and convenient</li> <li>-Collaborate with local agencies to effectively educate and inform community members on the availability and benefits of climate adaptive careers</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Program Description:</b></p> <p>The cross-cutting Workforce, Education and Training program accelerates training (upskilling of existing workers and training for new workers) and increases opportunities for employment. Seeking to address equity issues access to, and awareness of energy related careers, the RuralREN WE&amp;T offering presents pathways to diffuse program benefits more equitably for rural Californians. Program pathways are targeted broadly for disadvantaged workers, but they specifically target returning citizens, veterans, Opportunity Youth, women, communities of color, and displaced Ag workers. The program addresses skills training, trades advancement, pre-apprenticeship placement and supports building professionals, while coordinating with third-party program implementers and local employers to increase opportunities. It will support training for and employment of Energy Advisers to deliver parts of other RuralREN programs, as well as upskill trades in the regions. The RuralREN will promote specific courses and hold seats for those in the trade ally network, allowing local contractors the ability to upskill through specific certifications and training. The benefit being received by the contractor, the program will offer</p> |   |

62 Park, Angela. Urban Sustainability Directors Network, 2014, Equity in Sustainability: An Equity Scan of Local Government Sustainability Programs, [https://www.usdn.org/uploads/cms/documents/usdn\\_equity\\_scan\\_sept\\_2014\\_final.pdf](https://www.usdn.org/uploads/cms/documents/usdn_equity_scan_sept_2014_final.pdf).

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| customized versions of in-person and virtual training curriculum to best serve the populations in each specific region. Individuals are enrolled into the program pathway that is best suited for them, and training is delivered directly and/or in coordination with the RuralREN's community partners, ensuring development of a well-trained and knowledgeable workforce that reflects the communities they live in.  |  |   |  |
| <b>Intervention Strategy:</b><br><br>-Deliver training in partnership with local agencies through a network of connected sites and standardized content<br><br>-Create placement opportunities for program graduates in other RuralREN programs<br><br>-Utilize remote learning platforms and as COVID-19 restrictions are eased, incorporate in-person training<br><br>-Use proven successful training programs such as Clean Energy Academy and Climate Careers<br><br>-Clean Energy Academy and Climate Careers provides pathways to employment in EE programs and trades<br><br>- |  | <b>Program Metrics:</b><br><br>-Equity-targeted worker participation, percentage<br><br>-# of CEA cohorts trained<br>-# of CEA student placements<br>% of CEA student placements<br># of Green House Youth Staff employed<br># of students enrolled in MC3 programs<br># of pre-apprenticeship seats confirmed<br><br>All final metrics, targets and indicators will be confirmed (or established after baseline determination) after selection of third-party program design and implementation contractors. |  |
| <b>High-level description of delivery workforce including necessary scale and its risks:</b><br><br>Delivery workforce will include staff of RuralREN's Implementation Partners and third-party design and implementation contractors. Availability and scale of the workforce needed for delivery of the WE&T program will not present a risk.   |  |   |  |
| <b>Market Actors necessary for success:</b> Employment of WE&T graduates will rely on the entire spectrum of market actors  |  |   |  |
| <b>Solicitation Strategy:</b> Design and implementation of all, or portions of the program will be outsourced. Supplier diversity   |  | <b>Transition Plan:</b><br><br>Not applicable   |  |

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| will be incorporated into RuralREN's solicitation strategy.   |   |
| <b>Expected Program Life:</b><br>Rollout will begin in 2023 and continue through the nine year cycle and beyond. RuralREN will implement continuous improvements and refinements in program design, delivery strategies and tactics throughout the life of the program. | <b>Short Term Plan:</b><br>Conduct a solicitation for third party design and implementation, award contract(s), launch the program in 2023 and begin full-scale implementation 2024             |
| <b>Cost Effectiveness:</b><br>NA – RREN-05 WE&T is a non-resource program   | <b>Long Term Outlook:</b><br>RuralREN's WE&T program substantially increases the skills of the local workforce, and provides pathways for employment of local workers within local communities. |
| <b>Proposed Annual Budgets for 2024-2027:</b><br>2023: \$2.96 million<br>2024: \$5.11 million<br>2025: \$5.14 million<br>2026: \$5.15 million<br>2027: \$5.16 million   | <b>Anticipated directional and scale changes in budget for years 2028-2031:</b><br>Budgets are anticipated to increase slightly over the last four years of the business plan period.           |
| <b>Implementation Plan:</b> Implementation Plans for all RuralREN programs will be developed after CPUC approval of RuralREN's Application and before implementation begins.  |   |

## INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

The RuralREN's portfolio does not include specific Industrial Sector programs, however Finance and Workforce, Education and Training cross-cutting programs will be marketed and available for Industrial sector businesses.

## PUBLIC SECTOR

The RuralREN's Public Sector program will offer a suite of services to rural governments and public agencies to identify, develop, track, and implement energy savings opportunities in



their buildings and facilities on their path to meeting mandates for GHG reduction and Zero Net Energy. Energy efficiency projects developed using the RuralREN's support services will be tracked in a pipeline queue and handed off to applicable IOU or other PA incentive programs and/or financing programs, including the RuralREN's Bridge Loan Program. In addition to providing much needed project support services, the program will increase awareness and expertise of public agencies, increase information sharing among them, and help them demonstrate leadership in energy efficiency within their local communities. The Public Sector program will focus on agencies, schools and local governments in underserved and disadvantaged communities as well as those qualifying as geographically hard-to-reach.

## PUBLIC SECTOR GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

### Public Sector Goals

| Goal   | Strategy  | Objective  |
|--|---|--|
| G1-Reduce energy use and GHG emissions       | -Provide support to identify and implement EE projects, and to incorporate EE projects into Capital Improvement Plans and Climate Action Plans                          | -Rural governments and agencies implement EE and decarbonization projects  |
| G2-Help the public sector lead by example    | -Integrate renewables, EV charging, and Demand Response recommendations in feasibility studies<br>-Publish case studies, build community awareness of energy strategies | -Rural governments and agencies adopt ZNE and decarbonization in their own facilities which causes increased adoption in their communities |
| G3-Support local control and energy security | -Assess DG and Microgrid feasibility<br>-Encourage use of local workforces in project implementation  | -Rural governments and agencies become more self-sufficient and energy resilient   |

TABLE 60

## PUBLIC SECTOR COORDINATION

The RuralREN will coordinate with IOUs' Local Government Partnership programs, third-party programs targeting Public Sector customers, and other demand-side programs, including IOU, CEC, CPUC energy efficiency, Demand Response, Electrification and Market Transformation programs targeting Public commercial customers to leverage funding and services, especially in the area of decarbonization and EV charging station siting.

## CATEGORIZATION BY SEGMENT

### Public Categorization by Segment

| Sector                           | Program  | Segment | Rationale   |
|----------------------------------|--|---------|---|
| Public Categorization by Segment | Local Government and Public Agency EE Outreach and Support | Equity  | RuralREN's Public sector program targets local governments, schools and public agencies that serve Disadvantaged, Underserved and Hard-to-Reach communities primarily |

TABLE 61

## PROGRAM DETAILS

| Program Name: RuralREN Public Equity Program  |  |
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| <b>Program ID:</b> RREN-03<br><b>New / Existing:</b> NEW<br><b>Link to implementation plan if existing (see D.21-05-031):</b> IP to be developed after CPUC approval of the new RuralREN.   |  |
| <b>Portfolio Segment:</b><br><br>EQUITY   | <b>Implementation Party:</b><br><br>RuralREN   |
| <b>Applicable Sector:</b><br><br>Public   | <b>Market Sub-Sector:</b><br><br>Local Governments, Public Agencies, Special Districts, K-12 Schools   |
| <b>Sector Challenge:</b> Energy efficiency public agency programs in rural communities face the following challenges:<br>-Limited staff capacity to address EE opportunities<br>-Due to lack of capital and limited staff, facilities and systems are usually maintained beyond normal service life | <b>Sector Opportunity:</b><br>-Supplement staff with expert consulting support<br>-Provide scopes of work to replace older, inefficient equipment with more cost effective high-efficient alternatives |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Public sector customers serving rural, small and underserved communities not well served by resource acquisition programs</li> <li>-Gap in IOU non-resource market support EE programs serving the segment</li> <li>-Public sector revenues are down due to COVID-19 impacts such as decreased sales tax from hospitality and restaurant businesses.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-High demand for an EE program focusing on equity-targeted, small rural public sector customers</li> <li>-A non-resource program can funnel energy savings opportunities to RuralREN and other financing and resource acquisition programs.</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Known Equity Concerns in the Selected Markets:</b></p> <p>Public facilities in lower income rural regions do not have the resources to maintain and upgrade their facilities.</p>  | <p><b>Proposed Solutions to Equity Concerns:</b></p> <p>Provide increased technical assistance and services, acting on behalf of agencies as an extension of staff, in order to identify energy savings opportunities and manage implementation of upgrades and participation in EE programs. RuralREN's Finance Program will provide no cost financing for upgrade projects. Establish targets that will ensure achieving a high percentage of participation from targeted equity public customers.</p> |
| <p><b>Program Description:</b></p> <p>The RuralREN Public Equity Program is a public agency-focused program designed to help hard-to-reach, disadvantaged, and underserved public agencies in Lake, Mendocino, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties access, understand, and participate in energy efficiency by providing local expertise and knowledge of public buildings and infrastructure. The program builds on existing relationships, data, and experience to bring savings and knowledge of energy use to public sector customers.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Intervention Strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use energy meter data such as ESPM, Green Button, and PG&amp;E's Share My Data to</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Program Metrics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Equity-targeted agency, school, local government customer participation, percentage</li> </ul>  |

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| <p>identify usage patterns, changes, and opportunities for energy savings. By viewing this information across multiple agencies, we will develop scaled savings opportunities, create economies of scale for public dollars, inform future community-wide plans, and develop policies in support of energy efficiency procurement and leadership</p> <p>- Deploy a public-facing, web-based platform to work collaboratively with local governments to create infrastructure inventories that the customer can access, while simultaneously providing information to project managers to identify opportunities for energy equipment improvements. SJVCEO developed this tool and will provide it at no- cost to the Public Equity Program. Inventories will be 'crowdsourced' allowing the customer to update their information through a secured log-in and RuralREN staff will augment information utilizing data gathered from ESPM access, agency insurance filings and risk management reports and previous energy efficiency data from audits conducted by third parties.</p> <p>- Produce Energy Readiness Reports (ERRs) that will serve as a primary tool for communicating with agency staff and local elected officials to use data analysis collected from energy benchmarking to identify and prioritize opportunities for energy savings. The ERR will also prompt jurisdictions to integrate EE</p> | <p>-Hard-to-reach customer participation</p> <p>-Underserved customer participation</p> <p>-Disadvantaged community customer participation</p> <p>-Contacts: # of contacts by sub-sector and type</p> <p>-Pipeline: kWh, kW, Therms savings by phase (identified, committed, in construction, completed)</p> <p>- Audit/Reports (f): Number of audits or reports prepared or presented</p> <p>-Projects Managed (s): Number of projects managed and/or using GRITS, those where financing is facilitated or through OBF</p> <p>-Education (s): Number of Educational Opportunities offered</p> <p>-Benchmarking (s): Number or percentage of Buildings Benchmarked</p> <p>All final metrics, targets and indicators will be confirmed (or established after baseline determination) after approval of RuralREN with submittal of full Implementation Plan.</p> |
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| <p>into their capital improvement planning process when making decisions on building and equipment upgrades and deferred maintenance. ERR's will identify opportunities for funding and financing paths/programs and will include council- ready documents that support agency staff in moving projects from conception to completion, as well as applicable EE policies.</p> <p>-Provide inside project management support to help apply for funding, write staff reports, provide presentations to elected officials, conduct outreach to contractors, manage project installation, and help fulfill incentive or grant reporting requirements.</p> <p>-Promote financing and leverage RREN-07 Finance program micro loan and OBF bridge financing as a solution to overcome first-cost barriers.</p> |  |
| <p><b>High-level description of delivery workforce including necessary scale and its risks:</b></p> <p>Delivery workforce will include staff of RuralREN's Implementation Partners, including new hires dedicated to program implementation, and third-party engineering consultants. Availability and scale of the workforce needed for successful implementation of the program will not present a risk.</p>  |  |
| <p><b>Market Actors necessary for success:</b> Local engineering companies, contractors, trade allies, wholesale suppliers, and retailers must be able to support the increase in local demand for EE services.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Solicitation Strategy:</b> Implementation of portions of the program will be outsourced. Supplier diversity will be incorporated into RuralREN's solicitation strategy.</p>   | <p><b>Transition Plan:</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p> |

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| <p><b>Expected Program Life:</b></p> <p>Rollout will begin in 2023 and continue through the nine year cycle, at a scale to be determined during the first 5- year period, and depending on performance of third party programs and LGPs providing similar services in other area of RuralREN's service area. RuralREN will implement continuous improvements and refinements in program design, delivery strategies and tactics throughout the life of the program.</p> | <p><b>Short Term Plan</b></p> <p>Launch the program in 2023 and begin full-scale implementation in at least two RuralREN regions in 2024, then roll out in North Coast and Central Coast regions.</p>   |
| <p><b>Cost Effectiveness</b></p> <p>NA – RREN-03 is a non-resource program</p>  | <p><b>Long Term Outlook</b></p> <p>Rural public agencies and local government customers become comfortable using RuralREN support to implement energy efficiency and decarbonization measures, and adoption rates and energy savings in the sector increase. The program may be expanded to other RuralREN regions depending on performance of third party programs and LGPs providing similar services in those areas.</p> |
| <p><b>Proposed Annual Budgets for 2024-2027:</b></p> <p>2023: \$.547 million<br/> 2024: \$.579 million<br/> 2025: \$.581 million<br/> 2026: \$.535 million<br/> 2027: \$.535 million</p>  | <p><b>Anticipated directional and scale changes in budget for years 2028-2031:</b> Budgets are anticipated to remain constant over the four years of the business plan period but will be adjusted as needed based on demand for the program.</p>   |
| <p><b>Implementation Plan:</b> Implementation Plans for all RuralREN programs will be developed after CPUC approval of RuralREN's Application and before implementation begins.</p>   |   |



### PROGRAM SPECIFIC COORDINATION

Coordination will be needed between Local Government Partnership and IOU third-party contracts serving local governments and public agencies serving the region.

### RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

The RuralREN is proposing two programs in the Residential Sector – a non-resource, Equity Segment element and a Resource Acquisition element. Because there is a higher percentage of customers owning and occupying detached single-family homes than attached multifamily in rural areas, both programs focus on single-family owners and tenants. In addition to being geographically hard-to-reach, a large percentage of single-family households in the RuralREN region are also in disadvantaged communities and/or are underserved. The RuralREN's residential programs will provide a high-level of tailored outreach and in-person services and fill a gap that has been growing over time as pressures of cost effectiveness have caused IOUs to reduce their investment in the residential segment in general, and especially in the areas of in-person services and support.

The Residential Equity Segment Program will provide outreach and energy awareness information to all residential customers, tailored to the region, climate, county or community-level demographics, housing stock, and other characteristics, with a priority to serve hard-to-reach, underserved and disadvantaged communities. A basic energy efficiency “toolkit” containing simple training materials and simple low-cost energy efficiency measures such as LED lamps and faucet aerators will be provided at no-cost to residents who register for the program. The customer will install the measures and be encouraged to request a virtual or in-home audit as a follow-up. The audits will provide specific, actionable recommendations for improving the home to reduce energy consumption and GHG emissions, and will guide the customer toward available incentives and financing options offered by the RuralREN or electric and gas utility companies and third-party program implementers.

The Residential Resource Acquisition Segment Program will offer incentives for common home energy upgrades and GHG reducing heat pumps and induction cooktops. Energy Efficiency measures will include a variety of “whole home” items like weatherization, HVAC, and plug loads/appliances. Financing will also be promoted to qualified customers to enable implementation of energy projects with no capital outlay. RuralREN's proposed financing offerings are described in the cross-cutting Finance Sector discussion.

## RESIDENTIAL GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

### Residential Sector Goals

| Goal  | Strategy   | Objective  |
|---|--|--|
| G1-Create awareness of EE and decarbonization benefits and techniques among rural customers | -Inform and educate customers about specific actionable EE opportunities via EE kits, and virtual and in-home energy assessments   | Rural customers engage with and participate in RuralREN outreach and education activities  |
| G2-Increase participation of equity-targeted customers in EE programs                       | -Deploy tailored marketing and outreach campaigns to equity-targeted customer groups<br>-Use EE kits and energy coaches as an extra level of support for participation       | At least 50% of program participants are rural equity targeted customers   |
| G3-Drive energy savings and GHG reductions in rural residential sector                      | -Offer incentives and/or financing for common EE and decarbonization measures<br>-Refer customers to other IOU and third-party programs, and coordinate application process. | Energy and GHG reduction goals of RuralREN resource programs are met, and customers participate in other IOU and third-party resource programs |
| G4-Support and grow the local EE trade ally/contractor market                               | -Offer training for contractors about available programs and promoted measures<br>-Support rural contractors marketing and promotion through a trade ally network system     | Trained, knowledgeable contractors actively support RuralREN programs and customers to implement EE measures/projects. communities             |

**TABLE 62**

### RESIDENTIAL SECTOR COORDINATION

The RuralREN's Residential sector programs will coordinate with IOU, CEC, CPUC energy efficiency, Demand Response, Electrification and Market Transformation programs targeting residential customers to leverage funding and services. The RuralREN will coordinate closely with other residential behavioral and incentive programs. In the Central Coast and San Joaquin Valley RuralREN regions where the Residential Resource Acquisition program is not offered, the Residential Equity program will coordinate with finance and incentive program offerings to assist customers in participation and avoid overlap or conflicting messaging.

