



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
REGIONAL CLIMATE  
COLLABORATIVE

# 5-Year Impact Report

2020 – 2025



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REGIONAL CLIMATE  
COLLABORATIVE**

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## Acknowledgements

### **Steering Committee Members**

Primitiva Hernandez (Chair), Executive Director, 805Undocufund  
Ana Rosa Rizo Centino, Senior Organizer, United Farm Workers  
Sara Lee Macdonald, NAACP Lompoc–Santa Maria  
Sean McArthur, Climate Project Manager, Community Environmental Council  
Katie Maynard, Director of Student Sustainability Initiatives, UC Santa Barbara  
Rodney Loehr, Utility Conservation Coordinator, City of Lompoc  
Zoë Carlson, Senior Planner, County of Santa Barbara  
Dana Murray, Sustainability Manager, City of Goleta

### **County of Santa Barbara, Sustainability Division**

Garrett Wong, Climate Program Manager  
Malia Josephine, Climate Program Specialist  
Isa West, CivicSpark Fellow

# Introduction

## From the Network Management Team

When we first launched the Collaborative, we dropped our assumptions and started with questions: What climate topics are not being addressed that should be? How can we collaborate as a region?

We explored new ways of organizing and convening that at times felt ambiguous. We ventured new projects, funding, and engagement ideas, not all of which were successful. However, as time went on, our efforts began to bear fruit.

The Collaborative has secured millions in grant funding to launch new programs and initiatives, advance equitable engagement and capacity building, and has grown and diversified its membership.

***It has become a unique and vital space to find peers and resources and to develop partnerships and projects to solve some wicked climate problems.***

Supporting the Collaborative has been incredibly valuable and rewarding as we have found new and different ways to bolster our many communities. We look forward to continuing to deepen the Collaborative's impact for our members, the community, and the region.

In partnership,

Garrett & Malia





## 5 Years of Collective Action

Like many communities, Santa Barbara County is grappling with the realities of a changing climate: rising sea levels, more wildfires, prolonged droughts, intense rainfall, and flooding. These challenges underscore the need for collaborative solutions.

The Santa Barbara County Regional Climate Collaborative (Collaborative) began as a bold idea: A shared vision to collectively address the growing challenges of climate change, that no single jurisdiction or organization can solve alone.

In March 2020, the County of Santa Barbara, in partnership with cities and nonprofits, officially launched the Collaborative to pave a new way forward. Together, we set out to build capacity, connect efforts, and create a whole-community approach to climate resilience.

As we mark the Collaborative's five-year anniversary, this report reflects on the journey that brought us here. It celebrates our collective progress, honors the partnerships that have made it possible, and charts a path for the future. The story of the Collaborative is one of hope and a shared commitment to building a thriving region for generations to come.

# Our Purpose

We are guided by the vision of cultivating a carbon-neutral, climate-resilient, prosperous, and equitable region. In pursuit of this vision, the Collaborative serves as a forum for fostering a shared understanding of regional risks and opportunities, bridging efforts between sectors, and identifying and implementing climate solutions. As a Collaborative network, our role is different from advocacy groups, as we focus on aligning and developing multi-stakeholder and multi-benefit efforts that deliver landscape-level impact.

**We advance regional scale solutions through our four primary functions:**



## Connect Partners

Connect diverse partners to build relationships, exchange ideas and learn from each others' experiences.



## Leverage Resources

Leverage and share resources to coordinate strategies and launch joint initiatives that advance regional climate solutions.



## Champion Solutions

Champion initiatives, programs, and projects that reflect the regional nature of climate change and the shared solutions required to address them.



## Advance Equity

Advance equity by uplifting community needs, strengths, and ideas through thoughtful community engagement.



# About the Collaborative

## How We Work

The Collaborative is a free cooperative network of 60+ members, including nonprofits, community organizations, academic institutions, businesses, and government agencies. Members represent local and regional interests in climate-related actions and decision-making.

The County of Santa Barbara provides fiscal and administrative support. Membership is free and open to all who share our vision, and members can engage through our network events, joining a subcommittee, or serving on the Steering Committee.

