



California
Road Charge

Public Private Roads Project

APPENDIX

C

Pilot Recruitment Plan with Results

Appendix was prepared to follow industry guidelines and standards for accessibility and usability to the extent feasible. If you have difficulty accessing content in this document, please contact Caltrans for assistance.

Pilot Participant Recruitment Plan with Recruiting Results

Version: 1.0

Date: June 30, 2023

Task: 2.a.3, Agreement 82A0002

Prepared By:



Document Control

File Name:	CA-PPRP_Task2.a.3_Recruitment-Plan-with-Results_v1.0_20230630.docx	
Version Number:	1.0	
Created By:	WSP	June 30, 2023
Reviewed By:		
Modified By:		
Approved By:		

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	5
1.1	Recruitment Plan Goals and Objectives.....	5
1.1.1	Recruitment Plan Results.....	6
1.1.2	Recruitment Challenges.....	10
1.2	Draft Schedule	12
2.	Pilot Participant Recruitment.....	15
2.1	Pilot Participant Requirements.....	15
2.2	TCA Recruitment.....	16
2.3	Rural Recruitment	17
2.3.1	Rural Tactics	17
2.4	Tribal Approach and Recruitment	17
2.4.1	Additional Tribal Tactics / Bring-a-Friend Program.....	18
3.	Pilot Participant Recruitment Tools	20
3.1	Pilot Materials for Recruitment	20
3.2	Interested Parties Intake Process.....	20
3.3	Pilot Participant Vetting and Selection	21
3.3.1	Pilot Enrollment Results	21
4.	Conclusion.....	24

Tables

Table 1: Interested Parties by U.S. Census Tract Geographic Classification and Pilot Type	6
Table 2. Draft Schedule of Activities	12
Table 3: Actual Schedule of Activities	13
Table 4: Participant Enrollment Results by Pilot Type – Round 1.....	22
Table 5: Participant Enrollment Results by Pilot Type – Round 2.....	22
Table 6: Participant Enrollment Results by Pilot Type – Round 3.....	22
Table 7: Participant Enrollment Results by Pilot Type – Rounds 1, 2, and 3.....	23
Table 8: Fully Enrolled Participants by Pilot Type	23
Table 9: Participant Enrollment Results by Geographic Region and Pilot Type	23

Figures

Figure 1: Total Interested Parties by US Census Tract Geographic Classification ...	7
Figure 2: Percentage of Interested Parties by Age Range.....	8

Figure 3: Percentage of Interested Parties by Income Level.....	8
Figure 4: Percentage of Interested Parties by Gender.....	9
Figure 5: Percentage of Interested Parties by Education Level	9

1. Introduction

As outlined in the Communications Plan, the California Road Charge Public/Private Roads Project (the Project) was the next step in California’s efforts to study the viability of a Road Charge program in the state. To date, California has led two successful pilots and, as a result of findings from those pilots, made a concerted effort to focus the Public/Private Roads Project pilot on two distinct populations of the state: rural and tribal communities. Recruiting active participants from rural and tribal communities for this pilot was considered essential for gathering information from the targeted communities regarding their use of public and private roadways. This information will also influence the continued study of alternate and sustainable transportation funding mechanisms, such as a road charge. The pilot also includes a 50-person sub-pilot with the Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA), branded as “The Toll Roads”, to evaluate the feasibility of a tolling entity acting as a road charge account manager.

This pilot participant recruitment plan identifies the process for recruiting rural and tribal communities as well as active TCA customers to participate in the Project. This plan builds upon the communications plan and highlights recruitment for the participants to join in the 6-month pilot.

1.1 RECRUITMENT PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives of this recruitment plan included:

- Actively recruiting participants from the identified communities:
 - Rural participants – goal 350
 - Tribal participants – goal 100
 - TCA sub-pilot participants – goal 50
- Outlining tactics for recruiting participants from each of the targeted communities
- Outlining a Bring-a-Friend Program for tribal communities:
 - This program was proposed as an optional augmentation to recruiting, based on the level of participation from initial recruiting efforts. The program encouraged qualified/active participants from tribal communities to recruit fellow community members and reward them if their recruit(s) successfully completed participation in the pilot.
 - Extending recruitment period for rural, tribal, and TCA participant pools to support reaching the participant goal, as needed.
- Building awareness for, and an inclination to be an active participant in, the Public/Private Roads Project 6-month pilot.

1.1.1 Recruitment Plan Results

Recruitment efforts generated significant interest in participating in the Public/Private Roads Project pilot – more than 1,700 people expressed their interest in participating. Given the nature of the pilot and the pilot’s goals, recruitment efforts sought participants from several geographic classifications:

- **Large Urban Dense:** metro population greater than 250,000 (among the densest 40% of U.S. census tracts) and primary commute flow within urban areas
- **Large Urban Moderate:** metro population greater than 250,000 (**not** among the densest 40% of U.S. census tracts) and primary commute flow within urban areas
- **Small Urban:** metro population less than 250,000 and primary commute flow within urban areas
- **Rural Connected:** outside urban area with population greater than 10,000 and primary commute flow is $\geq 50\%$ into urban areas
- **Rural Independent:** all other tracts

Table 1 displays the total number of interested parties, by geographic classification and pilot participant type.

Table 1: Interested Parties by U.S. Census Tract Geographic Classification and Pilot Type

Geographic Classification	Rural	Tribal	TCA	Total
Large Urban Dense	597	7	305	909
Large Urban Moderate	82	2	34	118
Small Urban	112	4	0	116
Rural Commuters	292	6	26	324
Rural Independent	194	33	1	228
Out of State	4	0	3	7
TOTAL	1,281	52	369	1,702

Figure 1 shows the percentages of interested parties by geographic classification.

