



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

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NEWS RELEASE

Date: January 28, 2026

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COUNTY ANNOUNCES MEASURE Q GRANT OPPORTUNITY

The County of Santa Cruz is now accepting applications for the inaugural cycle of the Measure Q Grant Program, a new funding opportunity supporting local projects that advance clean water protection, wildfire resilience, habitat restoration, and equitable access to parks and natural spaces throughout Santa Cruz County.

Approved by voters in November 2024, Measure Q — formally titled the Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction, and Wildlife Protection Act — generates more than \$7 million annually to invest in environmental health, climate resilience, and community access to nature. Approximately \$2.5 million per year is dedicated to competitive grants awarded through the Measure Q Grant Program.

The Measure Q Grant Program is jointly administered by the County's Office of Response, Recovery & Resilience (OR3) and the Department of Parks, Open Space & Cultural Services. Grant funding is guided by the Measure Q Vision Plan, a five-year roadmap developed with extensive community and stakeholder input to ensure investments align with countywide priorities and community-identified needs.

Eligible applicants may apply under one of two funding tiers:

- **Tier 1** – Community Catalyst Grants: Awards ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 to support smaller-scale projects, pilot programs, community stewardship efforts, education, planning, and localized restoration activities.
- **Tier 2** – Community Impact Grants: Awards ranging from \$50,000 to \$500,000 for larger, multi-benefit projects such as watershed restoration, wildfire fuel reduction, habitat protection, and capital improvements that expand public access.

The Measure Q Act also establishes dedicated annual funding allocations of at least \$600,000 for projects within the San Vicente Redwoods conservation easement and at least \$600,000 for up to three grants benefiting residents in the Pajaro Valley, including areas near the Watsonville Slough system, Pinto Lake, and the Pajaro River.

Eligible applicants include:

- Public agencies
- Nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) status
- Tribes

Projects must take place within Santa Cruz County or demonstrate a clear public benefit to County residents, watersheds, natural resources, or ecosystems.

Application Details

Applications must be submitted online and include a project narrative, budget, timeline, site information, and descriptions of community benefit, equity, and alignment with the Measure Q Vision Plan. While matching funds are not required, applicants are encouraged to document leveraged funding, volunteer contributions, or partnerships.

Grant awards will be evaluated through a competitive scoring process and are subject to review by the Measure Q Citizens Oversight Advisory Board and final approval by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors. All grant awards, scoring, and reporting will be publicly available to ensure transparency and accountability.

Learn More and Apply

Full grant guidelines, application materials, and deadlines are available at:

www.santacruzcountyca.gov/MeasureQ.aspx

All Measure Q-funded projects are required to acknowledge support using the language: "Funded by the County of Santa Cruz Measure Q – Safe Drinking Water, Clean Beaches, Wildfire Risk Reduction and Wildlife Protection Act."