



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

STAFF REPORT

To: ESCOG Joint Powers Authority

From: Elaine Kabala, ESCOG Staff

Subject: Modification to Collection Agreement 22-CO-11050400-003 Planning Support for the Eastern Sierra Communities and Climate Resilience Project between the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments and the United States Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service Inyo National Forest

Meeting date: June 25, 2025

Prepared on: June 17, 2025

Attachments: A) Modification to Collection Agreement 22-CO-11050400-003 Planning Support for the Eastern Sierra Communities and Climate Resilience Project between the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments and the United States Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service Inyo National Forest

BACKGROUND/HISTORY:

On June 15, 2021, the ESCOG was awarded a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration Grant & Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant in the amount of \$3,384,269 for implementation of the Eastern Sierra Pace and Scale Accelerator. On December 10, 2021 your Board approved Collection Agreement Collection Agreement 22-CO-11050400-003 Planning Support for the Eastern Sierra Communities and Climate Resilience Project (ESSCRP) between the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments and the United States Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service Inyo National Forest for coordination and collaboration with the IDT consistent with the scope for work described in the CDFW grant and grant agreement.

The INF supported the development of the Environmental Assessment for the ESSCRP, which was finalized in September 2024.

At the October 10, 2024 ESCOG meeting, your Board authorized a grant amendment extending the term of the agreement to December 31, 2026 to expend unspent funds to expand to footprint of environmental planning beyond the initial study area in the upper Owens Watershed to include a significant portion of the western Mono Basin. The grant amendment included an increase in the Inyo National Forest Service budget in the amount of \$210,000 using awarded but unallocated CDFW funding.

The modification reflects the expanded scope and revised deliverables authorized under Amendment No. 1 to ESCOG's CDFW Grant Agreement Q2196015. Specifically, the project area has been expanded to include approximately 58,000 additional acres in the West Mono Basin, extending the total planning footprint to over 113,000 acres. The U.S. Forest Service will support planning and environmental review efforts in the West Mono Basin by assisting in the delineation of treatment units, determining the appropriate NEPA compliance pathway, contributing Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) staffing, and providing technical input and GIS data. USFS will also support the development, review, and finalization of NEPA documentation, including specialist reports and environmental assessments. These tasks build on lessons learned from phase one of the ESCCRP.

BUDGET IMPACTS:

The Agreement allocates \$210,000 and increases the not-to-exceed amount for the U.S. Inyo National Forest from \$228,692 to \$438,692 consistent with the scope for work described in the CDFW grant agreement amendment.

LEGAL REVIEW:

ESCOG Counsel John-Carl Vallejo has reviewed this item and found that it complies with the law.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board approve the Modification to Collection Agreement 22 CO-11050400-003 Planning Support for the Eastern Sierra Communities and Climate Resilience Project between the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments and the United States Department of Agriculture, US Forest Service Inyo National Forest and authorize the Chair to sign.