



Beach and Coast Accessibility Grants

Orange County Coastkeeper (Coastkeeper), in partnership with the California State Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy), is pleased to announce the availability of grant funding for beach and coastal accessibility projects. Grants are available to federally recognized tribes, public agencies, and non-profit organizations.

The goal of this program is to expand equitable access to California’s iconic coastline, enabling more people - especially those from communities with historic barriers to access to outdoor spaces and related resources–to explore and enjoy our state’s spectacular coastal resources. This is the second round of the Beach and Coast Accessibility Program, with a continued emphasis on reconnecting Native Peoples to their ancestral lands, and supporting access for other impacted groups, including individuals with disabilities and mobility challenges.

Approximately $290,000 in total funding is available for this round. Grant awards will range from a minimum of $1,000 to a maximum of $30,000. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until all funds are awarded. First priority will be given to proposals submitted by federally recognized tribes and Indigenous non-profit organizations.

PLEASE SCROLL TO PAGE 5 FOR THE APPLICATION QUESTIONS. TO APPLY, EMAIL [BCAP@COASTKEEPER.ORG](mailto:BCAP@COASTKEEPER.ORG) FOR THE LINK TO THE APPLICATION.

**Background**

This grant program is a collaboration between the California State Coastal Conservancy (Conservancy) and Orange County Coastkeeper (Coastkeeper).

The Conservancy is a non-regulatory state agency that works to preserve, enhance, and restore public access, natural resources, and agricultural lands along California’s coast, the San Francisco Bay shoreline, and surrounding counties. The Conservancy partners with public agencies and non-profit organizations to advance these goals, with a core focus on increasing equitable access to the coast and supporting programs that bring people to the shoreline and enrich their experiences. To support this mission, they’re partnering with Coastkeeper to help distribute grant funds that increase accessibility to the beach and coast.

Founded in 1999 and based in Costa Mesa, Coastkeeper is a clean water non-profit organization and the 27th licensed “Keeper” program in the U.S. For over two decades, Coastkeeper has worked closely with government agencies, industries, and community members to protect local waters, restore aquatic and coastal habitats, and ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act.

Coastkeeper also leads robust environmental education efforts, reaching thousands of students and residents to foster stewardship and awareness of water quality issues. Through a balance of education, advocacy, restoration, research, and enforcement, Coastkeeper promotes clean waterways, a healthy water supply, and public access to coastal resources for all.

We are honored to partner with the Conservancy to support projects that expand access to California’s beloved coastline–especially for Native communities, individuals with disabilities, and other groups who face historic barriers to access.

**Eligible Applicants**:

Grants are available to the following entities:

* Federally recognized tribes
* Public agencies
* Eligible non-profit organizations

To qualify, non-profit organizations must be tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Additionally, the organization’s articles of incorporation must demonstrate that its purposes align with Division 21 of the California Public Resources Code–the enabling legislation of the California State Coastal Conservancy. Applicants must include a copy of their IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter as an attachment with their grant application.

**Eligible Project Locations:**

Projects must involve water-adjacent areas throughout California. Eligible locations include, but are not limited to, sites on or near the coast such as beaches, lakes, rivers, and bays.

For reference on the current availability of beach wheelchairs at California beaches, please visit: <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/access/beach-wheelchairs.html>. Applicants are required to include a map or aerial image clearly identifying the project location and the area expected to be impacted by the proposed equipment.

**Eligible Projects:**

This grant program supports projects that increase public access to California’s beaches and coastal areas, particularly for individuals with mobility challenges.

Eligible projects may include the **purchase and provision of the following equipment for free public use:**

* Beach wheelchairs or all-terrain wheelchairs
* Beach accessibility mats
* Adaptive equipment for kayaks
* Maintenance parts for accessibility equipment
* Non-permanent storage solutions such as prefabricated sheds or weather protection for equipment

All funded projects must include one or both of the following components:

1. Purchase of beach accessibility equipment
   1. Includes beach wheelchairs, adaptive outdoor equipment, and/or beach mats.
   2. Equipment must be used to maximize barrier-free coastal access for individuals with mobility limitations.
   3. Grantees must submit proof of purchase to Orange County Coastkeeper within 90 days of receiving funds.
   4. Equipment must be maintained and made available for public use for a minimum of five (5) years.
2. Support for equipment upkeep and temporary storage
   1. Includes the purchase of maintenance parts, prefabricated temporary storage (e.g., sheds), or weather protection (e.g., awnings) for new or existing equipment.
   2. Please note: Due to the small scale of available grants, this program does not fund the planning or construction of permanent storage facilities.

Projects may also include a modest outreach or promotional component as a small portion of the total budget. This may include publicity or media efforts to promote new equipment or mat installations and/or signage and advertising aimed at increasing visibility and use of accessibility resources.

