

Career Pathways: Fire, Forest, Fish & Facilities

Project Title: Career Pathways: Fire, Forests, Fish & Facilities

Lead Applicant: Trees Foundation

Collaborator(s): Mid Klamath Watershed Council, Mattole Restoration Council, Mattole Salmon Group, Native Health in Native Hands, Northern Mendocino Ecosystem Recovery Alliance, Southern Humboldt Fire & Rescue, Tribal EcoRestoration Alliance, Trees Foundation

Project Phase: ☒ Exploratory ☐ Last-mile

Region(s) Served: Lake County, Northern Mendocino County, Humboldt County

Location of Headquarter: Garberville, Humboldt County

Primary Sector: Working Lands and Blue Economy

Secondary Sector: Workforce Development, Arts and Culture (not Tourism)

Project Summary (~250 words):

The Career Pathways: Fire, Forests, Fish & Facilities project, proposed by the Rural Resilience Partnership (RRP), looks to bring together ten organizations to create sustainable wage opportunities and promote environmental stewardship in the Redwood Region. The initiative focuses on workforce development, climate resilience, prescribed fire, and cultural preservation by training workers for natural resource jobs in forestry, fire suppression, watershed restoration, and native plant restoration. By establishing community cultural and training hubs across Lake, Mendocino, and Humboldt Counties, the project provides paid, accessible training close to home, minimizing barriers like travel and the need to sacrifice stable wages for training.

By October 2026, Career Pathways aims to launch a comprehensive workforce certification program, with standardized training curricula, clear career pathways, and employer partnerships for recruitment and job placement, focusing on underserved Native and remote rural communities. The goal is to train 200 individuals and place 50 in living-wage jobs. The success of regional facility

development will be measured through planning documents and community engagement metrics.

Career Pathways offers paid training, certifications, and job pathways that equip workers to fill positions in growing industries like forestry and fire management. The project prioritizes underserved communities, including youth, rural residents, low-income households, and Tribal citizens, by addressing barriers to employment and fostering upward mobility. Partnerships with organizations like Native Health in Native Hands and Southern Humboldt Fire and Rescue provide immediate job opportunities. Facility development integrates sustainable materials and designs, while distributed training centers reduce commuting emissions and costs. The project honors Native communities and fosters ecosystem restoration using fire for cultural and ecological health.