

WELCOME!
November 15, 2024 Convening

Who:

- Hosted by Whitebark Institute, with support from the Inyo and Mono County Wildfire Coordinators
- Wildfire Alliance past participants, fire management agencies, and other regional wildfire resilience partners

What:

- **Learn** from state and regional leaders about programs & funding
- **Celebrate** recent successes
- **Contribute** knowledge & expertise on wildfire needs and opportunities
- **Determine** the next steps for building a regional wildfire collaborative

EASTERN SIERRA WILDFIRE ALLIANCE



Funding for this project has been provided by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, an agency of the State of California, and Inyo National Forest, US Department of Agriculture.

Introductions

Host:

Laura Beardsley, Executive Director, Whitebark Institute

Meeting Facilitator: Stacy Corless

Co-Facilitators: Wendi Grasseschi, Mono County Wildfire Coordinator; Kristen Pfeiler, Inyo County Wildfire Coordinator

Whitebark Institute Staff

In the room: Annie Crowley, Claire Galaway, Janet Hatfield

On Zoom: Jessie O'Dell, Heidi Porras, Crystal Medhurst, Carl Rumpp

Meeting Agreements

- State your name when speaking
- Respect hybrid format
- Treat people with respect
- All ideas are valuable
- Actively participate
- Be willing to reach consensus
- Others?

EASTERN SIERRA WILDFIRE ALLIANCE

Meeting Goals

- Affirm need for/benefits of forming a regional wildfire collaborative in the Eastern Sierra
- Re-engage ESWA participants and engage new participants, build relationships
- Share information/knowledge, and celebrate successes of collective work
- Identify challenges and opportunities for a regional wildfire resilience
- Understand next steps for Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance development



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Introductions

What's Your Place?



What IS EASTERN SIERRA WILDFIRE ALLIANCE?

Formed in 2021, a group of partners from Inyo, Mono, and Alpine counties representing nonprofit organizations, Fire Safe Councils, Tribes, and federal, state and local government agencies

- **Mission:** to prevent catastrophic wildfires by improving ecosystem health and community resiliency through collaboration and capacity-increasing programs
- **Goals:** increase the pace and scale of projects, enhance communication, build capacity, and act as a repository for resources and information
- **Activities**
 - Assist with efforts dedicated to ecosystem health management (fuels reduction, restoration, biomass removal etc.)
 - Develop more community-based involvement through a collaborative
 - Assist in the pursuit of grant funds
 - Explore green waste disposal options and community chipping options
 - Implement and amend as necessary a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)
 - Provide capacity-building programs (grant writing workshop, home hardening seminar, CEQA/NEPA workshop)
 - Increase education and outreach efforts



What IS EASTERN SIERRA WILDFIRE ALLIANCE?

Reports and Resources at ESWILDFIREALLIANCE.ORG

Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program - East Subregion Capacity Assessment



Eastern California Water Association

Sierra Corps

April 30, 2020

Eastern Sierra Nevada Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program Subregional Plan



Eastern California Water Association

Rick Kattelmann, Ph.D.

Holly Alpert, Ph.D.

RFFCP Stakeholder Group

September 2022



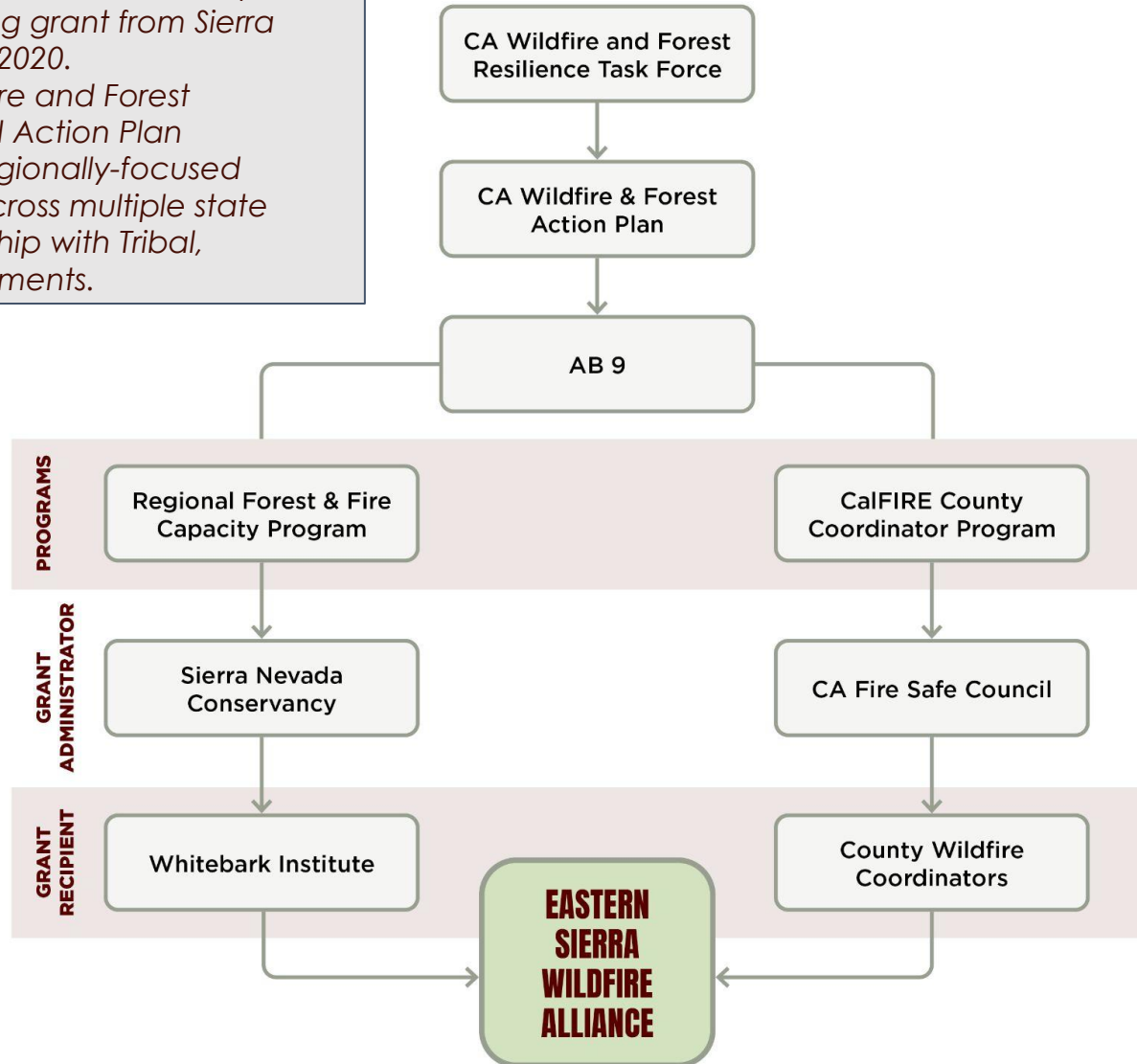
Have you been involved with Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance before today?

Do the mission and goals seem right to you?

