



Redwood Coast Energy Authority's

Supplier Diversity

2024 Annual Report

& 2025 Annual Plan

Report to the California Public Utilities Commission
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2024 ANNUAL REPORT

The Redwood Coast Energy Authority's (RCEA) Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program started serving load to Humboldt County in May 2017 for the express purpose of empowering its member communities to choose the generation resources that reflect their specific values and needs. Chief among these needs identified through community workshops and input to RCEA's Board of Directors are affordability, local economic development, local control over power resources and generation rates, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, air quality, protection of natural resources, and energy reliability in rural Humboldt County, an area especially prone to extended electric outages.

2024 marks the fifth year for RCEA's participation in the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) Supplier Diversity Program. Several highlights from RCEA's 2024 supplier diversity activities include increased engagement with our community and collaborations with equity organizations, implementation of several community projects, an increase in the proportion of procurement with small and local businesses, representing 41% of total procurement, and continuity in contracting and spend with the three certified diverse businesses from the previous year. RCEA is thankful for the opportunity to continue participating in this and other programs in our community to expand equity.

9.1.1 – Description of Supplier Diversity Program Activities During the Previous Calendar Year

In 2024, RCEA made progress toward the goals set in the Annual Plan submitted last reporting cycle. 2024 activities and a description of progress are provided below.

External Program Activities In 2024

As reported in previously filed Supplier Diversity reports, the RCEA Board of Directors adopted a Resolution in 2020 that made a commitment to racial justice. In October 2022, the Board adopted the RCEA Racial Justice Plan, which established a plan of action for ongoing work toward increasing diversity and equity in RCEA's hiring practices, governance, workplace culture, program development, and program delivery. RCEA recognizes that access to energy, energy efficiency, freedom from pollution and a role in the renewable

energy transition intimately affect economic and personal health outcomes. RCEA strives to serve everyone in the Humboldt County community more equitably. Throughout the course of 2024, RCEA has made progress on many of the components identified in the Racial Justice Plan.

Tribal Engagement

RCEA's service area is home to several California Tribes, namely the Big Lagoon Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe, Hoopa Valley Tribe, Karuk Tribe, Resighini Rancheria, Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria, Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria, Wiyot Tribe and the Yurok Tribe. Because of this, many of the programs RCEA implements in the community serve Tribal members and Tribally-owned businesses and entities.

The Racial Justice Plan goals related to Tribes are to strive to include Tribal representation, including Board representation, expand work with local Tribes on program development, customer outreach, and policy setting, and expand efforts to identify opportunities to collaborate with local Tribes as partners on sustainable energy initiatives.

RCEA has made progress this year in implementation of a \$3,000,000 award to begin design, solicitation, and contracting to construct resilient energy systems consisting of solar panels and batteries at fire stations that serve high-fire risk areas. This effort is in partnership with the Yurok Tribe Fire Department, Karuk Tribe Department of Natural Resources, Hoopa Fire Department, and 13 other non-tribal rural fire stations.

Additionally, in 2024 RCEA staff assisted the Yurok and Hoopa Valley tribal housing authorities with micro-grid feasibility studies for planned elder housing facilities. RCEA staff secured \$20,000 to conduct the studies which included solar plus battery system alternatives and projected financial benefits.

Lastly, RCEA is continuing collaboration with both Blue Lake Rancheria and the Wiyot tribe to apply for Department of Energy Home Electrification and Appliance Rebate (HEAR) funding.

Efforts in Support of Small, Local, and Diverse Businesses

RCEA staff continues to engage with new and existing vendors that are qualified but not certified to provide information about Clearinghouse certification and offer technical assistance and resources to become certified.

While there are limited chambers and groups in our rural area that are dedicated to supporting diverse businesses, RCEA has connected with Black Humboldt, a volunteer organization with a mission to enlighten, empower, and entertain our Black and Brown communities

on California's North Coast. In 2024, RCEA sponsored Black Humboldt's Juneteenth Celebration. This contributed towards the Humboldt's Juneteenth Festival celebrations and future endeavors by Black Humboldt.