**Questions**: Prospective applicants are welcome to discuss their projects with Coastkeeper staff prior to submitting an application. For questions about project eligibility, the application process, or any other aspect of the grant program, please reach out to

**Genesee Ouyang**

Email: [BCAP@coastkeeper.org](mailto:BCAP@coastkeeper.org)

**Application Submittal**:

To apply, prospective applicants must first email [Beach Coastal Access Program](mailto:BCAP@coastkeeper.org) to register their interest and receive a link to the online application form (hosted via Google Forms).

*Please note:* Applications submitted via email will not be considered unless a prior accommodation has been discussed.

**Submission Dates**:

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and accepted until all available funds have been awarded.

**Application Review and Grant Award Process**

**Project Review:**

Coastkeeper staff will evaluate each application based on how well it aligns with the Selection Criteria outlined below. During the review process, applicants may be contacted to provide additional information or clarification. To ensure a thorough and thoughtful review, Coastkeeper staff may consult with individuals or technical experts from relevant governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, and other qualified entities.

Applicants will typically be notified of their funding status within 90 days of Coastkeeper’s confirmation of application receipt.

**Selection Criteria**: Projects will be evaluated for support of the following criteria:

* **Target Audience**

Priority will be given to projects that meaningfully serve and involve tribal and systemically excluded communities. This round of funding emphasizes Indigenous involvement, and special consideration will be given to projects that directly engage or benefit Indigenous Peoples and tribes.

* **Access Enhancement**

The degree to which the project improves equitable access to California’s beaches for individuals with disabilities and others who face barriers to enjoying coastal spaces.

* **Location Need**

The demonstrated need for new, additional, or replacement beach accessibility equipment and/or storage at the project site.

* **User Accessibility**

The ease with which the public can access and use the equipment. Coastkeeper will consider the proposed equipment’s location and the simplicity of the checkout process.

* **Clarity and Feasibility**

The project description is clear, the scope is well defined, and the proposed budget is realistic and appropriate for the scale of the project.

**Grant Approval Process:**

Projects recommended by Coastkeeper staff for funding are subject to approval by the Coastal Executive Officer.

Project funding will not be available until a grant agreement between Coastkeeper and the grantee has been executed, which will generally take at least a month after any award announcements.

**BEACH AND COAST ACCESSIBILITY 2025 GRANT APPLICATION**

**CONTACT INFO**

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Organization:

\*If applicable, Include name of fiscal or project sponsor. – If applicant qualifies as a 501(c)(3) organization, provide your IRS 501(c)(3) letter as an attachment.

Contact person:

Email address:

Position/title:

Phone:

Fax:

Physical address:

Federal Tax ID#:

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

Name of location(s):

County:

\*Include an attachment of a map/image showcasing the area the beach accessibility equipment will impact.

Project summary (such as “Beach wheelchairs for X, Y, and Z beaches.”:

Total project cost ($ amount):

Amount requested ($ amount):

**APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

**1. Please provide a brief project description.** Describe the proposed project; this will look like the project summary but will include specific details such as equipment brand and cost.

**2. What is your site/organization/community’s need for this equipment?**

**3. If you have existing beach accessibility equipment, please list that equipment here.** Please include # of beach wheelchairs, length of access mats, # of beach walkers, etc. If your site does not have any equipment at this time, please state that.

**4. What is the protocol for visitors/users to check out or reserve the equipment?**

**5. Please list the equipment you intend to purchase with the requested funds.** This includes replacement parts for existing equipment, new beach accessibility equipment, etc.

**6. How much visitation does your site receive annually, or how much usage does your existing equipment receive annually?**

**7. How will the beach accessibility equipment be stored and protected from the elements?** Is there a need for new or additional storage for beach wheelchairs at your site, and if so, what will be acquired for storage?

**8. How will the availability of beach accessibility equipment be advertised?** Some of your requested funds are eligible to be allocated toward outreach and marketing efforts.

**9. If you are requesting funds for outreach and marketing, please briefly describe how these funds will be used.**

**10. How will the beach accessibility equipment be maintained?** You will be required to maintain your beach accessibility equipment for a minimum of 5 years. Please ensure you take this into consideration when filling out your application, and make sure you’re requesting the necessary replacement parts for general wear and tear.

**Preliminary Budget**

**11a. Please provide a picture or combined PDF of your online shopping cart(s) with the costs of the beach accessibility equipment visible.** Please include your organization’s name in the title of your document.

**11b. If you are requesting additional funds for outreach and marketing, please list that here ($ amount):**

**12. If your project total cost is greater than the amount requested, please describe the other sources of funding and whether they have already been secured.**

**13. Any additional information you’d like to provide!** This might include pictures of your current beach accessibility equipment in use, evidence of community input in this application (e.g., a support letter or survey responses), pictures of your site, etc.

**14. Additional comments:**