



## Community Solar Pilot Program

The California Low-Income Weatherization Program (LIWP) Community Solar Pilot was designed by the Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) to expand access to renewable energy for low-income households that do not have the ability to participate in existing low-income solar PV programs — due to a lack of home ownership, or because of inadequate roofing for solar PV. Households participating in the Community Solar Pilot Program benefit from reduced energy costs while communities benefit from reduced air pollutant emissions associated with conventional energy generation.

### Program Overview

The Community Solar Pilot Program reduces energy costs for households that are not currently able to benefit from existing low-income solar programs. Most Californians face barriers to traditional rooftop solar, including those who rent, don't have a roof suitable for solar, who live in an apartment building, or lack financing options. Well-designed community solar increases access to clean renewable energy by enabling multiple households or buildings to participate in a larger-scale shared solar installation located in their community. The goal of CSD's Community Solar Pilot Program was to provide funding for the implementation and testing of a model to deliver community solar to low-income households in an innovative way that has the potential to be replicated elsewhere and to scale, reduce greenhouse gas and toxic air emissions, reduce household energy costs, and provide workforce development opportunities and other co-benefits to communities.



*California's first low-income Community Solar Project, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians Reservation. Image courtesy of GRID Alternatives Inland Empire.*

GRID Alternatives Inland Empire was awarded \$2.05 million in November 2018 to install a 994-kilowatt (kW) ground-mounted solar array in partnership with the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians and the Anza Electric Cooperative, Inc. The project provided solar installation training, and residents from the Santa Rosa Band participated in paid job training opportunities during solar installation. The community solar system is situated on Santa Rosa Tribal lands in Riverside County, an area designated as a low-



income community, and benefits 38 homes on tribal land and approximately 200 other low-income households served by Anza Electric. The project is expected to produce more than 42,000,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) of energy over the next 30 years and provide up to \$5.4 million in savings to participants over the life of the project.

The Community Solar Pilot project was completed in 2021.

[GRID Alternatives: First Low-Income Community Solar Project in California Underway](#)

## California Climate Investments



### About California Climate Investments

California Climate Investments is a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy and improving public health and the environment—particularly in disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and for low-income households. For information, visit <http://www.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov>.

## Community Solar Resources

- [LIWP Fact Sheet](#)
- [LIWP Impact Report – November 2020](#)
- [LIWP Supplemental Report to the Legislature](#)
- [California Climate Investments Annual Report to the Legislature](#)
- [Notice of Intent to Award](#)
- [CSD 2018-NOFA-62 Community Solar Pilot Program \(with Addendum\)](#)

## Program Guidelines

- [Community Solar Program Guidelines](#)
  - [Community Solar Program Design Outline](#)
- [Public Comments on Community Solar Draft Program Guidelines](#)
  - [Transcript of Public Hearing on Draft Community Solar Program Guidelines](#)
  - [CSD Responses for Comments on Draft Community Solar Program Guidelines](#)