- **Mission:** to prevent catastrophic wildfires by improving ecosystem health and community resiliency through collaboration and capacity-increasing programs
- **Goals:** increase the pace and scale of projects, enhance communication, build capacity, and act as a repository for resources and information

EASTERN SIERRA WILDFIRE ALLIANCE IN PERSPECTIVE

The Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance developed out of a capacity building grant from Sierra Nevada Conservancy in 2020. In 2021, California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force and Action Plan identified the need for regionally-focused programs and funding across multiple state agencies and in partnership with Tribal, federal and local governments.



A photograph of a forest with tall, thin trees, some with brown, dry-looking foliage and others with green needles. A large, semi-transparent blue rectangle is overlaid on the center of the image, containing white text.

Guest Speakers:

Keali'i Bright, California Natural Resources Agency

Brian Newman-Lindsay, CA Department of Conservation

Hanna Page, CA Department of Conservation

Waylon Coats, Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Jennifer Hughes, Sierra Nevada Conservancy

EASTERN SIERRA WILDFIRE ALLIANCE IN PERSPECTIVE





Sierra Nevada Conservancy Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program

Presented by:
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Partnerships and Community
Support Team



Sierra Nevada Conservancy

We are the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), a state agency tasked to improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of California's Sierra-Cascade region since 2004.



About the RFFCP

The [Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program](#) is a California Natural Resources Agency program administered by the Department of Conservation and is part of [California Climate Investments](#), a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment—particularly in disadvantaged communities.

Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program - "RFFCP"



Recap of SNC RFFCP Funding: Rounds One & Two

Round One (\$1.9 million):

Subgrants provided to subregional “leadership organizations” and Technical Assistance providers to:

- Build on the strengths already existing in subregional areas of the Sierra Nevada
- Advance their capacity to engage in collaborative planning, identify and prioritize projects, obtain funding, and implement projects

Round Two (\$7.77 million):

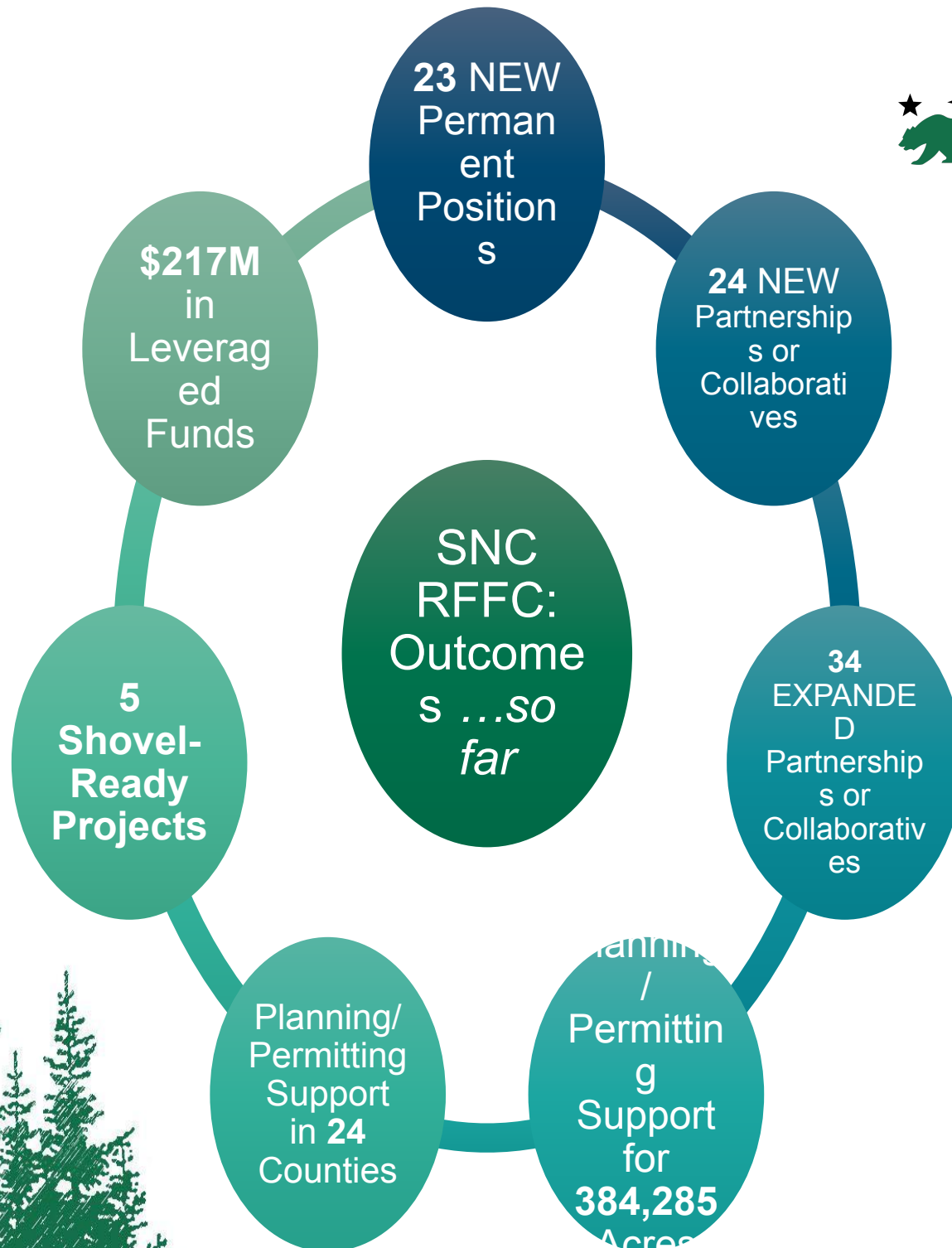
Primary investments to:

- Support next steps towards project development
- Fund geographic areas that had not received Round One funding



Top photo provided by Southern Sierra Miwuk Nation in partnership with Sierra Foothill Conservancy

