



Image Source: Californians for Pesticide Reform



Image Source: Move-LA

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A CALL TO INVEST IN COMMUNITY POWER: Lessons from 10 years of CA Climate Investments for the State and the Nation

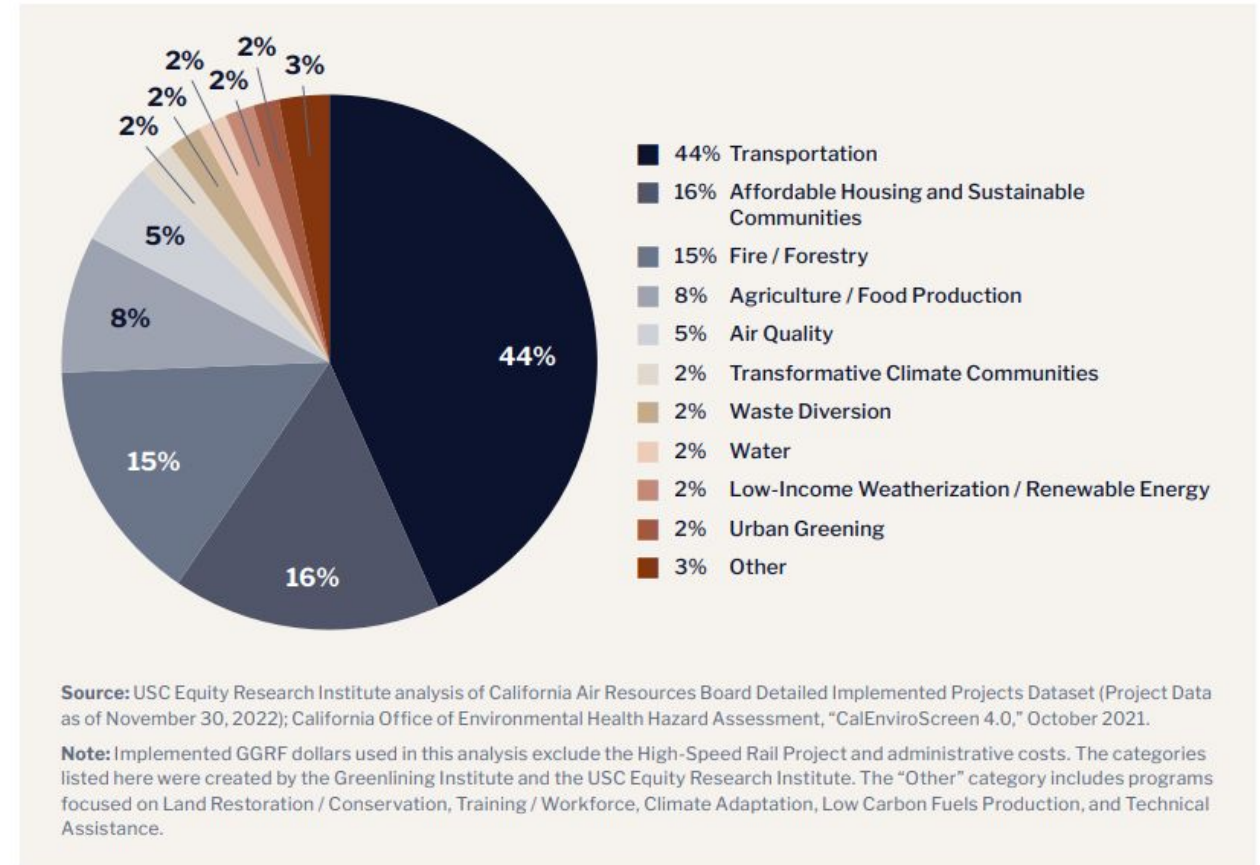
06.25.24

AUSTIN MENDOZA

WHAT IS CALIFORNIA CLIMATE INVESTMENTS (CCI)?

- A dedicated portfolio of climate projects and programs, funded by cap-and-trade revenues.
- Includes 70+ programs focused on GHG reduction and other benefits.
- Minimum of 35% of funding must be allocated to Priority Populations (SB 535 / AB 1550).
- More than \$10 billion implemented since 2013.