## CATEGORIZATION BY SEGMENT

### Residential Categorization by Segment

| Sector      | Program                | Segment              | Rationale   |
|-------------|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Residential | Outreach and Education | Equity               | The Residential Equity program targets CPUC-defined Equity customers in hard to reach, disadvantaged, and underserved categories. 50 to 70% of the program participants will be in these equity categories. |
| Residential | Incentives             | Resource Acquisition | The Residential Resource Acquisition program will offer incentives and direct install measures and claim energy savings and TSB using Deemed savings.   |

TABLE 63

### PROGRAM DETAILS

| Program Name: RuralREN Residential Equity Program  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Program ID:</b> RREN-004</p> <p><b>New / Existing:</b> NEW</p> <p><b>Link to implementation plan if existing (see D.21-05-031):</b> IP to be developed after CPUC approval of RREN Application</p> |  |
| <p><b>Portfolio Segment:</b></p> <p>EQUITY</p>   | <p><b>Implementation Party:</b></p> <p>RuralREN</p>  |
| <p><b>Applicable Sector:</b></p> <p>Residential</p>  | <p><b>Market Sub-Sector:</b></p> <p>Single Family Residential (primarily)</p> <p>Mobile Home and Multi-Family (in select regions or communities)</p> |
| <p><b>Sector Challenge:</b> Energy efficiency in rural communities faces the following challenges:</p> <p>-Geographic Isolation</p>  | <p><b>Sector Opportunity:</b> With relatively low awareness and participation in EE programs comes an opportunity for a locally-based,</p>           |

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| <p>-Lack of energy efficiency awareness in rural communities</p> <p>-High first-cost of energy efficiency, especially for services workers and retirees</p> <p>-Low engagement by Rural HTR customers in energy efficiency programs that are perceived as more suited for urban/suburban residents.</p>   | <p>regional approach to raise awareness and increase customer adoption of EE practices and measures. With TOU rates phasing in, and the market at an inflection point with regard to decarbonization strategies, the timing is ideal for tailored education and awareness approaches to drive new and deep energy savings in rural communities. High energy burden and extreme weather provide motivation for customers to pursue energy efficiency for cost savings and increased comfort benefits.</p> |
| <p><b>Known Equity Concerns in the Selected Markets:</b></p> <p>A large portion of RuralREN's communities are disadvantaged, lower income, and geographically hard-to-reach. Energy burdens are on average, much higher than the state average, and counterparts in urban/suburban areas.</p>   | <p><b>Proposed Solutions to Equity Concerns:</b></p> <p>RuralREN's Residential Equity program targets equity customers first, including service and agricultural workers and retirees. Outreach and messaging strategies are tailored to the needs and characteristics of local communities and approaches will be customized based on predominant culture, language, employment, and housing type, to develop knowledge of basic energy and energy management principles.</p>                           |
| <p><b>Program Description:</b></p> <p>RuralREN's Residential Equity program connects rural residential communities to energy efficiency opportunities through targeted outreach, education and technical assistance focusing on equity-targeted hard-to-reach, disadvantaged, and low-income customer groups, including agriculture, hospitality, healthcare workers, and retirees who often face very high energy burdens in rural areas. The program aids rural communities in better understanding the concepts of energy conservation, energy efficiency, and demand response; connects customers to the opportunities for energy savings that might exist in their homes; and guides</p> |  |

customers to other RuralREN programs as well as external programs and resources to support implementation of energy projects.

**Intervention Strategy:**

- Marketing, Education and Outreach campaigns via digital (email, social media), direct mail, local print, radio, and television media, community events, utilizing local elected officials, agency staff, CBOs, FBOs, tailored regionally
- “Find a Watt” energy efficiency opportunity awareness “toolkits” provided to customers who sign up via marketing channels
- Virtual energy efficiency, net zero energy and carbon audits utilizing interactive modeling platform (initially offered only in Central Coast region)
- In-home energy audits conducted by local program staff and Green House Calls Climate Careers trainees
- Energy reports that map out action steps to implement EE measures and behaviors, connecting customer with other supporting programs, incentives and financing offered by IOU, third parties, and RuralREN.

**Program Metrics:**

As a non-resource program, quantitative metrics and indicators focus on delivery and impacts, including:

- Equity-targeted customer participation, percentage
- Hard to reach customer participation
- Underserved customer participation
- Disadvantaged community customer participation
- Outreach events held and number of attendees
- Digital media offerings and response/effectiveness
- Total populations reached w/ME&O campaigns
- EE Toolkits distributed and installed
- Audits conducted, in person, phone, virtual

Targets for each metric will be confirmed (or established after baseline determination) after CPUC approval of RuralREN Application.

**High-level description of delivery workforce including necessary scale and its risks:**

Delivery workforce will include staff of RuralREN's Implementation Partners, including new hires dedicated to program implementation and temporary paid and volunteer workers to staff outreach events and Green House Calls trainees from RuralREN's WE&T program. Availability and scale of the workforce needed for successful implementation of the program will not present a risk.

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| <b>Market Actors necessary for success:</b> Local contractors, trade allies, wholesale suppliers, and retailers must be able to support the increase in demand expected from the program's ME&O efforts.  |  |
| <b>Solicitation Strategy:</b> Portions of the Res Equity program that may be outsourced include virtual audit app, EE toolkits, and in-home audits.<br><br>RuralREN will implement a strong supplier diversity program in its outsourcing activities.                       | <b>Transition Plan:</b><br><br>Not applicable  |
| <b>Expected Program Life:</b><br><br>Rollout will begin in 2023 and continue through the nine-year cycle and beyond. RuralREN will implement continuous improvements and refinements in program design, delivery strategies and tactics throughout the life of the program. | <b>Short Term Plan</b><br><br>Get the program operational in 2023 and begin full-scale ME&O implementation in all four RuralREN regions in 2024.   |
| <b>Cost Effectiveness</b><br><br>As a non-resource program cost effectiveness is not applicable.  | <b>Long Term Outlook</b><br><br>Customers in rural communities become increasingly aware of energy policies and strategies and continue to implement energy savings activities and adapt to changing strategies and tactics. |
| <b>Proposed Annual Budgets for 2024-2027:</b><br>2023: \$3.06 million<br>2024: \$6.83 million<br>2025: \$6.75 million<br>2026: \$6.86 million<br>2027: \$6.89 million   | <b>Anticipated directional and scale changes in budget for years 2028-2031:</b> Budgets are anticipated to increase slightly over the last four years of the business plan period.   |
| <b>Implementation Plan:</b> Implementation Plans for all RuralREN programs will be developed after CPUC approval of RuralREN's Application and before implementation begins.  |  |



| Program Name: RuralREN Residential Resource Acquisition Program  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Program ID:</b> RREN-001<br><b>New / Existing:</b> NEW<br><b>Link to implementation plan if existing (see D.21-05-031):</b> IP to be developed after CPUC approval of a new, RuralREN   |   |
| <b>Portfolio Segment:</b><br><br>RESOURCE ACQUISITION  | <b>Implementation Party:</b><br><br>RuralREN  |
| <b>Applicable Sector:</b><br><br>Residential   | <b>Market Sub-Sector:</b><br><br>Single Family Residential  |
| <b>Sector Challenge:</b> Energy efficiency resource acquisition programs in rural communities face the following challenges:<br><br>-Geographic isolation<br>-Lack of energy efficiency awareness<br>-High first-cost of energy efficiency, especially for low-moderate income rural service workers and retirees<br>-Low engagement by rural HTR customers in energy efficiency programs that are perceived as more suited for urban/suburban residents<br>-Low cost effectiveness of resource acquisition programs because of high cost to serve and most needed measures carry low cost effectiveness | <b>Sector Opportunity:</b> With relatively low awareness and participation in EE programs comes an opportunity for a locally-based, regional approach to raise awareness and increase customer adoption of EE practices and measures. With TOU rates phasing in, and the market at an inflection point with regard to decarbonization strategies, the timing is ideal for a tailored resource acquisition program to drive new and deep energy savings in rural communities. High energy burden and extreme weather provide motivation for customers to pursue energy efficiency measures to reduce costs and realize comfort and reliability benefits. |
| <b>Known Equity Concerns in the Selected Markets:</b><br><br>A large portion of RuralREN's communities are disadvantaged, lower income, and  | <b>Proposed Solutions to Equity Concerns:</b><br><br>RuralREN's Residential Resource Acquisition program will focus its efforts on achieving a high percentage of participation from  |

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| <p>geographically hard-to-reach. Energy burdens are on average, much higher than the state average, and counterparts in urban/suburban areas.</p>  | <p>targeted equity customers. Outreach and messaging strategies of the Residential Equity program will drive equity customers to implement energy efficiency upgrades to their homes using incentives and direct install services.</p>   |
| <p><b>Program Description:</b></p> <p>RuralREN's Residential Resource Acquisition program is a comprehensive EE and decarbonization program offering technical services, customer incentives, and direct installation of select measures aimed at reducing energy usage, on-peak load and GHG emissions. The program will be offered in RuralREN's Sierra and North Coast regions, which are the most remote and sparsely populated areas of RuralREN's service territory. The program uses a whole house approach to increase adoption of EE, demand response, and decarbonization measures, while providing added safety, resilience and occupant comfort benefits. While not categorized as an Equity segment program, the program will prioritize services for disadvantaged, underserved and geographically hard-to-reach customers, including low- to moderate-income retirees and service workers in hospitality, agriculture and healthcare industries who often face very high energy burdens in rural areas. The program compliments RuralREN's Residential Equity program (RREN-004) by integrating its marketing, outreach and education activities.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Intervention Strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Leverage RREN-04 Residential Equity program marketing, education and outreach campaigns via digital (email, social media), direct mail, local print, radio, and television media, community events, utilizing local elected officials, agency staff, CBOs, FBOs, tailored regionally, and other Equity program services that can drive customers to the Residential Resource Acquisition program.</li> <li>-Energy Advisors act as customer's single-point-of-contact. An Energy Advisor will provide</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Program Metrics:</b></p> <p>As a resource acquisition program with an equity emphasis, metrics include resource and non-resource measures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Equity-targeted customer participation, percentage</li> <li>-Hard-to- reach customer participation</li> <li>-Underserved customer participation</li> <li>-Disadvantaged community customer participation</li> <li>-TSB: \$1,368,685</li> <li>-Net kWh: 4,115,269</li> <li>-Net kW: 120</li> <li>-Net Therms: 28,586</li> </ul> |

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| <p>home evaluations of single measures all the way up to a full home performance report, depending on the customer's needs and situation, and guide the customer through implementation options.</p> <p>Energy Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Deemed incentives for appliances, insulation, heat pump water heaters, heat pumps, duct sealing, pipe wrap, and faucet aerators.</li> <li>-Direct installation of certain measures, with incentives high enough to cover 100% of the measure cost using trade allies who have been qualified and agree to RuralREN pricing with zero or low customer co-pay.</li> </ul> | <p>-CO2e, tons: 986</p> <p>Targets for each metric will be confirmed (or established after baseline determination) after CPUC approval of RuralREN Application.</p> |
| <p><b>High-level description of delivery workforce including necessary scale and its risks:</b></p> <p>Delivery workforce will include staff of RuralREN's Sierra and North Coast Implementation Partners, including new hires dedicated to program implementation and graduates of RuralREN's WE&amp;T program, RREN-05. Local direct install contractors and market-based trade allies will be needed to meet customer demand for measures. Availability and scale of the workforce needed for successful implementation of the program will not present a risk.</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Market Actors necessary for success:</b> Local contractors, trade allies, wholesale suppliers, and retailers must be able to support the increase in demand for the promoted EE measures.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Solicitation Strategy:</b> Portions of the program may be outsourced, such as installation contractor services. Supplier diversity will be incorporated into RuralREN's solicitation strategy.</p> <p>RuralREN will implement a strong supplier diversity program in its outsourcing activities.</p>   | <p><b>Transition Plan:</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>  |
| <p><b>Expected Program Life:</b></p>   | <p><b>Short Term Plan</b></p>   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Rollout will begin in 2023 and continue through the nine year cycle and beyond. RuralREN will implement continuous improvements and refinements in program design, delivery strategies and tactics throughout the life of the program. | Launch program in 2023 and begin full-scale implementation in Sierra and North Coast RuralREN regions in 2024.  |
| <b>Cost Effectiveness</b><br>TRC w/o admin: 0.60<br>TRC w/admin: 0.24<br>PAC w/o admin: 0.61<br>PAC w/admin: 0.24  | <b>Long Term Outlook</b><br>EE adoption rates of rural customers and energy savings in the region increase and energy burden is decreased, especially for equity-targeted customers. Other RuralREN regions implement resource acquisition programs as gaps develop, and TSB and cost-effectiveness increase over time. |
| <b>Proposed Annual Budgets for 2023-2027:</b><br>2023: \$.590 million<br>2024: \$1.15 million<br>2025: \$1.70 million<br>2026: \$2.36 million<br>2027: \$2.49 million  | <b>Anticipated directional and scale changes in budget for years 2028-2031:</b> Budgets are anticipated to increase slightly over the last four years of the Business Plan period.  |
| <b>Implementation Plan:</b> Implementation Plans for all RuralREN programs will be developed after CPUC approval of RuralREN's Application and before implementation begins.   |   |

## PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

### STRATEGIES TO OPTIMIZE PORTFOLIO AND MANAGE RISK

#### APPROACH TO USE OF GOALS AND METRICS FOR PORTFOLIO OPTIMIZATION

The foundation of the RuralREN's management and optimization of its portfolio is based on a comprehensive set of goals and metrics it has established and described in preceding sections of this Business Plan. The RuralREN's approach to using these goals and metrics to optimize the portfolio will include the following principles:

Visibility and Transparency: Publish metrics and progress to goals regularly and frequently. Ensure all team members have access to reports and dashboards. Report status and forecasts to the RuralREN's Leadership Team at regular meetings and discuss possible course corrections.

Data Analysis to Quickly Identify Trends: Use automated programs and portfolio databases to produce performance summaries. Understand what tactics and strategies are working, and where possible corrections or program design modifications are needed to improve performance.

Forecasting that Considers Market Trends: Proactively take into account changes in market conditions that may affect program performance. Examples of Market Trends could include COVID-19 spread, economic trends such as inflation and unemployment.

Flexibility to Use Additional Metrics or Goals as Needed: The RuralREN's proposed set of metrics and goals should be adequate to manage portfolio performance, but other proxies or indicators may be identified during implementation that may improve forecasting accuracy or better describe program performance.

#### *PLAN AND PROCEDURES PA WILL FOLLOW FOR STAYING "ON-TARGET" IN ITS ABILITY TO MEET SAVINGS/TSB GOALS AND COST-EFFECTIVENESS TARGETS*

The RuralREN will develop procedures manuals for its management team to manage portfolio, segment, sector, and program level performance to achieve targets. Procedures will address operations, IT systems, program controls, program forms and agreements and tracking and reporting results and metrics. A customer relationship management software platform will be implemented by lead administrative, RCEA, to manage programs. Program reports will quickly identify metrics and indicators that are deviating from plan, and program and portfolio managers will be expected to develop a recovery or cure plan to get back on target.

#### *APPROACH TO RISK MANAGEMENT, SUCH AS PLANNING FOR THE UNPREDICTABLE EVENTS. INCLUDE HERE ANY LESSONS LEARNED FROM COVID THAT INFORMED THE PAS MANAGEMENT APPROACH.*

The RuralREN understands the importance of managing the impacts to the program portfolio brought on by unpredictable events such as a pandemic, wildfires, floods, droughts, or other natural disasters. These crisis-based events require an agile and quick response by the

Program Administrator, who can mitigate the impact on the program portfolio and, in some instances, create an opportunity to increase energy efficiency adoption.

RuralREN's presence across rural California, and its collaborative portfolio management structure, allows the RuralREN to respond to such events in a structured, coordinated manner. The RuralREN will mitigate its exposure to these unpredictable events by (1) conducting ongoing program performance reviews to identify needs in portfolio realignment, (2) implementing program budgets changes to address program performance, (3) resetting program operations to maintain program delivery, (4) reconfirming existing joint collaboration with other Program Administrators and their Implementers to support ongoing collaboration and (5) coordinating with the CPUC on needed programmatic or policy changes.

During the Covid 19 pandemic, RuralREN members adjusted their customer relationships to create virtual engagements, allowing their energy efficiency initiatives to continue.

#### APPROACH TO FLEXIBLE PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT

The RuralREN's approach to managing its portfolio begins with the establishment of goals and outcomes (scope), schedules, and costs. These parameters become the program management triangle used by the management team to inform their segment or sector portfolios. Tracking and reporting systems are used to gather and consolidate program results, costs and schedules which are in turn will be used to produce dashboards and reports of performance in real-time that will show performance compared to goals. Forecasts are reviewed, and if necessary, updated at least quarterly (depending on the program). When forecasts indicate changes are needed in any of the three program triangle variables, re-planning of portfolio variables at the sector, segment, and portfolio levels is triggered. Sector, segment, and portfolio management work together to consider corrective actions. Key areas of flexibility needed to ensure overall portfolio goals are achieved include:

- Scope
  - Outreach
  - Subcontracts
  - Delivery approach
  - Partners
  - Service levels
  - Measures
  - Incentive levels



- Goal allocation by program/sector/segment/portfolio
- Cost (Budget)
  - Allocation to programs/sector/segment
- Time (Schedule)
  - Monthly, quarterly, or annual milestones (within overall program authorization cycle)

## PLANNED PROCEDURES AND THRESHOLDS FOR COURSE CORRECTION IF PORTFOLIO IS OFF-TRACK

Portfolio management procedures, including those addressing course corrections, are described at a high level in the section above. Detailed procedures for program management and controls, including thresholds and delegation of authority with regard to forecasting and re-planning will be contained in the operating procedures manuals for the RuralREN. Manuals will be finalized after CPUC authorization and prior to program launch.