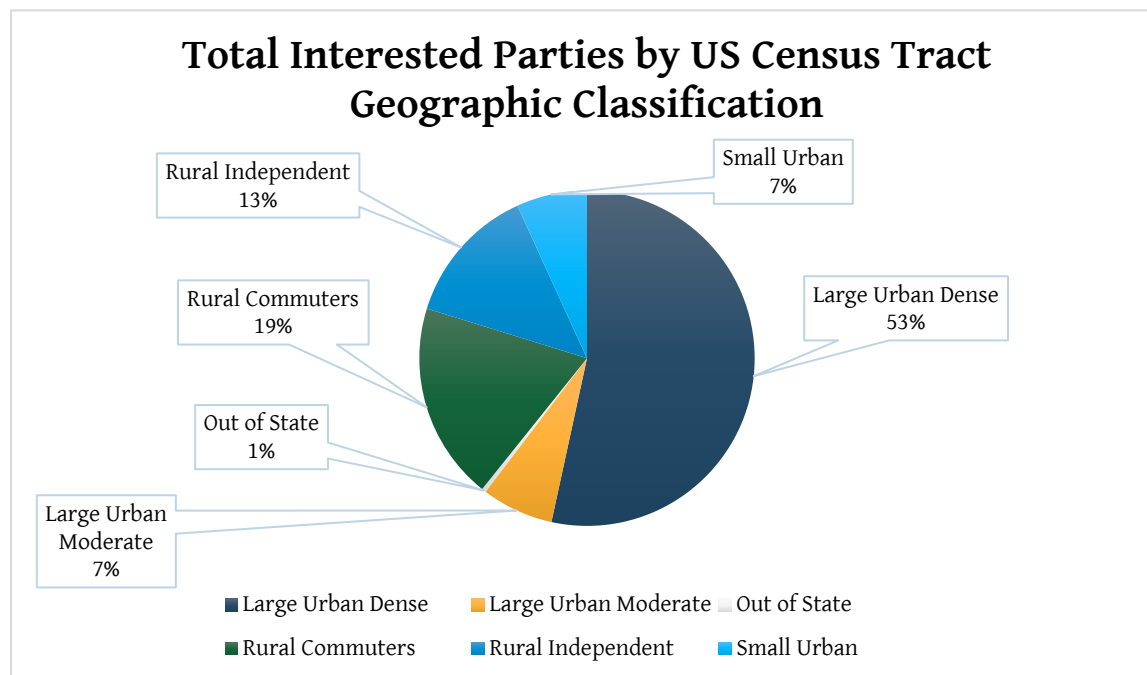


Figure 1: Total Interested Parties by US Census Tract Geographic Classification

The high number of interested parties does lend credence to the belief that California residents are aware that the state will need to examine other funding mechanisms to maintain and improve roads. The level of interest also demonstrates a willingness to be a part of the state's efforts to create a potential road charge system that works for all Californians.

The following figures provide breakdowns of interested parties by demographic categories. Although recruitment objectives did not set demographic stratification goals for this pilot, this information provides some insight into the demographic makeup of California citizens that engaged with and indicated interest in this effort.