In 2024, RCEA staff launched two equitable transportation incentive programs with a focus on supporting local businesses and prioritizing the distribution of the program dollars to underserved segments of the community, including:

- An electric bike (e-bike) program that limits rebate dollars to purchases made at locally owned bike shops throughout Humboldt County. Additionally, the program has dedicated 75% of the initial program budget to low-income customers and has designed the rebate as a point-of-sale voucher to enable low-income rebate recipients to purchase an e-bike without initially fronting the funds and waiting until a rebate payment is generated. The program also offers adaptive e-bike rebates (defined as an e-bike designed for a customer who has a medical condition precluding use of a standard e-bike). The e-bike program has been popular and successful, particularly with the adaptive customers whose purchase of an e-bike using RCEA's voucher is their primary, or only, form of independent transportation.
- An Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate program, which required EVs to be purchased in California, offered enhanced incentives for low-income customer rebates, and allowed for the use of the rebate on used EVs. RCEA's budget for the EV rebate program was expended in 2024 and an updated program is planned for launch in 2025.

In our power procurement, RCEA continues to incorporate energy-justice best practices and affordability into renewable development and power purchase solicitations and resource planning. To ensure that contracts benefit racially diverse communities and to avoid projects that are detrimental to those communities, RCEA includes project location and community benefit in its evaluation criteria for power solicitations. Some of these contracting efforts include the following activities:

- As part of the 2022 Tierra Buena project located in Sutter County, RCEA's contract stipulated that the developer commit to contributing \$10,000 "to a clean energy or battery storage workforce training program, or science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) educational program, located within twenty (20) miles of the Project." In 2024, the developer completed the curriculum and shared it with RCEA and host community Sutter County for use in their jurisdictions.
- In April 2024 RCEA entered into a contract for the Sandrini battery energy storage system project located in Kern County and was able to negotiate a \$250,000 community benefit fund to that contract, to be used either in Kern or Humboldt Counties.
- In December 2024, RCEA issued a solicitation for local storage projects that includes preferred criteria for proposals with a community benefits component. Responses to this solicitation are due in March 2025.

Outreach and Community Engagement

RCEA staff continues to improve methods to reach wider audiences and get information, resources, and programs out to all segments of our community.

RCEA launched a new website this year, which provides a more streamlined and accessible format for customers and community member to navigate. The website meets accessibility standards and has Google Translate features embedded. The website now includes a new page for “Contractor Resources” which details the Supplier Diversity Certification, its benefits, and how to apply. Additionally, RCEA staff continued translating program applications into Spanish as a standard procedure as a tool to help the programs benefit more segments of our community.

RCEA staff tabled at eight public community events in geographically diverse locations throughout the county. Some examples of events RCEA tabled at include the Klamath Salmon Festival, two days at the Humboldt County Fair, the Humboldt County Conservation Fair, an Earth Day event in Loleta, and a Zero-Waste Humboldt Earth Day event.

In March, RCEA hosted a Heat Pump Workshop for homeowners and contractors. In November, RCEA hosted a webinar educating participants about how to electrify their homes without upsizing their panel. RCEA provides a supplier diversity brochure and presentation slide tailored for contractors and business owners for presentation and distribution at all RCEA-led workshops and events.

RCEA is a member of all 11 local chambers and staff attended chamber of commerce mixers in Arcata, Ferndale, Fortuna, Eureka, McKinleyville, and the Young Professionals this year. RCEA staff members also attended the Women’s Leadership Training at Eureka Chamber of Commerce, which was hosted by the Eureka Chamber of Commerce.

Collaboration with External Equity Organizations

RCEA continues to maintain collaboration with organizations that promote the interest of and advocate for diverse suppliers and diverse communities.