## THIRD-PARTY PROGRAMS

As a Regional Energy Network, CPUC requirements for IOUs to utilize third parties to “design and implement” certain percentages of their portfolios do not apply to the RuralREN. Thus, the RuralREN is not proposing to include any “Third-Party Programs” in its portfolio.

## PORTFOLIO COORDINATION

### COORDINATION WITH OTHER PAs

Successful energy efficiency programs across overlapping regions require active and continuous cooperation among PAs, across shared customer groups and market supply chains. The RuralREN is founded on such collaboration among its four California rural regions and proposes to extend such effective collaboration to IOUs, CCAs, and other RENs to ensure complementary offerings are effectively directed at rural customers located in overlapping territories. As a result of the growing importance that RENs and CCAs have in California's energy efficiency landscape, as well as the evolution of CPUC policies recognizing the need to create unique portfolio segments for customer equity and energy efficiency market support. The RuralREN recognizes coordination performed at a local level is vitally important to the success of energy efficiency programs. The RuralREN is committed to coordination and effective collaboration with other PAs and implementers.

*DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR'S PORTFOLIO IS COMPLEMENTARY WITH THE PORTFOLIOS OF OTHER PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS WITH OVERLAPPING SERVICE TERRITORY*

The RuralREN possesses the skillset, experience, and position to coordinate effectively with the other PAs within the overlapping geographic regions to better serve rural customers. The RuralREN's established vision is based on the premise that we will offer complementary services and advance energy efficiency adoption by equity-qualified customer groups, including geographically hard-to-reach customers who are often underrepresented and underserved by energy efficiency programs. Our vision is to act as a catalyst to accelerate the implementation of the state's energy efficiency and climate goals in geographically hard-to-reach California. By delivering rural regional collaboration, leveraging our trusted local relationships, and promoting pragmatic responses to community needs, the RuralREN will help deliver an equitable and clean energy future for rural California.

*DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE FOUR-YEAR PORTFOLIO AND BUDGET CONSIDERS AND COORDINATES WITH OTHER ENERGY PROGRAMS TO MITIGATE DUPLICATION OF EFFORT, UNNECESSARY SPENDING, AND CUSTOMER CONFUSION OR A CUSTOMER PARTICIPATING IN A SUBOPTIMAL PROGRAM FOR THEIR NEEDS.*

The RuralREN unifies vast rural regions throughout California to enable greater economies of scale in program outreach and delivery to create a greater level of customer program participation. The RuralREN's governance structure allows the RuralREN to seamlessly coordinate with multiple PAs and program implementers. The RuralREN will facilitate regularly scheduled (monthly, quarterly) coordination meetings with other PAs and implementers with the goal to eliminate customer confusion, avoid program duplication, create cost efficiencies, and help programs achieve higher levels of customer participation. As part of these program coordination meetings, the RuralREN will facilitate the advancement of other objectives, including creating and leveraging local workforces throughout rural California, especially workers located in disadvantaged communities, to help deliver programs in their own communities. The RuralREN's coordination will enable the sharing of best practices and lessons learned in program design and delivery among program implementers serving the represented rural communities.

The RuralREN will use the annual Joint Cooperation Memorandum process to negotiate and memorialize processes and parameters of coordination among PAs to avoid duplication of

programs that address a common sector in overlapping service territories.<sup>63</sup> As part of the Joint Cooperation Memorandum, the RuralREN will: (1) summarize all the programs we intend to run and indicate which programs may overlap; (2) describe how we will work with other PAs so that customers are informed of all options and not steered simply to our own programs; and (3) describe how we work with the PAs to ensure customers are aware of the others' programs, where that administrator does not have a similar offering. The annual Joint Cooperation Memorandum will enable the RuralREN to coordinate all operational and marketing activities to avoid suboptimal program delivery.

### *COORDINATION WITH OTHER DEMAND-SIDE PROGRAMS*

Rural customers must be enabled to pursue a clean energy future. This requires providing rural customers opportunities for equitable transition to the clean energy future envisioned by California policymakers. The RuralREN looks to empower rural customers so they can make informed energy management decisions, including the importance of adopting clean energy solutions along with energy efficiency. The RuralREN is well-positioned to help rural communities navigate to this clean energy transition, by bridging the information and services gaps that have left so many rural customers in an economic and environmental divide.

The RuralREN will promote other demand-side programs, with an emphasis on cleaner energy solutions, to rural customers. Given the higher levels of disadvantaged communities, especially in the San Joaquin Valley, the RuralREN will actively promote the IOU's ESA and CARE offerings to residential customers. As the new market transformation efforts evolve, the RuralREN will actively inform customers about the benefits of incentive stacking and the adoption of newer emerging technologies. The RuralREN will coordinate with other PAs and program implementers to advance customer awareness to increase participation in other DSM offerings.

### *STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS APPLICATION*

As part of the CPUC requirements, the RuralREN application must include a written summary of feedback received from the CAEECC meeting and other stakeholder input, along with the

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<sup>63</sup> D. 18-05-041, OP 38 "...Both utility program administrators and non-utility program administrators shall (1) summarize all the programs they intend to run and indicate which programs may overlap; (2) describe how each will work with the other so that customers are informed of all options and not steered simply to their own programs; and (3) describe how each will ensure customers are also aware of the others' programs, where that administrator does not have a similar offering. The program administrators must submit their first annual joint cooperation memos for approval via Tier 2 advice letters no later than August 1, 2018. The program administrators must include subsequent annual joint cooperation memos via Tier 2 advice letters no later than June 15, prior to submitting their annual budget advice letters"

response or changes that were made as a result of the input on the proposed REN.<sup>64</sup> In response, The RuralREN presented its plan to several stakeholders including a public workshop sponsored by CAEECC. Generally, the RuralREN received a positive stakeholder response to helping rural customers gain greater access to energy efficiency programs. Stakeholders understood the need to advance the CPUC equity policies and how the RuralREN could help advance these policies in rural communities throughout California. The RuralREN business plan is informed of this stakeholder feedback process. An itemized list of stakeholders' input and the RuralREN's response and adjustments made to its plan are shown in Appendix D (Stakeholder Input & Resolution).

Stakeholder engagement also included a commitment to cooperate from affected Program Administrators, consistent with CPUC requirements for new RENs.<sup>65</sup> The PA letters of commitment to cooperate with the new RuralREN are presented in Appendix A & B (Letters of Commitment to Coordinate & Support).

## EVALUATION, MEASUREMENT & VERIFICATION

### SUMMARY OF PLANNED EM&V STUDIES AND ACTIVITIES

The RuralREN anticipates working closely with CPUC staff, IOUs and other PAs, especially other RENs, to participate and advise on development of CPUC EM&V Roadmaps and be an active participant in CPUC EM&V studies and working groups. Needs have been identified by other RENs and the RuralREN will become a part of and contribute to REN-related studies. Planned activities for RuralREN include supporting CPUC EM&V needs with data collection built into each of its programs, and to become active participants in the EM&V planning and implementation activities.

### PA/ED BUDGET ALLOCATION AND JUSTIFICATION

RuralREN proposes an EM&V budget for the 5-year portfolio of \$996,048, which is 1.05% of the total 5-year portfolio budget. The split of the 4% EM&V budget is 26.5% for RuralREN, 73.5% for

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<sup>64</sup>D. 19-12-021, OP 2 "A proposal for a new regional energy network (REN) may be brought to the Commission at any time via a motion in the open energy efficiency rulemaking. A proposed REN is required to represent more than one local government entity and must present its business plan proposal to at least one meeting of the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC) prior to filing it with the Commission. The REN motion to the Commission must also contain: (a) A description of its new and unique value to contribute to California's energy, climate, and/or equity goals. (b) A description of its proposed governance structure. (c) A "letter of commitment to cooperate" from each existing program administrator with whom the new REN's proposed activities will overlap. (d) A written summary of feedback received from the CAEECC meeting and any other stakeholder input, along with the response or changes that were made as a result of the input. (e) A proposed set of energy savings targets. (f) A proposed set of goals and metrics. (g) An estimate of benefits and costs according to the Total Resource Cost and Program Administrator Cost tests."

<sup>65</sup> Id

Energy Division. The RuralREN plans to utilize its budget to gather and maintain data needed to support program evaluations, and as described in the preceding section.

### COST & COST RECOVERY

Our recommendation for funding/cost recovery for the RuralREN is to use the same funding split that was used by the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization in the three-IOU LGP which was: 80% electric split 50/50 between PG&E and SCE, and 20% gas split (while not established, we suggest 60/40 between SoCalGas and PG&E). The overall co-funding split would be 48% for PG&E, 40% for SCE, and 12% for SoCalGas. However, we defer to the guidance of the IOU partners and Energy Division for the funding split since we do not have the necessary sales or load data to come up with a more accurate basis for a split.

### SUMMARY OF COSTS AT PORTFOLIO-LEVEL

Summaries of RuralREN's proposed portfolio costs are included in this business plan and Program Portfolio (Application) Exhibit One and Two. Detailed breakdowns of costs are included in attached spreadsheets and budget narrative "Exhibit Four: RuralREN Responses, Pursuant To Energy Division Templates" in accordance with CPUC Decision 21-05-031<sup>66</sup>

### PA'S APPROACH TO CLASSIFICATION OF WHICH UNSPENT FUNDS ARE DESIGNATED "COMMITTED" AND THUS NOT APPLIED TO REDUCE RECOVERY IN FUTURE YEARS

The RuralREN will use procedures acceptable to its Fiscal Agent and the CPUC to classify unspent funds as "committed". We anticipate we will have unspent but committed funds in the incentive programs, finance programs and in outsourced services or implementation contracts that span reporting/authorization cycles.

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<sup>66</sup> D.21-05-031, OP 5 "All current energy efficiency program administrators shall file applications on February 15, 2022 for program year 2024, and every four years after that, containing the following elements: (a) A business plan to cover an eight-year period. The business plan shall serve as a strategic plan for the energy efficiency efforts of the program administrator, and shall contain sector-level strategies, metrics, and an eight-year budget. (b) A four-year program portfolio, beginning with program year 2024. This portion of the application shall contain: detailed sector and program strategies; annual budgets, totaling to a four-year revenue requirement; cost-effectiveness showings over the four-year period; and implementation plans, or links to them, for all programs that are currently operating or planned to operate during the four-year portfolio period, with the exception of third party programs where the contract has not yet been awarded. (c) The technical inputs given in Table 2 of this decision."; Id, OP 8 "When all program administrators file their combined business plan and four-year portfolio applications, the funding proposals shall be zero-based, justifying all expenses for each year of the four-year period, after analyzing each function within the budget for its needs and costs."

## EXHIBIT THREE: APPENDICES

- A. Letters of Commitment to Cooperate
- B. Letters of Support
- C. Stakeholder Feedback
- D. CAEECC Stakeholder Presentation Slide Deck and Response to Questions
- E. Figures, Tables, and Photos



## APPENDIX A: LETTERS OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE

### Investor Owned Unities

- Pacific Gas & Electric Company
- Southern California Edison Company
- Southern California Gas Company

### Regional Energy Networks

- Southern California Regional Energy Network
- Tri-County Regional Energy Network

**REGIONAL ENERGY NETWORK**  
**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE**  
**BETWEEN**  
**REDWOOD COAST ENERGY AUTHORITY AND**  
**PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC COMPANY**

**PURPOSE**

Pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC” or “Commission”) Decision D.19-12-021 (“Decision”), Ordering Paragraph (OP) 2, this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate is to make an initial clarifying statement highlighting the coordination and cooperation between Redwood Coast Energy Authority (“RCEA”) as the Program Administrator of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (“RuralREN”) and Pacific Gas and Electric Company (“PG&E”), an investor-owned utility (IOU). RuralREN and PG&E would have overlapping operation in the same geographic area RuralREN proposes to operate. The RCEA on behalf of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (“AMBAG”), County of San Luis Obispo, High Sierra Energy Foundation (“HSEF”), San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (“SJVCEO”), and Sierra Business Council (“SBC”) and itself in the matter of forming and administering RuralREN hereby submits this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate along with the RuralREN’s energy efficiency (EE) strategic business plan and portfolio plan proposal (EE Application) to the CPUC.

**Program Coordination**

RuralREN has initiated efforts to coordinate its planned EE approaches and programs with PG&E. PG&E and the prospective RuralREN agree to continue to coordinate and cooperate to mitigate program conflicts should RuralREN’s proposal be approved by the Commission. This includes, but is not limited to, development and execution of joint cooperation memoranda (JCMs) pursuant to D.19-12-021, OP 3.

Further, upon approval by the Commission of RuralREN’s EE Application, RCEA and PG&E will work with all other program administrators with overlapping geographical jurisdictions, to negotiate in good faith and develop the JCM. RCEA and PG&E intend to finalize the REN program parameters and coordination details in the JCM for annual joint submittal to the Commission.

**[Signatures on the following page]**

**SIGNATURE PAGE TO**  
**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE**  
**BETWEEN**  
**Redwood Coast Energy Authority**  
**AND**  
**Pacific Gas & Electric Company**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have made and executed this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate as of the date first written above.


**RCEA**

Redwood Coast Energy Authority

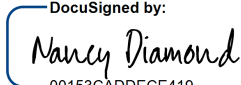
By:   
71854927A198432...  
Matthew Marshall  
Executive Director

**Investor Owned Utility**

Pacific Gas and Electric Company

By:   
DDBEF558EDC04BC...  
David Poster  
Director, Energy Efficiency

Approved to Form:

By:   
00153CADDECE419...  
Nancy Diamond  
General Counsel

**REGIONAL ENERGY NETWORK**  
**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE**  
**BETWEEN**  
**REDWOOD COAST ENERGY AUTHORITY AND**  
**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON**

**PURPOSE**

Pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC” or “Commission”) Decision D.19-12-021 (“Decision”). Ordering Paragraph 2(c), the purpose of this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate is to make the initial clarifying statement to highlight the cooperation between Redwood Coast Energy Authority (“RCEA”) as the Program Administrator (“PA”) of the Rural Regional Energy Network (“RuralREN”) and Southern California Edison Company (“SCE”), an investor-owned utility. The RCEA, on behalf of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (“AMBAG”), County of San Luis Obispo, High Sierra Energy Foundation (“HSEF”), San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (“SVCEO”), and Sierra Business Council (“SBC”) and itself in the matter of forming and administering RuralREN, hereby submits this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate between RCEA and SCE, along with the RuralRENs Business Plan proposal to the CPUC.

**BACKGROUND**

The Commission adopted the Decision on December 5, 2019. The Decision authorized the continued operation of all existing Regional Energy Networks (“RENs”) and invited proposals for new RENs to be filed with the Commission via a motion in the open energy efficiency rulemaking, if they meet certain additional requirements as defined in the Decision. The additional requirements for new RENs are as follows:

1. RENs will be required to demonstrate unique value in achieving state goals;
2. RENs will represent more than one local government entity;
3. RENs will coordinate with existing program administrators in their geographic area prior to filing their business plans;
4. RENs must vet their proposal with stakeholders through the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (“CAEECC”);
5. RENs must explain their REN governance structure in their business plan filing;
6. RENs must provide an estimate of benefits and costs according to the Total Resource Cost and Program Administer Cost Tests;
7. RENs must provide a proposed set of energy savings targets;
8. RENs must provide a proposed set of goals and metrics.

## **Program Coordination**

RCEA and SCE will coordinate on the following program sectors:

Codes & Standards

Finance

Residential

Workforce Education & Training

Working with other Program Administrators, RCEA and SCE will initiate the development of the Joint Cooperation Memo if RuralREN's Business Plan is approved by the Commission. Upon approval, RCEA and SCE commit to cooperate and work together, and with other relevant Program Administrators, to f complete the RuralREN program parameters and coordination details so that the parties can submit the required Joint Cooperation Memo.

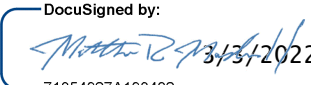
**[Signatures on the following page]**

**SIGNATURE PAGE TO**  
  
**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE**  
**BETWEEN**  
**Redwood Coast Energy Authority**  
**AND**  
**Southern California Edison**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have made and executed this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate as of the date first written above.


**RCEA**

Redwood Coast Energy Authority

By:  3/3/2022  
71854927A198432...  
Matthew Marshall  
Executive Director

**Investor Owned Utility**

Southern California Edison Company

By:  3/3/2022  
76FBB74B131C44A...  
Chanel Parson  
Director, Advanced Energy Solutions



**REGIONAL ENERGY NETWORK**  
**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE**  
**BETWEEN**  
**REDWOOD COAST ENERGY AUTHORITY AND**  
**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY**

**PURPOSE**

Pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC” or “Commission”) Decision D.19-12-021 (“Decision”), the purpose of this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate is to make the initial clarifying statement to highlight the cooperation between Redwood Coast Energy Authority (“RCEA”) as the Program Administrator (“PA”) of the Rural Regional Energy Network (“RuralREN”) and Southern California Gas Company (“SoCalGas”), an Investor Owned Utility. The RCEA on behalf of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (“AMBAG”), County of San Luis Obispo, High Sierra Energy Foundation (“HSEF”), San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (“SJVCEO”), and Sierra Business Council (“SBC”) and itself in the matter of forming and administering RuralREN hereby submits this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate along with the RuralRENs Business Plan proposal to the CPUC.

