

From Planning to Action: Wildfire Work in Motion

Eastern Sierra Council of Governments

Kristen Pfeiler

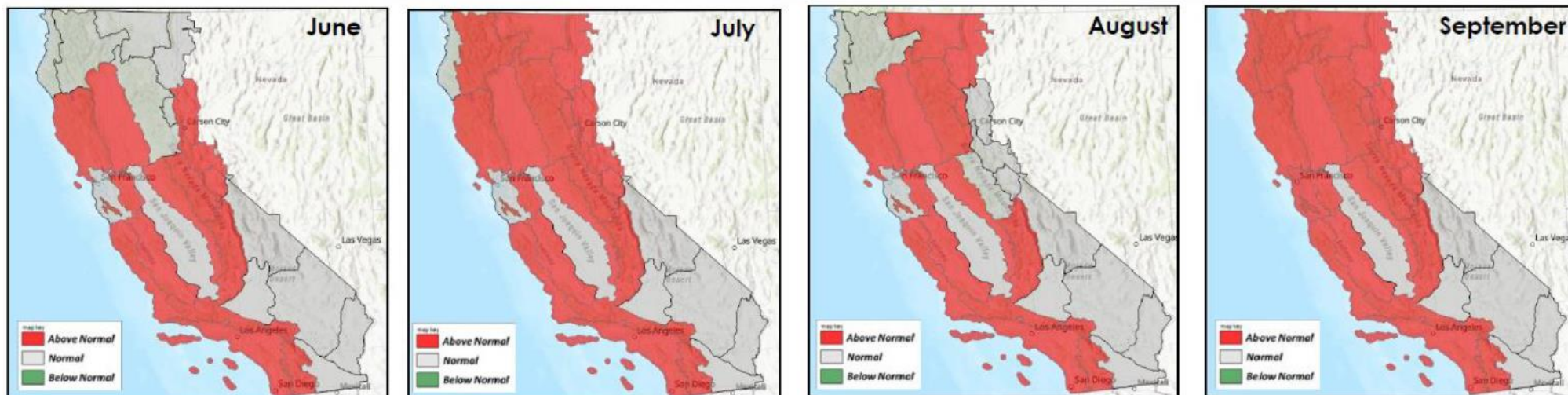
June 25, 2025

Agenda

- CA Wildfire Taskforce takeaways
- Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance timeline + next steps
- Eastside Riparian Resilience Working Group
 - Prep for Prop 4 funding (SNC + CALFIRE)
- Grants:
 - Prop 4 Funding opportunities
 - Community Wildfire Defense Grant (pending)
 - CALFIRE County Coordinator Grant
 - Community Directed Grants
 - CALFIRE Forest Health Grant
- Other
 - Hazard Zone Map Information

Significant Large Fire Potential | June - September 2025

ANCE INTEGRATION



Takeaways from the CA Wildfire Taskforce meeting on June 6, 2025:

- Regional collaboration is imperative
- Many models to learn from

AGENDA

(9:00 AM) **Welcome & Opening Remarks**

Wade Crowfoot, CNRA
Chris Feutrier, USFS

(9:30 AM) **Director's Report**

- 2025 Progress & Action Plan
- Regional Frameworks

Patrick Wright, Task Force Director

(9:45 AM) **Regional Progress in Planning & Priority Setting**

- Southern California
- Sierra Nevada
- Northern California
- Central Coast

Moderator: Angie Lottes, CA State Parks

Jeff Heys, USFS
Ann Baldrige, RCD of SD

Sara Campe, SNC
Paul Ringgold, Giant Sequoia Lands Coalition

Karen Gaffney, NCRP
Alison Blodorn, Inner Coast Collaborative

Koustoula Vallianos, SCC
Timothy Federal, San Mateo RCD

(11:00 AM) **Break**

(11:15 AM) **Agency Preparations for Regional Funding**

Moderator: Nick Goulette, Watershed Center
Lisa Lien-Mager, CNRA
Shanna Atherton, DOC
Alan Talhelm, CAL FIRE
Angie Avery, SNC
Evyann Borgnis Sloane, SCC
Rebecca Fris, WCB

