



**FEMA**

September 28, 2017  
RIX-NR-17-17  
FEMA Public Affairs (510) 627-7006

# Press Release

## **Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe Recognized as National Leader for Disaster Preparedness Work**

OAKLAND, Calif. –The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today that the [Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe](#) has been selected as one of 11 Individual and Community Preparedness Award recipients from around the country.

The Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe (BLR) was chosen to receive the 2017 John D. Solomon Whole Community Preparedness Award for proactive efforts to address emergency preparedness challenges. BLR, with a population of 203 people, is located near several geographically high-risk areas, including the Mad River—a natural and historical floodplain—and Matthew’s Dam. Additionally, BLR resides near a number of geological fault lines, putting it in danger for earthquakes. The community is also a gathering spot for more than 2,000 people from neighboring Humboldt and Del Norte Counties when disasters strike.

Due to these factors, BLR has transformed the Blue Lake Casino and Event Center into an official public shelter with help from the American Red Cross. BLR also installed a back-up green power micro grid should the regular power grid fail. Using a grant from the Department of Homeland Security, BLR developed a Regional Resilience Training & Innovation Center (RTIC) that offers pre-disaster training and exercises to tribes, local governments, and agencies. The tribe has also distributed 72-hour disaster supply backpacks to residents and employees, and in 2017 held a Resiliency Preparedness Fair for the general public. BLR’s actions have been a model for other tribes and communities, and BLR officials assist other tribes and agencies with their emergency preparedness needs.

“We are a stronger, more resilient nation when we work together—in communities large and small—to prepare for and respond to disasters,” said FEMA Acting Deputy Administrator Daniel Kaniewski. “FEMA is proud to recognize the great efforts of individuals and organizations who are helping to create a national culture of preparedness.”

Emergency management is most effective when the whole community is engaged and involved. Faith-based organizations, service agencies, businesses and associations, tribal organizations, youth and older Americans, and people with disabilities and functional needs, can make a real difference in their communities before, during, and after disasters. Each year, FEMA honors individuals and organizations who excel at inspiring the public to be ready if a tornado, hurricane, wildfire, or other disaster were to strike their community.

The additional winners include:

- Outstanding Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Initiatives: [Long Beach Fire Department CERT](#)
- Outstanding Citizen Corps Council: [Connecticut Citizen Corps Council](#)
- Community Preparedness Champions: [Rosalind “Roz McKelvey”](#) and [Cindi Barker](#)
- Awareness to Action: [Be Ready Alliance Coordinating for Emergencies](#) (BRACE)
- Technological Innovation: [SABER](#), the Single Automated Business Exchange for Reporting
- Outstanding Achievement in Youth Preparedness: [MyPI National](#) (short for “My Preparedness Initiative”)
- Outstanding Private Sector Initiatives: [William Bracken](#)
- Outstanding Citizen Corps Partner Program: [Arlington Christian Disaster Network](#)
- Prepareathon in Action: [Prep Step Campaign from Save the Children](#)

Visit <https://www.ready.gov/awards> for more information on the 2017 award recipients and to see the honorable mentions.

###

*FEMA’s mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate all hazards.*