Figure 1: GGRF Dollars Implemented by Program Categories as of November 2022 (\$9.2 Billion)



RESEARCH MOTIVATION

- California's cap-and-trade funded suite of climate investments have been running for 10 years. As of May 2023, over \$9.8B have been implemented.
- What have been the equity outcomes?
- **What lessons can be leveraged towards future climate and energy investments in CA and beyond?**



METHODOLOGY

- Literature review
- Quantitative analysis
- Interviews with environmental justice stakeholders
- Focus groups with 3 communities: Eastern Coachella Valley, Oxnard, Richmond
- Case studies of 10 programs using interviews, program materials, implementation data
- In aggregate, we spoke with 100+ interviewees / informants.



Image Source: CAUSE

IS CCI EQUITABLE?

It depends...

- Many EJ projects have been funded through the CCIs.
- Some bitter pills have also been swallowed.
- And a lot in the middle.

Where the EJ ecosystem showed up, that's where we saw equity.

We did learn a lot about **how to make climate investments equitable.**



HIGH LEVEL FINDINGS: 10 LESSONS FOR CALIFORNIA AND BEYOND

1. Climate investments produce the **most visible, felt impacts when projects are community-driven** or have significant community buy-in and involvement, and are well-coordinated.

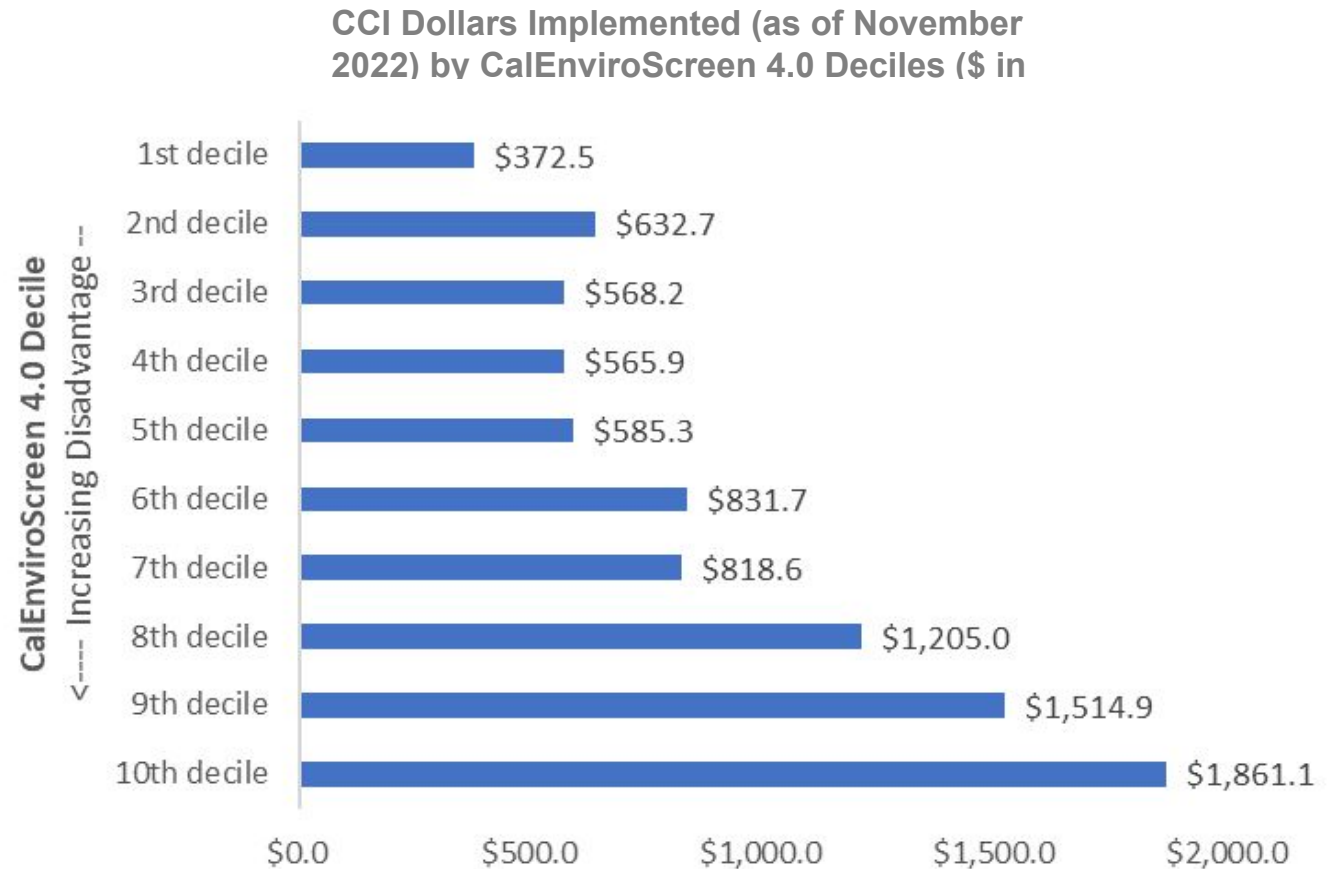


Image Source: SLATE-Z

HIGH LEVEL FINDINGS: 10 LESSONS FOR CALIFORNIA AND BEYOND

2. **Equity goals matter**

and need to be paired with clear requirements, trackability, and accountability to yield measurable results.



HIGH LEVEL FINDINGS: 10 LESSONS FOR CALIFORNIA AND BEYOND

- 3. Climate investments are not neutral** and harmful investments—particularly those that perpetuate fossil fuel infrastructure, false solutions, or worsen local pollution—must be identified and corrected to avoid harm, or defunded.
- 4. For equity outcomes, community and EJ groups must have structural influence** over climate investments that go beyond engagement (e.g., determining what types of programs are funded, pushing back on unwanted projects).



Image Source: CAUSE

HIGH LEVEL FINDINGS: 10 LESSONS FOR CALIFORNIA AND BEYOND

- 5. Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities** relate to climate investments in their own ways—and **investments must tailor support** to respect the unique context of these communities.
- 6. Complete data that incorporates community knowledge** alongside quantitative statistics is essential for determining and tracking equity outcomes.



Image Source: Mid Klamath Watershed Council / Western Klamath Restoration Partnership

HIGH LEVEL FINDINGS: 10 LESSONS FOR CALIFORNIA AND BEYOND

7. The next evolution of climate investment programs can build on previous **improvements by producing deeper economic benefits** (including high-road jobs), supporting community wealth building, and building long-term capacity and power.