**BACKGROUND**

The Commission adopted the Decision on December 5, 2019. The Decision authorized the continued operation of all existing Regional Energy Networks (“RENs”) and invited proposals for new RENs to be filed with the Commission via a motion in the open energy efficiency rulemaking, if they meet certain additional requirements as defined in the Decision. The additional requirements for new RENs are as follows:

1. RENs will be required to demonstrate unique value in achieving state goals;
2. RENs will represent more than one local government entity;
3. RENs will coordinate with existing program administrators in their geographic area prior to filing their business plans;
4. RENs must vet their proposal with stakeholders through the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (“CAEECC”);
5. RENs must explain their REN governance structure in their business plan filing;
6. RENs must provide an estimate of benefits and costs according to the Total Resource Cost and Program Administer Cost Tests;
7. RENs must provide a proposed set of energy savings targets;
8. RENs must provide a proposed set of goals and metrics.

## **Program Coordination**

RCEA and SoCalGas will coordinate on the following program sectors in the shared service territory:

Codes & Standards

Finance

Residential

Workforce Education & Training

Working with other Program Administrators, RCEA and SoCalGas will initiate the development of the Joint Cooperation Memo if RuralREN's Business Plan is approved by the Commission. Upon approval, RCEA and SoCalGas will work together along with other Program Administrators on finalizing the program parameters and coordination details for the final submittal of the Joint Cooperation Memo.

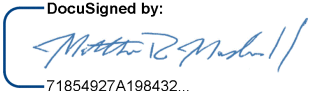
**[Signatures on the following page]**

**SIGNATURE PAGE TO**  
  
**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE**  
**BETWEEN**  
**Redwood Coast Energy Authority**  
**AND**  
**Southern California Gas Company**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have made and executed this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate as of the date first written above.


**RCEA**

Redwood Coast Energy Authority


By:   
71854927A198432...  
Matthew Marshall  
Executive Director

**Investor Owned Utility**

Southern California Gas Company

By:   
E7913F1D4D95493...  
Brian Prusnek  
Director, Customer Programs &  
Assistance

Approved to Form:

By:   
00153CADDECE419...  
Nancy Diamond  
General Counsel

**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE  
BETWEEN  
REDWOOD COAST ENERGY AUTHORITY AND  
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL ENERGY NETWORK**

**PURPOSE**

Pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission ("CPUC" or "Commission") Decision D.19-12-021 ("Decision"), Ordering Paragraph (OP) 2, this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate is to make an initial clarifying statement highlighting the coordination and cooperation between Redwood Coast Energy Authority ("RCEA") as the Program Administrator of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network ("RuralREN") and Southern California Regional Energy Network ("SoCalREN"), an existing Regional Energy Network (REN). RuralREN and SoCalREN would have overlapping operation in the same geographic area RuralREN proposes to operate. The RCEA on behalf of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments ("AMBAG"), County of San Luis Obispo, High Sierra Energy Foundation ("HSEF"), San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization ("SJVCEO"), and Sierra Business Council ("SBC") and itself in the matter of forming and administering RuralREN hereby submits this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate along with the RuralREN's energy efficiency (EE) strategic business plan and portfolio plan proposal (EE Application) to the CPUC.

**Program Coordination**

RuralREN has initiated efforts to coordinate its planned EE approaches and programs with SoCalREN. SoCalREN and the prospective RuralREN agree to continue to coordinate and cooperate to mitigate program conflicts should RuralREN's proposal be approved by the Commission. This includes, but is not limited to, development and execution of joint cooperation memoranda (JCMs) pursuant to D.19-12-021, OP 3.

Further, upon approval by the Commission of RuralREN's EE Application, RCEA and SoCalREN will work with all other program administrators with overlapping geographical jurisdictions, to negotiate in good faith and develop the JCM. RCEA and SoCalREN intend to finalize the REN program parameters and coordination details in the JCM for annual joint submittal to the Commission.

**[Signatures on the following page]**

**SIGNATURE PAGE TO**

**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE  
BETWEEN  
Redwood Coast Energy Authority  
AND  
Southern California Regional Energy Network**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have made and executed this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate as of the date first written above.

**RCEA**

Redwood Coast Energy Authority  
Network

By:



Matthew Marshall  
Executive Director

**SoCalREN**

Southern California Regional Energy

**Minh Le**

Digitally signed by Minh Le  
Date: 2022.03.01 17:22:19  
-08'00'

By:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name  
Title

**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE  
BETWEEN  
REDWOOD COAST ENERGY AUTHORITY AND  
TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL ENERGY NETWORK**

**PURPOSE**

Pursuant to California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC” or “Commission”) Decision D.19-12-021 (“Decision”), Ordering Paragraph (OP) 2, this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate is to make an initial clarifying statement highlighting the coordination and cooperation between Redwood Coast Energy Authority (“RCEA”) as the Program Administrator of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (“RuralREN”) and Tri-County Regional Energy Network (“3C-REN”), an existing Regional Energy Network (REN). RuralREN and 3C-REN would have overlapping operation in the same geographic area RuralREN proposes to operate. The RCEA on behalf of the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (“AMBAG”), County of San Luis Obispo, High Sierra Energy Foundation (“HSEF”), San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (“SJVCEO”), and Sierra Business Council (“SBC”) and itself in the matter of forming and administering RuralREN hereby submits this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate along with the 3C-REN energy efficiency (EE) strategic business plan and portfolio plan proposal (EE Application) to the CPUC.

**Program Coordination**

RuralREN has initiated efforts to coordinate its planned EE approaches and programs with 3C-REN. 3C-REN and the prospective RuralREN agree to continue to coordinate and cooperate to mitigate program conflicts should RuralREN’s proposal be approved by the Commission. This includes, but is not limited to, development and execution of joint cooperation memoranda (JCMs) pursuant to D.19-12-021, OP 3.

Further, upon approval by the Commission of RuralREN’s EE Application, RCEA and 3C-REN will work with all other program administrators with overlapping geographical jurisdictions, to negotiate in good faith and develop the JCM. RCEA and 3C-REN intend to finalize the REN program parameters and coordination details in the JCM for annual joint submittal to the Commission.

**[Signatures on the following page]**

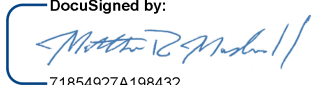


**SIGNATURE PAGE TO**  
**LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO COOPERATE**  
**BETWEEN**  
**Redwood Coast Energy Authority**  
**AND**  
**Tri-County Regional Energy Network**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties hereto have made and executed this Letter of Commitment to Cooperate as of the date first written above.

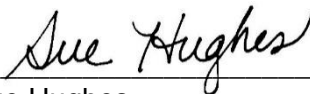
**RCEA**

Redwood Coast Energy Authority

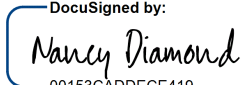
By:   
71854927A198432...  
Matthew Marshall  
Executive Director

**County of Ventura**

Tri-County Regional Energy Network

By:   
Sue Hughes  
Deputy Executive Officer

Approved to Form:

By:   
00153CADDECE419...  
Nancy Diamond  
General Counsel

## APPENDIX B: LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe

Central Coast Community Energy

City of Angels Camp

City of Arcata

City of Bishop

City of Blue Lake

City of Clearlake

City of Eureka

City of Ferndale

City of Fort Brag

City of Fortuna

City of Gonzales

City of Hollister

City of King

City of Lakeport

City of Monterey

City of Salinas

City of Santa Cruz

City of Seaside

City of Soledad

City of Ukiah

City of Watsonville

City of Willits

County of Humboldt

County of Inyo

County of Kings

County of Lake

County of Mariposa

County of Mendocino

County of Mono

County of Monterey

County of Placer

County of San Benito

County of Santa Cruz OR3

County of Yuba

Eureka City Schools

Humboldt County Office of Education

Lake Area Planning Council

Mendocino Council of Governments

Monterey Bay Area Resources District

Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe

Northern Humboldt Union High School District

San Joaquin Council of Governments

Town of Mammoth Lakes

# BLUE LAKE RANCHERIA

P.O. Box 428  
Blue Lake, CA 95525

Office: (707) 668-5101  
Fax: (707) 668-4272

[www.bluelakerancheria-nsn.gov](http://www.bluelakerancheria-nsn.gov)



January 31, 2022

President Alice Busching Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator, and for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear President Reynolds:

On behalf of the Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe, I am pleased to submit this letter of support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). The Blue Lake Rancheria is a federally recognized Native American Tribal Government located within Humboldt County.

Providing energy efficiency, decarbonization, and energy resilience to our citizens and communities is a high priority, and these efforts are critical to helping achieve deep energy reliability and savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy.

Native American communities traditionally have a higher energy cost-to-income ratio with less access statewide to energy efficiency programs and other investments. Further, many Tribes within California are in alignment with the state on the need to deploy innovative energy solutions for climate and community resilience. The RuralREN will help our shared region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those most in need, while creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County, including Tribal citizens, businesses, and government agencies both on and off reservation lands. RCEA has a proven record of successful design and administration of energy efficiency, decarbonization, financing, workforce development, codes and standards, energy services, clean energy innovation programs delivered to rural government, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003. RCEA is a strategic partner with Tribes to ensure services and programs are provided equitably to Tribal customers.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions and sovereign Tribal governments of California to support the ambitious tribal, state, national, and international goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participating in its benefits. Working with RCEA, a trusted, local partner, is an important component to ensuring these programs are implemented without delay and reach those most in need. For these reasons, the Tribe is in strong support of the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio

administrator, and for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application. Please contact Jana Ganion, Director of Sustainability and Government Affairs at [jganion@bluelakerancheria-nsn.gov](mailto:jganion@bluelakerancheria-nsn.gov) for more information as needed. We look forward to the work we can all do together with this new innovative structure in place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Ramos" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jason Ramos  
Tribal Council Member

Cc:

Darcie Houck, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission

Cliff Rechtschaffen, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission

John Reynolds, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission

Genevieve Shiroma, Commissioner, California Public Utilities Commission



January 21, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of Central Coast Community Energy (CCCE), I write to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. CCCE sees their planned efforts as critical to helping advance affordable decarbonization in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a sustainable and resilient economy, and we look forward to working with the RuralREN to serve our shared customers. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments (AMBAG) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

CCCE is a community choice aggregator and public agency serving ratepayers in Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties and parts of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties. CCCE is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through local control of utility scale renewable electricity generation provided at competitive rates and the implementation of innovative energy programs that facilitate electrification and local economic development.

CCCE continues working with the Tri-County Regional Energy Network (3C-REN) to supplement our electrification programs with their energy efficiency efforts that provide an important resource for our communities to relieve energy burdens, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and thereby support beneficial electrification. In the Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz counties that 3C-REN does not serve,

we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and, through RuralREN, we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community and shared customers need.

CCCE would like to reiterate our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. If you have any questions about the information in this letter of support, please contact Jon Griesser at [jgriesser@3ce.org](mailto:jgriesser@3ce.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R. M. Shaw", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert M. Shaw  
Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



CITY HALL

CITY OF ANGELS PO Box 667, 200 Monte Verda St. Suite B, Angels Camp, CA 95222 P: (209) 736-2181

January 24, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**RE: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Angels Camp City Council, I write to you to express our support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as having the potential to help the City achieve energy savings in our region and an equitable transition to a resilient economy. The RuralREN could help our City realize energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

We understand that the RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, Sierra Business Council (SBC) has assisted the City with preparing its Greenhouse Gas Inventory and we are working together to complete a Climate Action Plan. The SBC has also been involved in the region in economic development, and regional advocacy issues and we believe they could work within our community in cooperation with other agencies to raise awareness about energy efficiency, assist in securing energy efficiency services for our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

The City is a member of the Utica Water and Power Agency which generates hydropower. Therefore, we understand that energy production and efficiency is an important resource for our community and we support the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alvin Broglio".

Alvin Broglio, Mayor  
City of Angels

cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds





736 F Street  
Arcata CA 95521

City Manager  
707-822-5953

Environmental Services  
707-822-8184

Police  
707-822-2428

Recreation  
707-822-7091

Community Development  
707-822-5955

Finance  
707-822-5951

Engineering  
707-825-2128

Transportation  
707-822-3775

January 31, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Arcata, I write to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and the creation of the Rural REN will allow RCEA to continue and expand these services to rural customers most in need.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize RCEA as a trusted provider that will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,

Karen Diemer  
City Manager

Cc:

Commissioner Rechtschaffen  
Commissioner Shiroma  
Commissioner Houck  
Commissioner Reynolds



*Small Town with a  
Big Backyard!*

# CITY OF BISHOP

377 West Line Street - Bishop, California 93514  
Post Office Box 1236 - Bishop, California 93515  
760-873-8458 publicworks@cityofbishop.com  
www.cityofbishop.com

February 18, 2022

President Alice Busching Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a Portfolio Administrator and for their 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of The City of Bishop, I write to you to express my support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). The formation of the RuralREN, with a specific emphasis on rural and hard-to-reach areas in California, with programs designed to address their unique needs, will benefit the State by bringing energy efficiency focused programs and resources to underserved regions. These programs and services will facilitate energy savings and accelerate an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits, while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN, composed of the High Sierra Energy Foundation, Sierra Business Council, Redwood Coast Energy Authority, County of San Luis Obispo, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments and the San Joaquin Clean Energy Organization, is proposing this solution to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community, based on their knowledge of regional characteristics. The High Sierra Energy Foundation has been bringing energy efficiency and sustainability awareness and programs to the region for the past 15 years and is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents and businesses, and provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

Sincerely,

Karen Schwartz, Mayor

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



# CITY OF BLUE LAKE

Post Office Box 458  
Phone 707.668.5655

111 Greenwood Road

Blue Lake, CA 95525  
Fax 707.668.5916

February 4, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Blue Lake, I write to you to express our support of the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access to energy efficiency programs. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most, while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County.

RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and the creation of the Rural REN will allow RCEA to continue and expand these services to rural customers most in need.

The creation of the RuralREN is an important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize RCEA as a trusted provider that will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,

Amanda Mager  
City Manager

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.





## **City of Clearlake**

14050 Olympic Drive, Clearlake, California 95422  
(707) 994-8201 Fax (707) 995-2653  
[www.clearlake.ca.us](http://www.clearlake.ca.us)

February 3, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Clearlake and Lake County, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will partner with the Lake Area Planning Council (Lake APC) to serve eligible customers within Lake County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and working with Lake APC will be the perfect opportunity to reach customers in our region while building capacity for Lake APC to become a full partner in the RuralREN.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize Lake APC as a trusted provider of services and through their partnership with RCEA they will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dirk Slooten', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dirk Slooten  
Mayor

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.

January 24, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Eureka, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six-member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County.

RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and the creation of the Rural REN will allow RCEA to continue and expand these services to rural customers most in need.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize RCEA as a trusted provider that will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,



Miles Slattery  
City Manager

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.Sincerely

# CITY OF FERNDALE

POB 1095

FERNDALE, CA 95536

*"A Historic Victorian Village"*

+\*-



January 31, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Ferndale, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County.

RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and the creation of the Rural REN will allow RCEA to continue and expand these services to rural customers most in need.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize RCEA as a trusted provider that will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,

Name

Title City Manager

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.





## CITY OF FORT BRAGG

*Incorporated August 5, 1889*

416 N. Franklin Street  
Fort Bragg, CA 95437  
Phone: (707) 961-2823  
Fax: (707) 961-2802

January 24, 2022

Alice Reynolds, President  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Letter of Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator and for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application**

Dear President Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Fort Bragg, within Mendocino County, we write to express support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most, while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy for our community.

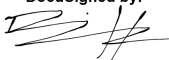
The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will partner with the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) to serve eligible customers within Mendocino County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and working with MCOG will be the perfect opportunity to reach customers in our region in the near future while building capacity for MCOG to become a full partner in the RuralREN.

The creation of the RuralREN is an important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize MCOG as a trusted provider of services and through their partnership with RCEA they will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we give our strong

Alice Reynolds, President  
January 24, 2022  
Page 2

support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
FD00090B53AE4F0...  
**Bernie Norvell**  
Mayor

DocuSigned by:  
  
E0D4FAFC608A4C1...  
**Jessica Morsell-Haye**  
Vice Mayor

DocuSigned by:  
  
D46D5ED8A8C0403...  
**Teresa K. Albin-Smith**  
Councilmember

DocuSigned by:  
  
6C3E2F0499D74FF...  
**Lindy Peters**  
Councilmember

DocuSigned by:  
  
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**Marcia Rafanan**  
Councilmember

cc: Commissioner Clifford Rechtschaffen  
Commissioner Genevieve Shiroma  
Commissioner Darcie Houck  
Commissioner John Reynolds  
Redwood Coast Energy Authority  
Mendocino Council of Governments

January 27, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Fortuna, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County.

RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and the creation of the Rural REN will allow RCEA to continue and expand these services to rural customers most in need.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize RCEA as a trusted provider that will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,



Merritt Perry  
City Manager

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



# City of Gonzales

P.O. BOX 647  
PHONE: (831) 675-5000

147 FOURTH ST.  
FAX: (831) 675-2644

GONZALES, CALIFORNIA 93926  
[www.gonzalesca.gov](http://www.gonzalesca.gov)



February 4, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Jose L. Rios  
Mayor

***RE: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan Application***

Scott Funk  
Mayor Pro Tem

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

Liz Silva  
Councilmember

On behalf of the City of Gonzales, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

Lorraine Worthy  
Councilmember

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

Paul Miller  
Councilmember

René L. Mendez  
City Manager

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

René L. Mendez  
City Manager

cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds

*Gonzales will continue to be a safe, clean, family-friendly community, diverse in heritage, and committed to working collaboratively to preserve and retain its small town charm*





# City of Hollister Development Services

339 Fifth Street, Hollister, CA. 95023 • Telephone (831) 636-4360 • Fax (831) 634-4913

Wednesday, January 19, 2022

To: President Alice Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, California 94012

From: City of Hollister  
Development Services Department – Planning Division  
339 Fifth Street  
Hollister, California 95023

**Re: Letter of Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a Portfolio Administrator and the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan Application**

---

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Hollister's Development Services Department – Planning Division, I write to you to express my support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most, while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies, which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

M. Abraham Prado  
Interim Development Services Department Director & Planning Manager

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, and Commissioner Houck



February 8, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

The City of King supports AMBAG's application to create a proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

Steve Adams  
City Manager

c: Commissioner Rechtschaffen  
Commissioner Shiroma  
Commissioner Houck  
Commissioner Reynolds.