As a member of CalCCA, who “share a commitment to inclusion and representation of our diverse communities through democratic governance and intensive community engagement,” RCEA continues to represent Humboldt County in these endeavors.

RCEA continues participating as a member of the Equity Metrics Working Group of the California Energy Efficiency Coordinating Committee (CAEECC), which serves as an advisory group to the CPUC.

RCEA continues engagement with the Redwood Region Climate & Community Resilience Hub (CORE Hub), a community organization with a mission to provide community engagement, technical assistance and an equity and justice lens to help our community transition

our built and natural systems to a decarbonized and resilient future. The CORE Hub has been requested by federal, Tribal, state, and local governments, agencies, and community organizations to facilitate community engagement on Offshore Wind, to include “Community Benefits” strategies that will ultimately help guide and shape this new industry as it develops within the region. In this work, CORE Hub will help reduce conflicts, avoid maladaptation, and create enduring human, environmental, and economic resilience. RCEA is actively engaged in CORE Hub’s discussions and collaborations with tribal governments, tribal organizations, community-based organizations representing underrepresented communities, local government and agencies, local environmental and conservation groups, local educational leaders, and trade unions.

In September 2024, the CPUC issued a decision approving the Northern California Rural Regional Energy Network (NREN) to deliver energy efficiency programs to underserved rural customers. RCEA, serving as Lead Portfolio Administrator, is partnering with the Sierra Business Council, Lake Area Planning Commission, and the Mendocino Council of Governments to govern the NREN and guide the implementation of seven programs across 17 counties.

The seven programs are:

- Residential Resource Acquisition: energy efficiency and electrification incentives and rebates for residential customers
- Commercial Resource Acquisition: energy efficiency and electrification incentives and rebates for commercial customers
- Residential Equity: assessments and other “non-resource” services to residential customers
- Public Equity: assessments and other “non-resource” services to public agency customers
- Codes & Standards: education and technical resources to increase understanding of and compliance with California’s Building Energy Efficiency Codes
- Workforce Education & Training: accelerates training (upskilling of existing workers and training for new workers) and increases new opportunities for employment
- Finance: gap and micro-loans for residential, commercial, and public agency customers.

This year, RCEA worked with our NREN partners to begin program design and implementation planning for program launch in 2025. Five of the seven NREN programs are equity programs that will target and primarily serve energy efficiency to hard-to-reach or underserved customers and disadvantaged communities in advancement of the CPUC’s Environmental and Social Justice (ESJ) Action Plan.

External equity events RCEA attended include April 2024’s CPUC’s Small and Diverse Business Expo held in San Francisco and January 2024’s first-ever Tribal Offshore Wind Summit. The tribe-centered Summit included other local government agencies and offshore wind federal agencies to critically examine current and future floating offshore wind projects and empower tribes to play a greater role in offshore wind development and ensure that such projects benefit our community.

Internal Program Activities In 2024

This year, RCEA continued to integrate and update supplier diversity language in solicitations and continue the practice of posting solicitations directly to the Supplier Diversity Clearinghouse to share these opportunities with existing certified vendors. RCEA also trained key staff, as needed, with instructions and procedures for distributing contract opportunities on the Supplier Clearinghouse platform.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policies

RCEA is committed to creating a supportive and affirming space for staff, stakeholders, and community members across all identities. To foster this environment, RCEA has worked to progress the goals in our Racial Justice Plan in our hiring process and internal operations through the incorporation of equity actions in job descriptions and work plans, interviewing, and continued staff training.

In 2024, RCEA took additional steps to ensure fair and equitable hiring. Building upon our practices of blind applicant screening, HR created a new application screening process in which the reviewers would rate applicants based on how well their experience and education lined up with specific knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) as detailed in the job descriptions. Prior to this change, the screening sheet used a simplified 'yes', 'no', 'maybe' system, which was open to debate, personal feelings, and potential bias, as committee members were using their instincts and judgement to determine applicant compatibility.