The work of the Collaborative is guided by its members, Steering Committee, and subcommittees, each playing a key role in identifying opportunities, securing resources, and advancing initiatives that strengthen regional resilience. Subcommittee serve as innovation hubs, bringing together organizations to:

- Identify climate challenges that require regional coordination
- Secure funding and technical assistance to support solutions
- Conduct stakeholder engagement and develop recommendations
- Pilot and implement policies, programs, and projects
- Develop tools and resources to expand impact

# Accomplishments & Progress 2020–2025



**60+ Member Organizations**  
**110+ Individual Participants**

**\$3.5**

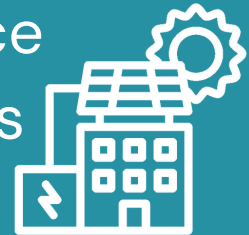
million  
in grant  
funding  
secured

**7 Committees**

Steering | Equity Advisory & Outreach | Clean Energy  
Assurance | Sea Level Rise Adaptation | Climate  
Smart Agriculture & Land Stewardship | Building  
Decarbonization | Carpinteria Community Resilience

**3**

Resilience  
Hub sites  
piloted



**\$22,000**

in stipends to members of the  
Equity Advisory & Outreach Committee

**2**

Network  
meetings  
organized  
each year

Countless funding opportunities,  
webinars, and events shared  
across the network

# Impact Areas

## Actions and Results

### Energy

Santa Barbara County is particularly at risk for power outages and poor power quality because it lies at the boundaries of two utility service areas. The Collaborative convened two subcommittees to expand renewable energy and improve energy performance in buildings in order to reduce emissions and increase regional energy resilience.

- **Clean Energy Assurance Subcommittee**  
Focuses on expanding zero-emission energy sources to enhance local energy resilience. This subcommittee is composed of public agencies and nonprofit energy service providers. Members shared resources and best practices, and contributed to the development of the Resilience Hubs Pilot Program, the County's Energy Assurance Plan, and 3C-REN's Energy Assurance Services.
- **Building Decarbonization Subcommittee**  
Supports the adoption of local ordinances that reduce gas infrastructure in new buildings. This subcommittee is composed of local governments who are developing local policies to electrify buildings and the utilities and technical assistance providers who support them. Over the years, members have worked to develop natural gas bans and energy performance reach codes.

### Land Stewardship

In 2022, the Collaborative partnered with public agencies and nonprofits across the tri-county area to develop a **Carbon Sequestration 5-part Webinar Series** highlighting methods such as regenerative agriculture, forest management, and rangeland preservation. Featuring leading experts, the series explored nature-based solutions and carbon offset market opportunities. These webinars remain available on our [website](#) as an ongoing resource.

Farmers and ranchers are increasingly interested in adopting climate-beneficial land stewardship practices, but regulatory, financial, and technical barriers remain. **The Land Stewardship & Carbon Farming Subcommittee** strengthens networks and partnerships among land managers and agricultural advocates to leverage funding, foster collaboration, and inform policy. This Subcommittee works to:

- Expand incentives for farmers and ranchers to adopt climate-smart practices.
- Enhance regional understanding of the benefits of sustainable land stewardship.
- Act as an advisory board for farmer and rancher outreach and grant funded projects



Credit: Mark Bright

## Sea Level Rise

Projected sea level rise poses significant risks to Santa Barbara County's beaches, wetlands, infrastructure, housing, and economy.

**The Sea Level Rise Adaptation Subcommittee** supports coordination of plans and projects that protect coastal resources in the face of sea level rise. The Subcommittee's coordination and partnerships have led to substantial progress, including:

- Supporting the City of Santa Barbara to secure a **\$630,000 grant to develop the Sea Level Rise Regional Climate Adaptation Monitoring Program (RCAMP)** in 2023.
- **Coordinating community outreach for three regional projects:** the County Regional Sediment Management Plan, the Carpinteria Living Shoreline Project, and the Goleta Slough Area Coastal Resilience Adaptation Plan.



*"I have been involved with the Sea Level Rise subcommittee since the earliest days. The forum has been extremely valuable for exchanging information and knowledge about what is happening in the region, learning about how others are thinking about the issues and challenges, and building a stronger regional community around resilience. Two thumbs up!"*