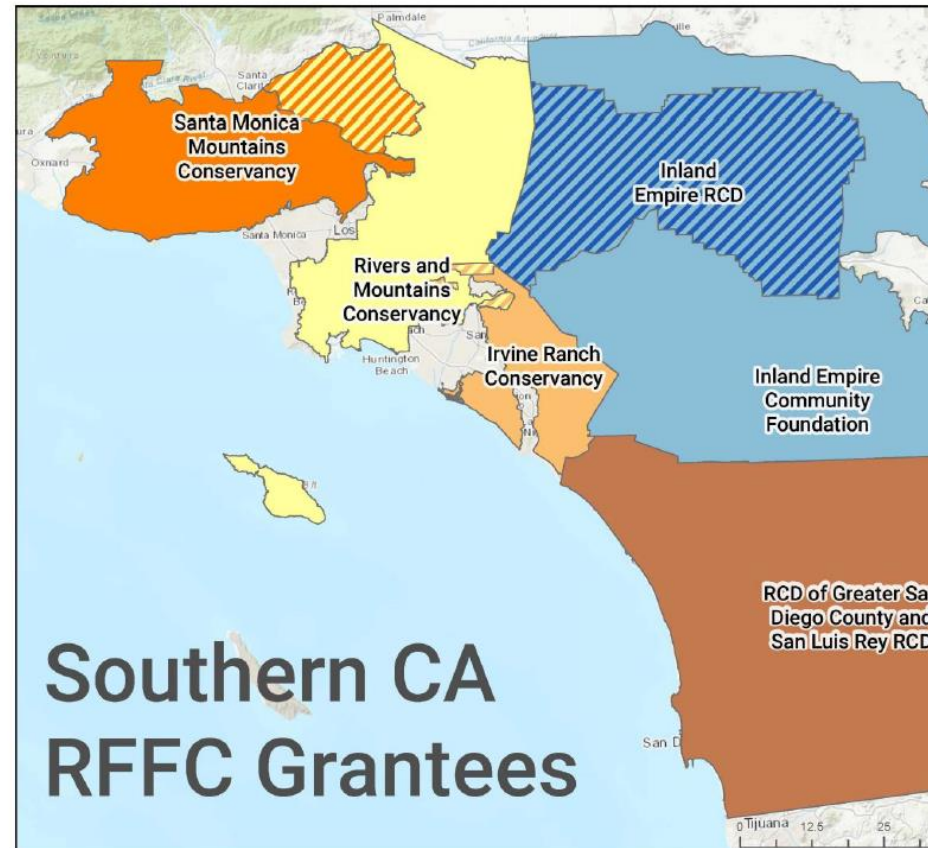
(12:30 PM) **Closing Remarks**

Task Force Co-chairs

Models for Regional Collaboration - SoCal

Regional Collaboration

- Southern California Wildfire Resilience Partnership (SCWRP)
 - Building on relationships
 - Elevating local voices
 - MOU for shared leadership
 - Supporting implementation of regional plans



Four Cornerstones

Across the Southern California Zone, four central cornerstones provide a framework to help reduce wildfire risk. Explore each cornerstone below.



Ignition Reduction

Did you know, most wildfires in Southern California are started by people? Escaped campfires, improper towing, or parking on dry grass along roadways can all spark a wildfire. The good news is, we can all work to prevent wildfires before they start by reducing ignitions in the first place.

Prevention



Strategic Fuelbreak Networks

Fuelbreaks are areas without woody plants along ridgelines, roads, or powerlines. As wildfire moves into or out of communities, strategic fuelbreak networks give firefighters a safe place to stop or slow the spread of wildfire.

Fuels Treatment Success



Montane Forest Conservation

Many of Southern California's treasured recreation areas are within sky islands – patches of forest found on mountaintops and higher elevations. Yet these forests are under threat from wildfires, droughts, pollution, and invasive species. Maintaining the health of our montane forests can reduce wildfire risk and benefit both humans and wildlife.

Montane Forests



Community Planning & Preparedness

Are you prepared for wildfire? Wildfires put homes, lives, and infrastructure at risk. Reducing your wildfire risk ahead of time is important. Hardening your home, creating defensible space around structures, and having an evacuation plan can help keep your family and community safe.

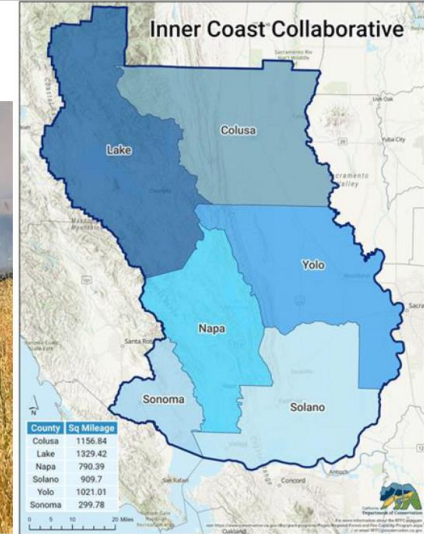
Get Prepared

Collaborative Approach & Partnership Structure

- Represented & governed by **Lead Partners** in each county
- Codified by an **MOA**, utilizes consensus-based decision making
- Committed to:
 - Equity, inclusivity, & transparency
 - A multi-benefit approach to forest health & wildfire resilience

Approach to Regional Priority Plan Development

- Builds on existing plans & local knowledge
- Centers multi-benefit lens for project identification & prioritization
- Centers equity, inclusivity, transparency
- Ensures adaptability, utility over time



Mission

Enhance the Quality of Life in North Coast Communities & Ecosystems

Multiple Integrated Objectives

- Wildfire & Climate Resilience
- Water Quality & Supply
- Biodiversity & Ecosystem Function
- Community Health & Safety