In conjunction with hiring managers, HR now identifies 5-10 important KSAs and provides a rating sheet in which reviewers determine on a set scale how well the candidate's education and prior experience meet those KSAs. Scores are then added and averaged over all reviewers to create an ordered list from which candidates are interviewed. In doing this, we have been able to focus the reviewers to screen the applications through the lens of identifying important elements of the position, rather than through potential affinity or halo biases.

Additionally, this year, RCEA began restructuring aspects of the Community Strategies Department to emphasize responsibilities related to RCEA's strategy for targeted outreach for rural, hard-to-reach, and equity priority communities and for facilitating ongoing Tribal engagement. With the restructuring and new hires for this department, RCEA is building a team that integrates more elements of our supplier diversity program into community events and engagements with business owners and community members.

Workforce Data

RCEA is not required to report any non-confidential workforce data that is already reported to other state and federal agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission on the EEO-1.

Self-reported CCA Board Member Demographics

RCEA's Board is made up of member-agency appointed representatives, who are primarily elected Council and Board members.

Board demographic data was collected via a survey with this question: "In three sentences or less, please describe yourself using whatever demographic categories or language you prefer. Or let us know if you decline to participate."

See the table below for the results of RCEA's Board demographic survey:

Jurisdiction	Director	Survey Response
City of Arcata	Sarah Schaefer, Chair	I am a 32-year-old white, cis-gender female.
City of Blue Lake	Elise Scafani	Decline
County Humboldt	Natalie Arroyo	Humboldt County Supervisor, District 4. I identify as Puerto Rican/Latina, and I am a military veteran.
City of Eureka	Scott Bauer, Vice-Chair	Decline
City Ferndale	Skip Jorgensen	I am Alan "Skip" Jorgensen a seventy-five year old male caucasian and RCEA representative for the City of Ferndale, CA. I am a retired educator and public school administrator working 37 years in California and serving as Superintendent in three different school districts. I live with a neurological condition - Primary Lateral Sclerosis since 2016 which has transitioned and was diagnosed as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis in early 2023.
City of Fortuna	Kris Mobley	NO RESPONSE
Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District	Sheri Woo	Asian-American female
City of Rio Dell	Frank Wilson	White American male
City of Trinidad	Jack Tuttle	Decline
Yurok Tribe	Michael Gerace	Decline
Blue Lake Rancheria	Jason Ramos	I'm the Tribal Chairman of the Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe of California. I'm a tribal member and part of the larger native American community in Humboldt County.

9.1.2 – Supplier Diversity Results of Goods and Services (Non-Power Purchases) if Procured

		[Year] of Report							
		Direct Spend ¹ \$	Sub Spend ² \$	Total \$	%	Product Spend \$	Service Spend \$	Total \$	%
Minority Male	African American								
	Asian Pacific American								
	Hispanic American	\$ 12,674		\$ 12,674	0.40%		\$ 12,674	\$ 12,674	0.40%
	Native American								
	Total Minority Male	\$ 12,674		\$ 12,674	0.40%		\$ 12,674	\$ 12,674	0.40%
Minority Female	African American								
	Asian Pacific American								
	Hispanic American								
	Native American								
	Total Minority Female								
Total Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)		\$ 12,674		\$ 12,674	0.40%		\$ 12,674	\$ 12,674	0.40%
Women Business Enterprise (WBE)		\$ 23,184		\$ 23,184	0.72%		\$ 23,184	\$ 23,184	0.72%
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Business									
Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE)		\$ 5,350		\$ 5,350	0.17%		\$ 5,350	\$ 5,350	0.17%
Persons with Disabilities Business Enterprise (DBE)									
8(a)*									
Total Supplier Diversity Spend		\$ 41,208		\$ 41,208	1.28%		\$ 41,208	\$ 41,208	1.28%

Net Procurement**	\$ 3,208,404
Net Product Procurement	84,843
Net Service Procurement	3,123,561
Total Number of Diverse Suppliers that Received	3

