



Many of California's rural, forested communities face extreme challenges associated with poor socioeconomic conditions and the increasing threat of catastrophic wildfire. The Sierra Institute's Rural Community Development Initiative (RCDI) is designed to build community capacity to address these challenges. Successful implementation of this project will protect the residents, resources, and economies of rural communities by reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfires and creating jobs.



Through RCDI, the Sierra Institute provides organizational and technical capacity building assistance to nine community organizations working on forest biomass utilization projects. Some of these projects focus on heating schools with biomass boilers, others hope to build combined heat and power plants, and many are working to create value-added wood products. Although the end products of these projects vary from baseball bats to electricity, they are unified by a common goal: resilient forests and healthy communities. By incentivizing forest restoration, the program maintains key forest infrastructure with benefits to all Californians, including secure hydropower and electric transmission infrastructure, healthy watersheds that produce clean and cheap water for users across the state, and forests that provide multiple benefits.

# RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Specific technical assistance that is provided to the recipients includes education on biomass utilization opportunities, training in community outreach and engagement, guidance on engaging project partners, assistance in contracting pre-development consultants, and support in securing funding and capital investments. This technical assistance allows the recipients to overcome identified barriers and realize success.

Much of the Sierra Institute's work with these communities is done in collaboration with CA's State Wood Energy Team and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. This partnership works with public bodies, tribal groups, non-profit organizations, and underserved communities in rural, forested regions in California to develop a wide range of wood product initiatives.

**"SI AND THE RCDI PROGRAM HAVE BEEN ABSOLUTELY INSTRUMENTAL IN CATALYZING THE CAMPTONVILLE PROJECT. WITHOUT RCDI SUPPORT, CCP AND THE CAMPTONVILLE PROJECT WOULD BE NOWHERE NEAR WHERE IT IS TODAY."**

## RCDI COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions
- Camptonville Community Partnership
- Fall River Resource Conservation District
- Foresthill Public Utility District
- Northern California Resource Center
- Watershed Research and Training Center
- Yosemite-Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council
- City of Portola
- Indian Valley Community Services District

**\$400,000**  
RCDI SUPPORT

Sierra Institute's work with the RCDI network has spurred \$27 million in investments in community scale biomass projects.

**\$27**  
**MILLION**  
COMMUNITY-SCALE  
WOOD PRODUCT  
INVESTMENT