Governance

Tribal & County Co-Leadership

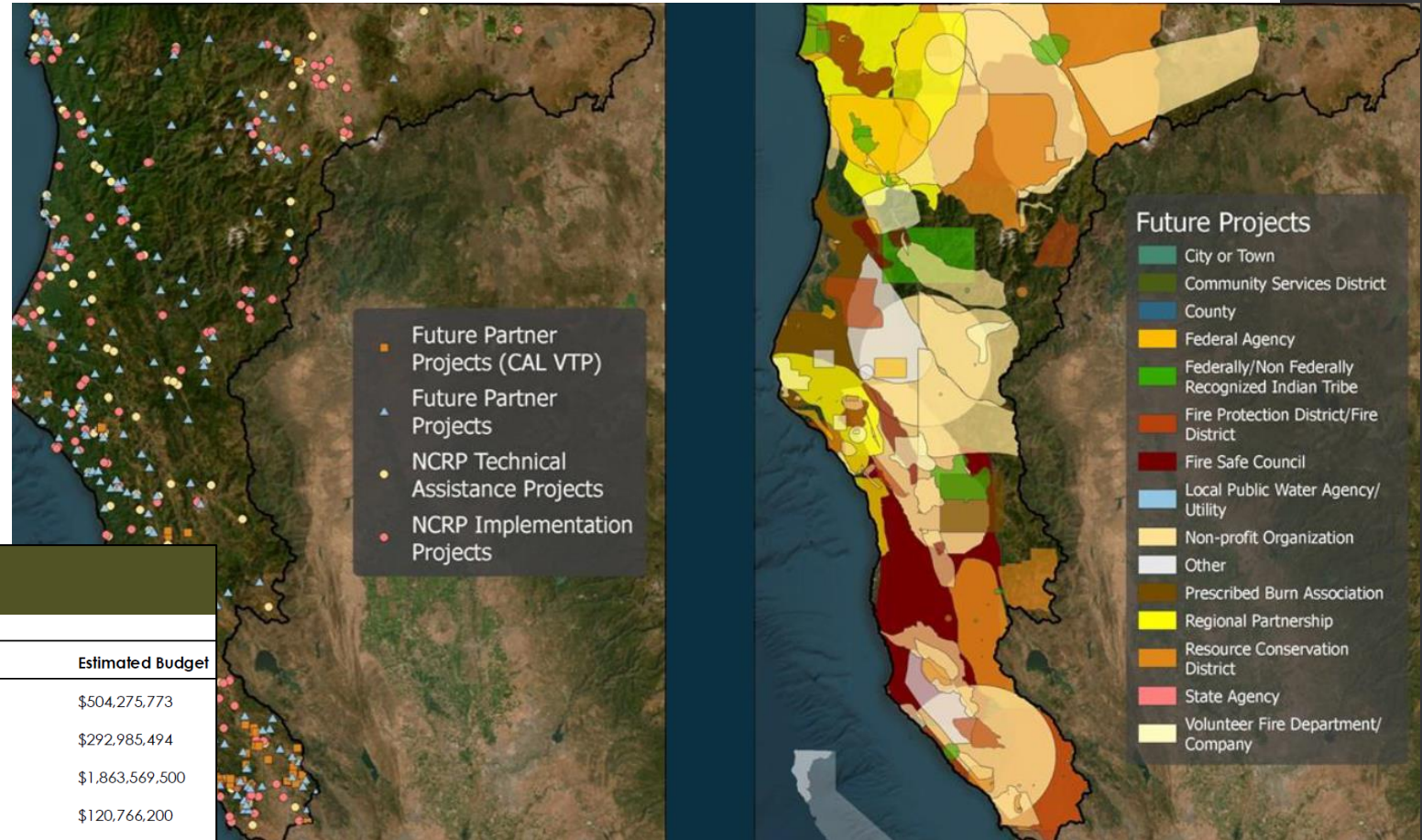


Northern CA

Northern CA continued

Multi-Objective Project Pipeline

Project Type (Number Projects)	Estimated Budget
Wildfire Resilience & Forest Health: Fuel Management (136)	\$504,275,773
Biodiversity & Ecosystem (101)	\$292,985,494
Wildfire Resilience: Community Health & Safety (66)	\$1,863,569,500
Prescribed or Cultural Fire (64)	\$120,766,200
Wildfire Resilience: Fire Response Capacity (55)	\$122,706,455
Water Quality & Supply (35)	\$67,990,000
Recreation & Public Access (26)	\$48,560,000
Organizational Capacity Development (22)	\$12,835,000
Forest Health: Biomass (15)	\$35,021,000
Forest Health: Reforestation (8)	\$5,723,000
Other (6)	\$41,200,000
Climate Change Adaptation (5)	\$27,500,000
Forest Pest Management & Invasive Species (3)	\$15,230,000
Total Project Count & Budget: (542 Projects)	\$3,158,362,422



Organizing for Landscape Scale Resilience

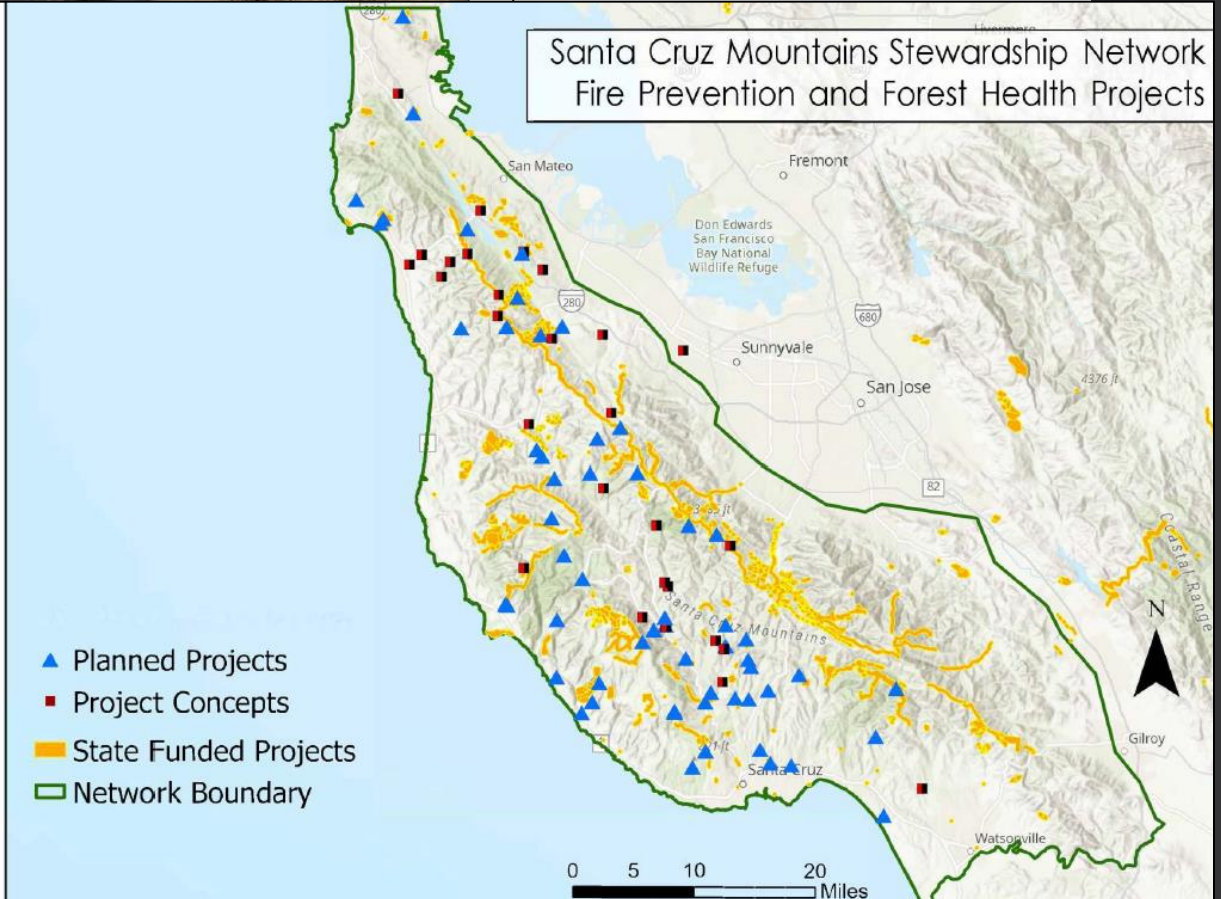
- Engage high-functioning stakeholder group
- Develop prioritization framework
- Solicit projects
- Convene technical advisors
- Identify synergies
- Identify gaps
- Iterate