Image Source: Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians

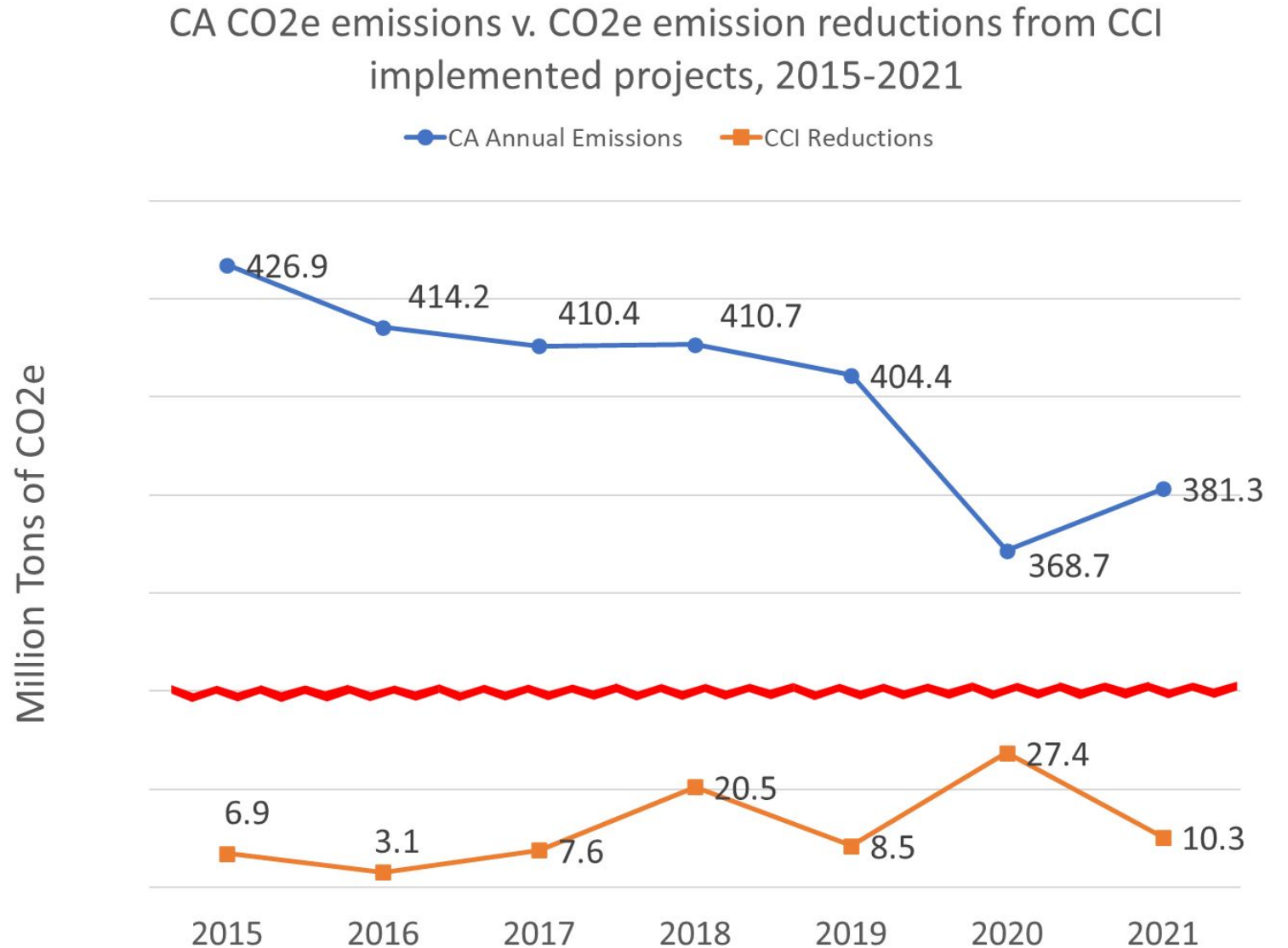
8. **Ongoing support from the State and philanthropy** is needed to ensure communities can easily utilize public climate dollars. In particular, defragmenting programs, streamlining and reducing administrative barriers, and providing ample capacity building and technical assistance should be priorities.



Image Source: <https://www.libertyhill.org>

HIGH LEVEL FINDINGS: 10 LESSONS FOR CALIFORNIA AND BEYOND

9. In many places, including California, the immense scale of need in pollution-burdened communities likely requires **deeper, more reliable funding towards climate justice solutions**, including private and philanthropic investments.



10. The **ecosystem for climate justice** has and will continue to make climate investments more equitable and impactful for communities.



THANK YOU!

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*Charging
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Lithium
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Vehicles, and
a Just Future*

Community Solar on Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians Tribal Land, in Anza Valley



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Santa Rosa Solar Project

Anza Electric Cooperative
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Community Solar on Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians Tribal Land, in Anza Valley

- **Funded by Community Solar Pilot Program grant**
(Administered by CA Dept. of Community Services and Development, funded as part of California Climate Investments)
- **994 kilowatt (kW) ground mounted solar array**
constructed in 2021, estimated to last ~30 years
- **Providing reliable and discounted (or cost-free) energy** to all tribal homes and ~200 low-income households in electric cooperative service area
- **Partners**
 - **Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians** - provided land lease for arrays; members participated in construction process
 - **Anza Electric Cooperative** - provided upfront costs for transformers and line upgrades; owns and operates solar array
 - **GRID Alternatives** - main applicant on CSD grant; oversaw construction of array



Panelists



Alexis Sanders-Alto
Tribal Vice-Chairwoman,
The Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla
Indians



Lisa Castilone
Director of Tribal Programs,
GRID Alternatives Inland Empire



Kevin Short
General Manager,
Anza Electric Cooperative, Inc.



Lolly Lim (moderator)
Program Manager,
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Thank you!