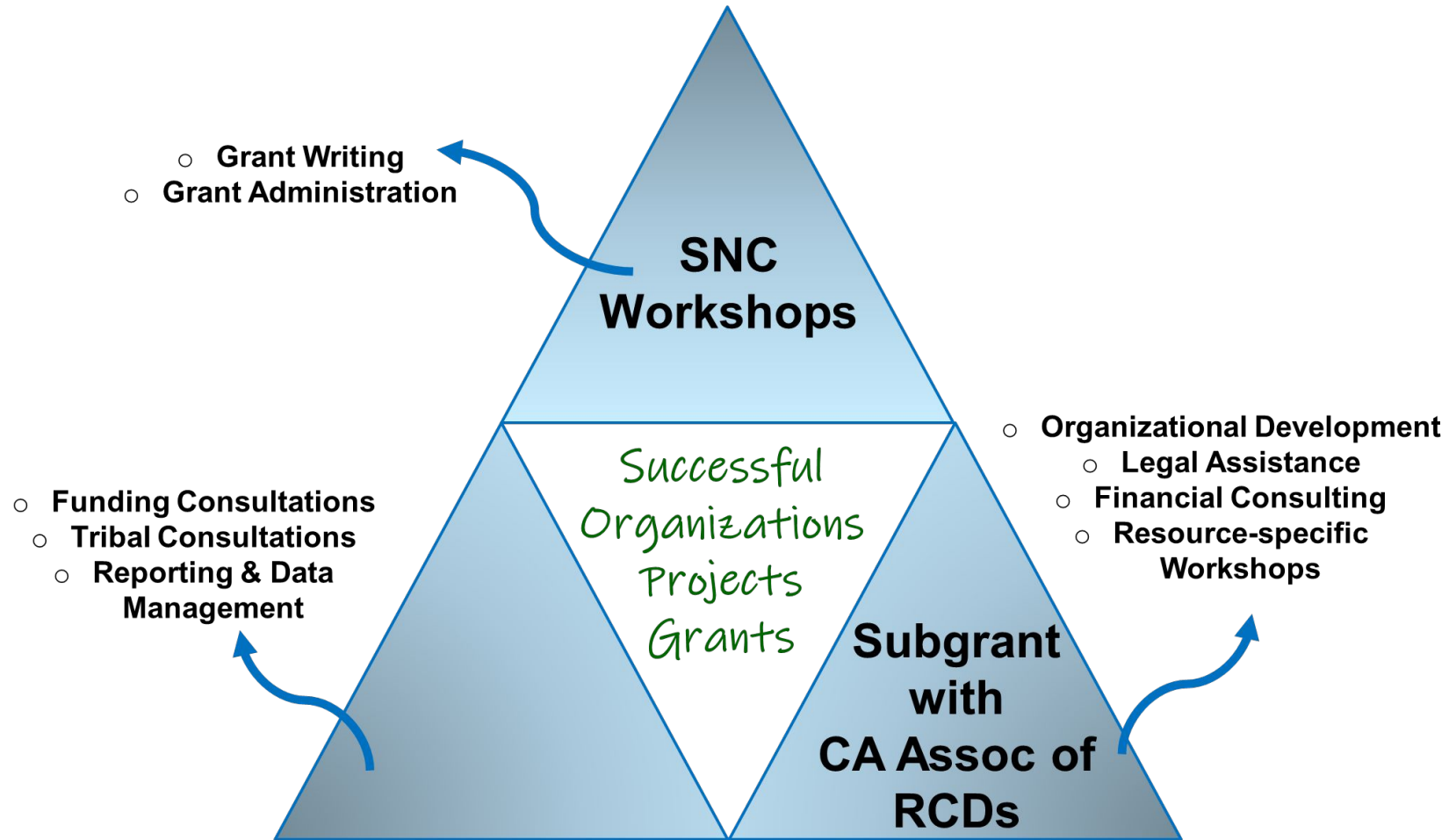
Lower photo provided by Alpine Watershed Group





Fellowship opportunities funded through the SNC Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program have increased capacity of numerous organizations and led to full-time positions.

Technical Assistance

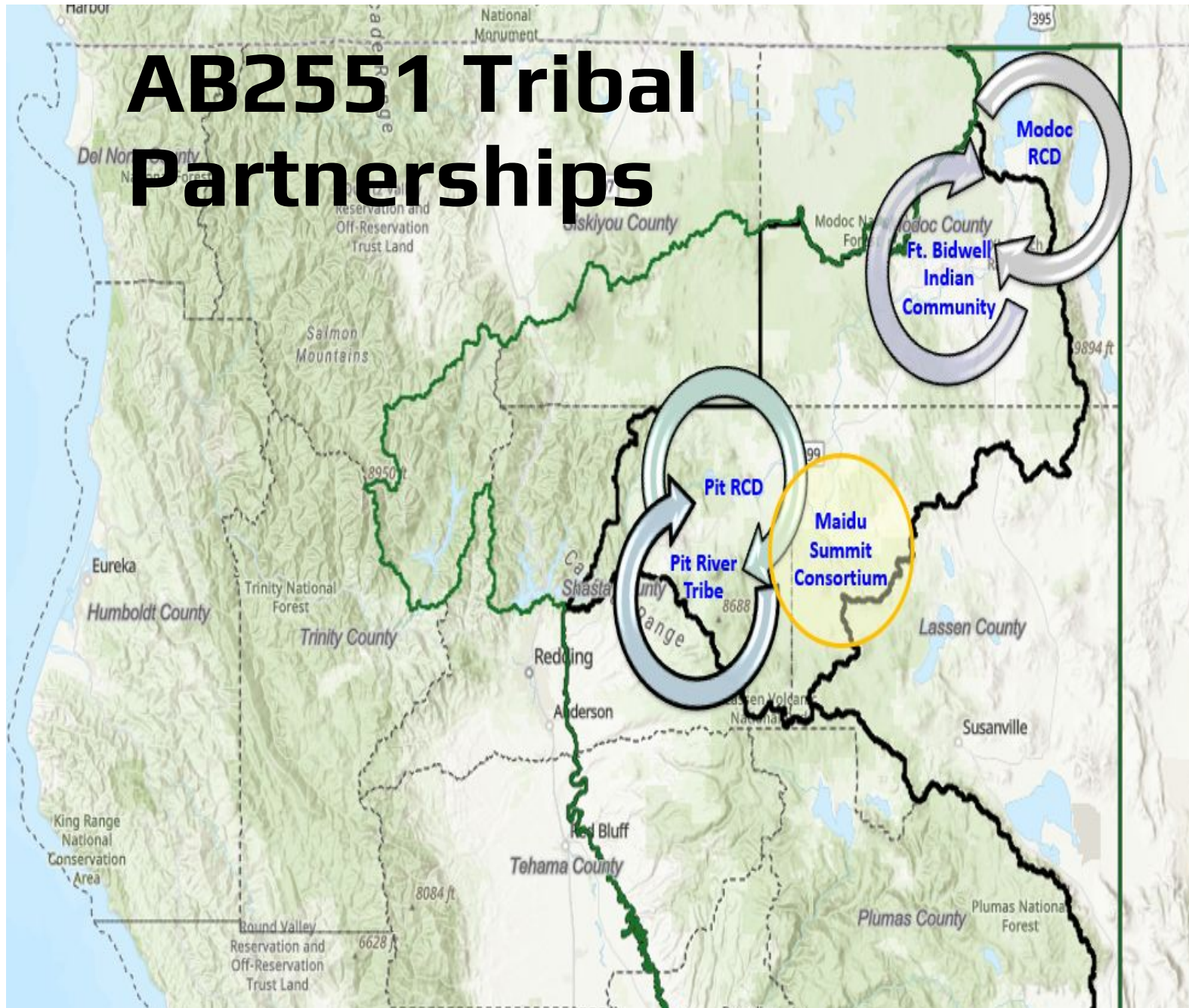




Tribal Engagement

- Cultural Monitoring workshops
- Specific assistance tailored for tribes
- AB 2551 grants
- Tribal Capacity Building program