Central Coast

Since 2019

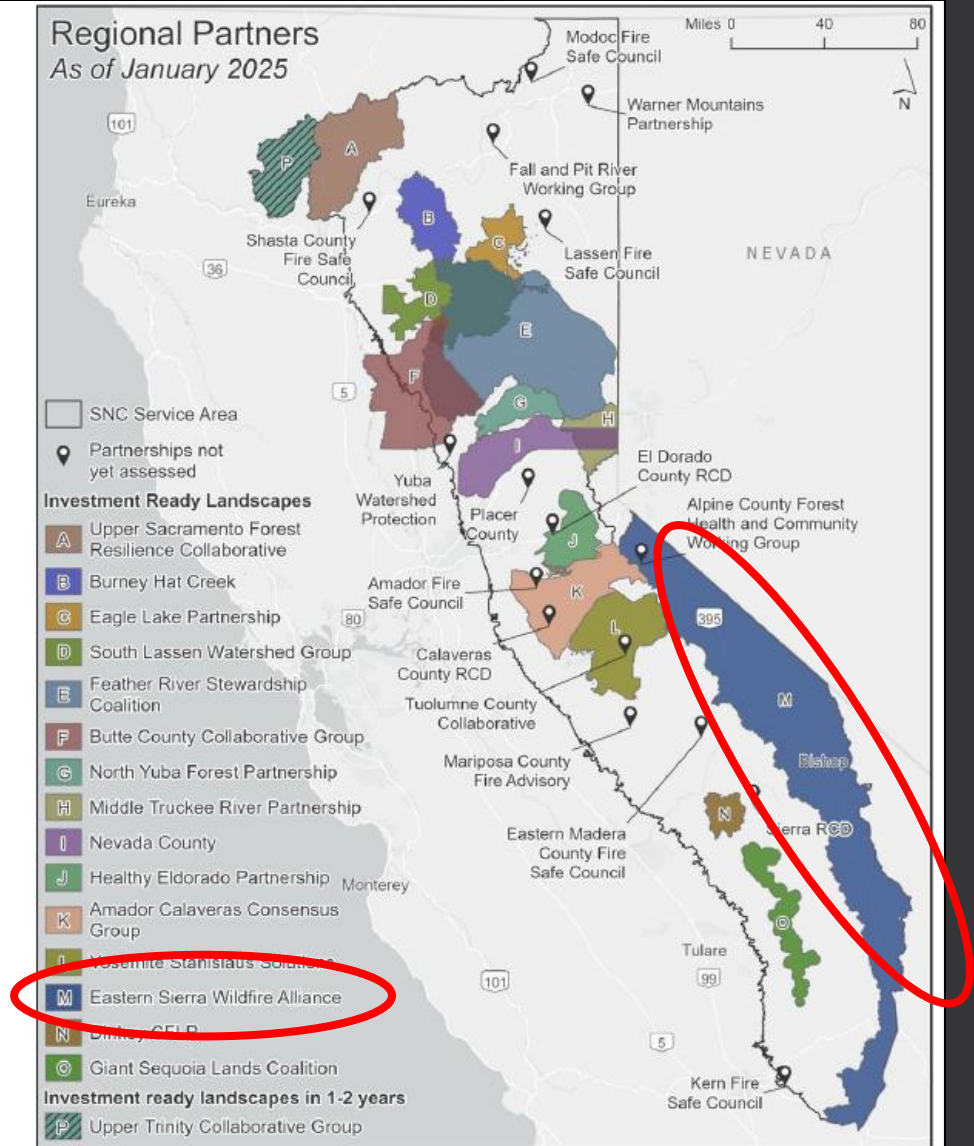
- 100,000+ acres
- \$60M+ grant funds
- Innovation hub
 - First Public Works Plans
 - First completed CalVTP project
 - Fine-scale veg mapping
 - Change detection tools