## **CITY OF LAKEPORT**

*Over 130 years of community  
pride, progress and service*



February 1, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Lakeport, I write to you to express the City Council's support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, rural jurisdictions need the assistance of greater technical support offered through the RuralREN program to better assist area residents and businesses take advantage of offered innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will partner with the Lake Area Planning Council (Lake APC) to serve eligible customers within Lake County, including the City of Lakeport. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and working with Lake APC will be the perfect opportunity to reach customers in our region while building capacity for Lake APC to become a full partner in the RuralREN.



The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize Lake APC as a trusted provider of services and through their partnership with RCEA they will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stacey Mattina", written in a cursive style.

Mayor Stacey Mattina  
City of Lakeport

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck,  
Commissioner Reynolds.



January 14, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**


Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

I, Mayor Clyde Roberson, am writing to you as an individual to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. I see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

I understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, I recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN, I believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore, I would like to once again express my strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
FA1981217DEE4FB...

Mayor Clyde Roberson  
City of Monterey, California

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck,  
Commissioner Reynolds



## City of Salinas

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR • 200 Lincoln Avenue • Salinas, California 93901  
(831) 758-7201 • Fax (831) 758-7941 • [www.cityofsalinas.org](http://www.cityofsalinas.org)

February 3, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

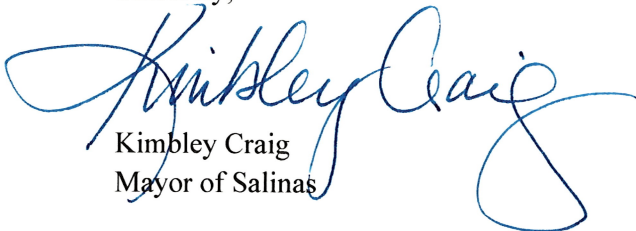
Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Salinas, I write to you to express our support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). The City of Salinas is in the process of creating its first Climate Action Plan and sees RuralREN's efforts as critical to helping the City achieve energy savings for our residents and business. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most through education and financial assistance while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is a strong stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency and provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies.

Energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage to relieve energy financial burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs through RuralREN. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,



Kimbley Craig  
Mayor of Salinas

cc: Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Reynolds, Commissioner Shiroma



809 CENTER STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060 • 831-420-5030 • [www.cityofsantacruz.com](http://www.cityofsantacruz.com)

January 31, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Subject: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Santa Cruz I write to you to express my strong support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community. These are high priority activities for the City.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and, as such, is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need more information or have any questions about the City's support for this motion. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tiffany Wise-West". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Tiffany Wise-West, PE, PhD  
**Sustainability & Climate Action Manager**

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.





**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT:  
PLANNING DIVISION**

656 Broadway Avenue  
Seaside, CA 93955  
[www.ci.seaside.ca.us](http://www.ci.seaside.ca.us)

Telephone 831-6723  
Fax 831-899-6211

January 11, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Seaside, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Beth Rocha', with a stylized, cursive script.

Beth Rocha  
Senior Planner

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



January 11, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Soledad, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan T. Swanson".

Bryan T. Swanson  
Community and Economic Development Director

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



February 07, 2022

Alice Reynolds, President  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator and for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application**

Dear President Reynolds:

On behalf of the City of Ukiah, I write to express support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. Although the programs offered by RuralREN will have limited value for City of Ukiah Electric Utility customers, I support efforts to help achieve energy savings throughout Mendocino County.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will partner with the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) to serve eligible customers within Mendocino County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and working with MCOG will be the perfect opportunity to reach customers in our region while building capacity for MCOG to become a full partner in the RuralREN.

The creation of the RuralREN is an important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize MCOG as a trusted provider of services and through their partnership with RCEA they will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we give our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application. Thanks very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jim Brown  
Mayor, City of Ukiah

cc: Mendocino Council of Governments



# City of Watsonville

*"A Community of Opportunities"*

January 26, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

I would like to express our support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. The City of Watsonville recognizes this effort as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. We would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

Steve Palmisano  
Assistant Director  
Public Works and Utilities  
City of Watsonville

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



## ***Gateway to the Redwoods***

111 E. Commercial Street  
Willits, California 95490  
Tel | 707.459.4601  
Fax | 707.459.1562  
[www.cityofwillits.org](http://www.cityofwillits.org)

January 21, 2022

Alice Reynolds, President  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator and for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

President Reynolds:

On behalf of City of Willits, I write to express support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will partner with the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) to serve eligible customers within Mendocino County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and working with MCOG will be the perfect opportunity to reach customers in our region while building capacity for MCOG to become a full partner in the RuralREN.

The creation of the RuralREN is an important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize MCOG as a trusted provider of services and through their partnership with RCEA they will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we give our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

For the City of Willits, the Rural Regional Energy Network is a means for the City to achieve an adopted goal of fostering sustainable energy policies. The City Council envisions transiting the community to an *environmental model city* by reducing the City's carbon footprint by 50-percent, promoting greater



energy independence from utility companies, and strengthening the City's resiliency & self-reliance. As this goal shows, the City Council is an advocate for actions that will see our region implement policies that advance social equity, environmental health, and economic prosperity.

Writing on the behalf of the Mayor and City Council, I greatly appreciate the opportunity to express our support for this important initiative. Thanks very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Brian P. Bender, ICMA-CM, AICP CEP, CFM  
City Manager

cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner John Reynolds, Redwood Coast Energy Authority, Mendocino Council of Governments



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

825 5th Street, Suite 112, Eureka, CA 95501-1153

Telephone (707) 445-7266 Fax (707) 445-7299

[cao@co.humboldt.ca.us](mailto:cao@co.humboldt.ca.us)

Jan. 12, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**RE: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds,

On behalf of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and the creation of the Rural REN will allow RCEA to continue and expand these services to rural customers most in need.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. Humboldt County supports efforts that accelerate development of renewable energy resources. We recognize RCEA as a trusted provider that will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,

Elishia Hayes, Humboldt County Administrative Officer

CC: California State Association of Counties, Rural County Representatives of California, Shaw/Yoder/Antwih/Schmelzer & Lange



**COUNTY OF INYO**  
ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE  
**LESLIE L. CHAPMAN**  
*COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER*



February 16, 2022

President Alice Busching Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a Portfolio Administrator and for their 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of Inyo County, I write to you to express my support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). The formation of the RuralREN, with a specific emphasis on rural and hard-to-reach areas in California, with programs designed to address their unique needs, will benefit the State by bringing energy efficiency focused programs and resources to underserved regions. These programs and services will facilitate energy savings and accelerate an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits, while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN, composed of the High Sierra Energy Foundation, Sierra Business Council, Redwood Coast Energy Authority, County of San Luis Obispo, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments and the San Joaquin Clean Energy Organization, is proposing this solution to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community, based on their knowledge of regional characteristics. The High Sierra Energy Foundation has been bringing energy efficiency and sustainability awareness and programs to the region for the past 15 years and is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents and businesses, and provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

Sincerely,

Leslie L. Chapman,  
Administrator  
County of Inyo

cc: Inyo County Board of Supervisors  
Commissioner Rechtschaffen  
Commissioner Shiroma  
Commissioner Houck  
Commissioner Reynolds.



JOE NEVES – DISTRICT 1  
LEMOORE & STRATFORD

RICHARD VALLE – DISTRICT 2  
AVENAL, CORCORAN, HOME GARDEN  
& KETTLEMAN CITY

DOUG VERBOON – DISTRICT 3  
NORTH HANFORD, ISLAND DISTRICT  
& NORTH LEMOORE

CRAIG PEDERSEN – DISTRICT 4  
ARMONA & HANFORD

RICHARD FAGUNDES – DISTRICT 5  
HANFORD & BURRIS PARK

# COUNTY OF KINGS BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

MAILING ADDRESS: KINGS COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, HANFORD, CA 93230  
OFFICES AT: 1400 W. LACEY BLVD., ADMINISTRATION BUILDING # 1, HANFORD  
(559) 852-2362, FAX: (559) 585-8047  
Web Site: <http://www.countyofkings.com>

March 1, 2022

President Alice Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

## RE: Letter of Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN)

Dear President Reynolds,

The Kings County Board of Supervisors respectfully submits this letter of support for the Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN) and its coalition of public agencies and community benefit organizations in their application to the California Public Utilities Commission to become a Program Administrator of energy efficiency funds.

The Kings County Board of Supervisors and our regional representative to the RuralREN, the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (SJVCEO), have a long history of collaborating to improve the quality of life throughout our eight-county region through the promotion of clean energy and sustainability practices. Through our local government partnership, the Valley Innovative Energy Watch (VIEW) with PG&E, SCE, SCG and the SJVCEO our two-county Partnership was able to save more than 23,000,000 kWh over ten years and saw the benefit firsthand of having locally delivered access to energy efficiency programs. We view the possibility of a RuralREN as a natural progression of more than a decade of work in our Valley. Consisting of eight counties—Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare—the region is ready to take on more. Through collaboration with the RuralREN agencies we know our community reach and impact will help rural spaces accelerate the equitable implementation of the state's energy efficiency and climate goals.

A Regional Energy Network lead by those who live in our communities will stimulate job creation and economic growth in our region, reduce the financial and environmental energy burden on our communities, and train and upskill local workers while growing local demand for clean careers. In the San Joaquin Valley, RuralREN programs targeting Workforce, Education, and Training (WE&T), Residential energy use, Codes and Standards (C&S) compliance, and local lending, will support systematic change.

**WE&T** through the RuralREN accelerates training (upskilling of existing workers and training for new workers) and increases new opportunities for employment. The program pathways support other RuralREN programs and utility programs through locally based workforces, benefiting future generations and building community wealth through lower bills, career opportunity and clean energy investments.

The **Residential** effort will serve our hard to reach, disadvantaged, and underserved residents, focusing on serving service workers, such as agriculture, hospitality, and healthcare workers, as well as retirees since they often face some of the highest energy burdens.

**C&S** will provide rural building departments and building professionals with education and technical resources to increase comprehension of and compliance with California's Building Energy Efficiency Code (Title 24) and escalate more rapid adoption of new standard technologies. The RuralREN C&S program will help our regions reduce energy usage through improved building design and construction and greater code compliance and enforcement.

A rurally focused **Finance** offering will equitably support the residential, small businesses and public sectors through 0% loans that will encourage and accelerate the implementation of energy efficiency projects. The program addresses first cost and access to capital barriers that exist in rural California by providing guidance and support to customers during their participation in energy efficiency related offerings.

When we impact people in their jobs, in their homes, in their communities, in their ability to access capital—we change lives and we build communities that contribute to regions and those regions all rise together. A rural movement towards a clean energy future is here, and we proudly support the RuralREN in their efforts to enact change through equity, collaboration, and community.

Sincerely,



Joe Neves  
Chairman, Kings County Board of Supervisors  
District 1





**COUNTY OF LAKE  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Courthouse - 255 North Forbes Street  
Lakeport, California 95453  
TELEPHONE (707) 263-2368  
FAX (707) 263-2207

*Moke Simon – District 1*

*Bruno Sabatier – District 2*

*Eddie Crandell – District 3*

*Tina Scott – District 4*

*Jessica Pyska – District 5*

February 8, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the Lake County Board of Supervisors, this letter is intended to express our support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will partner with the Lake Area Planning Council (Lake APC) to serve eligible customers within Lake County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and working with Lake APC will be the perfect opportunity to reach customers in our region while building capacity for Lake APC to become a full partner in the RuralREN.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize Lake APC as a trusted provider of services and through their partnership with RCEA they will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,

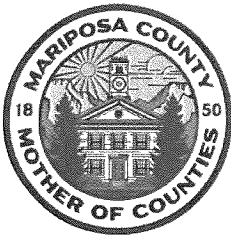
Respectfully submitted,

  
Eddie Crandell (Feb 9, 2022 11:41 PST)

Eddie Crandell, Chair

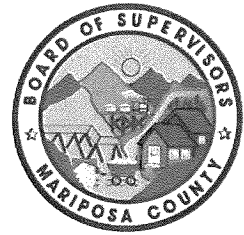
Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.





# MARIPOSA COUNTY

Administration • 966-3222



## RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2022-91

MEETING: February 1, 2022

TO: The Board of Supervisors

FROM: Dallin Kimble, County Administrative Officer

RE: RuralREN Support Letter

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### RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Approve a Letter of Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) Motion to Become a Portfolio Administrator and the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan Application; and Authorize the Board of Supervisors Chair to Sign the Letter.

The proposed Rural Regional Energy Network could help our region achieve energy savings, accelerate an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy, achieve energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most, and create new career opportunities in clean energy.

This letter is submitted for Board consideration at the request of the Sierra Business Council. Additional information is attached.

### BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

The Board routinely approves letters of support for various legislation and policy actions that may positively impact the county.

### ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Do not approve. Staff will not transmit this letter of support.

### ATTACHMENTS:

2022.01.14 Mariposa County\_SBC RREN Letter of Support (PDF)  
RuralREN Overview (PDF)  
RuralREN Abstract(PDF)

**RESULT:** ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]

**MOVER:** Tom Sweeney, District II Supervisor

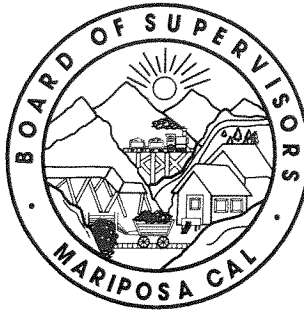
**SECONDER:** Wayne Forsythe, District IV Supervisor

**AYES:** Rosemarie Smallcombe, Tom Sweeney, Marshall Long, Wayne Forsythe

**EXCUSED:** Miles Menetrey

# Mariposa County Board of Supervisors

District 1 ... ROSEMARIE SMALLCOMBE  
District 2 ..... TOM SWEENEY  
District 3 ..... MARSHALL LONG  
District 4 ..... WAYNE FORSYTHE  
District 5 ..... MILES MENETREY



DALLIN KIMBLE  
County Administrative Officer

RENÉ LAROCHE  
Clerk of the Board

P. O. Box 784  
Mariposa, CA 95338  
(209) 966-3222  
(800) 736-1252  
Fax (209) 966-5147  
[www.mariposacounty.org/board](http://www.mariposacounty.org/board)

February 1, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator and the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors, I write to express support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). This network could help our region achieve energy savings, accelerate an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy, achieve energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most, and create new career opportunities in clean energy.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, Sierra Business Council (SBC) is a trusted partner on sustainability, economic development, and regional advocacy issues. SBC is well suited to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services, and provide transformative career training for new clean energy jobs.

Thank you for your consideration of the RuralREN proposal and this letter of support.

Sincerely,

Rosemarie Smallcombe, Chair

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.

CARMEL J. ANGELO  
Chief Executive Officer  
Clerk of the Board



**COUNTY OF MENDOCINO  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

CONTACT INFORMATION  
501 Low Gap Road • Room 1010  
Ukiah, California 95482  
TELEPHONE: (707) 463-4221  
FAX: (707) 463-7237  
Email: [bos@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:bos@mendocinocounty.org)  
Web: [www.mendocinocounty.org/government/board-of-supervisors](http://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/board-of-supervisors)

Alice Reynolds, President  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator and for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application**

Dear President Reynolds:

On behalf of the County of Mendocino, I write to express support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will partner with the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) to serve eligible customers within Mendocino County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and working with MCOG will be the perfect opportunity to reach customers in our region while building capacity for MCOG to become a full partner in the RuralREN.

The creation of the RuralREN is an important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize MCOG as a trusted provider of services and through their partnership with RCEA they will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we give our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application. Thanks very much for your consideration.

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

GLENN MCGOURTY  
First District

MAUREEN MULHEREN  
Second District

JOHN HASCHAK  
Third District

DAN GJERDE  
Fourth District

TED WILLIAMS  
Fifth District

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature consisting of the letters 'T' and 'W' in blue ink, enclosed within a hand-drawn circle.

Ted Williams  
Chair, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner John Reynolds, Redwood Coast Energy Authority, Mendocino Council of Governments





Jennifer Kreitz ~ District One   Rhonda Duggan ~ District Two   Bob Gardner ~ District Three  
John Peters ~ District Four   Stacy Corless ~ District Five

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## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF MONO

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P.O. BOX 715, BRIDGEPORT, CALIFORNIA 93517

(760) 932-5530

[BOS@mono.ca.gov](mailto:BOS@mono.ca.gov)

*Scheereen Dedman, Clerk of the Board*

February 25, 2022

President Alice Busching Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a Portfolio Administrator and for their 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of Mono County, I write to you to express my support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). The formation of the RuralREN, with a specific emphasis on rural and hard-to-reach areas in California, with programs designed to address their unique needs, will benefit the State by bringing energy efficiency focused programs and resources to underserved regions. These programs and services will facilitate energy savings and accelerate an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits, while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN, composed of the High Sierra Energy Foundation, Sierra Business Council, Redwood Coast Energy Authority, County of San Luis Obispo, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments and the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization, is proposing this solution to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community, based on their knowledge of regional challenges and characteristics. The High Sierra Energy Foundation has been bringing energy efficiency and sustainability awareness and programs to the region for the past 15 years and we look forward to having them implement programs that will raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents and businesses, and provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

Sincerely,

*Bob Gardner*

Bob Gardner (Feb 25, 2022 09:14 PST)

Bob Gardner

Mono County Board of Supervisors - Chair

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.