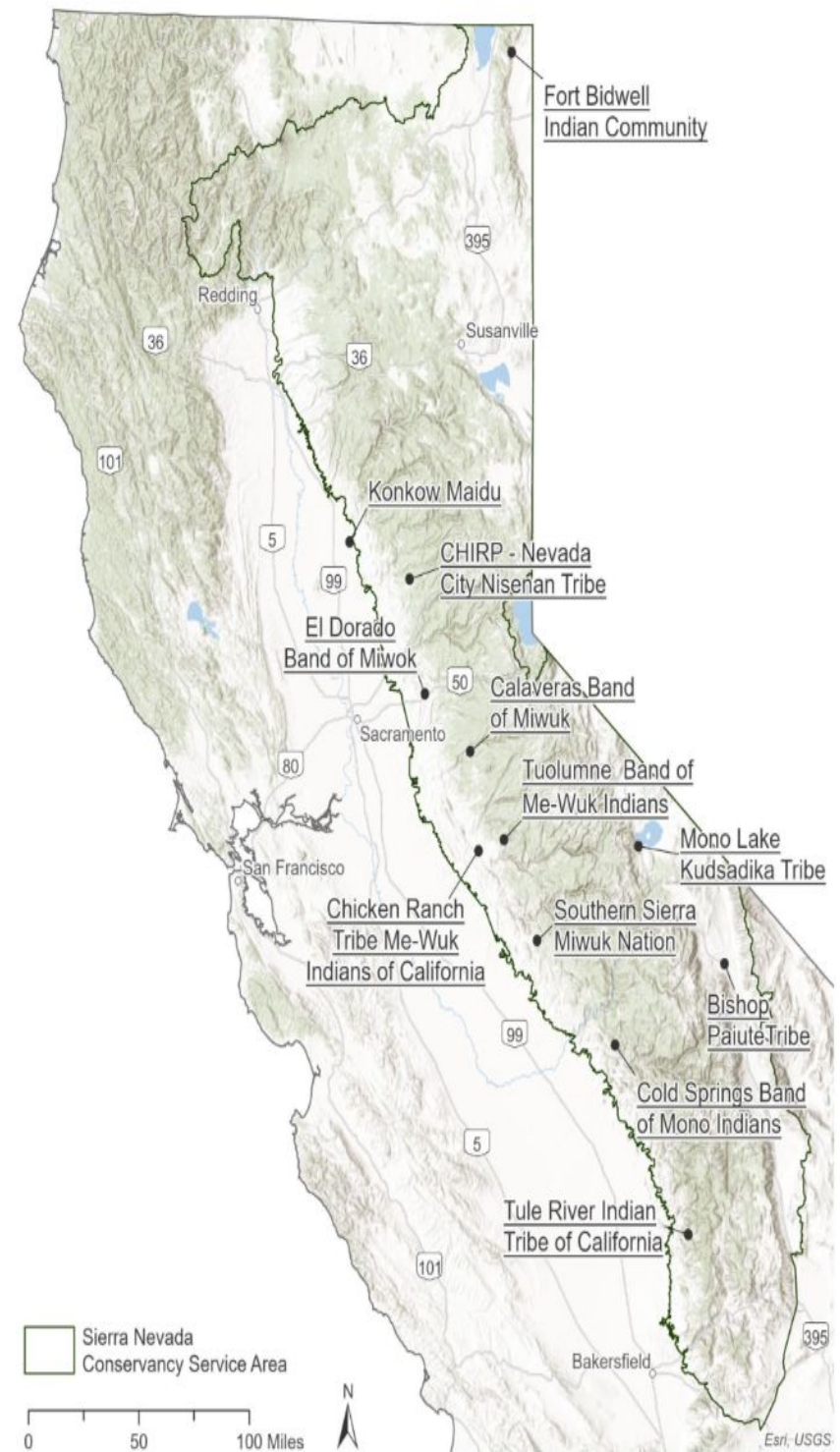
AB2551 Tribal Partnerships



The Big Picture: Round 3 Goals

- Every planning area develops the **capacity** to engage in landscape scale activities and/or comprehensive community protection projects
- Every planning area has a robust **pipeline of priority projects**
- Implement pilot program to **build tribal capacity**
- Complete a meaningful and useful **Regional Priority Plan (RPP)**

Tribal Capacity Building Program



In Their Own Words

RFFCP Subgrantees



Wildfire Coordinator Intro

ARE YOU READY FOR A DISASTER?
PREPARATION CAN SAVE YOU + OTHERS. VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO LEARN MORE
LISTOSCALIFORNIA.ORG

The Wildfire Coordinators' work across both counties aligns with the objectives laid out in the RFFC. That plan called for the coordinators to **centralize** and **accelerate** meaningful, accessible wildfire prevention/mitigation **actions** to better protect communities and landscapes from wildfire.

To that end, one of our main priorities has been to **engage** our communities, **understand** their particular needs and resources, and **integrate** them into the ESWA.

Metrics of Success

The 2022 RFFCP plan for our region outlined five quantitative metrics to measure Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance efforts and successes:

- Number of **relationships forged** among tribes, fire safe councils, fire departments, federal agencies, local governments, and more
- Number of **fire safe councils functioning** sustainably
- Number of **activities undertaken to implement** community wildfire protection plan projects
- Amount of **funding obtained** for projects
- Number of **projects successfully implemented**


RELATIONSHIPS FORGED

The Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance (ESWA) is a group of Partners from Alpine, Mono, and Inyo counties representing non-profit organizations; Fire Safe Councils; California Native American Tribes and federal; and federal, state and local government agencies.

Meet the "group"

- Alpine Biomass Collaborative
- Alpine Watershed Group
- American Forests
- Big Pine Paiute Tribe
- Big Pine Volunteer Fire Department
- Bishop Fire Department
- Bishop Paiute
- Bureau of Land Management, Bishop Office
- CAL FIRE- San Bernadino/Inyo/Mono Unit
- California Fire Safe Council
- CalTrout
- County of Inyo
- Fort Independence Indian Reservation
- Friends of the Inyo
- Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
- Independence Fire Safe Council
- Inyo-Mono Resource Conservation District
- Inyo National Forest
- June Lake Fire Safe Council
- Lone Pine Bishop Shoshone Paiute Tribe
- Mammoth Lakes Fire Safe Council
- Mono Basin Fire Safe Council
- Mono Basin Historical Society
- Mono County
- Plumas Corporation
- Sierra Institute
- Washoe Tribe
- Wheeler Crest Fire Safe Council















INYO COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

IN COLLABORATION WITH:






LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES





FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS





TRIBAL NATIONS





NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS




STATE AGENCIES

FEDERAL AGENCIES

CONSULTANTS

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

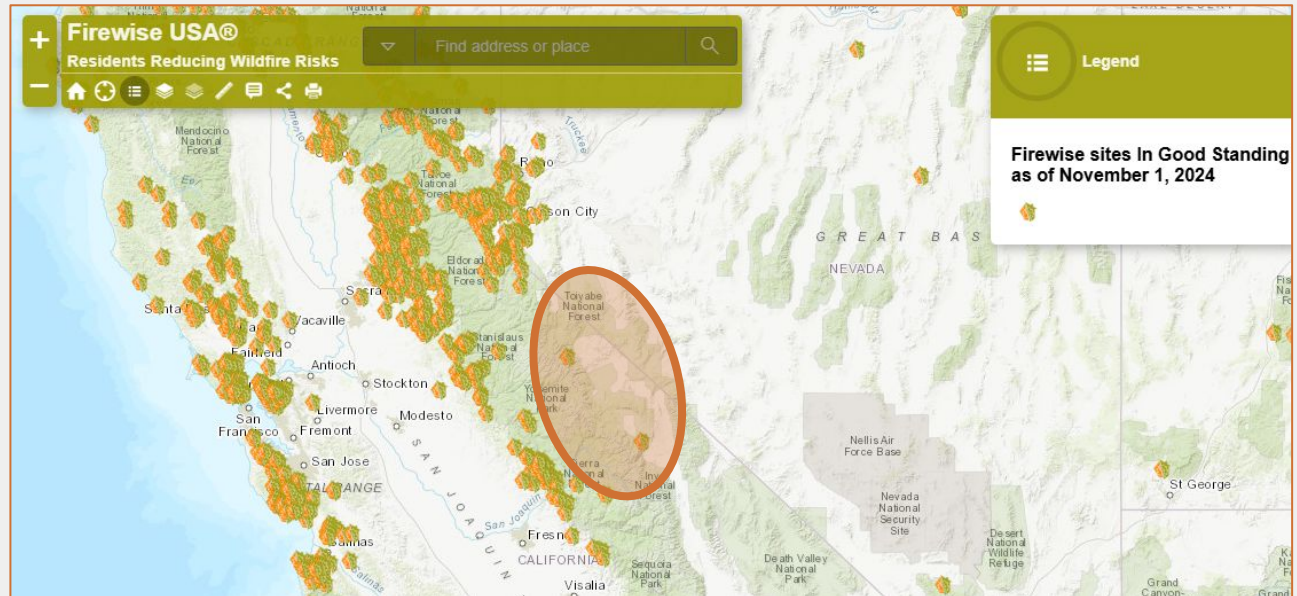
Fire Safe Councils	8	40 Acres, Independence, Lone Pine, Mammoth Lakes, Twin Lakes, Wheeler Crest, Wilkerson
Firewise USA Communities	17	(see next slide for details)
Community Groups w/focus on fire mitigation	3	Big Pine, Keeler, Aspendell/South Fork

TOTAL 28



FireWise USA Status Update

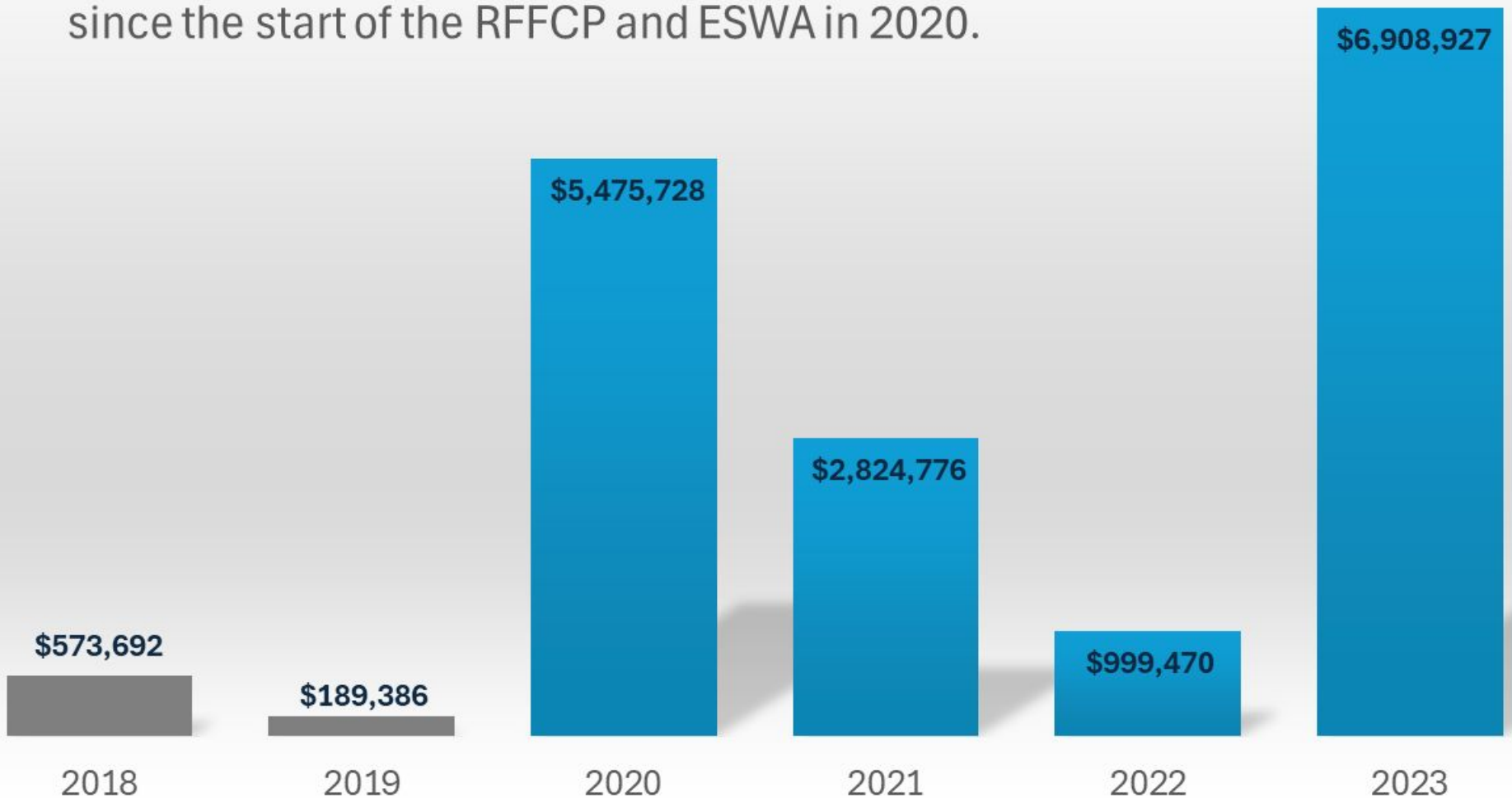
Status	Number	Description
Recognized Firewise Communities	2	Swall Meadows, Twin Lakes
Communities with Firewise Applications Submitted	4	Mustang Mesa, Sunny Slopes, Aspen Springs, Mono City
Communities identified on Firewise Portal	5	Aspendell South Fork, Mammoth Lakes - Juniper Springs Lodge, Mammoth Lakes - Holiday Knolls, Mammoth Lakes - Midtown, Bridgeport
Communities forming Firewise Committees	6	Crowley Lake 1-2-3, Mammoth Lakes - Hidden Valley, Mammoth Lakes - Snowcreek, Walker
Total	17	



