

ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM



The Foundation envisions a California that manages, stewards, and conserves its water and land to support a resilient environment and healthy communities.

Capacity building for California's land and water fields

The S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation's Environment Program invests in capacity building to enhance the effectiveness of our grantees and strengthen the systems and structures surrounding their work.

Goal

Strong leaders, organizations, and fields guide California's efforts to manage its water and land.

Approach

- Invest in individual leaders, with an emphasis on relationship-building to promote cross-sector collaboration.
- Support organizations as they identify and build capabilities, knowledge, and resources to be more effective and durable.
- Strengthen the water and land fields with support for networks, collective infrastructure, and shared knowledge.
- Assist efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion within grantee institutions and the land and water fields.

Intended outcomes

- ✓ The water field has strong leaders, institutions, and partnerships that are well positioned to respond to new challenges and pursue integrated water solutions.
- ✓ California's conservation leaders, institutions, and partnerships are effective and resilient, enabling them to lead the field to long-term conservation success.
- ✓ Organizations in the water and land fields strengthen their relevance by incorporating the values, needs, and interests of a broad set of communities – particularly those that traditionally have not been at the forefront of the environmental movement.

Progress to date

- Since 2011, the [Water Foundation](#) has delivered over \$40 million in funding to the field, convened hundreds of diverse nonprofit, private, and community-based organizations, and worked with partners to secure landmark water policies.
- In 2015, the PPIC Water Policy Center launched to activate a wide-ranging [research network](#) – a dynamic group of top researchers from around the state and beyond who approach California's water challenges from a range of disciplines.
- In 2015, launched a [network of California community foundations](#) working individually to build regional water management capacity, and collectively to integrate water and land use planning with a focus on equity.
- In 2015, the [Santa Cruz Mountains Stewardship Network](#) launched to collaboratively steward this vast mountain region across jurisdictions and sectors.
- In 2015, the [California Association of Resource Conservation Districts](#) launched an ongoing program to make network members more relevant, excellent, and visible.
- In 2018, the [Water Solutions Network](#) launched as a cross-sector collaboration of leaders focused on the future of water management in California.
- In 2018, invested in developing communications infrastructure including the [Water Hub](#) and the [Water Desk](#) to support water journalism and build public awareness of water as an economic, health, and social justice issue as well as an environmental one.
- In 2019, supported Land and Water grantee participation in experiential learning and developing organization action plans to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion.