

2025 Conference, Sept 25-26: Fresno, CA



A person is shown from the chest down, holding a large, fresh head of green lettuce. They are standing in a field with other lettuce plants visible in the foreground and background. The background is slightly blurred, showing a bright, overcast sky. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Supporting BIPOC Farmers in the San Joaquin Valley & Beyond

Supporting BIPOC Farmers in SJV & Beyond: Presenters

Jamie Fanous

Community Alliance With Family
Farms
Policy & Organizing Director

Jose Armando Munguia

Allensworth Progressive Association
Project Manager

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Sierra Resource Conservation
District
Agriculture & Rangeland Program
Manager

Nayamin Martinez

Steering Committee, Marigold Fund
Executive Director, Central California
Environmental Justice Network

Jacky Rivera, Program Coordinator CACLTN
& **Kim Thompson**, CLT Consultant





Athens Land Trust

Celebrating 30 Years



Lopez Community
Land Trust



Molokai Heritage Trust



CAFF

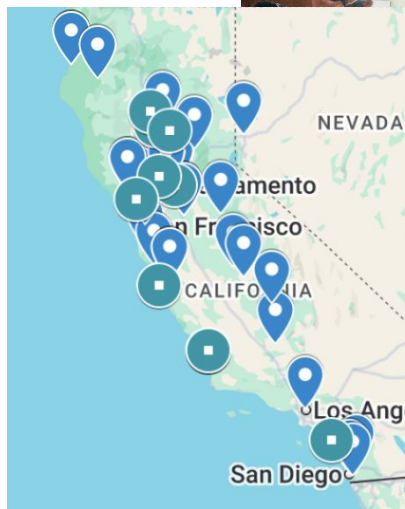
COMMUNITY ALLIANCE
with FAMILY FARMERS

Mission: *To build sustainable food and farming systems through policy advocacy and on-the-ground programs that create more resilient family farms, communities, and ecosystems.*

Programs:

- Ecological Farming
- Farm to Market
- Farmer Services (Emergency Relief Funds, Food Safety, and Technology)
- Policy & Advocacy

Who we work with? *farmers who align with our values and vision for a more just, sustainable and local food system.*



Where staff + contractors are based



Advancing change: Some policy we have worked on over the years

- AB 524 (Wilson) - Farmland Access & Conservation for Thriving Communities Act
- Prop 4/Climate Bond investments for land access, equipment sharing & farmer cooperatives, urban agriculture
- AB 1009 (Bloom) - established the Farm to Community Food Hub program
- Funding for Small & Underserved Farmer Emergencies



2025 Farmer Policy Priorities

- 1 Invest in a **just agricultural economy** for family farmers
- 2 Enable **equitable access to land** for California's small-scale, beginning, & underserved food producers
- 3 Protect **access to water** for California's local food producers committed to sustainable water use
- 4 Bolster **climate resiliency and disaster relief** for California's small and underserved food producers



AGRICULTURAL LAND REFORM IN CALIFORNIA

a policy platform for a more just land transition

JULY 2025



Agricultural Land Reform... what is it?

"...deconcentration and democratization of land access, use, and the benefits of land's use accompanied by provisioning of capital and infrastructure to support new and expanded agroecological production and localized markets"

Why is it so important? - **POWER.**

- In 2017 over 50% of agricultural land was owned by the top **5% of landowners.**
- In more recent research we've found that locally in Fresno for example the top 10% of landowners own 73% of the ag land in the county



S I E R R A
RESOURCE
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT

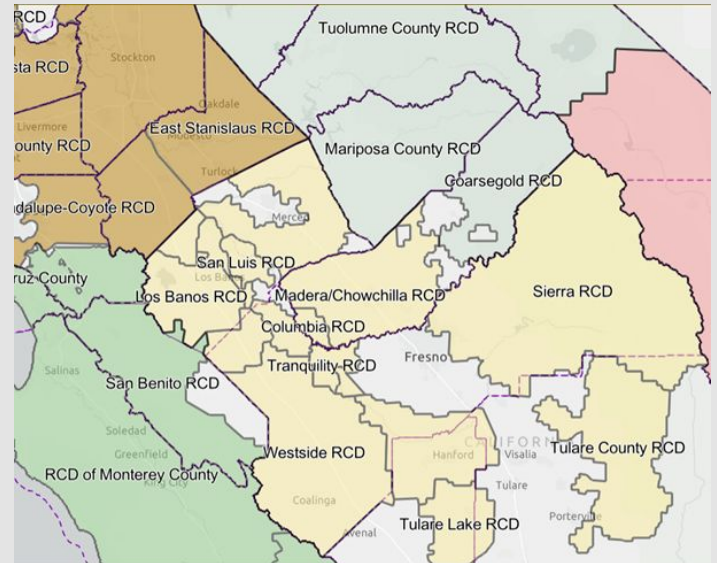
Conservation + Land Tenure



California Community Land Trust
Network Conference
September 25, 2025

What is an RCD?

- Local, non-regulatory special districts
- Formed in the 1930s Dust Bowl era
- Mission: work with communities to conserve soil, water, habitat, and working lands
- Locally governed by a board of directors
- Programs/resources vary by county depending on local needs



Secure Land Tenure is Key for Creating Healthy Agroecosystems

Methods that enhance biodiversity, soil health and water conservation:

- Take time & investment
- Are often more labor intensive
- Require more upfront costs

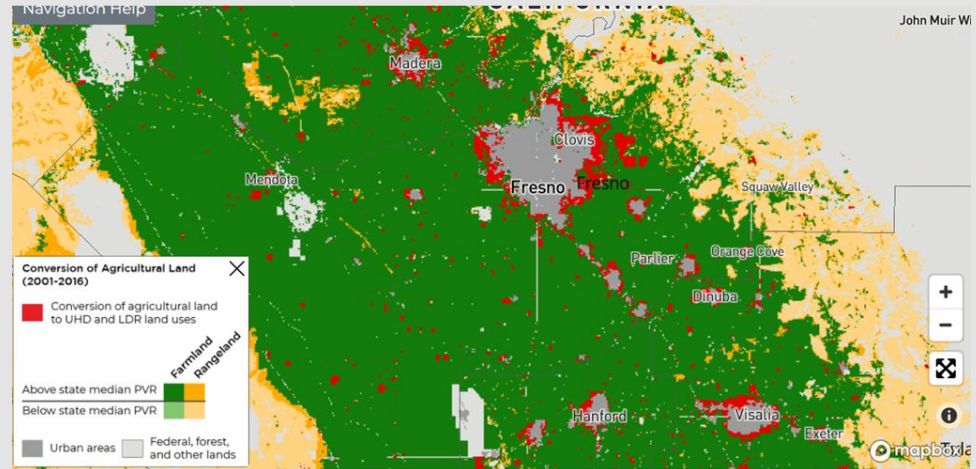


State incentivize programs are a start, but farmers must demonstrate control of land for at least three years to receive funding.



Farmland Loss

- California is losing 50,000 acres of agricultural land annually
- 40% of land will be changing hands in the next decade
- Agricultural land values rising as cities sprawl farther beyond traditional suburbs
 - Leads to further consolidation



Conservation Easements

- A voluntary, legally binding agreement between a landowner and a conservation organization that permanently limits the use of the land to protect its conservation values, such as natural habitats, agriculture, or water quality.
- Landowner retains ownership of the land, but gives up development rights
- Development rights may be paid for by the state, land trust, or other entity (typically 15-45% of market value)
- Agreement is typically permanent



BUY- PROTECT - SELL

- **Buy:** land trust or public agency acquires agricultural land at risk of conversion to development
- **Protect:** agency places an agriculture conservation easement on the property – restricts use to farming and removes development potential
- **Sell:** the protected property is sold to a new or beginning farmer at its agricultural value, lower than market value because of the easement



Developing a Land Access & Conservation Program for Fresno County

Sustainable Agriculture Lands Conservation (SALC) Program

Conservation Acquisition Grants

- Covers up to 90% of a property's fair market value for a fee title purchase
- eligible for 100% funding if benefits priority populations, involves a tribe or tribal nonprofit, or secures tenure for socially disadvantaged farmers

Applications can be submitted by cities, counties, regional park, open-space, resource conservation districts, non-profits, and tribes



Documentation Needed to Apply for Acquisition Funding

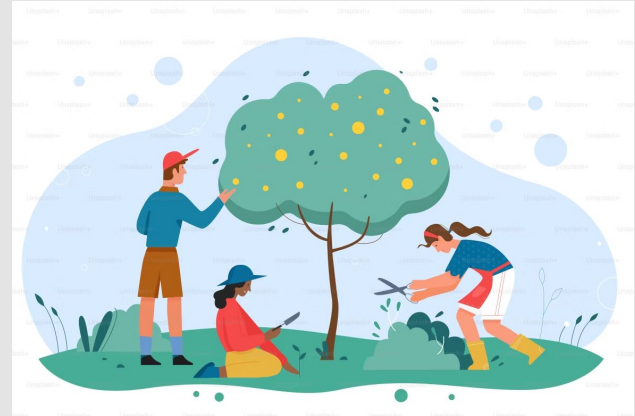
1. Conflict of Interest Policy
2. Monitoring Policy
3. Stewardship Endowment Policy
4. Easement Amendment Policy
5. Easement Enforcement Policy

SRCD will also develop an easement template for a land transfer plan.

Acquire, Protect, Transfer?

Program Goals

- Interrupting patterns of dispossession and land consolidation
- Using community-centered ownership to decommodify land and remove the threat of development, speculation, and corporate ownership.
- Ensuring affordable and secure access and tenure for historically underserved farmers
- Facilitating farming practices that leave the whole farm ecosystem healthier year-to-year





**Allensworth
Progressive Assoc.**

* /allensworthpa

Allensworth Solidarity Projects



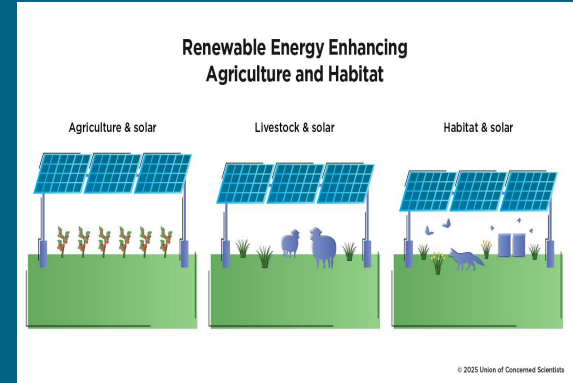
Community Center

Community space
serving residents
health and
professional needs



Agroecology Hub

Diversified food
system for residents
and neighbors



Agrioltaics Community Solar

Farming the sun for food and
energy



ALLENSWORTH COMMUNITY RESILIENCE CENTER



SILVOPASTURE SYSTEM

There are four silvopasture areas dedicated to the rabbitry. Each one is adjacent to a 400 square foot rabbit barn. A silvopasture is an integration of tree crops with animals. In this case, trees are created at a distance further apart on each acre. A minimum of 30 feet between **canopies** is suggested resulting to 25-foot-wide rows to be placed on the silvopasture. This allows for ample sunlight into the pasture between trees to grow forageable grasses, herbs, and browse for rabbits to feed on.

The trees themselves are chosen for their quality of rabbit forage, and odor. Trees such as: Ficus, Mulberry, Black Locust, Poplar, and standard cedar. Apple and cherry are also low to the ground. The trees will cast shade cooling down the entire rabbitry system as well, providing forage in the fall for hay, and/or huts to supplement rabbit feed.

An ancient method for managing a system such as this is the use of **Palisading**. A palisading management technique on some part of all pasture raised trees will provide additional summer tree hay to feed rabbits.

The rabbit silvopasture zone would need to be thoroughly fenced to keep predators out and rabbits in. Electrified riparian/barn attached to permanent fencing systems is suggested to keep predators from getting in, fencing dug into the ground to keep rabbits from burrowing under is also necessary.

Inside each silvopasture area rabbits could be further fenced into smaller areas, allowed to roam and move throughout each pasture, or moved around in fully enclosed barn "factors".

Willow, poplar, elm, Oak, mulberry, hawthorn, apple, pear, black locust degraded

RIPARIAN ZONE

At the western edge of the rabbitry is a large riparian zone. This area provides water catchment and infiltration services to the whole farm. Stocked into this system is a forest of Willow and Dogwood.

These are native plants that provide excellent habitat for rabbits. They also provide habitat for numerous wildlife species. The willow will thrive in the concentrated areas such as swimming and bathing. Cultural areas can be employed both as a management strategy to create healthy habitat and to be able to successfully harvest of tree hay for rabbits.

Winding through the riparian forest is a pedestrian hiking trail, as this area is bound to attract many kinds of birds and insect life. Specifically, this is an area that is outside the fenced silvopasture zone to allow wildlife better access while keeping rabbits safe. Periodically, rabbits could be brought into this area if treated with electrified fencing or inside fenced mobile tractor systems. Otherwise, it is best to keep rabbits out of this area and harvest the material to bring into the rabbit pastures.

RABBIT FEED BARN

One large feed barn for the rabbitry is suggested on this plan. It is located close to the rabbitry and can provide multiple uses such as feed storage, feed processing, and packaging. Adjacent to the barn is an agrovoltaic area which provides additional feed processing and packaging areas in an on-or off-barn environment under the shade of solar panels.

A section of this barn can be dedicated to cold storage.

AGRIVOLTAIC VERMICULTURE SYSTEM

In between up the rabbit pasture area are Agrovoltaic/Vermiculture systems. Each system is nearly half an acre in size. Total Agrovoltaics suggested in this plan is nearly 1 acre in total.

These 1/2-acre systems can deep shade over the Vermiculture troughs. It is highly suggested to use a commercial grower system rather than windows in your climate. These will reduce evaporation and provide better protection from rain etc.)

The Vermiculture systems placed adjacent to the rabbitry allow for easy transport of rabbit manure to worms. Additionally, the solar panels reduce evaporation and cool the entire area. This Vermiculture system now connects to the row crop areas on the far side, providing easy access to bring additional composting material from the farm environment to feed the worms and bring vermicompost back to farm systems.

MULTI-USE TWO-STORY BARN

The main barn serving the farm is accessed through the staff entrance off the road. This barn is the largest building on site. It can be utilized for equipment storage, truck docking, food processing, cold storage, feed storage, farm offices, and other functions. It built two-story office and meeting rooms can be located on the second story with farm activity on the first floor.

SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Throughout the entire farm is a variety of water management systems. These range from water collection swales, rain gardens, and ponds.

The entire system is designed to achieve three functions:

Watershed Restoration

Catching and storing as much water as possible in the landscape will help prevent water erosion, improve water infiltration, and slow the water down. This is done by creating a watershed that can catch and store water.

Keeping water in the soil as long as possible in dry areas will support riparianity. This is done by creating a watershed that can catch and store water.

Food Control

A natural water management system is designed to capture and infiltrate water. This is done by creating a watershed that can catch and store water.

There are larger methods which, in better topography, such as this, control surface water in feed areas possible watershed. These are a generator from 100 to 1000 feet feed areas to be able to control water.

Nutrient Catchment and Erosion Control

The surface water management system is designed to capture and infiltrate water. This is done by creating a watershed that can catch and store water.

Water diversion swales are designed to capture and infiltrate water. This is done by creating a watershed that can catch and store water.

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INTEGRATED ORCHARD & ALLEY CROPPING SYSTEMS

There are over 5 acres of proposed integrated Orchard/Alley cropping farm systems. These are completed of orchard trees now with large hedgerow spaced between each row. In the alleyways, a second succession of cover crops, alfalfa, wheat, and other crops can be grown which also benefits the orchard system by attracting beneficial birds and insects, building soil, and keeping the soil surface cool.

A rotational system of crop growing on a staggered timeline is suggested to ensure the highest yields while providing access to fruit trees when needed for harvesting and pruning.

All at full tree species should be chosen not only for profitability and climate adaptability, but also chosen by **harvest time**, by containing alley crop growing/harvesting with Orchard Harvesting/maintenance, and a specialized system may emerge which maximize crop yields and reduces excess labor.

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FARM ENTRANCES

Access to the farm is being provided through three different entrances off the main road. A staff entrance which leads to farm yards, barns, and rabbitry. A public entrance, which leads to the gift shop/ethnics offices, and a residential entrance, which leads to the residential village.

PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY SYSTEM

Through much of the land we have designed a pedestrian pathway. This pathway mainly encompasses the perimeter of the farm, winding its way along water systems, rain gardens, and ponds. The path is designed to interact with farm roads, and appropriate, to allow pedestrians to utilize the farm road system when a path is not present. The path system also creates footways to easily access the perimeter of the farm for fence repair, and hedgerow work.

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GIFT STORE/KITCHEN /OFFICES

The residential village can be accessed through the residential entrance off the main road. There is ample parking here for guests and students and this area is adjacent to the culture center where public events will take place. The dom houses themselves are a "village" of domes, with each dome having its own connecting them all. Orchard/garden zones have been left in between buildings to soften the architecture, provide shade, growing space, and cool down the land. All water runoff from the residential village flows into a perimeter water catchment swale system, which winds the back of the back of the farm towards ponds and orchards.

DYNAMIC PUBLIC INTERFACE

Between the residential village and the private farm infrastructure is the public area. This includes the gift shop, indoor and outdoor kitchens, cultural gardens, community center/classroom, children's play area, covered outdoor seating, and a cultural tree gathering zone.

Weaving all this together with outdoor seating, U pick berry zones, and public access to the wider farm, a small pond will make the whole area an Eco-tour destination, Wisconsin.

COMMUNITY BUILDING/ CULTURE CENTER

The community building/culture center is an area dedicated to community use. Classes, weddings, dance/sports, parties, festivals, concerts, and other cultural events can all use this venue. It is easily accessed to outdoor dining, the outdoor kitchen, and other community spaces. This building can be used by residences for their events or the wider public.

FARM ROAD SYSTEM

The Farm Road system is and is in its appearance throughout the center of the farm. The farm roads border and bisect different zones, such as the rabbitry, row crops, orchards, and public spaces. This will give adequate access to all areas and provide sufficient access for hauling materials, crops, tractors, trucks, and four wheelers. The farm road also acts as a trail system through the middle of the farm.

Water catchment swales and hedgerows are designed adjacent to farm roads to catch runoff and erosion and infiltrate in place.

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CULTURAL (ETHNIC) GARDENS

The community building/culture center is an area dedicated to community use. Classes, weddings, dance/sports, parties, festivals, concerts, and other cultural events can all use this venue. It is easily accessed to outdoor dining, the outdoor kitchen, and other community spaces. This building can be used by residences for their events or the wider public.

OUTDOOR DINING

Multiple outdoor dining areas are included in the design of the community cultural zones.

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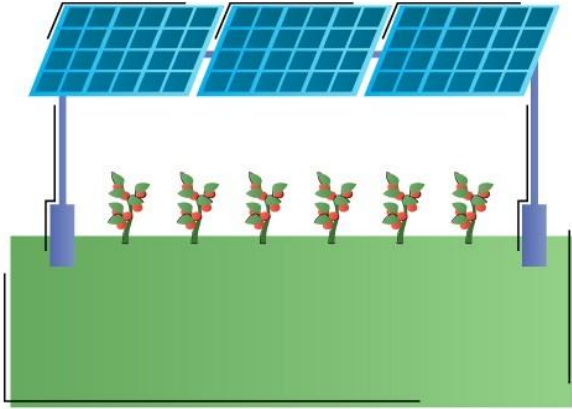
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CULTURAL GATHERING AREA

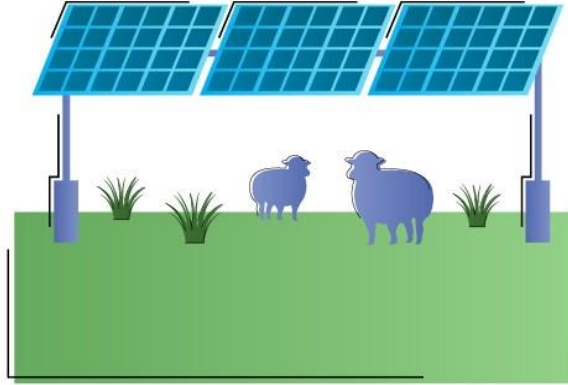
A fire pit/cultural gathering area which can be used for dances, outdoor classroom, lectures to entire community and cultural events is located in the public spaces.

Renewable Energy Enhancing Agriculture and Habitat

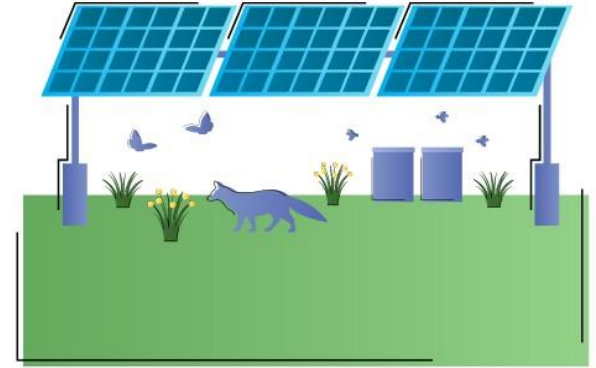
Agriculture & solar



Livestock & solar



Habitat & solar



© 2025 Union of Concerned Scientists

Renewable Energy To Fortify Food System & Electricity Under Community Control

Solar & plants create resilient systems

Agrivoltaics

- Reduces water use and cost for farmers and communities
- Resilient against extreme weather events
- Diversifies revenue stream for farmers and communities

Ecovoltaics

- Provides shades of soil and animal health
- Part of ecosystem restoration system reducing plants and wildlife
- Integrates renewable energy and ecosystem conservation

Soure: Union of Concerned Scientists

Nayamin Martinez + Janaki Anagha

THE MARIGOLD FUND

FOR UNINCORPORATED CALIFORNIA





what is a 'DAC' or disadvantaged community?

1995

Safe Drinking Water Act and CA Water Code (§ 79505.5) from 2002 lists communities as **"disadvantaged"** if the median household income was less than 80 percent of the statewide median.

2012

Amendment to the California Global Warming Solutions of 2006, requiring 25 percent of proceeds from the State's Cap and Trade program to benefit **"disadvantaged communities"** defined by CalEnviroScreen.

2014

Prop 1 Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act funds IRWM grant program with funds for **"disadvantaged communities"**

2021

Cal Enviro Screen 4.0 released as a tool to direct thresholds of funding to DACs

'disadvantaged communities'

Over the course of California history, the people who provide the agricultural labor of our state have been relegated to small communities often anchored by a packing house. These communities are almost entirely reliant on groundwater, as they are landless residents left bereft through the history of agricultural water supply development.



East Orosi, Tulare County, CA. Community Water Center has worked with East Orosi residents for 17 years on their drinking water problems. All residents consume bottled drinking water. *Photo: Janaki Anagha, October 2024.*

what has the env. justice movement in the Valley achieved?

- Drove \$\$ to DACs under the Greenhouse Gas Reductions Fund.
- Created the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water program.
- Developed EJ small grants, Supplemental Env. Projects, and more government programs
- Defined Socially Disadvantaged Farmer and Ranchers
- Ensuring Multi-benefit Land Repurposing Program is meaningful

Tireless community organizing has created a powerful fabric of active community participation in natural resource management programs (air, water, land use)...

but most communities lack access to land and capital

some disadvantaged communities are **actively transitioning land towards sustainability.**

still others lack the resources to engage with the process.



the central valley needs institutions and forms of governance run by people who live here



The Marigold Fund for Unincorporated California is a participatory grantmaking fund formed over 10 years of strategic organizing by agroecology practitioners and farmworker community service providers looking to seed a new chapter in California agriculture.

