



Together, Building  
a Better California

Marketing & Communications | 77 Beale Street | San Francisco, CA 94105 | 415.973.5930 | [www.pge.com](http://www.pge.com)

November 29, 2017

## **PG&E Expands Better Together Resilient Communities Grant, Announces Two New Recipients**

**SAN FRANCISCO, Calif.**—Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) today announced two winners of its Better Together Resilient Communities grant, providing \$100,000 each to nonprofit organizations Ag Innovations and Sierra Institute in support of their projects that examine new ways of managing forest and watershed land to prevent wildfires.

The additional grant winners represent an expansion of PG&E's Better Together program, doubling its investment from \$1 million to \$2 million, or four \$100,000 grants every year for five years. Two grant winners were announced in September: the University of California, Merced, and the Karuk Tribe of California were both presented the awards for their innovative examinations of ways to prevent and prepare for increasing wildfire risk.

"We are committed to finding real, lasting solutions to climate change by helping California communities build resilience to wildfire risk. The organizations we have recognized with funding have been deliberate, focused and committed to studying real, tangible ways that we can tackle climate challenges together. It's going to take time, which is why we are committing support over five years, but I'm confident that programs like these are what will lead to meaningful results," PG&E Corporation CEO and President Geisha Williams said.

### **Empowering local communities to find wildfire solutions**

The successful grant proposals recognize that collaboration is key to addressing climate change, and that solutions should protect the safety and vitality of communities.

"Programs such as the ones that Ag Innovations and Sierra Institute are conducting can make a lasting impact in the way California manages forestry in watershed areas and show us new and effective ways of building climate resilience," said Rob Fong, a PG&E Sustainability Advisory Council member, former vice mayor and councilmember for Sacramento's 4th Council District and principal at RKF.

Ag Innovations' winning grant proposal will partner with the Sonoma County Water Agency to bring together public agencies, private landowners, tribes, scientists, and forestry experts to develop collaborative solutions for managing vegetation in the Lake Sonoma Recreation Area, a critical source of water for more than 600,000 people. The project will develop solutions that improve erosion and wildfire management while protecting the local water supply and forest health.

"We are grateful that PG&E has chosen to invest in community-based collaborative solutions for the Lake Sonoma area. After the devastating fires of last month, it is critical that we find more

effective ways to reduce fuel loads, improve watershed health, and protect the future of this crucial piece of Sonoma County's natural infrastructure. We believe that the way to make true progress is by bringing together leaders from diverse groups to find higher ground. This grant will go a long way in helping us harness the collective knowledge in our community to make lasting change that we can share with others," Joseph McIntyre, president of Ag Innovations, said.

"The Sonoma County Water Agency is excited about the opportunities to reduce the threat of wildfire in the Lake Sonoma area. A major fire in this area could pose a serious threat to our drinking water supply," said Shirlee Zane, chair of the Water Agency Board of Directors.

Similarly, the Sierra Institute for Community and Environment will launch a collaborative effort in the headwaters of the California State Water Project, including Upper Feather River, Upper Mill Creek and Upper Deer Creek areas, to reduce fire risk while supporting the surrounding rural community and helping it to thrive.

"The Sierra Institute works with our partners to advance projects that benefit the environment and improve local socioeconomic outcomes and rural communities. This grant will support work with a powerfully diverse mix of local partners on some of the last free-running trout streams in California and across a landscape facing high risk of catastrophic wildfire. This work will help us contribute to California's broader climate resilience and upper watershed improvement efforts," Jonathan Kusel with the Sierra Institute said.

PG&E has engaged an outside advisory panel of community and sustainability leaders to evaluate Better Together Resilient Communities grant program applicants. In its first year, PG&E received 37 applications, which were assessed based on how they addressed this year's focus on wildfire resilience. The decision was made to extend grant offers to two additional applicant finalists as a result.

"As the impacts of climate change on our planet become more apparent, we need creative strategies to assess, learn and share best practices on building climate resilience. PG&E's Better Together Resilient Communities grant program is funding essential work toward these goals. By doubling the number of grantees, PG&E is demonstrating its commitment to a more resilient future," said PG&E Sustainability Advisory Council member Heather Zichal, president of Zichal, Inc., a domestic and international energy advisory consultancy, and former climate advisor to President Obama.

The Better Together Resilient Communities grant program focus for 2018 will be announced in early January. The application process will open in March 2018.

## About PG&E

Pacific Gas and Electric Company, a subsidiary of [PG&E Corporation](#) (NYSE:PCG), is one of the largest combined natural gas and electric utilities in the United States. Based in San Francisco, with more than 20,000 employees, the company delivers some of the nation's cleanest energy to nearly 16 million people in Northern and Central California. For more information, visit [www.pge.com/](http://www.pge.com/) and [www.pge.com/en/about/newsroom/index.page](http://www.pge.com/en/about/newsroom/index.page).