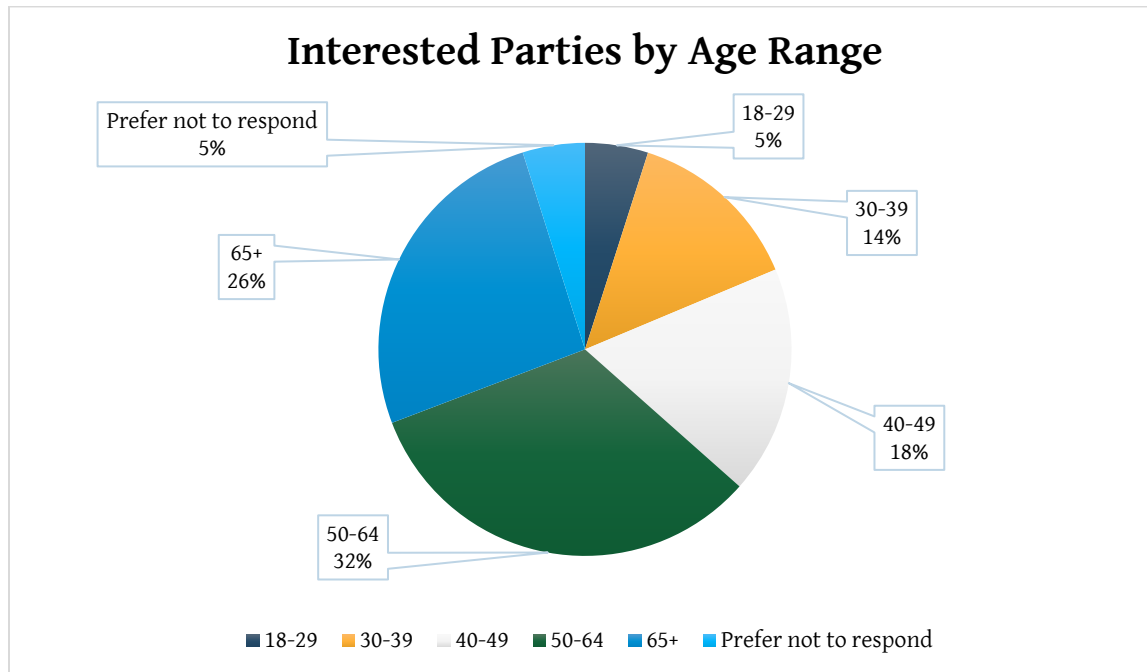


Figure 2: Percentage of Interested Parties by Age Range

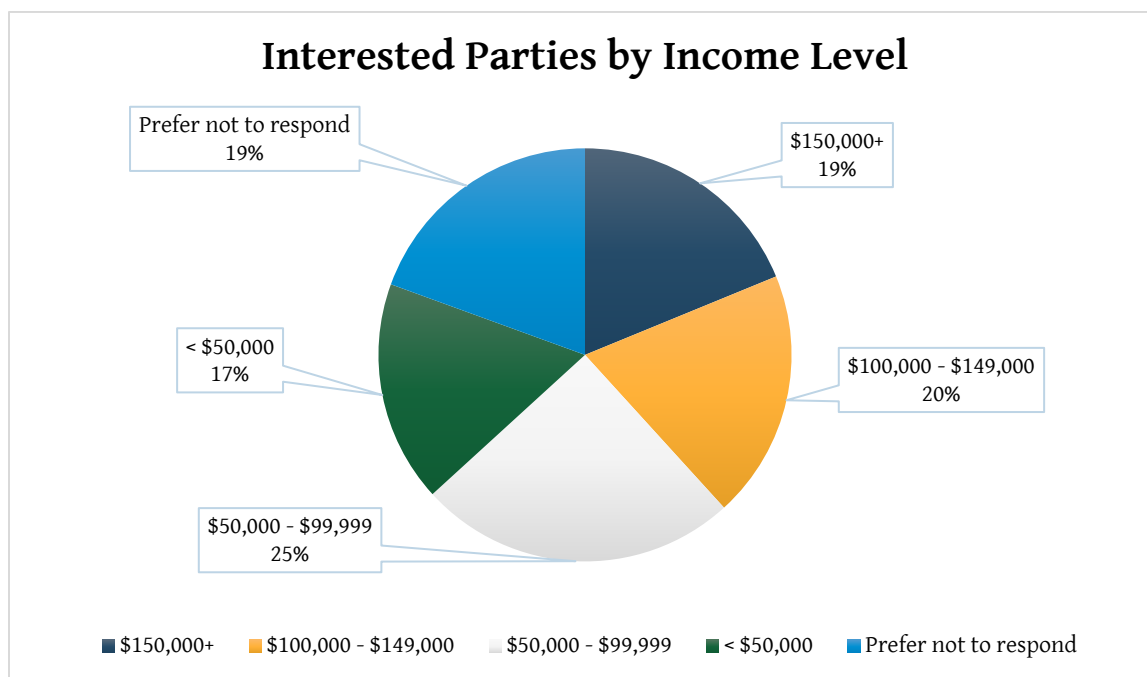


Figure 3: Percentage of Interested Parties by Income Level

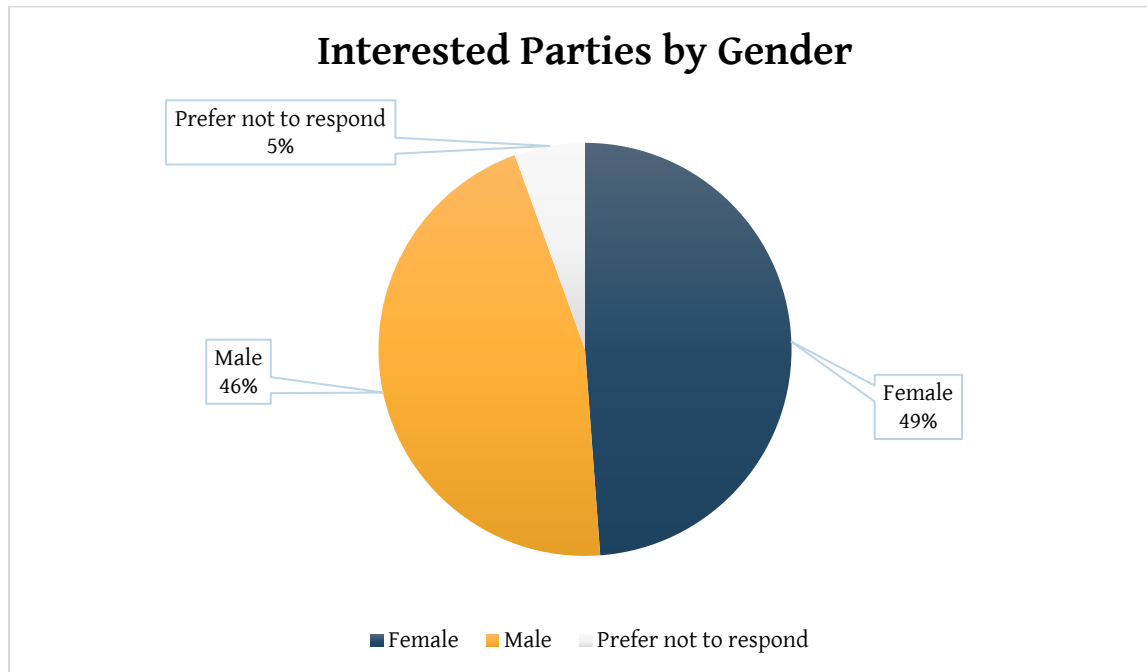


Figure 4: Percentage of Interested Parties by Gender

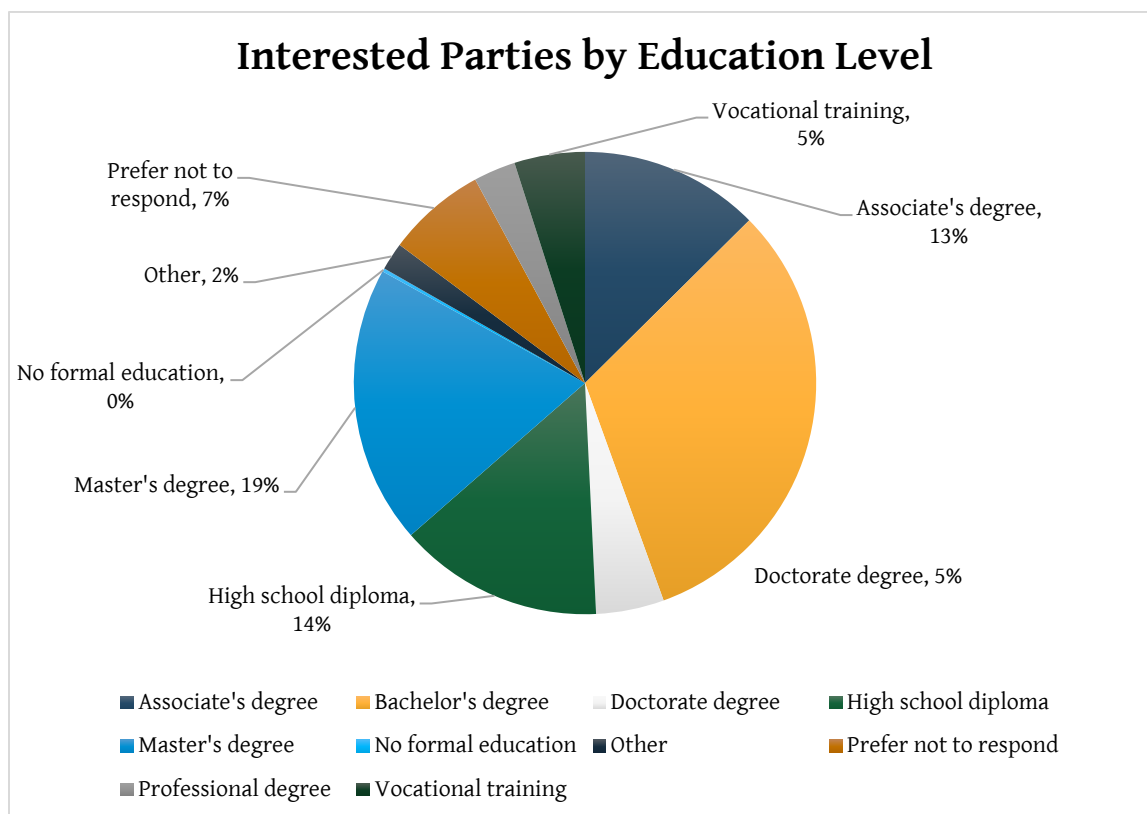


Figure 5: Percentage of Interested Parties by Education Level

1.1.2 Recruitment Challenges

It has always been understood that rural and tribal communities present unique recruitment challenges, including geographic isolation, distrust of government agencies, and cultural norms. The project team did anticipate resistance to recruitment efforts in these communities.

Rural Recruitment Summary

Recruitment efforts for rural communities performed well, in large part because of the decision to employ a top-down approach. Connecting with statewide entities, such as the Rural County Representatives of California, the California State Association of Counties, the League of California Cities, the Rural Community Assistance Corporation, the California Cattlemen's Association and the California Farm Bureau Federation to provide presentations to their leadership, and/or share our messaging via their various communications channels, helped “plant the flag” with key leaders representing rural communities and helped to generate interest for local presentations.

These presentations primarily occurred at local meetings held by County Boards of Supervisors and/or County Transportation Commissions. The key to positive recruitment efforts in rural communities was the willingness of Caltrans' leaders to visit these meetings in-person. Rural communities are often overlooked for in-person visits, and community members were pleased by Caltrans' presence. This built significant goodwill, despite community members' skepticism toward the concept of a road charge.