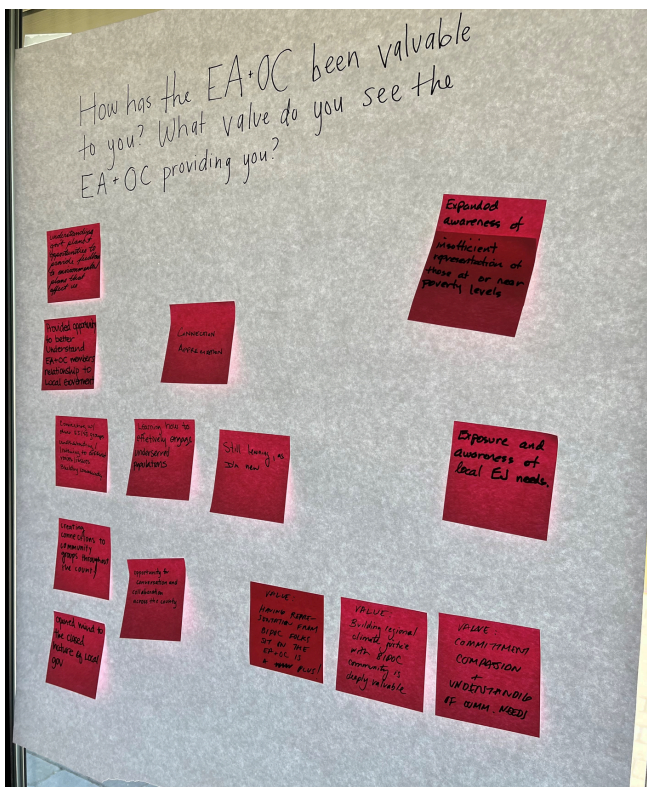
**– Charles Lester, Director of the Ocean and Coastal Policy Center, Marine Science Institute, UC Santa Barbara**

# Equity & Capacity Building

The Collaborative has advanced regional equity through the Equity Advisory & Outreach Committee (EAOC). The EAOC provides guidance, input and feedback on planning and implementation efforts from local and regional organizations and agencies and encourages community participation. Members are eligible to receive stipends for their committee participation to address historical inequities and compensate people for their time and expertise. The EAOC has advised the County's One Climate Initiative plans, including the Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment, Environmental Justice Element, and 2030 Climate Action Plan.

The EAOC is in the process of developing a **Community Benefits Framework** that can be used as a resource to guide organizations and agencies that develop and implement climate projects to ensure communities are included in the process and benefits are optimized.

In an effort to build deeper partnerships and capacity within our Collaborative, we host two **Network Events** each year for organizations and individuals to connect, share updates and resources, and guide the Collaborative's future activities. Each event regularly sees over 45 attendees who are highly engaged.



Members share their perspectives at the Joint Meeting between the Steering Committee and Equity Advisory & Outreach Committee in 2022



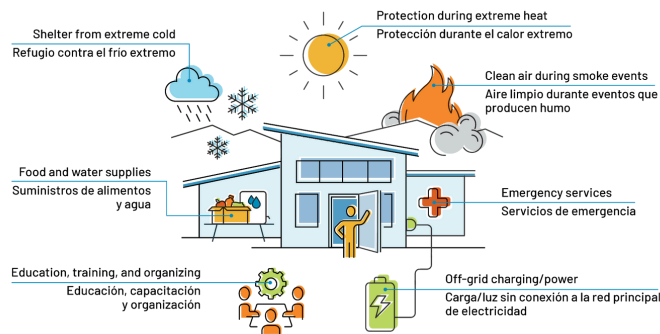
*"I was fortunate to be introduced to the Santa Barbara County Regional Climate Collaborative in 2021. Through the Collaborative, I'm able to help inform and empower current as well as future registered voters and others about climate action initiatives, programs, and resources in Santa Barbara County. There are many networking channels to further inspire community involvement."*

**- Ann Bailey, League of Women Voters and Equity Advisory and Outreach Committee Member**

# Climate Resilience

The Collaborative strengthens regional resilience to climate change by building partnerships, developing strategies with communities, and securing funding to pilot and implement projects and initiatives.

In 2023, the Collaborative was awarded \$225,000 to launch the Resilience Hubs Pilot Program, which supported three sites throughout the region to explore what it means to support communities before, during, and after climate disasters. The Collaborative supported these sites with technical assistance, grant writing, outreach and engagement, and convenings. A [final report is available online](#).



In 2023, the County was awarded a \$1 million Transformative Climate Communities grant to launch the [Resilient Cuyama Valley Initiative](#). This Initiative enhances the rural community's quality of life by investing in an array of projects such as home improvement, backyard composting, fresh food access, water infrastructure, and walking/bike paths.



## Girls Inc of Carpinteria leading Community Resilience

When Girls Inc Executive Director Jamie Collins applied to the County to become a Resilience Hub, she didn't know what to expect.

"We have shown up for the community during so many situations like the 2019 debris flow and COVID," says Collins, "This seems like a natural fit, but we need help from partners to know what to do."