<https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa/firewise-usa-sites>

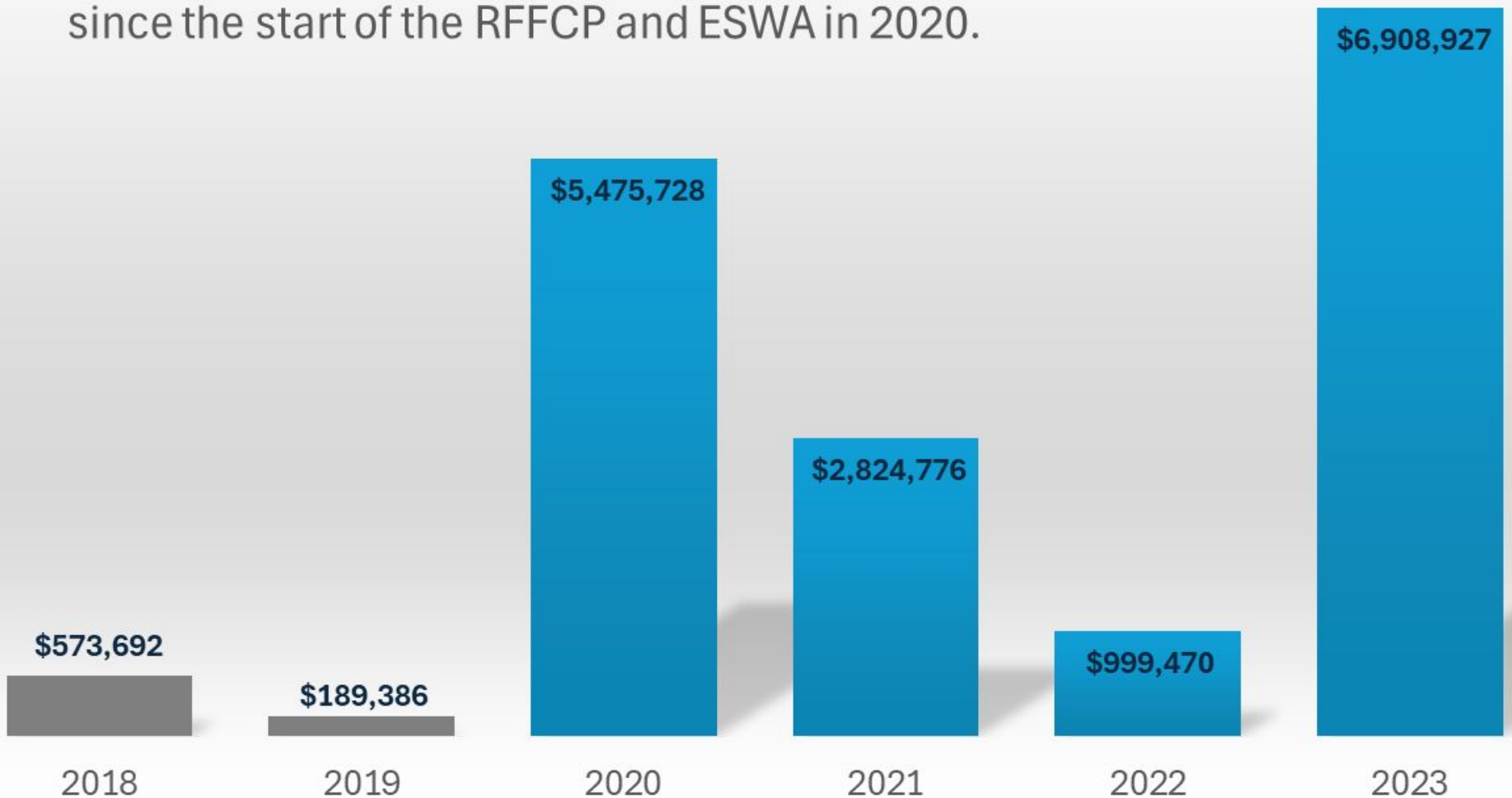
FUNDING FOR PROJECTS

The amount of CAL FIRE grant funding for projects across Inyo and Mono counties has increased by more than **3500 percent** since the start of the RFFCP and ESWA in 2020.

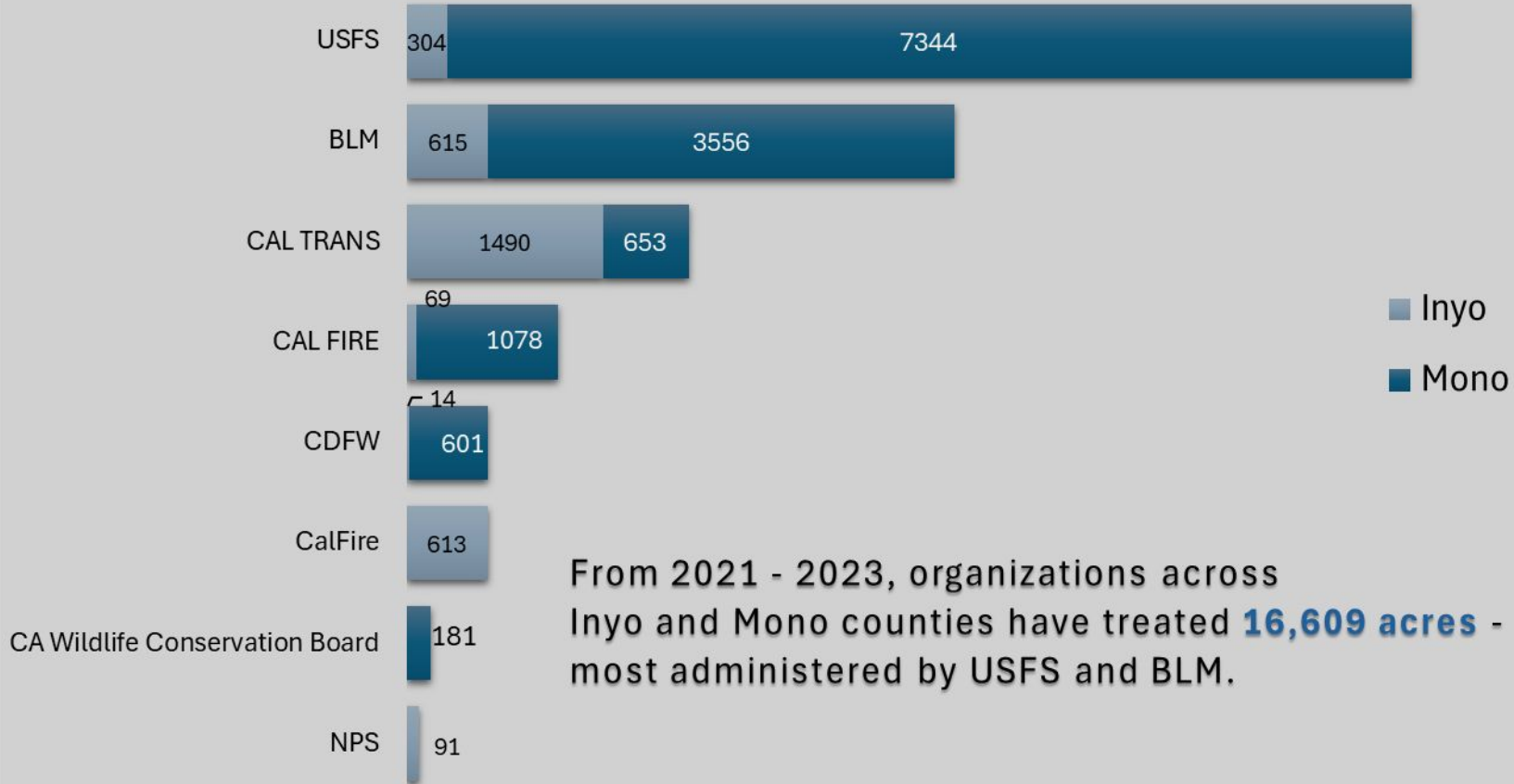


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PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION



ACRES TREATED, 2021-2023

Year	Number of Projects
2021	48
2022	105
2023	69
Grand Total	222

**Project data was gathered from the CA Interagency Tracking Dashboard and may be incomplete.*

ESWA Outcomes

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

- Firewise Community Creation (17)
- Mobile Tool Trailer Grant
- CFSC Outreach and Home Hardening Demo Grant
- Citizens Wildfire Academy
- Inyo CWPPs
- Alpine Watershed Group