Caltrans' presence at these meetings allowed the road charge message to be delivered directly to community members without a filter, which allowed the message to be delivered as Caltrans intended. The willingness of Caltrans' leadership to attend the meetings, present information about the Public/Private Roads Project pilot and, most importantly, to answer the difficult questions from community members helped to lay the foundation for rural community participation in the pilot. This strategy laid the foundation for rural communities to better understand the pilot, often disarming their initial concerns, leading to excellent recruitment opportunities. In addition, Caltrans' physical presence at many of these public meetings led to numerous one-on-one meetings and conversations with county government leadership.

The amount of interest from rural communities was surprising, and the project team was pleased that the recruitment goal was reached and exceeded. The goal set at the beginning of the rural recruitment effort was 350 rural participants – by the time of Pilot launch, more than 1,200 people expressed interest in participating in the rural pilot (even though many didn't live in rural areas).

Members of the project team noted that if they had known that interest for local presentations would be high, more work could have been done earlier to set up additional local meetings. In addition, the team noted that timing of outreach did create some challenges with respect to the statewide organizations. These entities do significant advance planning for annual meetings and conferences, and any outside organization wanting to have a presence at those meetings/conferences needs to give at least one year's notice of interest in participating.

Tribal Recruitment Summary

A significant issue encountered during recruitment efforts was the sheer number of Native American tribes – there are 110 federally recognized tribes in California¹. Due to its relative geographic diversity and abundance, California is unique in the sheer number of federally recognized tribes, second only to Alaska. There is no “master database” of people living in California who claim Native American heritage. As a result, outreach efforts were focused on connecting with tribal leaders who would share project information with their tribal members.