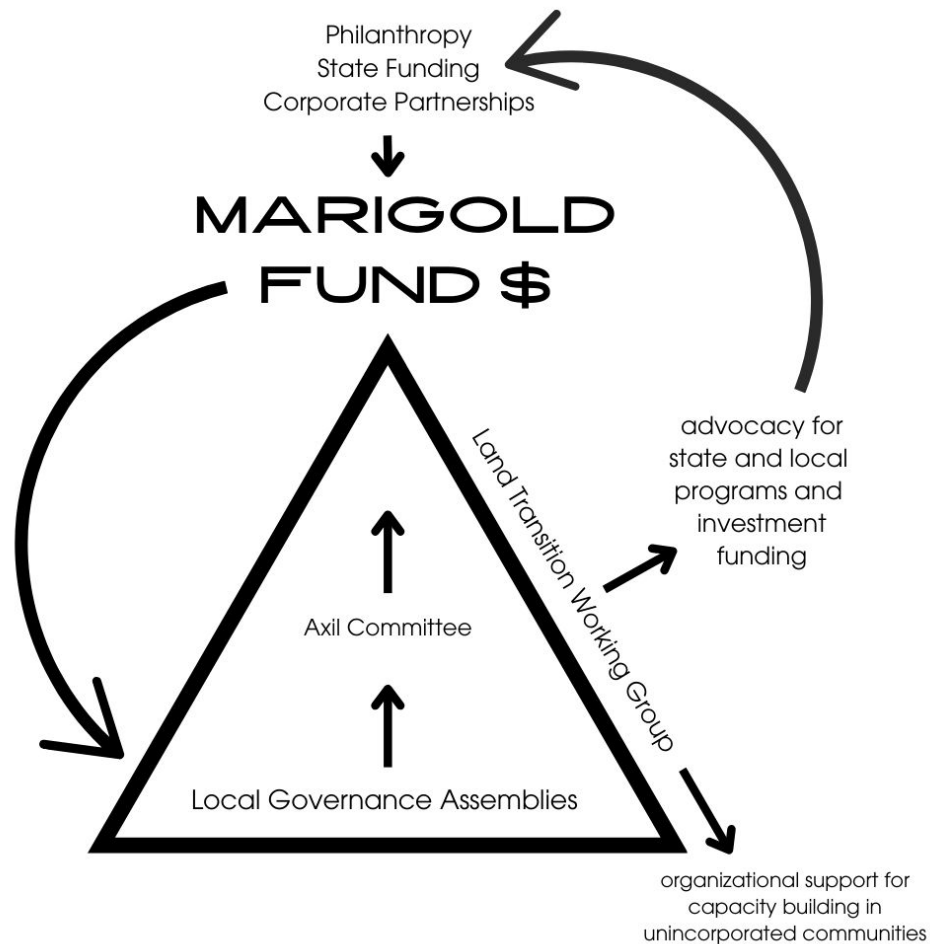
Local Governance Assemblies apply for funding from the Marigold Fund.

Funding decisions are made by members of the **Axil Committee.**

In the future, the **Land Transition Working Group** advocates to embed the Marigold Fund into existing and forthcoming public programs.

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People Food and Land Foundation offers legal support, technical assistance, and bridge financing.



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**Westlands
Water District
spans 600,000
acres (about 1/2
size of New
York City) with
about 1000
landowners.**



EXAMPLE ASSEMBLY: Community residents of Cantua Creek, Fresno County, CA eating a community meal near their garden.



Community garden in Cantua Creek, Fresno County, CA in the middle of Westlands Water District. This community lives on bottled water for their daily domestic needs as irrigation water is tainted and groundwater out of reach. The water district has a property-weighted voting structure: to vote or run in elections, one must be a landowner within the district.



Axil Committee

- Nayamin Martinez- Central CA Env. Justice Network (running and nurturing projects to transition land in Fresno County)
 - Darlene Franco- Chairwoman of Wukchumni Tribe and Executive Director at Wukchumni Farm (transitioning land in Tulare County)
 - Dezaraye Bagalayos- Allensworth Progressive Association (transitioning land in Tulare County)
-

momentum

builds

with

fundraising

#**NOREGRETS**
Initiative



11th Hour Project
The Schmidt Family Foundation

ANONYMOUS DONORS

VK FUND

TAO RISING

\$2.9 M
over 4 years

If you would like to become a
funder or corporate partner,
reach out to Janaki at
janaki.anagha@gmail.com

A person is shown from the chest down, holding a large head of green lettuce with both hands. The person is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt. The background is a bright, slightly overexposed outdoor setting, likely a field or garden, with other green plants visible in the foreground and background. The text "Questions & Answers" and "Large Group Discussion" is overlaid in a bold, dark green font.

Questions & Answers

Large Group Discussion

California
community
land trust
network