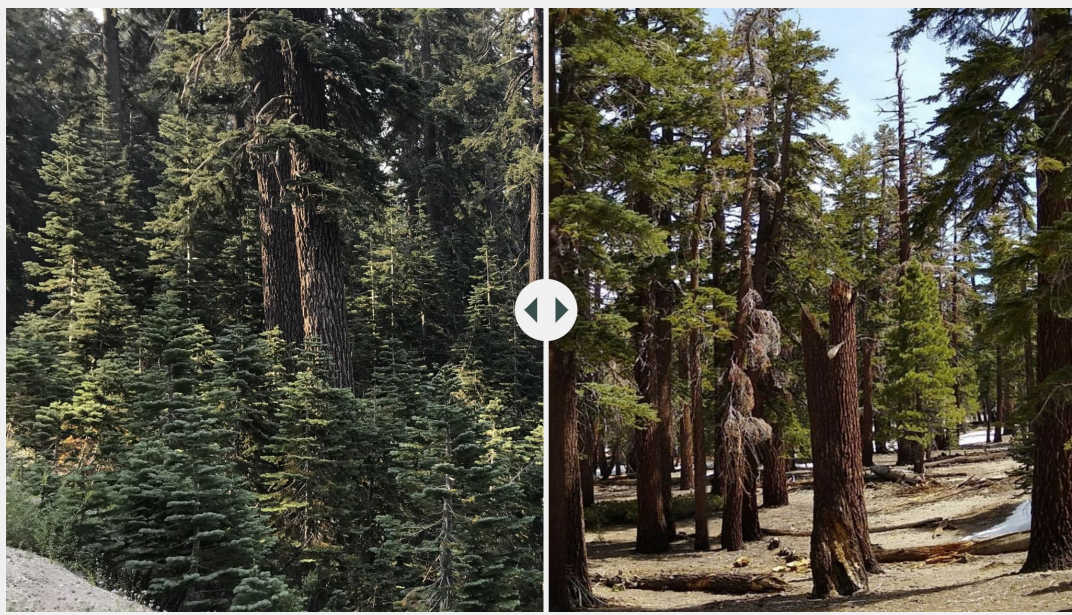
FUELS TREATMENT

- Federal, State, CAL FIRE, Private Projects
- SCE/Whitebark Mini Grants (Green Waste Collection Vouchers, Chipper Days),
- BurnBot Workforce multiplier
- Biomass facility planning grant

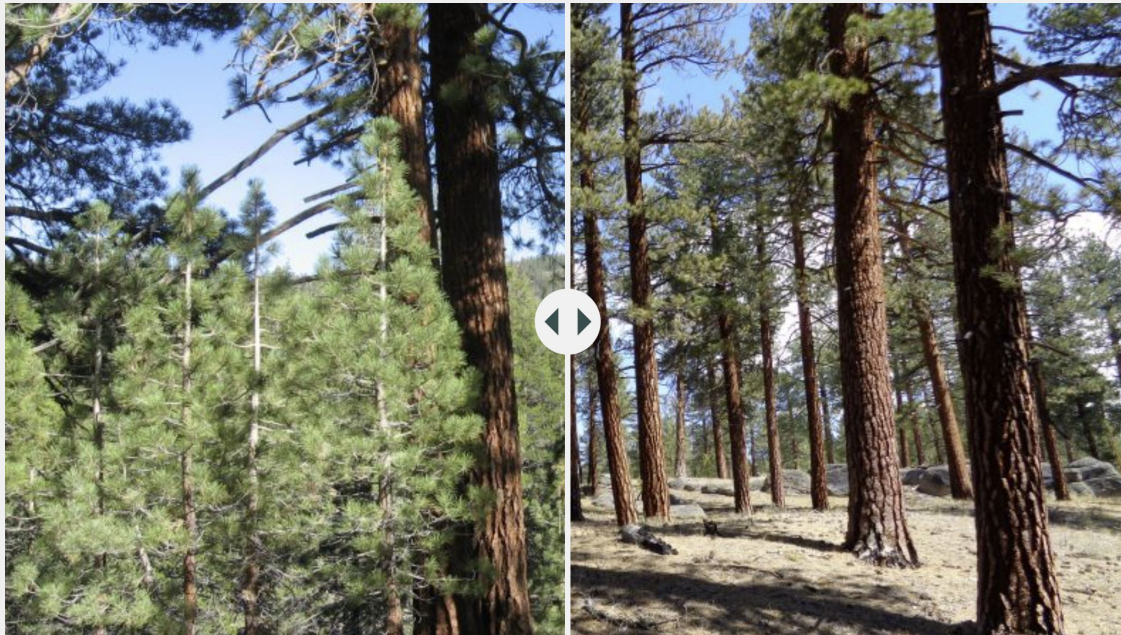
INCREASED REGIONAL COLLABORATION

- Inyo-Mono RCD
- CA Jobs First
- Cerro Coso Wildland Fire & Forestry Program
- CWPPs
- CAL FIRE collaboration with Firewise Community Planning