Outreach efforts to Native American tribes in California consisted of several contacts:

- Initial emails were sent to the tribal email addresses that were provided by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC)
- Several days after the emails were sent, follow-up phone calls were made to the tribal phone numbers that were provided by the NAHC
- Emails were re-sent/more follow-up calls were made based on new information gathered during the initial call (e.g., NAHC list contained an incorrect tribal email address, or a tribal chairperson was replaced by a new chairperson)

Recruitment activities reached 177 tribal contacts of the 214 contacts in the NAHC list, and although significant recruitment activities took place, few tribal members signed up to participate in the Public/Private Roads pilot. The project team established a goal of 100 participants from tribal communities, but the final result of 16 participants fell short of that goal. One proposed solution for this was a need for outreach to tribal members, as opposed to tribal leaders, and outreach directly where members live.

Timing was an issue; not just timing to plan for attending specific events, such as the California Native American Day at the state capitol, but, more importantly, dedicating the time to cultivate relationships with tribal leaders/chairs and organizations. Significant effort is required to reach tribes and establish relationships with tribal leaders/chairs.

Caltrans District Native American Coordinators (DNACs) were also engaged to support. These district-level liaisons were very helpful in helping to establish some level of relationship. However, additional time would have been necessary to effectively utilize these coordinators in tribal engagement.

In conclusion, tribal communities should be contacted early and often. They expressed the concern to be involved in discussions, but need follow up to ensure their needs are being heard and addressed. Effective engagement with tribal communities requires a considerable amount of involvement, well-beyond initial calls. Engaging with tribal communities, especially on initiatives as sensitive as road charge requires continuous engagement of several years, well-beyond the six months of this contract. Moving forward, Caltrans and other agencies should continue to engage

¹ United States Bureau of Indian Affairs – Federally recognized tribes in California:
https://www.bia.gov/service/tribal-leaders-directory/federally-recognized-tribes?field_us_state_s_value=CA&page=1

tribal communities to not only capture their unique needs and concerns but help further establish long-term relationships for future transportation initiatives.

Incentive Payments

The project team had anticipated that the total incentive amount of \$250 would have been sufficient to generate interest among potential tribal participants. This proved not to be the case. Tribal members were not swayed by the incentive payment and showed little interest in participation. Increasing the total incentive amount could have led to more tribal participation, but it is not a certainty. In the end, the \$250 incentive did not move the participation needle as much as anticipated.

Bring-A-Friend Program

As a secondary strategy for tribal recruitment efforts, the project team developed and rolled out the Bring-a-Friend program, which is discussed in detail in Section 2.4.1. This program did not generate much interest – four referrals were made.

1.2 DRAFT SCHEDULE

Table 2 displays the general schedule of actions. Dates are subject to modification and alignment of the Project pilot.

Table 2. Draft Schedule of Activities

Task/Item	Dates						
Rural Participant Recruitment	1/2023	2/2023	3/2023				
Tribal Participant Recruitment	10/2022	11/2022	12/2022	1/2023	2/2023	3/2023	4/2023
TCA Sub-Pilot Participant Recruitment	2/2023	3/2023					
Pilot (7 Months)	3/2023	4/2023	5/2023	6/2023	7/2023	8/2023	9/2023

During the course of recruitment activities and the pilot launch, some dates changed due to operational needs. Table 3 shows amended dates and the actual schedule of activities.

Table 3: Actual Schedule of Activities

Task/Item	Dates						
Rural Participant Recruitment	1/2023	2/2023	3/2023	04/2023	05/2023		
Tribal Participant Recruitment	10/2022	11/2022	12/2022	1/2023	2/2023	3/2023	4/2023
TCA Sub-Pilot Participant Recruitment	2/2023	3/2023					
Pilot (6 Months)		4/2023	5/2023	6/2023	7/2023	8/2023	9/2023

The actual pilot was reduced from seven to six months, launching the last three days of March for full enrollment and reporting starting in April and going through September 2023.

Rural participant recruitment was extended into early May to continue gaining rural-eligible interested parties from various meetings and outreach efforts.

Tribal participant recruitment efforts were anticipated to be extended when the draft schedule was developed, continuing recruitment efforts through April 2023 to continue garnering interest from eligible interested parties.

TCA sub-pilot recruitment kicked off in late February and ran for only a few days into March 2023, with an abundance of interested parties in a short period of time.

Rural recruitment activities included meetings in August and September 2022 with several statewide organizations, including the:

- Rural County Representatives of California
- California State Association of Counties
- California Cattlemen's Association
- California Farm Bureau Federation

At the local level, rural recruitment activities included meetings January through early May 2023 with several local government entities, including the:

- Amador County Board of Supervisors
- Calaveras County Board of Supervisors
- Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG)
- Modoc County Board of Supervisors
- Yuba County Board of Supervisors

Tribal recruitment activities included emails and follow-up telephone outreach to the tribal contacts on the list provided by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). The project team also developed a tribal engagement sprint that included the following recommendations:

- Caltrans to attend the April 5, 2023 NAAC meeting and set up laptops and ask all NAAC members to take the survey
- Caltrans to ask District Directors to request that their own DNALs and DNACs reach out to their tribal contacts and encourage people to take the survey
- Caltrans to contact Governor’s Office of Tribal Affairs and also Executive Secretary Raymond Hitchcock, Native American Heritage Commission
- Caltrans to attend Society for California Archaeology conference March 17-18, 2023, in Oakland
- Additional recommendations made to Caltrans were postponed until after Pilot launch; the WSP team plans on following up with Caltrans on these recommendations

2. Pilot Participant Recruitment

Recruitment included two distinct processes for involving targeted communities in this pilot. This section defines and differentiates these processes and further catalogues strategies for targeted outreach to these populations.