RCEA’s Small and Local Vendors

In addition to RCEA’s efforts to engage with and procure from certified diverse business, RCEA’s procurement policies continue to support small and local business owners. While General Order (GO) 156 acknowledges Small Business Administration 8(a) certified small businesses, RCEA notes the importance of purchasing from local and small businesses not recognized through the CPUC’s diverse business enterprises-focused Supplier Clearinghouse. Procuring from small businesses is impactful because our CCA service territory is rural, thus experiencing economic marginalization distinct from our metropolitan neighbors served by their own CCA programs. RCEA defines “small” as businesses that have California Department of General Services “Small Business” and “Micro Business” certifications. RCEA defines “local” as businesses based within RCEA’s territory, Humboldt County. This year, RCEA did business with seven certified small or micro businesses. For purposes of clarity, six out of the seven businesses RCEA identified as small also met the criteria for local, but the expenditures for these six businesses were excluded from the local expense calculations. This year, RCEA’s business with these certified small businesses, some of which were also certified diverse businesses, resulted in a total sum of \$48,457.

RCEA also recognizes the value in procurement with local businesses. Local procurement is essential in our service territory, where poverty and low household income are widespread, and where distance creates logistical challenges in procuring goods and services from outside our area. In 2024, RCEA did business with 65 local businesses including one power supplier and other non-power businesses providing a wide array of services such as event and training facilitation, IT, security, legal, financial, engineering, project consulting, as well as facility and outreach material expenses. More information can be found in section 9.1.9 regarding RCEA’s efforts to procure local renewable energy and energy storage projects.

	Small Business Procurement	Number of Small Suppliers	Local Business Procurement	Number of Local Suppliers	Small & Local Combined Spend	Small & Local Combined %
Non-Power	\$ 48,457	7	\$ 381,826	64	\$ 430,283	13%
Power	-	-	\$ 6,858,931	1	\$ 6,858,931	47%
ALL	\$ 48,457	7	\$ 7,240,757	65	\$ 7,289,214	41%

Net Non-Power Procurement	\$ 3,208,404
Net Power Procurement	\$14,572,575
Net Power and Non-Power Procurement	\$17,780,979

RCEA has maintained contracts with several vendors over several years that are local and have been identified as woman-owned, but not women business enterprise (WBE) certified. In 2024, \$183,240 of RCEA’s total spend went to these four WBE-eligible businesses.

RCEA does not currently survey all existing vendors for eligibility, so this total only represents the local businesses that are primarily sole proprietorships for which eligibility verification comes easily. While RCEA has engaged with some of our contracted WBE-qualified businesses to educate and assist with the certification process, it is important to emphasize that the certification requirements pose a material hurdle for these sole proprietors, and a more streamlined certification process could provide an equitable opportunity for certification of smaller vendors.

Nevertheless, RCEA is proud of our procurement from these businesses and is excited to continue leveraging GO 156 as an opportunity to further the power our procurement holds to stimulate small, local, and diverse business growth.

9.1.2 – Description of Diverse Suppliers with Majority Workforce in California

All three certified Diverse Supplier vendors RCEA hired in 2024 have 100% of their workforce working in California.

Supplier	Average Percentage of Workforce
Supplier 1	1.00
Supplier 2	1.00
Supplier 3	1.00
Sum of Average Percentage	3.00
Number of Suppliers	3
Average percentage of total diverse workforce that resides in California	1.00

9.1.3 – Supplier Diversity Program Expense

Expense Category	2024 (Actual)
Wages	\$ 4,540
Other Employee Expenses	\$ 889
Program Expenses	
Reporting Expenses	
Training Expenses	
Consultant Expenses	
Other Expenses	\$ 838
Total	\$ 6,267

9.1.5 – Description of Prime Contractors Utilization of Diverse Subcontractors

In 2024, RCEA entered five contracts that included the utilization of a subcontractor. Staff verified that none of those subcontractors were certified diverse business enterprises. RCEA enters very few contracts that entail prime contractors who utilize subcontractors for the work. With that said, RCEA is committed to collecting data about future subcontractors to the best of our ability.