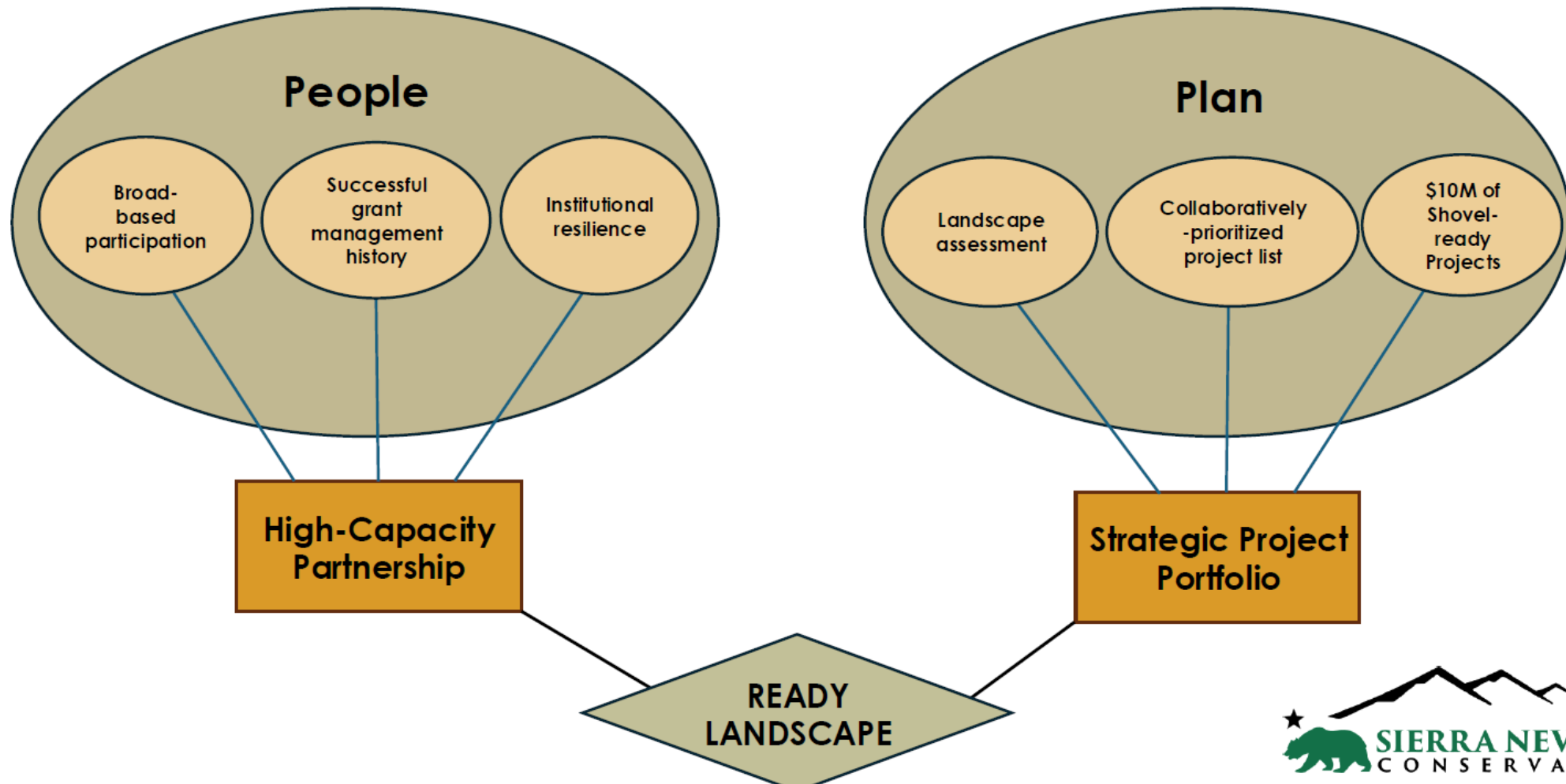
Scale: SNC's Landscape Grant Program 2025

- Climate Bond: \$40M in Regional Projects anticipated*
- Goals:
 - Inspire coordinated/joint investment across funders
 - Build on RFFC Program Investments & SNC's Landscape Grant Pilot

*Pending SNC Governing Board Approval



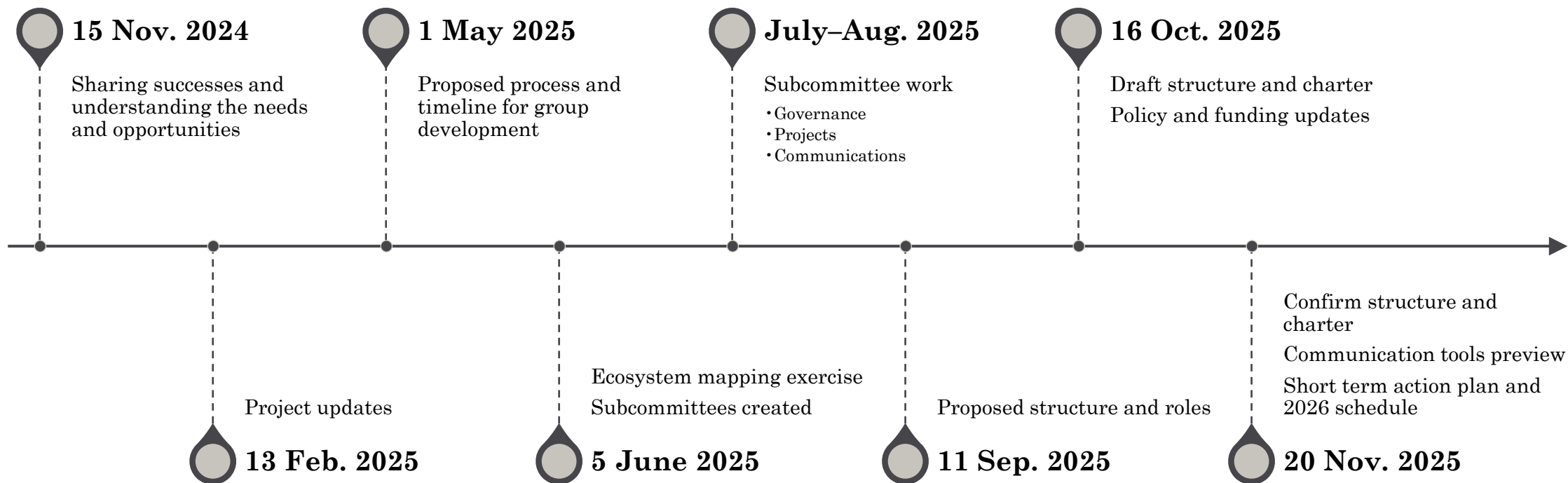
What is Ready?



How are we organizing?



Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance Development



Eastside Riparian Resilience Working Group

Intention:

To prepare a shovel-ready, multi-site riparian fuels reduction project near high-risk communities in Inyo and Mono Counties, leveraging the temporary suspension of state environmental regulations to accelerate wildfire risk reduction and enhance ecological resilience.