Recruitment is the process of securing participants in the pilot. As opposed to general engagement, recruitment involved the process of getting targeted populations to register and dynamically participate in the pilot for the Public/Private Roads Project, use the technology for 6 months, and to actively engage with the team through follow-up surveys.

Recruitment for the rural and tribal target populations used a similar process. However, extra effort was needed in attempting to secure tribal participants. These efforts included a broader reach to state and local tribal contacts, such as:

- Leveraging tribal contacts, when applicable, from Caltrans Districts public information teams.
- Attending the Northern California and Southern California Tribal Chairmen’s Association meetings to raise awareness of the pilot and offer availability for individual or micro-targeted follow-up.
- Individual and/or micro-targeted follow-up to confirmed tribal participants with information regarding the Bring-a-Friend option.
- Quick and responsive communications (email) to registered tribal participants reinforcing and welcoming their feedback and participation, as well as messages to emphasize the importance of their voice and opinions in the pilot.

Recruiting TCA sub-pilot participants varied in strategy and method, as the project leveraged TCA’s existing active customer pool and communication channels to recruit participants.

2.1 PILOT PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS

The project team actively recruited members to participate in the pilot. Many of the qualified participants were previous respondents of the research / participants in previous California Road Charge pilots. However, the criteria for pilot recruitment for rural and tribal populations was more rigid than the criteria used for communications research.

The project team utilized relationships established through targeted engagement to rural and tribal focused governments and organizations to recruit pilot participants. These target populations are defined as follows:

Tribal communities pilot participants

- California residents
- Age 18 and above

- Self-identify as a member of a federally recognized tribe
- Must be a driver and drive on tribal land an average of once per month, at a minimum, during the pilot

Rural communities pilot participants

- California residents
- Age 18 and above
- Live in a U.S. Census tract designated rural community
- Must be a driver and drive on private roads an average of once per week, at a minimum, during the pilot

TCA sub-pilot participants

- California residents
- Age 18 and above
- Must be a driver
- Must be an active TCA “The Toll Roads” account holder

All participants were also required to meet the following requirements:

- Enrolled a participating vehicle that met one of the following: gasoline vehicles 1996 or newer; diesel vehicles 2006 or newer; electric vehicles that include an active onboard diagnostics version two (OBD-II) port; alternative fuel vehicles will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis
- Participating vehicle’s OBD-II port not currently in use by another device that cannot be removed for the duration of the pilot (e.g., Progressive Snapshot plug-in device)
- Must have access to the internet and a browser; rural and tribal participants must either have access to internet and browser or a smartphone with internet connectivity and ability to download a mobile app (Android or iOS)

2.2 TCA RECRUITMENT

The project team worked in coordination with the Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA) to recruit participants for the TCA sub-pilot, based on a set of active users of the TCA toll program, branded as “The Toll Roads”.

Pilot participant recruitment with TCA was a coordinated effort between TCA and the project team to define appropriate criteria – sub-pilot eligibility requirements and desired participant stratification goals – and execute recruitment efforts through TCA’s existing channels with its customers. A total of 50 TCA customers were recruited to participate in the TCA sub-pilot.

2.3 RURAL RECRUITMENT

Once local stakeholder groups were identified, the team leveraged those contacts to prioritize targeted, localized outreach. Local outreach was conducted in regions and communities with adequate leadership/organizational support.

2.3.1 Rural Tactics

1. Requested initial introductory briefings with targeted local stakeholder groups. Utilized ambassadors and/or statewide organizational contacts to make introductions when possible.
2. Emphasized the incentive value of up to \$250 for qualified participants.
3. Prioritized targeted local stakeholder groups and scheduled a road show of presentations to rural communities. Requested that local stakeholder groups invite their members and connect with local elected officials to expand the potential participant audience.
4. Launched a targeted advertising campaign through rural publications and broadcast outlets to solicit interested parties to apply for participation in the pilot program. Leveraged existing relationships through Caltrans District PIOs to connect with rural broadcast outlets for earned media exposure.
5. When applicable, and coordinated through stakeholder organizations, created and distributed content to stakeholders for use in an email campaign to relevant mailing lists.
6. When applicable and when the level of participation warranted, the project team encouraged qualified participants to recommend others in their community for pilot qualification and participation in the Bring-a-Friend program outlined in Section 2.4.1.

The desired outcome was that the bulk of the pilot participants that did not fall under the tribal or TCA sub-pilot categories would consist of rural recruits.

2.4 TRIBAL APPROACH AND RECRUITMENT

Research survey participation and pilot recruitment overlapped with the targeted tribal communities. The outreach efforts to tribal leadership aimed to provide an entry to tribal communities at a broad level to recruit people to take the tribal opinion poll. A prompt at the end of the tribal opinion poll requested that those who were interested should complete the pilot interested parties form. Also, anyone who completed the pilot interested parties form were able to indicate whether they would be willing to participate in an opinion poll or focus group. These parallel activities enabled tandem recruitment for research respondents and pilot participants.

The project team advertised in a prominent tribally focused publication, **News from Native California**, a quarterly magazine publication targeted to a specific tribal audience.