9.1.5 – New Diverse Prime and Subcontractor Utilization

RCEA maintained contracts for services with three certified diverse businesses in 2024, but does not have any new contracted prime or subcontractor businesses that were certified to report during 2024.

Category	New Prime Contractors #	New Subcontractors #
Minority Male Business Enterprise		
Minority Female Business Enterprise		
Total Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)		
Women Business Enterprise (WBE)		
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Business Enterprise (LGBTBE)		
Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE)		
Persons with Disabilities Business Enterprise (DBE)		
8(a)		
Total	0	0

9.1.6 – List of Supplier Diversity Complaints Received and Current Status

RCEA did not receive any formal complaints this reporting cycle.

9.1.9 – Description of Supplier Diversity Activities and Progress in Power (Energy) Procurement

RCEA did not procure power products from a Clearinghouse-certified entity during reporting year 2024, nor did RCEA have any owned power plants or power purchase agreements (PPA) that required fuel provision. RCEA did, however, post two long-term open power procurement solicitation to the Supplier Clearinghouse website. No responses were received via the Clearinghouse as of the end of 2024.

Despite this, RCEA does procure power products from a variety of small, local producers as part of our Board-directed effort to spur and sustain economic development within our service area. In 2024, RCEA continued to procure energy and capacity from a local biomass plant, Humboldt Sawmill Company's Scotia Cogeneration Plant (HSC) which is depicted in the Small and Local Vendors subsection in section 9.1.2 of this report. RCEA's procurement from HSC sustains local jobs and will continue to do so through the end of the PPA term in June 2031.

RCEA has issued at least one solicitation for renewable energy and energy storage projects per year over the last few years, most of which have expressed preference for local resources. RCEA will continue to seek procurement opportunities with an emphasis on projects within its service area to promote local economic development and grid reliability.

9.1.9 – Supplier Diversity Results in Power (Energy) Procurement

RCEA has no results to report in Energy Procurement from certified diverse businesses in 2024, notwithstanding the efforts and activities outlined in the preceding section.

		2024							
		Direct Power Purchases \$	Direct Fuels for Generation \$			Totals \$ ¹			% ²
		Renewable and Non-Renewable Power Products	Diesel	Nuclear	Natural Gas	Direct ³	Sub ⁴	Total \$ ⁵	
Minority Male	African American	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Asian Pacific American	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Hispanic American	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Native American	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Total Minority Male	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Minority Female	African American	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Asian Pacific American	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Hispanic American	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Native American	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
	Total Minority Female	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Women Business Enterprise (WBE)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Business Enterprise (LGBTBE)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Persons with Disabilities Business Enterprises (DBE)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
8(a) ⁶		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Supplier Diversity		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Net Power Procurement		\$ 14,572,575							
Net Direct Power Purchases		\$ 14,572,575							
Net Direct Fuels for Generation		\$ -							
Total Number of Diverse Suppliers		0							

2025 ANNUAL PLAN

RCEA looks forward to continuing our Supplier Diversity Program with expanded efforts, policies, and programs in 2025.

Overall, RCEA's 2025 activities will focus on refining the methods established over the last several years to continue and improve our engagement and support with small, local, and diverse businesses. RCEA looks forward to continuing to grow the programs, initiatives, and policies outlined in this report. The following activities are under development for 2025.

10.2 – Description of Supplier Diversity Program Activities Planned for the Next Calendar Year

Planned External Program Activities For 2025

Efforts in Support of Small, Local, and Diverse Businesses

RCEA will continue the E-Bike rebate program mentioned in section 9.1.1. RCEA will develop an updated Electric Vehicle (EV) Rebate with very similar goals of supporting local businesses and prioritizing the distribution of the program dollars to underserved segments of the community. RCEA also plans to add EV charging capability in our most remote and rural areas of our territory, including on or near tribal reservations and tribally owned land.

