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Cascade Climate Launches Bedrock Initiative, a Coordinated Global Research Program to Unlock the Climate and Agricultural Potential of Enhanced Rock Weathering

New initiative will sharpen the scientific evidence needed to bring ERW into compliance carbon markets and agricultural programs worldwide, with founding support from Frontier, Google, and a coalition of leading philanthropic funders

[SOMERVILLE, Massachusetts – May 12, 2026] — Cascade Climate today announced the launch of Bedrock Initiative, a coordinated global research program to accelerate enhanced rock weathering (ERW) toward durable demand from governments and compliance markets. By deploying standardized research protocols across widely varying soils, climates, and cropping systems, Bedrock will generate the multi-region evidence and comparable datasets the field needs right now.

Enhanced rock weathering builds on a centuries-old agricultural practice — applying lime to manage soil acidity — by using alternative minerals or improved application strategies that maximize the permanent removal of atmospheric carbon. The approach offers a three-fold promise: healthier soils, higher crop yields, and accelerated carbon removal.

Building on growing academic research and commercial investment, Bedrock Initiative is designed to accelerate ERW's next phase by addressing three problems inhibiting deployment and demand:

1. **Closing the carbon-removal uncertainty gap to enable long-term integration into compliance markets and policy programs.** Bedrock's *Coordinated Research Network (CRN*) will apply a single standardized research protocol across intensively measured field sites — generating the apples-to-apples evidence the field has lacked. Sustained over multi-year timescales, measurements will go deeper into the soil profile and use multiple methods to robustly constrain ERW's carbon removal under varied conditions.
2. **Building the agronomic evidence farmers and policymakers need.** *Studies at Scale* will address questions that can only be answered on working farms — including soil organic carbon dynamics, watershed-level monitoring, and yield benefits across cropping systems. With particular focus on the Global South, where ERW's promise for acidic soils is greatest, rigorous replicated trials will build the crop-benefit data needed to earn farmer trust.
3. **Driving down monitoring costs that block scale.** Proving how much carbon ERW actually removes currently relies on expensive field measurements that can add up to $200 per ton to project costs — the single biggest financial barrier to deployment. The *Model Acceleration* effort will convene leading academic geochemical modelers to identify key field data gaps and develop validated, model-based monitoring — much as reliable weather models have replaced costly ground stations.

Bedrock Initiative launches in 2026 with the first two CRN pilot sites selected this year. Over the coming years, the program will scale to a larger network of up to 15 field sites across priority geographies including Brazil, India, sub-Saharan Africa, and the United States.

"ERW has exciting potential to benefit both farmers and the climate, but it needs independent evidence that policymakers, markets, and farmers can all trust. The Bedrock Initiative will produce truly comparable data across diverse soils and climates — and we're excited to be developing these datasets with the community to support durable, long-term demand for ERW."

Tannis Thorlakson, Senior Program Director, ERW, Cascade Climate

"There's no shortage of talented researchers working on ERW, and the Bedrock Initiative provides the connective tissue to synergize those rapidly growing efforts. The new initiative creates a community shared framework that lets us compare results across landscapes, climates, soils, and approaches so the whole field can move forward together."

Isabel Montañez, member of the Bedrock Initiative Scientific Advisory Board, Distinguished Professor and Chancellor's Leadership Professor in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, University of California, Davis

"Supporting carbon removal at early stages has taught us that deployment and science have to move together — deployment advances the science, and the science needs to be coordinated and comparable enough that buyers and governments can act on it. That's what Bedrock Initiative is designed to deliver, and it's how the field moves from early catalytic purchases toward the durable demand ERW needs to scale."

Randy Spock, Head of Carbon Credits and Removals, Google

Bedrock Initiative draws founding support from Cascade Climate, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, Frontier, Google, Grantham Foundation, King Philanthropies, Kissick Family Foundation, and Patrick J. McGovern Foundation. Additional partners — including government funding partners — are expected to join as the program develops. More information about Bedrock Initiative can be found at https://cascadeclimate.org/bedrock-initiative.

About Cascade Climate

Cascade is a philanthropy-backed nonprofit helping mobilize a more comprehensive response to the climate crisis by advancing high-potential solutions that remain on the margins of mainstream climate action.

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