This research project established a goal for up to 100 participants from tribal communities for the pilot program. According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 data, Native Americans make up about 1.1% of California’s population (CALIFORNIA: 2020 Census). However, it is unclear whether those are enrolled tribal members or are people who self-designate as having Native American ancestry. Given the project’s need to obtain data on travel on tribal reservation lands, pilot participants should be limited to enrolled tribal members.

Pilot participant recruitment from tribal communities benefitted from the broad reach of a targeted letter to the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) list of about 200 contacts, as well as a list of approximately 100 federally recognized tribal leadership contacts whose tribes have association to lands in the State of California. Follow-up in the form of phone calls and email was initiated to build on these initial mailings. In addition, Caltrans presented to the Northern and Southern California Tribal Chairmen’s Associations.

2.4.1 Additional Tribal Tactics / Bring-a-Friend Program

1. Established both research respondent and pilot participant outreach via letters to NAHC and the California-based members of the 110 federally recognized tribes with land associations in California.
2. Emphasized the incentive value of up to \$250 for qualified tribal participants.
3. Prioritized and provided swift responses and follow-up to tribal contacts who responded or expressed willingness to participate in surveys, participate in the pilot, or share information with tribal members.
4. Repeated advertising and / or content distribution to *News from Native California*.
5. The project team encouraged qualified participants to recommend others within their community for pilot qualification and participation in the Bring-a-Friend program outlined below:
 - a. The Bring-a-Friend program was an optional augmentation to recruiting, which was activated by the project team in early April 2023. A basic overview and implementation include the following steps:
 - i. Qualified and active tribal participants in the pilot were sent messages inviting them to recommend a fellow tribal member to participate in the pilot. The key messages included the essential qualifying criteria outlined in Section 2.1.
 - ii. Recommended pilot participants were assigned an associated data tag to the person who recommended them.
 - iii. Recommended pilot participants were qualified and confirmed for participation using the same criteria as all tribal members. Recommended

Bring-a-Friend participants were required to meet the same criteria outlined in Section 2.1.

- iv. Participants who made a recommendation were informed that their friend qualified and is participating. They also received a periodic message encouraging them to check in with their friend regarding the pilot.
- v. If a recommended participant qualified and completed essential pilot milestones during the six-month pilot, the person who recommended them received an additional incentive payment [\$25 to \$125, depending on incentive milestones achieved by the recommended participant].
- vi. Qualified and active tribal participants in the pilot were allowed to recommend up to five people for the Bring-a-Friend program.

3. Pilot Participant Recruitment Tools

3.1 PILOT MATERIALS FOR RECRUITMENT

Materials and collateral were developed to provide background, instructions, and announcements regarding the pilot. These included:

- Pilot brochure
- Pilot fact sheet
- Email and Newsletter Boilerplate Content
- Confirmation and Welcome Email
- Pilot poster
- Instructional infographics
- News releases
- Presentation decks
- Bring-a-Friend materials:
 - Bring-a Friend factsheet
 - Bring-a-Friend Email Boilerplate Content (Note: the newsletter was planned, but the project team determined that the newsletter was not needed)
 - Bring-a-Friend Registration and Confirmation Content
 - (Note: A news release about the Bring-a-Friend program was planned, but the project team determined that it was not needed)
 - (Note: A Bring-a-Friend web page and associated content were planned, but the project team determined that the materials were not needed)
 - Bring-a-Friend Terms and Conditions
 - Bring-a-Friend encouragement messages – for both participants
 - FAQs for program
 - Marked and separable participants in database

3.2 INTERESTED PARTIES INTAKE PROCESS

The project team updated the caroadcharge.com program website comment and engage form to include information for individuals to indicate interested in the pilot, and to provide a base set of information on demographics, community association (e.g., rural, tribal, TCA), and vehicle information to assist the project team in identifying potential eligible participants. This intake portal could be found by navigating to the Program’s website, was referenced via link on Program

and project communications, and via a QR code on recruiting materials (posters, flyers, and leave-behinds).

Following the submission of the interested parties form on the intake portal, interested parties saw a screen acknowledging completion of the intake process and thanking them for their time, plus confirmation of their interest in participating in the pilot.

Information submitted through the intake portal was loaded into a database that the project team used to manage public comments and pilot interest. If potential participants were identified in the course of in-person or telephone conversations, project team members collected the required information from the individual and manually entered the data into the database.

The pilot interested parties form was hosted on the Program website from September 23, 2022, through May 5, 2023.

3.3 PILOT PARTICIPANT VETTING AND SELECTION

The project team compiled all interested parties, evaluated their responses to the intake process, and vetted their participation against participation goals and objectives established for the pilot. This vetting involved comparing vehicle types against technology constraints, participant locations against geographic preferences, and evaluating demographic information to determine if socioeconomic stratification can be done for equity and diversity. The project team selected the number of participants necessary to fulfill the obligations of the pilot (initial round of selection over-selected participants under the assumption that some would not complete enrollment). Additional rounds of selection were required, as goal participation numbers were not met in the first round.

Once the participant list was finalized, the project team notified selected participants through their identified email address to provide information on how to complete enrollment and start their participation in the pilot.

3.3.1 Pilot Enrollment Results

The initial round of participant selection and invitation to participate in the pilot was sent out to selected participants on March 29, 2023. Interested parties invited to participate in the rural pilot included all interested parties with a ZIP code in a “rural independent” or “rural commuter” category, were not a member of a federally recognized tribe, and were not interested specifically in the TCA pilot. Also included in Round 1 for the rural pilot were any targeted recruits and project team members who intended to participate in the pilot. All interested parties that were members of federally recognized tribes and not specifically interested in the TCA pilot were invited to participate in the tribal pilot, regardless of ZIP code category, due to the small number of tribal interested parties in total. TCA interested parties were randomly down selected to 50 participants to invite to participate in the TCA pilot.

