



RRRISE Catalyst Fund Proposal Carving a Legacy – Summary Sheet

Project Title: Carving a Legacy: Tribal Traditions, Woodworking, and Workforce Development

Lead Applicant: Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe

Collaborator(s) (if applicable): WoodLab Designs

Total Funding Request: \$740,907.66 (Staff—including benefits: \$406,250, Equipment: \$210,643, Subcontracts: \$35,000, Travel: \$500)

Project Phase: ☒ Exploratory ☐ Last-mile

Region(s) Served: Humboldt County, Blue Lake Rancheria, Blue Lake Rancheria Ancestral Territory, All North Coast Tribes

Location of Headquarter: Blue Lake, Humboldt County

Primary Sector: Working Lands and Blue Economy

Secondary Sector: Arts, Culture, and Tourism

Project Summary (~250 words): This project aims to promote economic diversification, climate resilience, and cultural preservation. It sets out to address challenges Indigenous artisans face in accessing traditional woods, expands market opportunities for non-commercial timber species, and supports the Tribe's stewardship of 1,000+ acres of timberland. By integrating sustainable woodworking practices with Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), the initiative fosters environmental health, economic growth, and cultural revitalization.

The pre-development phase (June 2025–September 2026) includes a comprehensive feasibility study to assess equipment needs, site logistics, and market opportunities for wood products, focusing on non-commercial species like tan oak and pepperwood. The pilot study will procure essential equipment, including a portable sawmill, vacuum kiln, and traditional tools, to support sustainable

processing and cultural practices. Culturally relevant training programs will be developed for Tribal members and disadvantaged individuals, with an emphasis on sustainable forestry, sawmill operations, and woodworking techniques.

Community engagement will be central, with workshops and forums to ensure that project goals reflect community needs, advance sustainable practices, and preserve



cultural heritage. By prioritizing equity, the initiative empowers Tribal citizens,

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economically disadvantaged populations, and Indigenous artisans through job creation, training, and access to traditional materials.

The project aims to create sustainable timber markets, improve forest health, and reduce greenhouse gases through carbon-neutral energy sources. By September 2026, the pre-development phase would conclude with finalized equipment procurement, community buy-in, and a plan ready for implementation funding, setting the stage for a transformative, equitable project.