



Technical Advisory Council

Item 4: Adapting to Loss of Federal Funding

March 6, 2026

Introduction

Under the current administration, funding for climate and disaster resilience has become increasingly uncertain. Since January 2025, hundreds of millions of dollars in FEMA funding for mitigation, resilience, and preparedness have been cut, withdrawn, or cancelled affecting communities across California. This increased uncertainty is forcing communities to rethink how to fund climate and disaster resilience.

One example is how federal changes are impacting the recovery from the 2025 Los Angeles wildfires. Programs that traditionally support recovery from large scale disasters including the Hazard Mitigation Grants Program and Community Development Block Grants for Disaster Recovery have not yet been authorized. Despite philanthropic efforts raising between \$860 million and \$970 million, one of the largest amounts of post-disaster donations, the funds are insufficient for the approximate \$131 billion capital losses from the fires (SoCal Grantmakers). Dr. Lily Bui, the Director of Climate and Disaster Preparedness and Resilience at SoCal Grantmakers, will speak on how federal changes are impacting recovery efforts in Los Angeles and efforts to create new partnerships to support recovery.

Another example is the termination of the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced in April 2025 it would end BRIC, the largest competitively awarded disaster mitigation funding source in the U.S. (FEMA Advisory). Established in 2020, BRIC had over \$4.6 billion available to prevent damage before a natural disaster happens (Congress).

California was the largest beneficiary of BRIC and would have received over a billion dollars for projects that FEMA had selected for funding before the program was terminated (Office of Attorney General). Currently, FEMA paused funding awarded but not yet distributed, leaving many communities in limbo (AP Press). In December 2025, California Attorney General Rob Bonta and a coalition of 20 states secured a permanent injunction blocking the Trump Administration's attempt to shut down the BRIC program. The court decision

prevents FEMA from terminating the program and requires the restoration of funds (Office of Attorney General).

The California Office of Emergency Services identified 35 BRIC projects in the state that could lose funding for critical hazard mitigation (Assemblymember Rhodesia Ransom). The following communities will be presenting to the TAC in 2026:

- **The Sutter Bypass East Levee project**
 - FEMA's ending of the BRIC program has halted \$50 million of funding in upgrades to levees in Sutter, Yuba, and Colusa counties. In 2024, the Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency (SBFCA) and DWR applied to the BRIC program for funds to repair a critical five miles of levee along the Sutter Bypass to prevent flooding of the Yuba City basin and protect 3,400 people. Six years into the project, SBFCA had planned to start construction in 2027 but has since pivoted to find alternate funding with the help of the late Congressman LaMalfa's office.
- **The Oakland Alameda Flood Adaptation and Community Benefits project**
 - This BRIC project would have reduced current and future flood risk, improved natural habitats and provided community benefits across multiple jurisdictions. After FEMA froze the \$50 million grant for the project, the Oakland Alameda Adaptation Committee continued to advance the project, including with Climate Bond funding that supported the portion of the project within the City of Alameda to 60% design. The team is also rethinking climate adaptation funding and how to diversify sources of money.
- **The Wildfire Mitigation Program in the County of Napa**
 - Napa County is one of the most fire-prone regions in the U.S., and over a third of residents live in wildfire hazard zones (Napa County Mag). This program will lose \$35 million in funding. The county had already committed a 30% match to secure a total of \$50 million for wildfire protection measures, including hazardous fuels reduction, ignition-resistant construction, and defensible spaces creation.

Discussion Questions

- What concrete actions has your community or organization taken to continue climate adaptation or resilience efforts with limited or no federal funding?
- Which of these actions or models could realistically be replicated in other communities, and what conditions are needed for success?

Sources

[Remembering and Rising One Year After the January 2025 Wildfires | SoCal Grantmakers](#)

[A Primer: How Federal Changes are Shifting Disaster Resilience in California | Philanthropy California](#)

[FEMA-Advisory-Update-on-FEMA-Ending-the-Building-Resilient-Infrastructure-and-Communities-Program-April-16-2025.pdf](#)

[FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\): Recent Developments | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](#)

[Attorney General Bonta Blocks Unlawful Funding Cuts to Disaster Preparedness Program | State of California - Department of Justice - Office of the Attorney General](#)

[Trump administration must reinstate FEMA disaster funds, judge says | AP News](#)

[Assembly Joint Resolution to Restore Federal Disaster Funding Passes Policy Committee, Heads to Assembly Floor | Assemblymember Rhodesia Ransom](#)

[Napa County Leaders Seek Federal Support After FEMA Cuts Wildfire Protection Funding - Napa County Mag](#)