RCEA will continue to offer assistance to community partners in the development and implementation of grant applications.

RCEA will continue to provide technical assistance to diverse businesses and encourage local qualified firms and existing vendors to pursue certification. If RCEA finds that contractors or vendors are qualified for Clearinghouse certification or hold non-Clearinghouse certifications, we will encourage them to pursue Clearinghouse certification.

Outreach and Community Engagement

RCEA will continue to expand our outreach efforts to local community environmental groups, trade organizations, and chambers of commerce. Our goal is to provide at least two community presentations, participate in two tabling opportunities, attend two chamber mixers, and meet with two leaders of mission-aligned or tangentially connected local organizations or agencies a month. We also plan to participate in at least one event or presentation in each town or city of our service territory. Additionally, RCEA will continue to host workshops and trainings tailored for contractors and will continue sharing resources and information about the benefits of certification at these events.

RCEA will promote MCE's Certify and Amplify workshop, as well as any other CCA-led supplier diversity events throughout the year via social media, our website, community presentations, tabling, and participation in chamber of commerce activities.

RCEA will continue efforts to make resources, program applications, and information more accessible. This will include adding Spanish translation capabilities to our website and procuring an on-call translation service for customer interactions over the phone and in person.

Collaboration with External Equity Organizations

RCEA will continue collaboration with the CORE Hub efforts, which are anticipated to escalate as the timeline and efforts to develop offshore wind energy off the coast of Humboldt Bay continue to unfold. RCEA will seek partnerships with expert consultants on racially diverse community engagement, especially for large-scale projects such as offshore wind.

RCEA will continue to be active members of the CalCCA Environmental Justice and Equity Committee.

RCEA will ramp up collaboration with NREN partners and organizations throughout the 17 Counties served by NREN as we begin launching programs throughout the territory.

RCEA is partnering with four Tribal Nations (Blue Lake Rancheria, Karuk, Hoopa, and Yurok) and Schatz Energy Research Center to apply for federal funding for the Tribal Energy Resilience and Sovereignty project. This project was selected in 2024 and RCEA anticipates final award and project commencement in early 2025. The six-year TERAS project aims to increase reliability and resiliency for the Tribal Nations by developing microgrids. The project will serve vulnerable and historically under-resourced populations, in a fire-prone region, while simultaneously pushing microgrid innovation and development.

Planned Internal Program Activities For 2025

RCEA will continue the practice of providing staff trainings as needed to educate staff of how to distribute opportunities on Supplier Clearinghouse platform on the new website.

RCEA plans to continue restructuring aspects of the Community Strategies Department to emphasize responsibilities related to RCEA's strategy for targeted outreach for rural, hard-to-reach, and equity-priority communities and for facilitating ongoing Tribal engagement. With increased team capacity, RCEA will be able to include more elements of our supplier diversity program in community events and engagements with business owners and community members.

RCEA will develop and implement a voluntary supplier diversity survey for new vendors, with a future roll out to existing vendors. This survey will identify the certification status and eligibility of prime- and sub-contractors, with the goal of empowering RCEA to educate and support not-yet-enrolled-but-qualified vendors to complete certification. The development and process for collecting this data will be informed by other CCA best practices.

RCEA plans to continue the incorporation energy-justice best practices and affordability into renewable development and power purchase solicitations and resource planning.

10.2 – Plans to Encourage Prime Contractors to Subcontract Small, Local, and Diverse Businesses

As noted in previous sections, RCEA very seldomly solicits and contracts for work that entails hiring prime contractors who utilize subcontractors. As such, RCEA intends to educate prime contractors about utilization of diverse subcontractors on a case-by-case basis in upcoming years. As with all RCEA solicitations, supplier diversity information will be collected from vendors who contract with RCEA, and this request will extend to subcontractors when applicable.