Through the [Resilience Hubs Pilot Program](#), Girls Inc received an energy audit and outreach support to identify community needs. Girls Inc also participated in several efforts to obtain grant funding.

Wanting to keep the momentum going after the pilot program, Jamie organized the Carpinteria Resilience Hub Committee with support of the County. Additional partners like the City of Carpinteria and Carpinteria Children's Project joined with the Red Cross and County Office of Emergency Management. The committee identifies and coordinates resources and events like trainings and community resource fairs.

"We've learned so much from this experience and the partnerships," says Collins, "We feel more prepared and confident to be a part of the solution."



In 2024, the Community Environmental Council was awarded a \$1.6 million grant from the State to launch the [Guadalupe-Lompoc Initiative](#). The Initiative is a multi-year collaborative effort that supports 10 community-serving organizations and local governments with capacity building, planning, project development, and community engagement so they can address air quality, extreme heat, water supply, food security, and wildfire risk.

## GUADALUPE-LOMPOC INITIATIVE INICIATIVA GUADALUPE-LOMPOC



*"The Collaborative offers a venue to improve community-benefit projects being developed and implemented — whether it be through concept and work plan review, through the Equity Advisory and Outreach Committee, or to collaborate on grant writing and project work through subcommittees. Our Collaborative enables our region to generate revenue to actively improve our County's resilience to climate change."*

– Em Johnson, Director of Climate Programs, Community Environmental Council



Members discuss priorities for the Collaborative at the 2024 Summer Network Event

# Looking Ahead

The Collaborative is in the process of shaping its next chapter. At the 2024 Summer Network Event, members came together to generate hundreds of ideas for how we can deepen our impact. Through thoughtful evaluation, our Steering Committee identified the most promising opportunities—those with the greatest potential to advance our mission and drive meaningful regional change. Those priorities include, but are not limited to, increasing grant and financial resources, aligning efforts across subcommittees & organizations, expanding resilience hubs, and advancing green jobs and clean energy workforce development.

Now, we are moving into the next phase: selecting a set of core priorities to guide our work in the years ahead. These priorities will help us align efforts, secure resources, and strengthen our ability to foster a more resilient, equitable, and climate-ready Santa Barbara County.

## Join Us

The Collaborative catalyzes innovative projects—expanding capacity, unlocking resources, and fostering solutions – all made possible through transformative partnerships. We invite you to join us. Learn more about free membership and how to get involved: [www.countyofsb.org/collaborative](http://www.countyofsb.org/collaborative)

# Members

805Undocufund

Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans  
and Nourishment

C4 Lompoc Collective Cultures Creating  
Change

Cachuma Resource Conservation District

California State Parks

Carpinteria Valley Association

CBrain

Children & Family Resource Services

Central Coast Clean Cities Coalition

Central Coast Community Energy

Central Coast Labor Council

Chamberlin Ranch

City of Buellton

City of Carpinteria

City of Goleta

City of Guadalupe

City of Lompoc

City of Santa Barbara

Coastal Conservancy

Community Environmental Council

County of Santa Barbara

County of Santa Barbara: Commission for  
Women

County of Ventura

Gaviota Coast Conservancy

Grower Shipper Association of Santa Barbara  
& San Luis Obispo Counties

Guadalupe Business Association

Guadalupe Nipomo Dunes Center

Independent Living Resource Center

Land Trust of Santa Barbara County

Las Varas Ranch

League of Women Voters

LegacyWorks

Mercury Press

Movement for Ancestors Regenerating Youth

National Association for the Advancement of

Colored People: Santa Maria-Lompoc Branch

Santa Barbara Agriculture and Farm Education  
Foundation

Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District

Santa Barbara Botanic Garden

Santa Barbara County Fire Safe Council

Santa Barbara County Food Action Network

Santa Barbara County Local Agency Formation  
Commission

Santa Barbara County Promotores Network

Santa Barbara Foundation

Santa Barbara Organics

Santa Barbara South Coast Chamber of  
Commerce

Santa Maria Energy

Sierra Club: Los Padres Chapter

Solvang Chamber of Commerce

The Energy Coalition

Tri-County Regional Energy Network

UC Cooperative Extension Ag and Natural  
Resources

UC Santa Barbara

United States Department of Agriculture,  
Natural Resource Conservation Service

Ventura County Resource Conservation District

White Buffalo Land Trust

Wild Farmlands Foundation



[countyofsb.org/collaborative](https://countyofsb.org/collaborative)