Submit Suspension Request

Total Projects Approved

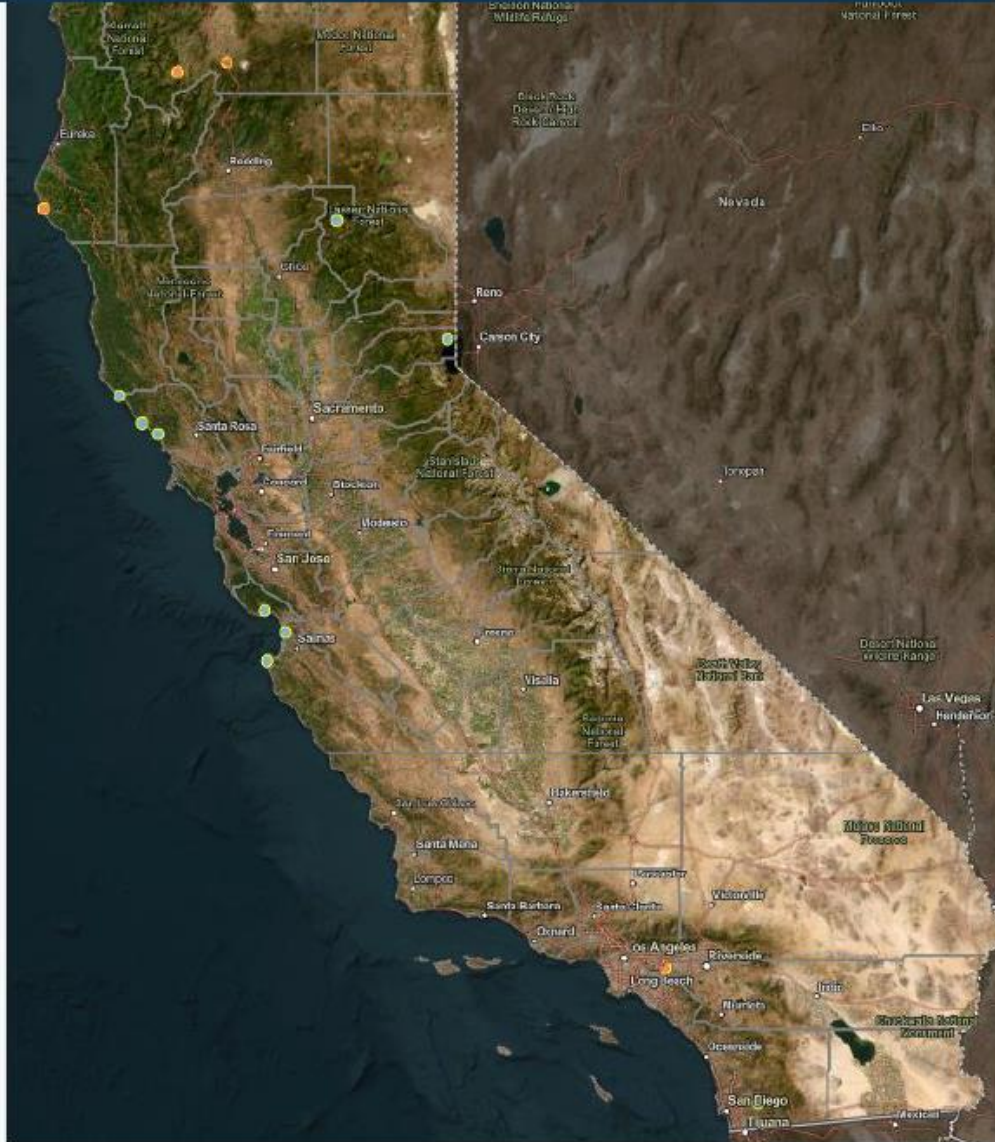
14

Projects Underway

4

Projects Completed

0



Fast-Tracking Critical Fuels Reduction Projects



Fast-Tracking Wildfire Projects

Removing Barriers to Get Critical Work Done

What does the Governor's state of emergency proclamation do:

- Streamline state regulations (like CEQA) to speed up fuels reduction work
- Allow local organizations to lead projects with quicker approval processes
- Prioritize urgent wildfire prevention activities, including:
 - Removing hazardous or overgrown vegetation and trees
 - Creating and maintaining fuel breaks
 - Clearing roadsides for safer evacuation and fire response
 - Using prescribed fire and cultural burning practices

Project Eligibility Requirements:

- ☐ Have a primary goal of wildfire risk reduction—such as fuel breaks, roadside clearance, defensible space, or cultural/prescribed fire
- ☐ Submit the request in 2025
- ☐ Be conducted or supervised by qualified professionals, such as Registered Professional Foresters or certified burn bosses
- ☐ Follow Best Management Practices outlined in the Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan (EPP)

Who is the core planning team?

LADWP

CDFW

Lahontan
Waterboard

Whitebark
Institute

CALFIRE

County
Coordinators

Mammoth Lakes
Fire Protection
District

Site-specific
consultants

Why Riparians?

Primary carrier of
fire




Historically haven't
received fuel
reduction Tx due to
regulatory and
permitting hurdles



The Project Goal:

The goal of this project is to create and maintain strategic fuel breaks in the riparian corridors adjacent to at-risk communities throughout Inyo and Mono Counties. Treatments may include manual, mechanical, and prescribed fire treatments. Areas with existing disturbance, adjacent to access roads, and/or otherwise less dense vegetation have been targeted for treatment to the extent practicable. Treatments have been designed to retain or improve riparian function consistent with the EPP.

A satellite map of a mountainous region, likely in the Sierra Nevada. The map shows rugged terrain with various shades of brown, tan, and green. Several yellow pins are placed on the map, each corresponding to a label in a white box. The labels are: Mammoth Creek, SNARL, Crowley Lake, Tom's Place/Sunny Slopes, 40 Acres, Rovana/Pine Creek, and West Bishop (various sites). The map also shows some roads and small clusters of buildings.