# MONTEREY COUNTY



## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

LUIS A. ALEJO, *Vice Chair, District 1*

JOHN M. PHILLIPS, *District 2*

CHRIS M. LOPEZ, *District 3*

WENDY ROOT ASKEW, *District 4*

MARY L. ADAMS, *Chair, District 5*

February 4, 2022

Alice Busching Reynolds  
President, California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear President Reynolds:

On behalf of the County of Monterey I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

If you have any questions about our support for the RuralREN Project, please contact Monterey County's Sustainability Program Manager, Ashley Paulsworth at 831.755.5344 or [PaulsworthAL@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:PaulsworthAL@co.monterey.ca.us). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary L. Adams  
Chair, Board of Supervisors

Cc: CPUC Commissioners





## COUNTY OF PLACER

### BOARD of SUPERVISORS

BONNIE GORE  
District 1

JIM HOLMES  
District 3

ROBERT M. WEYGANDT  
District 2

SUZANNE JONES  
District 4

CINDY GUSTAFSON  
District 5

## OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Todd Leopold, County Executive Officer

175 FULWEILER AVENUE / AUBURN, CALIFORNIA 95603  
TELEPHONE: 530/889-4030  
FAX: 530/889-4023  
[www.placer.ca.gov](http://www.placer.ca.gov)

February 2, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of Placer County, I write to you to express my support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). We see their efforts as an opportunity to helping the County achieve substantial energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a cleaner and more resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region in multiple ways, such as achieving significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most, lowering energy costs, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving natural resources and habitats and helping the economy by creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our communities.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create local programs to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, Sierra Business Council (SBC) is a trusted partner on sustainability, economic development, and regional advocacy issues. Founded in 1994, SBC has focused largely on creating regional unity among the business community, conservation initiatives, and ensuring the economic and environmental health of the region.

SBC also assisted the County by providing technical assistance on the County's Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory and provided recommendations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change. They are well suited to work within our communities to raise awareness about boosting energy efficiency, to provide energy efficiency programs to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as to provide transformative career training for clean energy job opportunities.

Energy efficiency is a compelling global resource that represents about 40 percent of the greenhouse gas reduction potential that can be realized. We believe that starting at a local level our communities have the ability to reduce energy burdens as they equitably transition to a greener economy, but this can only be accomplished through strategic partnership and collaboration. We, therefore, express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.


Sincerely,

Todd Leopold  
Placer County Executive Officer



# COUNTY OF SAN BENITO

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

481 FOURTH STREET, HOLLISTER, CA 95023 (831) 636-4000 FAX: (831) 636-4010  [WWW.COSB.US](http://WWW.COSB.US)

**RAY ESPINOSA, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**  
**EDGAR NOLASCO, DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

Dulce Alonso  
Sr. Admin. Analyst

Gabriel Orozco  
Budget Officer

Graciela Rodriguez  
Asst. Admin. Analyst

Jeanett Rodriguez  
Asst. Admin. Analyst

Lorena Moreno  
Executive Assistant

January 24, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

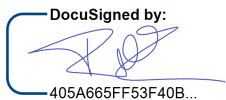
Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the County of San Benito, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
405A665FF53F40B...

Ray Espinosa  
County Administrative Officer

2/2/2022

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



## SANTA CRUZ COUNTY OFFICE OF RESPONSE, RECOVERY & RESILIENCE

February 1, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of County of Santa Cruz, Office of Response, Recovery & Resilience, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

Dave Reid  
Director  
Santa Cruz County Office of Response, Recovery and Resilience

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



# *County of Yuba*

## *District Supervisor*

Gary Bradford  
District Four  
Yuba County Government Center  
915 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 109, Marysville,  
California 95901  
(530) 749-7510 Fax (530) 749-7353

February 2, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of Yuba County, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, Sierra Business Council (SBC) is a trusted partner on sustainability, economic development, and regional advocacy issues. Given their past experience, SBC is well suited to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. Therefore we express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Bradford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gary Bradford  
Yuba County Supervisor, 4<sup>th</sup> District

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



# Eureka City Schools

2100 J Street, Eureka, CA 95501 / Tel: 707-441-2400

January 19, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) Motion to Become a Portfolio Administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan Application**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of Eureka City Schools, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and the creation of the Rural REN will allow RCEA to continue and expand these services to rural customers most in need.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize RCEA as a trusted provider that will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,

Fred Van Vleck, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma,  
Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds



January 19, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of Humboldt County Office of Education, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and the creation of the Rural REN will allow RCEA to continue and expand these services to rural customers most in need.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize RCEA as a trusted provider that will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

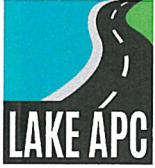
Sincerely,



Michael Davies-Hughes  
Humboldt County Superintendent of Schools

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.





## LAKE COUNTY/CITY AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

Lisa Davey-Bates, Executive Director  
www.lakeapc.org

525 South Main Street, Ukiah, CA 95482  
Administration: Suite G ~ 707-234-3314  
Planning: Suite B ~ 707-263-7799

February 9, 2021

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

Lake Area Planning Council is excited about the opportunity of partnering with the Redwood Authority Energy Authority as part of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs.

This program will be exceptionally valuable to Lake County because it is frequently ranked among the poorest counties in the United States. Approximately 18.3% of County residents were considered "persons in poverty" according to current Census data, compared to 11.8% statewide. Median household income was \$47,040 (statewide median \$75,235) as of 2019. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and this is a unique and invaluable opportunity for the Lake APC to collaborate as a partner in the RuralREN.

On February 9, 2022, the Lake APC's Board of Directors took action to join the RuralREN through a Memorandum of Understanding, confirming their commitment for the RuralREN. This letter serves as a formality to validate Lake APC's support for RCEA to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,

Lisa Davey-Bates, Executive Director  
Lake Area Planning Council

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds



# MENDOCINO COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

525 South Main Street~Ukiah~California~95482  
www.mendocinocog.org

NEPHELE BARRETT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Administration: Suite B  
(707) 463-1859  
Transportation Planning: Suite G  
(707) 234-3434

February 9, 2022

Alice Reynolds, President  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator and for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application**

Dear President Reynolds:

On behalf of Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG), I write to express support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN) and MCOG's interest in participating in the RuralREN through partnership with Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA). We are excited about this opportunity, and our member local governments recognize the program's potential for needed energy savings and a transition to a greener, more resilient rural economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access to energy efficiency programs. California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The Rural REN can improve the health and finances of our public agencies, schools, families, workforce and remote areas.

Our Board of Directors and staff support the RuralREN proposal by six member agencies cooperating to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the unmet needs of each community it serves. The combined expertise of RCEA and MCOG's 50 years of experience can do much to serve eligible customers within Mendocino County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003. Through partnership with RCEA, incentives and technical services can be provided to underserved communities in Mendocino County while building capacity for MCOG to become a full partner in the RuralREN.

This RuralREN strengthens the ability of California's rural regions to do our part in achieving ambitious state and national goals of transitioning to a green economy for all. In partnership with RCEA, MCOG will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we give our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application. We encourage your favorable consideration of this worthy proposal.

Sincerely,

Nephele Barrett  
Executive Director

cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner John Reynolds, Redwood Coast Energy Authority



January 25, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD) I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies which are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. In our region, the Association of Monterey Bay Governments is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and as such is a key partner on sustainability, transportation, and land use planning issues. AMBAG is the perfect stakeholder to work within our community to raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents, businesses, and public agencies, as well as provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. In our region, we recognize AMBAG as a trusted partner and through RuralREN we believe that AMBAG is uniquely positioned to provide services that our community needs. Therefore we would like to once again express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Frisbey".

David Frisbey  
Planning and Air Monitoring Manager

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



Nevada City Rancheria Tribal Council

P.O. Box 2624 Nevada City, Ca. 95959

530-265-6563 (Chairman) 530-570-0846 (Secretary)

January 20, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. We see their efforts as critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

We understand that energy efficiency is an important resource for our community to leverage in order to relieve energy burdens and equitably transition to a green economy. Therefore we express our strong support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network.

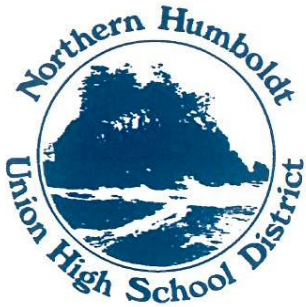
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shelly Covert".

Shelly Covert  
Tribal Council Spokesperson, Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.





## Northern Humboldt Union High School District

2755 McKinleyville Avenue, McKinleyville, CA 95519-3400  
TELEPHONE: (707) 839-6470 • FAX: (707) 839-6477  
[www.nohum.k12.ca.us](http://www.nohum.k12.ca.us)

**ROGER MACDONALD**  
District Superintendent

**CINDY VICKERS**  
Director of Fiscal Services

**GAYLE CONWAY**  
Director of Student Services

January 25, 2022

President Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC president Reynolds:

On behalf of the Northern Humboldt Union High School District, I write to you to express my support for creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network. These efforts are critical to helping us achieve deep energy savings in our region and accelerating an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. Rural customers traditionally have had a higher energy cost-to-income ratio while having less access statewide to energy efficiency programs. Furthermore, California's rural regions can serve as proving grounds for innovative energy solutions. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits for those who need it most while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN is composed of six member agencies that are cooperating regionally to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community it serves. The Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) will serve eligible customers within Humboldt County. RCEA has successfully implemented energy services to rural public, commercial, and residential customers throughout Humboldt County since 2003, and the creation of the Rural REN will allow RCEA to continue and expand these services to rural customers most in need.

The creation of the RuralREN is important pathway for rural regions of California to support the ambitious state and national goals for transitioning to a green economy and equitably participate in its benefits. We recognize RCEA as a trusted provider that will provide essential services and capacity building to our region. Therefore, we would like to once again express our strong support for the RuralREN's motion to become a portfolio administrator as well as for the 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Roger Macdonald".

Roger Macdonald  
Superintendent

Cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.



# SAN JOAQUIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

555 E. Weber Avenue • Stockton, California 95202 • P 209.235.0600 • F 209.235.0438 • [www.sjcog.org](http://www.sjcog.org)

February 22, 2022

*Leo Zuber*

CHAIR

*Robert Rickman*

VICE CHAIR

*Diane Nguyen*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

*Member Agencies*

CITIES OF

ESCALON,

LATHROP,

LODI,

MANTECA,

RIPON,

STOCKTON,

TRACY,

AND

THE COUNTY OF SAN  
JOAQUIN

President Alice Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94102

## **RE: Letter of Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN)**

Dear President Reynolds,

The San Joaquin Council of Governments respectfully submits this letter of support for the Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN) and its coalition of public agencies and community benefit organizations in their application to the California Public Utilities Commission to become a Program Administrator of energy efficiency funds.

Our regional representative to the RuralREN, the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (SJVCEO), has a long history of collaborating with our cities and counties to improve the quality of life throughout our region through the promotion of clean energy and sustainability practices.

We view the possibility of a RuralREN as a natural progression for our Valley. Consisting of eight counties—Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare—the region is ready to take on more and through collaboration with the RuralREN agencies we know our community reach and impact will help rural spaces accelerate the equitable implementation of the state's energy efficiency and climate goals.

A Regional Energy Network lead by those who live in our communities will reduce the financial and environmental energy burden on our communities as well as train and upskill local workers while growing local demand for climate adaptive careers. In the San Joaquin Valley, RuralREN programs targeting Workforce, Education, and Training (WE&T), Residential energy use, Codes and Standards (C&S) compliance, and local lending, will support systematic change.

**WE&T** through the RuralREN accelerates training (upskilling of existing workers and training for new workers) and increases new opportunities for employment. The program pathways support other RuralREN programs and utility programs through locally based workforces, benefiting future generations and building community wealth through lower bills, career opportunity and clean energy investments.

The **Residential** effort will serve our hard to reach, disadvantaged, and underserved residents, focusing on serving service workers, such as agriculture, hospitality, and healthcare workers, as well as retirees since they often face some of the highest energy burdens.

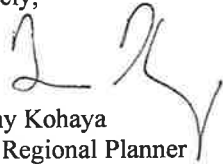
**C&S** will provide rural building departments and building professionals with education and technical resources to increase comprehension and compliance in the California Building Energy Efficiency Code (Title 24) and escalate more rapid adoption of new standard technologies. The RuralREN C&S program will help our regions reduce energy usage through improved building design and construction and greater code compliance and enforcement.



A rurally focused **Finance** offering will equitably support the residential, small businesses and public sectors through 0% loans that will encourage and accelerate the implementation of energy efficiency projects. The program addresses first cost and access to capital barriers that exist in rural California by providing guidance and support to customers during their participation in energy efficiency related offerings.

When we impact people in their jobs, in their homes, in their communities, in their ability to access capital—we change lives and we build communities that contribute to regions and those regions all rise together. A rural movement towards a clean energy future is here, and we proudly support the RuralREN in their efforts to enact change through equity, collaboration, and community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Timothy Kohaya', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Timothy Kohaya  
Senior Regional Planner



## Town of Mammoth Lakes

P.O. Box 1609, Mammoth Lakes, CA, 93546

(760) 965-3600

[www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov](http://www.townofmammothlakes.ca.gov)

---

February 28, 2022

President Alice Busching Reynolds  
California Public Utilities Commission  
505 Van Ness Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**Re: Support for the Rural Regional Energy Network's (RuralREN) motion to become a Portfolio Administrator and for their 2024-2031 RuralREN Strategic Business Plan application.**

Dear CPUC President Reynolds:

On behalf of the Town of Mammoth Lakes, I write to you to express my support for the creation of the proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN). The formation of the RuralREN, with a specific emphasis on rural and hard-to-reach areas in California, with programs designed to address their unique needs, will benefit the State by bringing energy efficiency focused programs and resources to underserved regions. These programs and services will facilitate energy savings and accelerate an equitable transition to a green and resilient economy. The RuralREN will help our region achieve significant energy efficiency benefits, while also creating new career opportunities in clean energy within our community.

The RuralREN, composed of the High Sierra Energy Foundation, Sierra Business Council, Redwood Coast Energy Authority, County of San Luis Obispo, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments and the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization, is proposing this solution to create programs that will be locally customized to fit the needs of each community, based on their knowledge of regional challenges and characteristics. The High Sierra Energy Foundation has been bringing energy efficiency and sustainability awareness and programs to the region for the past 15 years and we look forward to having them implement programs that will raise awareness about energy efficiency, provide energy efficiency services to our residents and businesses, and provide transformative career training that leads to clean energy job opportunities.

Sincerely,

Daniel C. Holler  
Town Manager

cc: Commissioner Rechtschaffen, Commissioner Shiroma, Commissioner Houck, Commissioner Reynolds.

## APPENDIX C: STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

The RuralREN held stakeholder meetings with PG&E, SCE, SCG, SoCalREN, 3CREN, and the LSGEC. RREN also presented at a CAEECC-sponsored public workshop that was open to all stakeholders. The chart represents feedback and questions from stakeholders from July 2021 to February 28, 2022.

Overall, the general feedback is favorable for forming a new REN that addresses rural populations through an innovative and equity-focused approach.