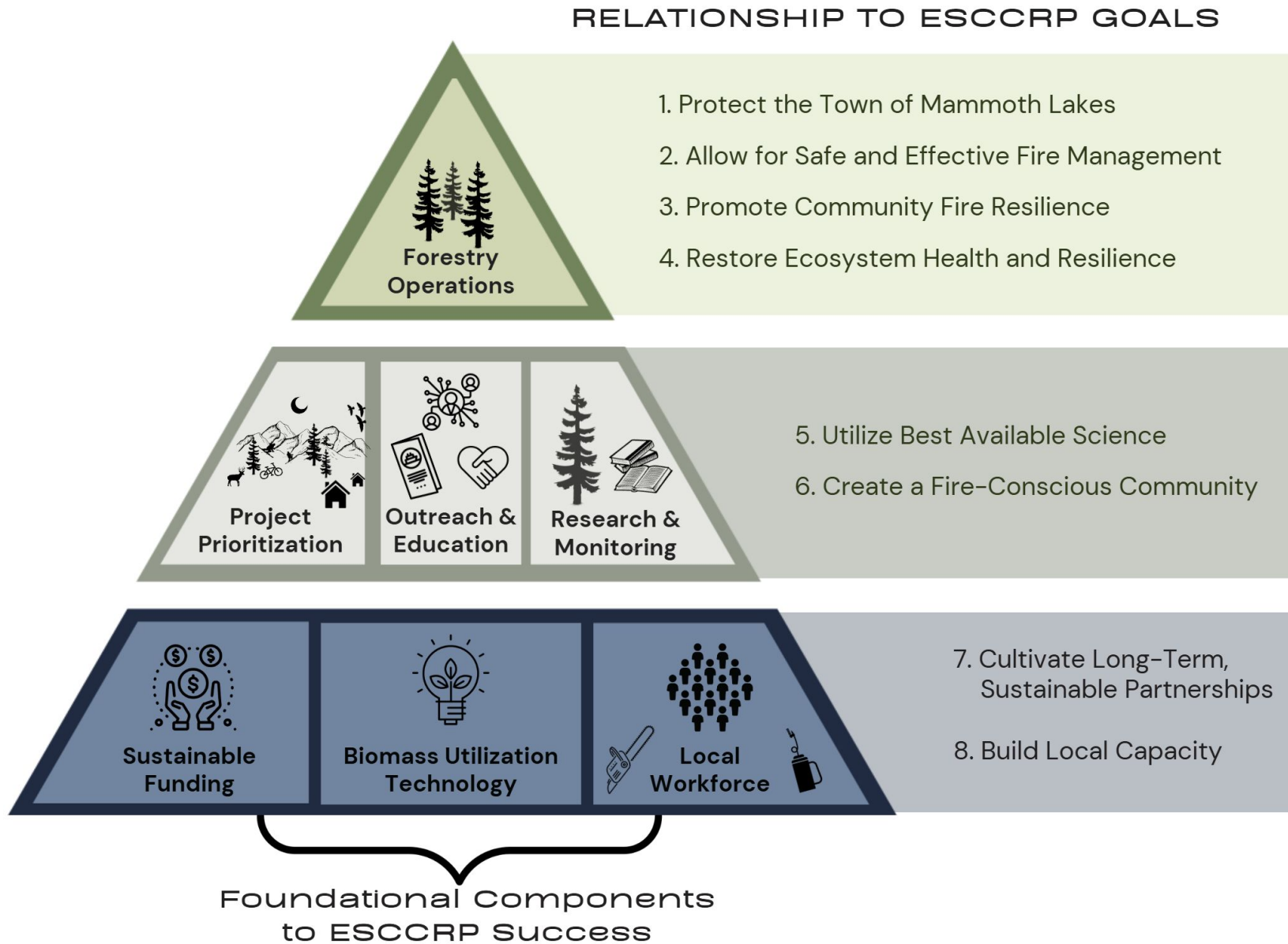
ESCCRP



Return forests to more historic densities to prepare the landscape for the reintroduction of beneficial fire.



ESCCRP



ESCCRP- A Capacity

Catalyst

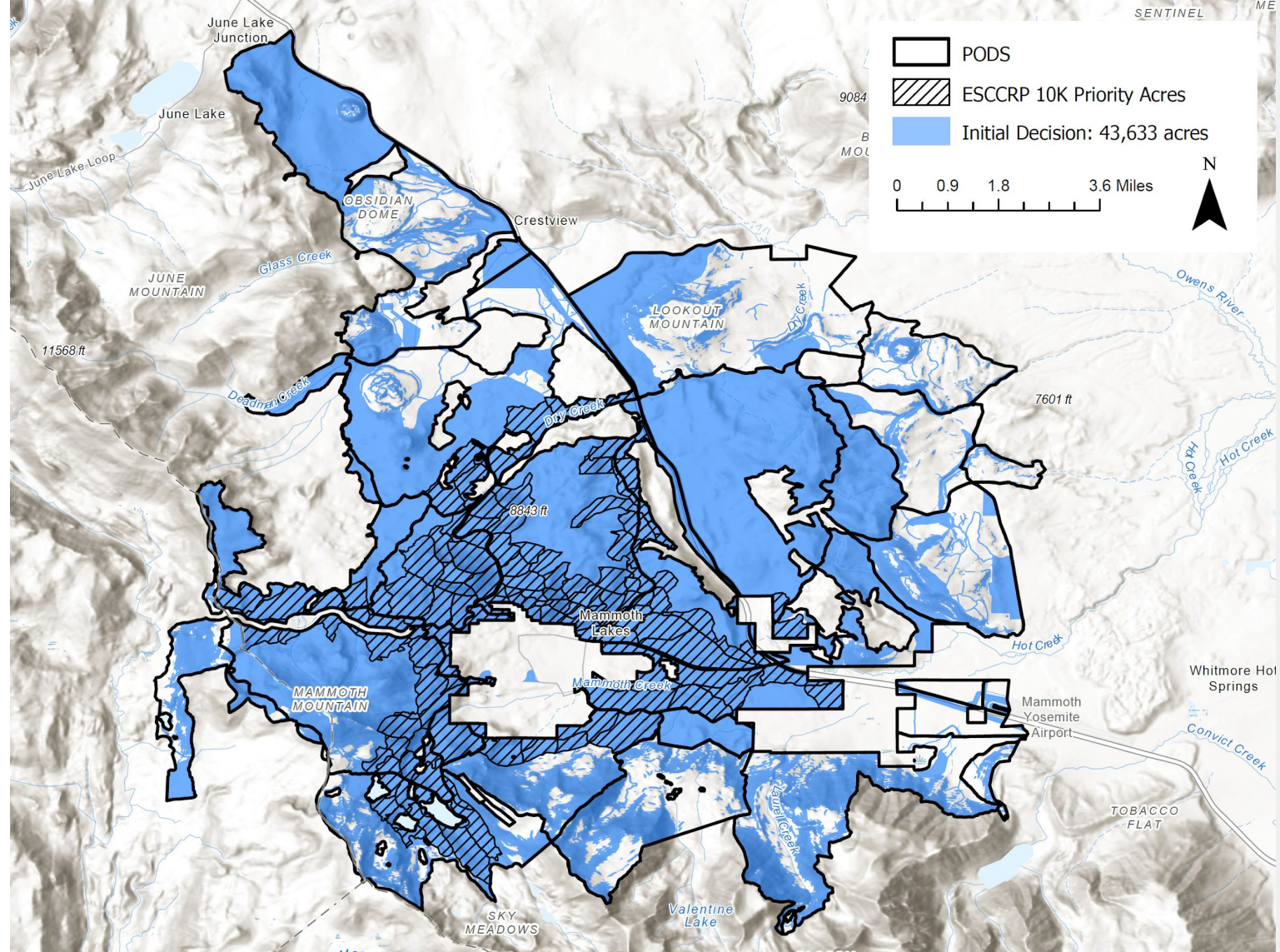


Smokedancers- Bishop Paiute Tribal Forestry Crew



"The Accelerator" NEPA Team

ESCCRP



First landscape-scale forest restoration NEPA decision on the Inyo National Forest

ESCCRP has secured \$28,326,595 in grants to date (5 years)

Over 5,000 acres implemented in last three years on prior decisions (thin/burn)

\$12 M in funding to begin implementing next year in priority acres



Gallery of Success

Meeting Break Activity

Walk the “gallery” of Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance regional successes and accomplishments

Reflect on what’s gotten done.
Grab a marker, and...

Share your feelings and comment on anything listed (star, happy face, question mark, exclamation point, name/organization if you’d like)

Add to the list--is something or someone missing?

poll

Name Your Challenge!

In 1-2 words or a short phrase, tell us your biggest challenge in working toward regional wildfire resilience!



EASTERN SIERRA WILDFIRE ALLIANCE:

Challenges Round Robin

Governance Structure & Capacity

Who does what? Are there models from other areas we can use? What are the biggest capacity issues that the Alliance could address? What could your (or your organization's) role be? How would ESWA participation benefit you?

Communication

What are some regional wildfire resilience communication, outreach and information challenges? What information do you need? What information is missing? How can regional communication be improved, both within the Alliance and with the public?

Project Planning & Funding

What are the challenges of project planning at a regional scale? What are the benefits? How do we develop a regional list of multijurisdictional projects? How do we prioritize projects? How do we find sustainable funding?



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Discussion and Reflection

Is the need evident?

Is there consensus around why?

Can we work together on how?



THANK YOU!

Next Steps:

- Meeting presentations, survey
- Meeting video and recap in December
- Tribal Forum
- Next ESWA Meeting Late January