Mammoth
Creek

SNARL

Crowley Lake

Tom's Place/Sunny Slopes

40 Acres

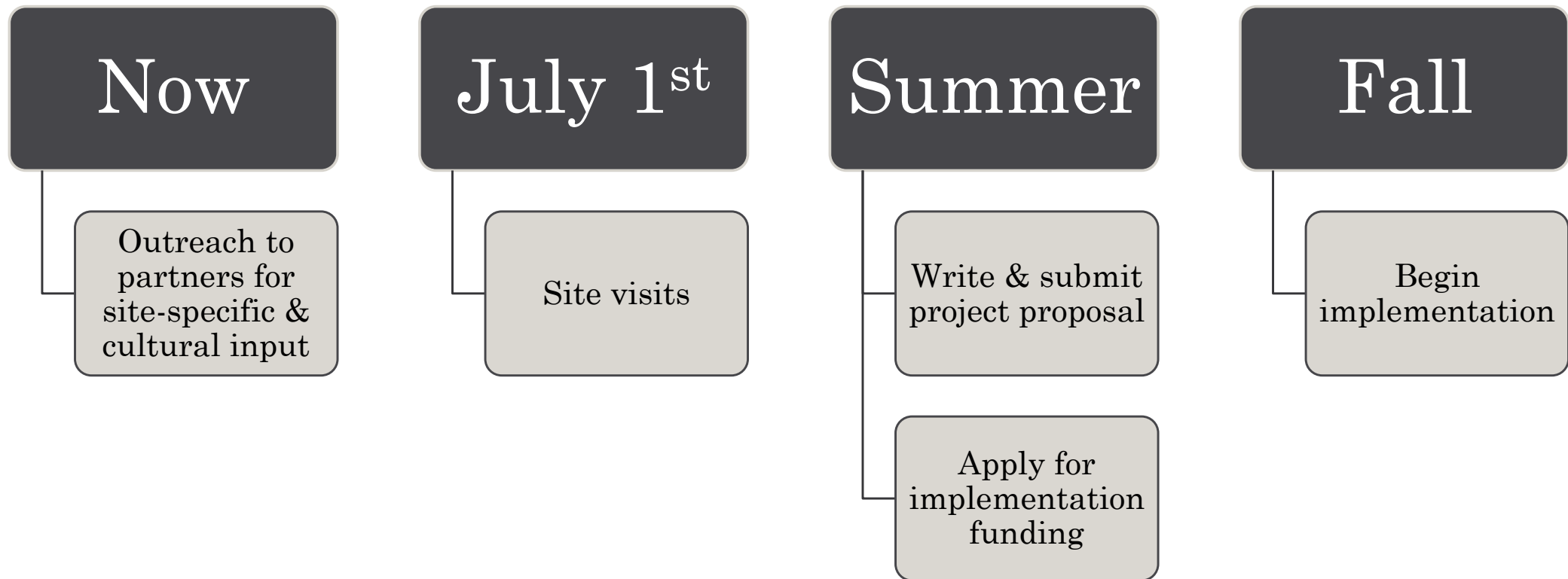
Rovana/Pine Creek

West Bishop (various sites)



- Lone Pine
- Oak Creek/Fort Independence
- Birch Creek/Three Creeks
- Big Pine
- West Bishop
- Rovana/Pine Creek
- 40 Acres
- Tom's Place/Sunny Slopes
- Crowley Lake
- SNARL
- Mammoth Creek
- Potentially others

Next Steps & Timeline





Future Regional Projects: Prop 4

“\$170,000,000 shall be available to implement regional projects, including, but not limited to, landscape-scale projects developed by forest collaboratives...”

- Proposed: $\frac{3}{4}$ CAL FIRE, $\frac{1}{4}$ Sierra Nevada Conservancy
- CAL FIRE FY25/26: ~\$50M

CAL FIRE
Prevention Grant

Fall 2025

Priorities:

- Applicant has Regional Priority Plan or equivalent that includes:
 - Defined partnership, delineated landscape
 - Implementable strategy & organizational capacity to implement
- Help build regional capacity, including by incorporating RFFC funding and meeting RFFC objectives.
- Leverage other state, federal, private/philanthropic investments.
- Achieve multiple CA Climate Bond objectives.

SNC Wildfire and Forest Resilience Directed Grant

Open Now

Act Now & Think Big



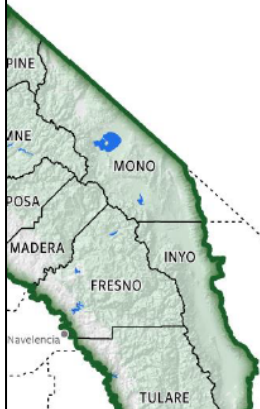
Act Now = Pace: Provide funding to shovel ready projects.



Think Big = Scale: Support collaborative, multi-jurisdictional, strategic investments at the landscape/watershed scale.

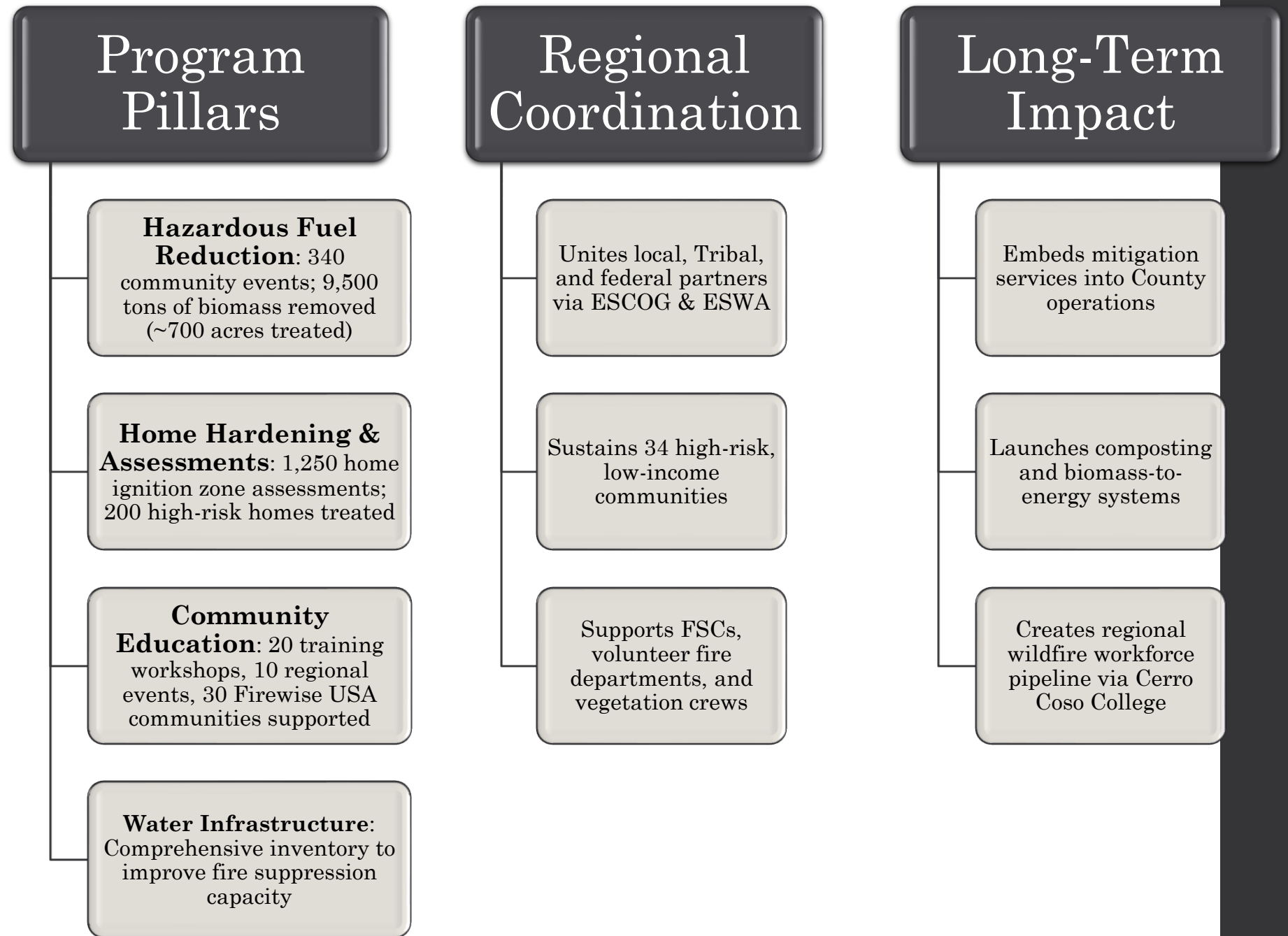
Pace: SNC's Wildfire & Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program