| Stakeholder  | Question/Feedback   | Response/Changes/Considerations   |
|--|---|---|
| California<br>Alternative<br>Energy and<br>Advanced<br>Transportation<br>Financing<br>Authority<br>(CAEATFA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asked about parameters of the residential and commercial programs</li> <li>- Stated CAEATFA can be a good complement when, for example, a project does not meet minimum or maximum dollar requirements.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Included in Exhibit Two, Sector Strategy Commercial, Residential and Cross-Cutting: Finance. RREN notes that portions of programs will be open to competitive solicitations.</li> <li>- RuralREN agrees and looks to create complementary offerings to support existing programs offered through CAEATFA, IOUs and others.</li> </ul>      |
| Center for<br>Sustainable<br>Energy (CSE)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asked whether ratepayer funds will be [used] for the entire loan pool or for credit enhancement to private funding.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ratepayer funds will be used for the loan pool.</li> <li>- Exhibit Two, Sector Strategy, Cross-Cutting: Finance.</li> </ul>  |
| PG&E   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How will the proposed Finance offering coordinate with existing offerings (OBF, CAEATFA) already available in these areas?</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Included in Exhibit Two, Sector Strategy, Commercial, Residential and Cross-Cutting: Finance. Noting that portions of some of these programs will be sent out for competitive solicitation.</li> <li>- RuralREN looks to create complementary offerings to support existing programs offered through CAEATFA, IOUs, and others.</li> </ul> |

| Stakeholder | Question/Feedback   | Response/Changes/Considerations  |
|-------------|---|--|
|             | <p>-How are the proposed Res programs unique from the existing ESA programs, no-cost virtual Res EE program, and PG&amp;E proposed res equity program?</p> <p>-How is the [WE&amp;T CEA] training proposal unique from the fully virtual learning opportunities provided by PG&amp;E Workforce Education and Training?</p> <p>-How is this distinct from Statewide WE&amp;T that trains K-12 students about energy and green careers with an emphasis on serving DAC schools?</p> | <p>- RuralREN offerings should enhance and expand but never duplicate or overlap with ESA programs. We intend to augment gaps and ensure the customer is holistically served.</p> <p>-Exhibit Two, Sector Strategy, Residential</p> <p>-CEA is offered in-person, these in-person sites are connected through a network. Exhibit Two, Sector Strategy, Cross-Cutting: WE&amp;T</p> <p>- The CEA has zero overlaps with "Energy is Everything" (Statewide K-12 WE&amp;T), as the CEA's target audience is 22 years and over. The Climate Careers targets 15–24 age group, and therefore does have the potential for some overlap; however, Climate Careers is not a school-based program. Climate Careers aims to serve a high percentage of Opportunity Youth. Opportunity Youth are defined as being disconnected from school and work, therefore, unable to benefit from a school-based program.</p> |
| SCG         | -General agreement for the case to serve.   |  |

| Stakeholder | Question/Feedback  | Response/Changes/Considerations   |
|-------------|--|---|
|             | <p>-Be aware of and understand new Statewide programs to avoid overlap.</p> <p>-Has the group considered co-funding splits, gas/electric splits?</p>   | <p>-Sector level Market Assessments included reviews of the Statewide program.</p> <p>-Implementation Plans will identify potential overlap and opportunities for collaboration.</p> <p>-Reviewed past contracts for LGPs in PGE/SCE/SCG and discussed the approach with 3CREN. Made recommendations, but understand final splits will be determined in collaboration with IOUs/ED.</p>   |
| SCE         | <p>- Give consideration to co-funding splits; effort is appreciated.</p> <p>-be mindful of budget and CPUC guidance on it. [D.19-12-021, p. 41]</p> <p>-Stay true to the three-prong REN test.</p> <p>-Recommended WE&amp;T CEA leverage SCE/IOU trainings to support courses.</p> | <p>-Reviewed past contracts for LGPs in PGE/SCE/SCG and discussed the approach with 3CREN. Made recommendations, but understand final splits will be determined in collaboration with IOUs/ED.</p> <p>-RuralREN proportionate price per person considered guidance as well as publicly available data for IOUs (2019).</p> <p>-See Exhibit One, Strategic Business Plan "Alignment with Legislative and CPUC Requirements and Relevant Action Plans".</p> |

| Stakeholder     | Question/Feedback  | Response/Changes/Considerations  |
|-----------------|--|--|
|                 | <p>-Focus effort towards DACs and HTR.</p> <p>-Inquired about RuralREN policy change recommendations.</p> <p>-Generally supportive of the rationale.</p>   | <p>-WE&amp;T program will coordinate with IOUs through IOU/3P Advisory Council, and CEA will leverage existing IOU WE&amp;T trainings where applicable.</p> <p>-78% of the budget targets equity-focused populations; RA programs include equity metrics.</p> <p>-While RuralREN supports SCE's request that the Commission should include public sector customers as "hard-to-reach" if they meet the geographic criteria approved in D.18-05-041, and are classified as a local government, K-12 school, community college, or tribal lands. However, RuralREN furthers the notion in our request that Commission revise its hard-to-reach definition to recognize any customer located in a rural area as geographical hard-to-reach.</p> |
| Energy Division | <p>Provide some specificity about what "unmet needs" you anticipate meeting in the Commercial and Residential sectors?</p> <p>- Describe whether installations will have a verification component?</p> | <p>- Even the best designed Statewide programs are not designed for the smallest and most remote homes and businesses which often fall far below minimum eligibility requirements.</p> <p>-installations done under the Residential and Commercial Resource Acquisition programs will have a</p>   |



| Stakeholder | Question/Feedback | Response/Changes/Considerations  |
|-------------|-------------------|--|
|             |                   | verification component, described in detail in the Implementation Plans. |

## APPENDIX D: PRESENTATION TO CAEECC & STAKEHOLDERS



# Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN)

*February 16, 2022, presentation to the California Energy  
Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC) and other  
stakeholders*

## Housekeeping

- ✓ All lines are muted due to the size of the attendee list.
- ✓ Please submit all questions to the chat. Post MUST include:
  - Name
  - Organization
  - CAEECC member or not
- ✓ Time permitting, we will answer questions from the chat following the presentation.
- ✓ Slide deck, questions, and response to questions will be posted at [www.ruralhtr.org](http://www.ruralhtr.org)



# Who is the RuralREN?

Six members of the Rural Hard to Reach Working Group (RHTR), an alliance of rural California local governments and non-profits experienced in implementing EE programs created through various IOU Local Government Partnerships.

RHTR has a primary goal of advancing local, regional and state policy and regulatory decisions in rural California to bring consistent and quality energy services and products necessary to meet the state's energy efficiency and sustainability goals in its represented communities.

The idea of a RuralREN is a direct response to the unique issues and urgent needs of geographically hard to reach California energy customers.



**REDWOOD COAST**  
**EnergyAuthority**



*A combined 88 years of experience implementing EE programs under the auspices of the CPUC.*

# How Did We Get Here?

**2014:** Brought together through Energy Division ad hoc group to address PG&E SMB DI to HTR customers.

**June 2015:** RHTR self organizes and meets with the four IOUs to open dialogue.

**2015-2018:** RHTR works directly with IOUs, meeting quarterly, to address rural issues.

**January 2018:** Decision addressing Third Party Solicitation Process for EE Programs

**March 2018:** RHTR votes to not participate in group solicitation.

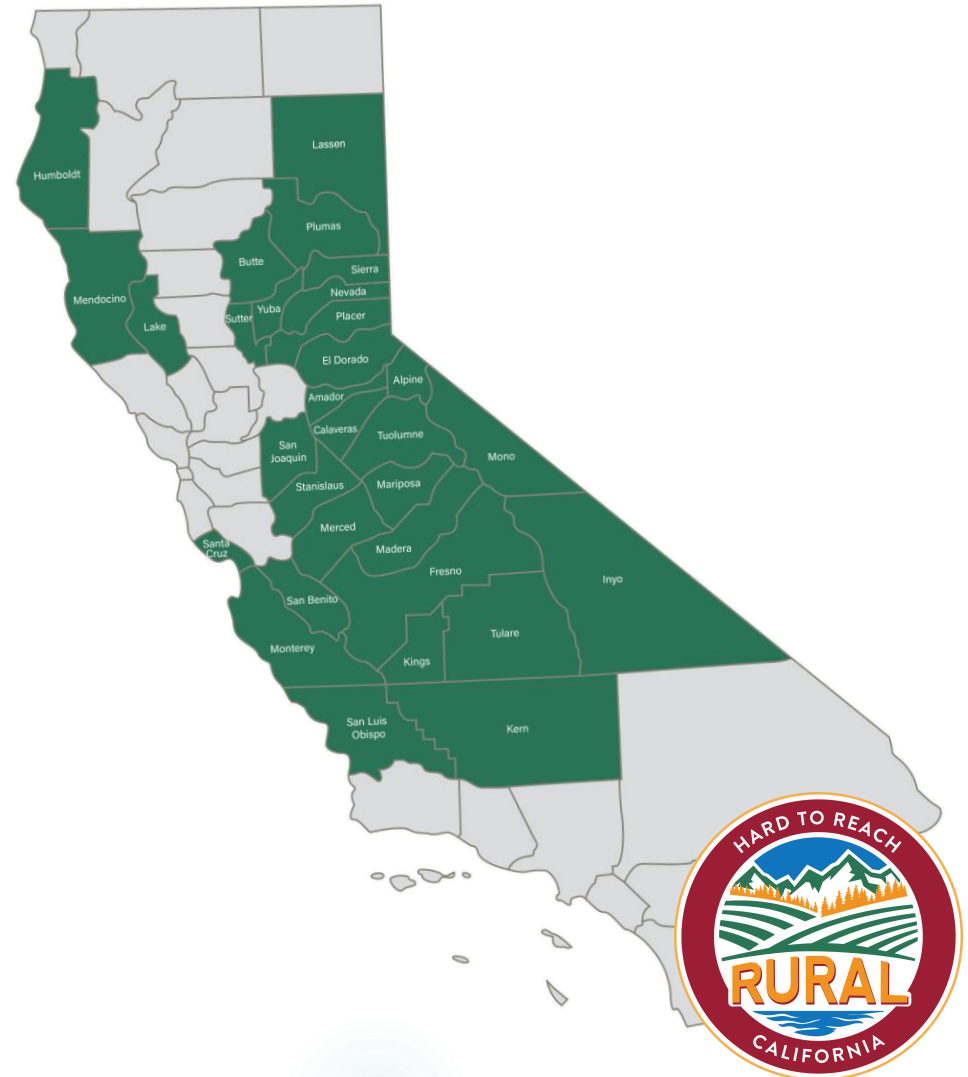
**August 2018:** RHTR votes to explore a REN

**January 2019:** RHTR meets with PG&E, SCE, and SCG to lay foundation for a Rural REN. Members vote RCEA as Program Administrator

**October 2019:** RHTR votes on budget and sector approach.

**July 2020:** Vote to accept governance model.

**May 2021:** Participating members enter MOU to apply for RuralREN





| Demographic Category   | Region Average Stats   |
|--|--|
| <b>Land Mass</b><br>(land area in square miles)  | 70,744   |
| <b>Population</b>  |  |
| % of California population in RuralREN territory   | 18% of California Population   |
| Population #   | 7,005,434  |
| <b>Median household income</b>   | \$ 61,365.06   |
| <b>Education Breakdowns</b>  |  |
| HS Grad or higher (% of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | 79.90%   |
| Bachelor's degree or higher (% of persons age 25+, 2015-2019)  | 27.58%   |
| <b>Unemployment Rates (2021)</b>   | 8.00%  |
| <b>Age range</b>   |  |
| Persons under 5  | 5.79%  |
| Persons under 18   | 21.91%   |
| Persons above 18   | 52.81%   |
| Persons 65 or above  | 19.33%   |
| <b>Language Other than English spoken</b>  | ~26%   |
| <b># of tribes</b>   | 66   |
| <b>% of veterans</b>   | 7.40%  |
| <b>Probation (probation caseloads in the state are in RREN territory )</b>   | 27.00%   |
| <b>CalEnviro Unemployment (top 25%)</b>  |  |
| # of census tracts   | 500  |
| # of zipcodes  | 210  |
| Included within definition of <b>"low-income communities"</b> defined by paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 39713 of Health & Safety Code   | 90.3% of RREN Counties<br>28/31 Counties   |
| 75 percent of public school students in the project area are eligible to receive <b>FRPM</b>   | 58.1% of RREN Counties<br>18/31 Counties   |
| DAC per CalEnviro 4.0 <b>most disadvantaged 25 percent</b> in the state according to the CalEnviroScreen   | 398 Census Tracts in RREN Region out of 1,984 in California<br>Roughly 20% of California disadvantaged census tracts are in RREN territory |
| <b>"Disadvantaged Community"</b> as defined by subdivision (g) of Section - whose median income is 80% of the state median income (\$75,235 is median income per census quick facts- 2015-2019)<br>80% of that is \$60,188 | 54.5% of RREN Counties<br>17/31 Counties   |
| Community located on <b>lands belonging to a federally recognized California Indian tribe</b>  | 80.6% of RREN Counties<br>25/31 Counties   |

# Why is a RuralREN needed now?

*RuralREN is more than just geographically hard to reach, within the population are many underserved, disadvantaged customers and its time to make a concerted effort to serve them.*

Our communities cannot wait...



# Rural California Needs a REN

- ✓ Extreme temperature conditions
- ✓ High annual energy burden (7.59 compared to 5.25)
- ✓ Slower to recover from The Great Recession
- ✓ Ongoing pandemic
- ✓ Increasing inflation
- ✓ Lack of skilled labor to fill Climate Adaptive Careers
- ✓ Extreme heat, drought, and wildfires

| Regional Energy Networks |          |        |             |                 |                     |
|--------------------------|----------|--------|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| REN Name                 | Counties | Cities | Population  | Area, sq. miles | Population/Sq. Mile |
| RuralREN*                | 31       | 115    | 7 million   | 70,000          | 100                 |
| SoCalREN                 | 12       | 220    | 20 million  | 50,000          | 400                 |
| BayREN                   | 9        | 101    | 7.8 million | 6,907           | 1,123               |
| I-REN                    | 2        | 52     | 4.5 million | 27,263          | 170                 |
| 3C-REN                   | 3        | 25     | 1.6 million | 7,877           | 201                 |

*\*proposed, not yet approved*

*The RuralREN will extend community reach and impact, promote the importance of energy efficiency, low GWP refrigerant awareness, and clean renewable energy as pathways to address climate change to advance the state's decarbonization policies.*



# Vast, Diverse, but Still Rural

Using a centralized administration with its area divided into regions, each implemented by one or more partners with close local ties.

Some variation in program offerings based on regional needs.

RHTR's membership, and therefore the RuralREN is based on shared interests rather than geographic proximity. For RuralREN's purposes, *these shared interests are much more important.*

## Program Administrator

Redwood Coast Energy Authority

## Implementing Agencies by RuralREN Region

### North Coast

Redwood Coast Energy Authority

### Central Coast

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments

County of San Luis Obispo

### San Joaquin Valley

San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization

### Sierra

High Sierra Energy Foundation

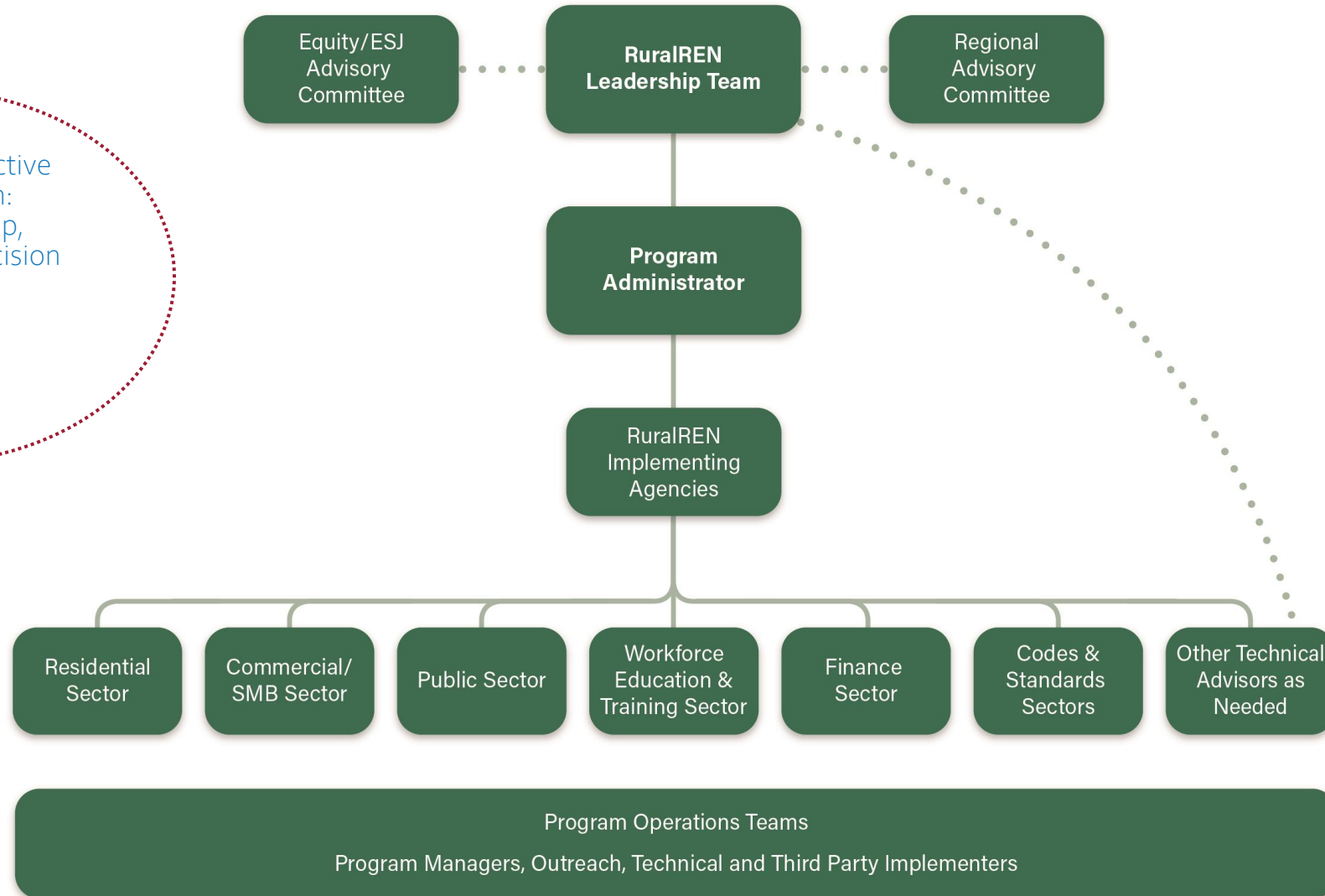
Sierra Business Council







# Governance



Planning for effective administration:

- ✓ Local leadership, centralized decision making
- ✓ Single PA
- ✓ Local delivery





# Equity and ESJ Advisory Committee

RuralREN's focus and highest priority objective is to provide energy efficiency services to underserved and hard to reach rural residents and small businesses. Appropriately, 78% of our total proposed budget is allocated to the Equity segment .

For the RuralREN Equity is more than a segment; it's imbued into our governance and decision making. The **RuralREN Equity and ESJ Advisory Committee** will provides input and recommendations regarding opportunities to incorporate and enhance equity and diversity of the organization and its programs. This advisory group will be formed during the startup phase of the RuralREN in 2023\* and will be comprised of champions of diversity, equity and inclusion from local governments, community-based organizations, schools/colleges, and other organizations within our communities.

*\*RuralREN is requesting funding to start in 2023*





# What is Our Purpose

The Rural REN approach—for rural, by rural—offers a complimentary path to deliver innovative approaches to reducing energy use and expand adoption of integrated demand resources across California's vast rural community

## EQUITY

Integrate equity, environmental and social justice principles into RuralREN's decision making and operations.

## COMMUNITY

Incorporate local needs and wants to ensure solutions meet the needs of the rural communities we serve.

## COLLABORATION

Work closely with other rural agencies, Program Administrators, and program implementers to improve rural customer program access and participation to avoid duplication and create synergies .





