



**Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG)
Joint Powers Authority Agenda**

STAFF REPORT

To: ESCOG Joint Powers Authority

From: Elaine Kabala, ESCOG Executive Director

Subject: Approve Agreement Regarding Wildfire Preparedness Services to be Provided by Inyo County to the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Joint Powers Authority

Meeting date: February 26, 2025

Prepared on: February 19, 2025

Attachments: A) Agreement Regarding Wildfire Preparedness Services to be Provided by Inyo County to the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Joint Powers Authority

ANALYSIS:

Per the Board's direction, staff has been working to identify sustainable capacity to meet current grant deliverables, as well as the long-term strategic objectives of the ESCOG, and the Eastern Sierra Pace and Scale Accelerator in particular. As provided by your Board during the September strategic retreat, the staff strategy presented for your consideration includes leveraging staff of member agencies with specific expertise and/or capacity.

Inyo County and Mono County currently each employ a Calfire funded Wildfire Coordinator position with expertise in regional wildfire resiliency agencies and programs. Due to the expiration of Calfire funding for the position in Inyo County, ESCOG has an opportunity to utilize some of its grant funding to hire Inyo County's Wildfire Coordinator as a consultant. This will be very beneficial to ESCOG because ESCOG needs additional capacity to support its grant deliverables, and hiring an already-established, local Wildfire Coordinator will allow ESCOG to leverage the institutional knowledge established by the Wildfire Coordinator to strengthen regional collaboration and partnerships with federal partners. This capacity would support ESCOG's Sustainable Recreation and Ecosystem Management Program and would be funded by the CDFW Proposition 1 grant and Inyo National Forest Liaison grant.

To fulfill this goal, Inyo County has provided the attached agreement, which would allow Inyo County staff to provide Wildfire Preparedness services to the ESCOG.

The agreement includes the specific qualifications of the staff to provide Wildfire Preparedness services, specific duties to be performed, reporting structure, and payment terms.

Specifically, Inyo County will invoice the ESCOG on a quarterly basis for the costs of salary, benefits, actual travel, actual costs fixed or variable costs, and a fixed 15% administration fee. The agreement also provides for an annual not-to-exceed amount as a way to protect ESCOG against any large, unanticipated fluctuations in these costs. The not-to-exceed amount will automatically increase by 10% every year to allow for anticipated increases, such as merit or COLA increases in the position's salary. The contract can be terminated with 30 days' written notice.

The agreement distinguishes the powers and authorities of Inyo County and ESCOG such that no organization may make binding obligations on behalf of the other, that no Inyo County employee is considered an employee of the ESCOG and that the agreement does not in any way constitute or authorize a joint-venture.

BUDGET IMPACTS:

None.

LEGAL REVIEW:

ESCOG Counsel Grace Chuchla has reviewed this item and found that it complies with the law.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board review the Agreement Regarding Wildfire Preparedness Services to be Provided by Inyo County to the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Joint Powers Authority and provide feedback to staff for modification, if desired. If no modifications are desired, staff requests the Board authorized the Chair to execute the Agreement Regarding Executive Director Services to be Provided by Inyo County to the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments Joint Powers Authority.