NOTE: During Round 1 invitation window, several duplicate invited participants were identified, who signed up as an interested party multiple times and were therefore repeated on the down selected list of invited participants. These duplicates were removed and replaced in Round 2 or Round 3, as applicable, with other interested parties.

The project team monitored Round 1 participant enrollment, assisting selected participants with enrollment questions and issues as they arose to support participants completing all necessary enrollment steps. The count of fully enrolled participants for the three pilot types – rural, tribal, and TCA – were not reaching the desired goals of 350, 100, and 50, respectively. Selected participants were emailed enrollment reminder emails one week after the initial invitation email was sent, with a deadline of three business days following the reminder email.

A second round of participant selection (Round 2) occurred on April 10, 2023, to an additional set of rural, tribal, and TCA pilot participants, with a reminder sent one week later (with a requested enrollment deadline of three business days following the reminder). The second round of enrollment did increase enrollment counts for all three pilot types, although still not up to the enrollment goals for each.

A third and final round of participant selection (Round 3) occurred on April 18, 2023, to an additional set of rural, tribal, and TCA pilot participants, with a reminder email sent one week later (and requested enrollment deadline of three business days following the reminder). Additionally, interested parties that indicated interest in the TCA pilot that marked they were a member of a federally recognized tribe were invited to participate in the tribal pilot rather than the TCA pilot, as the tribal pilot enrollment count was only 7% of the recruitment goal at the end of April.

A total of 802 invitations were sent to selected participants across the rural, tribal, and TCA pilot types. Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6 detail the count of interested parties invited for the rural, tribal, and TCA pilots in Rounds 1, 2, and 3 of recruitment and enrollment invitations.

Table 4: Participant Enrollment Results by Pilot Type – Round 1

Round / Status	Rural	Tribal	TCA	TOTALS
Round 1 – Enrolled	153	13	18	184
Round 1 – Did Not Complete Enrollment	9	7	4	20
Round 1 – Did Not Respond	237	35	29	301
TOTALS	399	55	51	505

Table 5: Participant Enrollment Results by Pilot Type – Round 2

Round / Status	Rural	Tribal	TCA	TOTALS
Round 2 – Enrolled	79	0	11	90
Round 2 – Did Not Complete Enrollment	4	0	1	5
Round 2 – Did Not Respond	98	0	39	137
TOTALS	181	0	51	232

Table 6: Participant Enrollment Results by Pilot Type – Round 3

Round / Status	Rural	Tribal	TCA	TOTALS
Round 3 – Enrolled	6	3	6	15
Round 3 – Did Not Complete Enrollment	1	0	1	2
Round 3 – Did Not Respond	4	1	43	48
TOTALS	11	4	50	65

The cumulative final recruitment and participant enrollment results for all three enrollment rounds are reflected in Table 7.

Table 7: Participant Enrollment Results by Pilot Type – Rounds 1, 2, and 3

Status (Rounds 1, 2, and 3)	Rural	Tribal	TCA	TOTALS
Enrolled	238	16	35	289
Did Not Complete Enrollment	14	7	6	27
Did Not Respond	339	36	111	486
TOTALS	591	59	152	802

For rural and TCA participants, final enrollment numbers approached 70% of the goal. For tribal participants, the final enrollment number hit only 16% of the goal. Table 8 displays enrollment results (as of the end of the recruitment period) by pilot participant type.

Table 8: Fully Enrolled Participants by Pilot Type

Pilot Type	Recruitment Goal	Recruitment Actual	Percent of Goal
Rural	350	238	68%
Tribal	100	16	16%
TCA	50	35	70%
TOTAL	500	289	58%

Table 9 displays enrollment results (as of the end of the recruitment period) by pilot participant type and region.

Table 9: Participant Enrollment Results by Geographic Region and Pilot Type

Geographic Region	Rural	Tribal	TCA	Total
North	125	10	2	137
Central	87	3	0	90
South	25	3	33	61
Out of State	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	238	16	35	289

4. Conclusion

With a final rural interested party count of 1,281, recruitment efforts for rural communities performed well. In large part, this success was due to the decision to employ a top-down approach. Connecting with statewide entities to provide presentations to their leadership and/or share our messaging via their various communications channels helped “plant the flag” with key leaders representing rural communities and helped to generate interest for local presentations.

With a final tribal interested party count of 52, recruitment efforts for tribal communities did not perform as well as would have been liked. A significant issue encountered during recruitment efforts was the sheer number of Native American tribes in California. Timing was an issue; specifically, insufficient lead time to cultivate relationships with tribal leaders/chairs and organizations. This is a difficult audience to engage with.

Engaging with rural and tribal communities, especially on initiatives as sensitive as road charge, requires continuous engagement with timeframes well beyond the six months of this contract. For rural communities, an engagement period of at least one year is recommended. This engagement time frame is even longer with tribal communities, requiring several years.

With a final toll-road mini-pilot interested party count of 369, recruitment efforts for TCA performed well. The project team worked well with California’s Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA) to recruit participants for the TCA sub-pilot.

The high number of interested parties lends credence to the belief that California residents are aware that the state will need to examine other funding mechanisms to maintain and improve roads. The high number of interested parties also demonstrates that California residents are willing to participate in California’s exploratory road charge efforts. In closing, future recruitment efforts to seek participants in road charge programs would be best served by budgeting extra time for hard-to-reach communities.