## Vision for the RuralREN

*The RuralREN will act as a catalyst to accelerate the implementation of the state's energy efficiency and climate goals in geographically hard-to-reach California. By leveraging rural regional collaboration, our trusted local relationships, and promoting pragmatic responses to community needs the RuralREN will help deliver an equitable and clean energy future.*





# What Will We Achieve?



## Structural & Distributional Equity

*Hard-to-reach, disadvantaged and underserved rural customers are provided the same level of services and support of CPUC energy programs as their counterparts in or near metropolitan areas, and are empowered to take action.*



## Reduced Consumption

*Energy consumption, energy cost and GHG emissions are reduced across the region, contributing to California's decarbonization and energy efficiency goals.*



## Climate Adaptive Careers

*A trained, local workforce is employed in well-paying careers that provide energy services to rural communities to enable energy and cost savings, and GHG emissions reductions.*



# Sectors by Region

|                              | Central Coast |     | North Coast | San Joaquin Valley | Sierra |     |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----|
|                              | AMBAG         | SLO | RCEA        | SJVCEO             | HSEF   | SBC |
| <b>Commercial RA</b>         |               |     | X           |                    |        | X   |
| <b>Residential RA</b>        |               |     | X           |                    |        | X   |
| <b>Public</b>                | X             |     | X*          |                    |        |     |
| <b>Codes &amp; Standards</b> | X             |     | X           | X                  | X      | X   |
| <b>Finance</b>               | X             | X   | X           | X                  | X      | X   |
| <b>WE&amp;T</b>              | X             |     | X           | X                  | X      | X   |
| <b>Residential Equity</b>    | X             |     | X           | X                  | X      | X   |

\*Lake and Mendocino counties only



# Programs: *filling gaps where others do not or cannot*

## PUBLIC (Equity)

Equity program offered in:

- Lake County
- Mendocino County
- San Benito County
- Santa Cruz County

All counties went unassigned in the PG&E non-resource solicitation for LGPs.

Supportive to GK12 & RAPIDS.

Offers technical assistance to public agencies.

Track and report EE project benefits.

## COMMERCIAL (RA)

Offered in the most remote regions:

- North Coast
- Sierra (northern)

Focused on filling the unmet needs from other utility and statewide programs.

Deliver direct-to customer rebates for energy efficient and electrification upgrades as well as some direct install options.

## RESIDENTIAL (RA)

Offered in the most remote regions:

- North Coast
- Sierra (northern)

Focused on filling the unmet needs from other utility and statewide programs.

Deliver direct-to customer rebates for energy efficient and electrification upgrades as well as some direct install options.



# Programs: *scaling successful REN programs to rural markets*

## CODES & STANDARDS (Market Support)

*Using 3CREN's C&S model as a best practice and scaling to the rural market.*

**C&S** will provide rural building departments and building professionals with education and technical resources to increase comprehension of and compliance with California's Building Energy Efficiency Code (Title 24) and escalate more rapid adoption of new standard technologies. The RuralREN C&S program will help our regions reduce energy usage through improved building design and construction and greater code compliance and enforcement.

Focus:

- ▶ Compliance
- ▶ Enforcement
- ▶ Accelerated adoption of new technologies





# Programs: *scaling successful REN programs to rural markets*

## FINANCE (Equity)

*Learns from and expands SoCalREN's public sector bridge loan to our rural market*

A rurally focused **Finance**\* offering will equitably support the residential, small businesses and public\*\* sectors through 0% loans that will encourage and accelerate the implementation of energy efficiency projects. The program addresses first cost and access to capital barriers that exist in rural California by providing guidance and support to customers during their participation in energy efficiency related offerings.

Addresses first cost barrier through localized lending.

- ▶ Bridge loans
- ▶ Micro-loans

*\*R.20-08-022 observed for impact*

*\*\*Public Agency loans will not be duplicated as an offering in SoCalREN territory*



# Programs:

*scaling successful REN programs to rural markets; pilot activity in rural markets; potential for scalability*

## WORKFORCE, EDUCATION & TRAINING (Equity)

**WE&T** through the RuralREN accelerates training (upskilling of existing workers and training for new workers) and increases new opportunities for employment. The program pathways support other RuralREN programs and utility (core and RA) programs through locally based workforces, benefiting future generations and building community wealth through lower bills, career opportunity and clean energy investments.

- ▶ Climate Careers: at-risk, low-income youth 16-22; tested along I5 and 99 corridors; trained to conduct “Green House Calls”.
- ▶ Clean Energy Academy: returning citizens, veterans, Disadvantaged Workers, women, 22+; satellite training sites in hyper-rural communities; 90 and 120 hr. cohorts--120 hr. includes electrification; 40-50 per cohort, 4 cohorts per year; train the trainer, career readiness support and job placement; supports all RA.



# Programs:

*scaling successful REN programs to rural markets; pilot activity in rural markets; potential for scalability*

## RESIDENTIAL (Equity)

A RuralREN **Residential** effort will serve our hard to reach, disadvantaged, and underserved residents, focusing on serving service workers, such as agriculture, hospitality, and healthcare workers, as well as retirees since they often face some of the highest energy burdens.

Raise awareness and drive demand.

- ▶ Green House Calls: uses Climate Careers participants to conduct Green House Calls in-person and virtually; installs non-claimed EE measures.
- ▶ Zero Net Energy online virtual home energy audit: uses data and energy modeling through an online dashboard to present homeowners with tailored path toward ZNE; small launch (Central Coast only) to test viability.



# Budget by Year/Sector

|             | 2023         | 2024         | 2025         | 2026         | 2027         | TOTAL        |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Commercial  | \$400,329    | \$954,842    | \$1,226,927  | \$1,450,222  | \$1,426,712  | \$5,459,032  |
| CC Finance  | \$2,867,047  | \$3,695,941  | \$3,889,106  | \$3,406,666  | \$3,167,551  | \$17,026,311 |
| CC WE&T     | \$2,962,667  | \$5,107,594  | \$5,138,691  | \$5,149,953  | \$5,163,377  | \$23,522,282 |
| CC C&S      | \$1,098,338  | \$1,442,036  | \$1,498,271  | \$1,620,119  | \$1,736,439  | \$7,395,202  |
| Public      | \$546,903    | \$578,553    | \$581,413    | \$534,954    | \$534,522    | \$2,776,345  |
| Residential | \$3,651,961  | \$7,975,018  | \$8,450,336  | \$9,224,142  | \$9,381,084  | \$38,682,540 |
| EMV         | \$121,036    | \$207,417    | \$218,240    | \$224,554    | \$224,802    | \$996,048    |
| Total       | \$11,648,281 | \$19,961,401 | \$21,002,983 | \$21,610,610 | \$21,634,486 | \$95,857,761 |

Year 1 Proportionate \$ Per Person = \$1.66

Year 2-5 averaged Proportionate \$ Per Person = \$3.01



# Funding Request

## Allocation of Budget by Segment (5-year budget, 2023-2027)

|                           | \$                  | %   |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----|
| Resource Acquisition      | \$13,745,139        | 14% |
| Market Support            | \$7,395,202         | 8%  |
| Equity                    | \$73,721,371        | 78% |
| <b>Total w/o EM&amp;V</b> | <b>\$94,861,713</b> |     |
| EM&V                      | \$996,048           |     |
| <b>Total w/ EM&amp;V</b>  | <b>\$95,857,761</b> |     |



# TSB and Cost Effectiveness

| Portfolio/Segment/Sector              | TRC, no Admin | TRC, w/ Admin | PAC, no Admin | PAC, w/ Admin |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| PORTFOLIO                             | 1.08          | 0.06          | 1.17          | 0.06          |
| RESOURCE ACQUISITION SEGMENT          | 1.08          | 0.42          | 1.17          | 0.43          |
| Residential Sector                    | .06           | 0.24          | 0.61          | 0.24          |
| Commercial Sector                     | 1.92          | 0.7           | 2.28          | 0.74          |
| MARKET SUPPORT SEGMENT                | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| Codes & Standards Sector              | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| EQUITY SEGMENT                        | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| Residential Sector                    | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| Workforce Education & Training Sector | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| Finance Sector                        | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| Public Sector                         | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |

| Portfolio/Segment/Sector        | TRC, no Admin | TRC, w/ Admin | PAC, no Admin | PAC, w/ Admin |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Sector: Residential             | 0.6           | 0.05          | 0.61          | 0.05          |
| Program: Residential Incentives | 0.6           | 0.24          | 0.61          | 0.24          |
| Sector: Commercial              | 1.92          | 0.7           | 2.28          | 0.74          |
| Program: SMB Incentives         | 1.92          | 0.7           | 2.28          | 0.74          |
| Segment: Resource Acquisition   | 1.08          | 0.42          | 1.17          | 0.43          |

| Portfolio/Segment/Sector     | TSB, \$     | kWh, net   | kW, net | Therms, net | CO2e, tons |
|------------------------------|-------------|------------|---------|-------------|------------|
| PORTFOLIO                    | \$4,476,729 | 14,091,820 | 194     | 63,786      | 107        |
| RESOURCE ACQUISITION SEGMENT | \$4,476,729 | 14,091,820 | 194     | 63,786      | 107        |
| Residential Sector           | \$1,109,826 | 4,115,269  | 120     | 28,586      | -137       |
| Commercial Sector            | \$3,366,903 | 9,976,551  | 74      | 35,200      | -244       |
| MARKET SUPPORT SEGMENT       | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0          |
| Codes & Standards Sector     | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0          |
| EQUITY SEGMENT               | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0          |
| WE&T Sector                  | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0          |
| Residential Sector           | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0          |
| Public Sector                | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0          |
| Finance Sector               | \$0         | 0          | 0       |             | 0          |





# A rural movement towards a clean energy future is here!

**The RuralREN will help deliver an equitable and clean energy future.**

When we impact people in their jobs, in their homes, in their communities, in their ability to access capital—we change lives and we build communities that contribute to regions and those regions **all rise together.**



# Discussion

QUESTIONS, IMPRESSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS



# Contact Us

Visit [www.ruralhtr.org](http://www.ruralhtr.org) to:

- ▶ Access public presentations
- ▶ Submit additional questions (closes 2/17/22 at 12:00 p.m.)
- ▶ Access RuralREN response to questions (02/22/22)
- ▶ Reach our general mailbox
- ▶ Read more about the members
- ▶ Access resources to support rural spaces

RuralREN Presentation team:

- ▶ FACILITATOR: Stephen Kullmann, Director of Demand Side Management, Redwood Coast Energy Authority
- ▶ PRESENTER: Matthew Marshall, Executive Director, Redwood Coast Energy Authority





**Response to Questions from the February 16, 2022 Presentation to the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC) and Other Stakeholders Regarding the Proposed Rural Regional Energy Network (RuralREN)**

**WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**Question 1**

“Thank you for the presentation and information. Can you help me understand how the Training proposal is unique from the fully virtual learning opportunities provided by PG&E Workforce Education and Training? And how this distinct from Statewide WE&T that trains K-12 students about energy and green careers with an emphasis on serving DAC schools? Thanks!”

**Response to Question 1**

The proposed RuralREN Workforce Education & Training (WE&T) trainings differ from the fully virtual online trainings PG&E offers in that they are in-person.

The Clean Energy Academy has zero overlap with “Energy is Everything” (Statewide K-12 WE&T), as its target audience is 22 and over. The Climate Careers targets 15–24 year old’s, and therefore does have potential for overlap, however Climate Careers is not a school-based program. Climate Careers hires and trains Energy Specialists. Employed Energy Specialists conduct in-home audits and energy efficiency measures. In addition to this, Climate Careers also aims to serve a high percentage of Opportunity Youth. Opportunity Youth are defined as being disconnected from school and work, therefore reducing the possibility of potential overlap.

The proposed RuralREN believes that strong collaboration in crafting Joint Cooperation Memos (JCM) and maintaining open communication with the lead Investor Owned Utility (IOU) and Third Party Implementer (The Energy Coalition) that we can avoid direct overlap or duplication.

**RESIDENTIAL**

**Question 2**

"Another Question: Can you please help me understand how the proposed Res programs are unique from the existing ESA programs, no-cost virtual Res EE program, and PG&E proposed res equity program? Thank you again."

**Response to Question 2**

The proposed RuralREN recognizes and respects the role and importance of the Energy Savings Assistance programs and the value they offer customers. Our offerings should enhance and expand, but

never duplicate or overlap with ESA programs. Our intention is to augment gaps, and ensure the customer is holistically served. Details about program offerings can be found in our Portfolio Application and further delineated in future Joint Cooperation Memos.

As addressed in D.21-05-031, page 15: *"We also clarify that the "equity" category is distinct from our separate low-income energy efficiency Energy Savings Assistance (ESA) programs, which have separate goals and regulatory treatment. While there is some overlap in customers within the target segments, the "equity" category is intended to be defined within the energy efficiency programs covered in this rulemaking that are not specifically targeting low-income populations with program offerings that low-income populations could receive at no cost from the ESA program." Low-income customers are those that meet CARE income guidelines. This effort is focused on customers who are not eligible for the ESA program. As specified in the CAEECC-Hosted Market Support and Equity Metrics Working Groups Draft Prospectus 6-24-2021, "The Decision defines Equity as "programs with a primary purpose of providing energy efficiency to hard-to-reach or underserved customers and disadvantaged communities in advancement of the Commission's Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Action Plan. Improving access to energy efficiency for ESJ communities, as defined in the ESJ Action Plan, may provide corollary benefits such as increased comfort and safety, improved air quality, and more affordable utility bills, consistent with Goals 1, 2, and 5 in the ESJ Action Plan". Note that the Equity category is distinct from Energy Savings Assistance (ESA) programs so as to avoid overlap for program offerings that low-income populations could receive at no cost through existing channels."*

And finally, as stated by PG&E in their Energy Efficiency 2024 Business-Portfolio Plan: *"The Residential Equity Placeholder program, as well as Residential 28 Zonal Electrification program, will coordinate outreach and implementation 29 with the ESA Program, ESA Pilot Plus and Pilot Deep. In cases where ESA 30 can fund customer measures to improve building efficiency or health and 31 comfort, the EE-funded programs may supplement implementation budgets 32 for measures not covered by ESA."*

In summation, the proposed RuralREN looks to offer energy efficiency equity programs, not low-income ESA programs.

The Climate Careers/Green House Calls program is being offered virtually as a response to COVID-19, but it is the intention of the proposed RuralREN to offer this as an in-person service. This in-person offering makes it a different experience from the PG&E virtual EE no-cost program. The proposed RuralREN ZNE/ZNC Home Audit software program has overlap in purpose, to some degree, with the Residential Behavioral program (Home Audit Reports), but dives more deeply using non-utility data to drive towards Zero Net Energy.

While the proposed RuralREN would work with PG&E to ensure no duplication or overlap between the Green House Calls conducted by Climate Career Energy Specialists, we understand the proposed 'Res Equity' program to address, primarily, electrification while Green House Calls looks to deliver with an energy efficiency focus.

### **Question 3**

"Excited to learn more about electrification & efficiency incentives for residential sector (particularly multi-family, low-income). Thank you!"

### **Response to Question 3**

Thank you for your enthusiasm! We are not proposing multi-family or low income programs in this application. Our Business Plan and Portfolio Application will include details about our planned Residential offerings.

## **FINANCE**

### **Question 4, 5, 6**

"How will the proposed Finance offering coordinate with existing offerings (OBF, CAEATFA) that are already available in these areas?"

"Hello -- great presentation and so pleased to see a concerted effort to aid energy equity in rural CA. I work at CAEATFA and would like to know more about the financing program. Could you share what the parameters of the residential and commercial programs are, or if you don't yet know, when (and where) I'll be able to find them? 0% financing is pretty hard to beat -- kudos on that -- but our program can be a good complement when, for example, a project doesn't meet minimum or maximum dollar requirements. So I'd like to get a handle on your program and see how GoGreen Financing can fit with it."

"For financing, will ratepayer funds be [used] for entire loan pool or for credit enhancement to private funding?"

### **Response to Questions 4, 5, 6**

The primary focus of the proposed RuralREN Finance offering is providing bridge loans across all sectors to increase customer participation in IOU and Resource Acquisition programs. By removing first cost barriers the proposed RuralREN anticipates 1) and increase in Resource Acquisition program participation, 2) an increase in IOU On-Bill Finance participation, 3) a quicker turn over from project ideation to completion, and 4) more comprehensive energy projects.

Ratepayer funds will be used for the loan pool. With the R. 20-08-022 active, RuralREN is proposing most of the effort focused on the Bridge Loan program to support the existing IOU On Bill Financing programs. The lesser remaining funds would support a program that will be sent out to solicitation for design with the goal to supplement, not supplant. Whether a solution includes micro loans through local community groups at amounts below the GoGreen minimum threshold, or providing bridge lending to contractors under the GoGreen Commercial lending, a market driven solution will add to the process and not compete against it.

Please refer to our Portfolio Application for further details.

## **RESOURCE ACQUISITION**

### **Question 7**

"Can you provide some specificity about what "unmet needs" you are anticipating meeting in Commercial and Residential? And can you describe whether installations will have a verification component?"

### **Response to Question 7**



Part one was answered in person, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5u8CQgyumw> at the 37:22 mark.

Yes, installations done under the Residential and Commercial Resource Acquisition programs will have a verification component, which will be described in detail in the Program Implementation Plans.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Question 8**

"Do you have a proposed gas/electric split and/or proposed IOU funding split?"

### **Response to Question 8**

Our recommendation is to use the same funding split that was used for the San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization in their three-IOU LGP contract, which was: 80% electric (split 50/50 between PG&E and SCE) and 20% gas (split should be determined with PG&E and SCG). The overall co-funding split would be 48% for PG&E, 40% for SCE, and 12% for SoCalGas. However, we defer to the guidance of the IOU partners and Energy Division for the funding split since we do not have the necessary sales or load data to come up with a more accurate basis for a split.

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