- Protecting people & communities
- Shovel-ready projects:
 - Environmental compliance complete or approved for EPP
- Work to be complete w/ 2 years (Jan 2030 latest)
- Climate Bond: \$10M available



Eastern Sierra Communities Wildfire Defense Program

*pending grant
announcement Fall 25*



CAL FIRE County Coordinator FY 25-26 Goals

Planning & Strategy

Update & Implement CWPPs

Streamline Planning & Funding

Strengthen Regional Collaboration

- a) Cross-sector (wildfire, recreation, ag, workforce)
- b) ESWA governance
- c) FSC/FWC Communities Collaborative

Community Support & Organizing

Expand Firewise & Fire Safe Councils (FSCs)

Build Systems & Tools to Support FWC/FSC Expansion

- a) Home assessment pilot

Zone 0 and Vent Replacement Campaign

Infrastructure & Communication

Redesign the ESWA Website

Design the Wildfire Communications Platform

- a) Refresh Citizen's Wildfire Academy

Create Building Blocks for Long-Term Sustainability

- a) Tools, staffing, shared infrastructure
- b) Blended/braided funding

SCE/Whitebark Institute Community Directed Grants 2025

Organization	Award Amount	Project Title							
Fire Response Infrastructure & Equipment									
Lee Vining FPD (portable tank)	\$5,000.00	Lee Vining Fire Wildland Support							
Mono City FPD (CrewBoss pants)	\$5,000.00	Wildland firefighting PPE purchase							
Wheeler Crest FPD (SCBAs)	\$3,900.00	Wheeler Crest Fire Protection District : Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - SCBA Cylinders							
Aspendell South Fork FD (PPE)	\$3,900.00	Purchase of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for Volunteer Firefighters							
Long Valley FPD (deployable pack)	\$2,200.00	WUI Deployable Hose Pack Kit							
Bridgeport FPD (nozzles)	\$2,200.00	Bridgeport Fire Protection District Nozzle Replacement							
	\$22,200.00								
Wildfire Mitigation & Vegetation Management									
Big Pine Community Association (fuels)	\$3,600.00	Big Pine Community Association Wildfire Fuels Reduction Project							
40 Acres FSC (fuels)	\$3,600.00	40 Acre Riparian Management							
Valley Outdoors (fuels)	\$3,600.00	Starlite Fuels Reduction 2025							
Mustang Mesa CSD (junipers/dumpsters)	\$3,600.00	Junk the Junipers and/or Clean Up Zone 0-5							
	\$14,400.00								
Defensible Space & Home Hardening									
Mono City Firewise-Mono Basin FSC (dumpsters)	\$4,500.00	Building Wildfire Resilience in Mono City: Home Hardening and Green-Waste Removal							
Aspen Springs Firewise (dumpsters)	\$3,600.00	Defensible Space Clearing- Aspen Springs 2025							
Mammoth Lakes FPD (tarps)	\$4,500.00	Fire-Resistant Tarp Program: Protecting Homes & Reducing Wildfire Risk in Mammoth Lakes							
Aspendell South Fork Firewise (firewood)	\$1,700.00	Firewood Re-Storage and Vegetation Removal for Hardening and Defensible Space							
Sunny Slopes Firewise (dumpster)	\$3,600.00	Sunny Slopes Wildfire Mitigation Project 2025							
Twin Lakes POA (fuels/homes)	\$2,750.00	Chipping days 2025							
Wheeler Crest FSC (dumpster)	\$2,750.00	Swall Meadows Green Waste Dumpster Rental							
	\$23,400.00								
	\$60,000.00								

The Impact of Community Directed Grants



Bridgeport Fire Department

309 Main St, Bridgeport, CA, 93517 * Phone (760) 932-7353

Chief Nick Way

Asst. Chief John Pelichowski

05/18/2025

Dear Whitebark Institute,

In the fall of 2024, the Bridgeport Fire Department was honored to receive a grant administered by the Whitebark Institute. Thanks to your generous support, we were able to acquire a Polaris Ranger equipped with both firefighting and medical rescue gear.

That support recently proved invaluable. Our department was dispatched to assist an elderly man suffering from a stroke. His residence was located approximately a mile down a dirt road that had become impassable for our rescue squad and ambulance due to a recent snowstorm. Anticipating the difficult conditions, we deployed the Polaris Ranger.

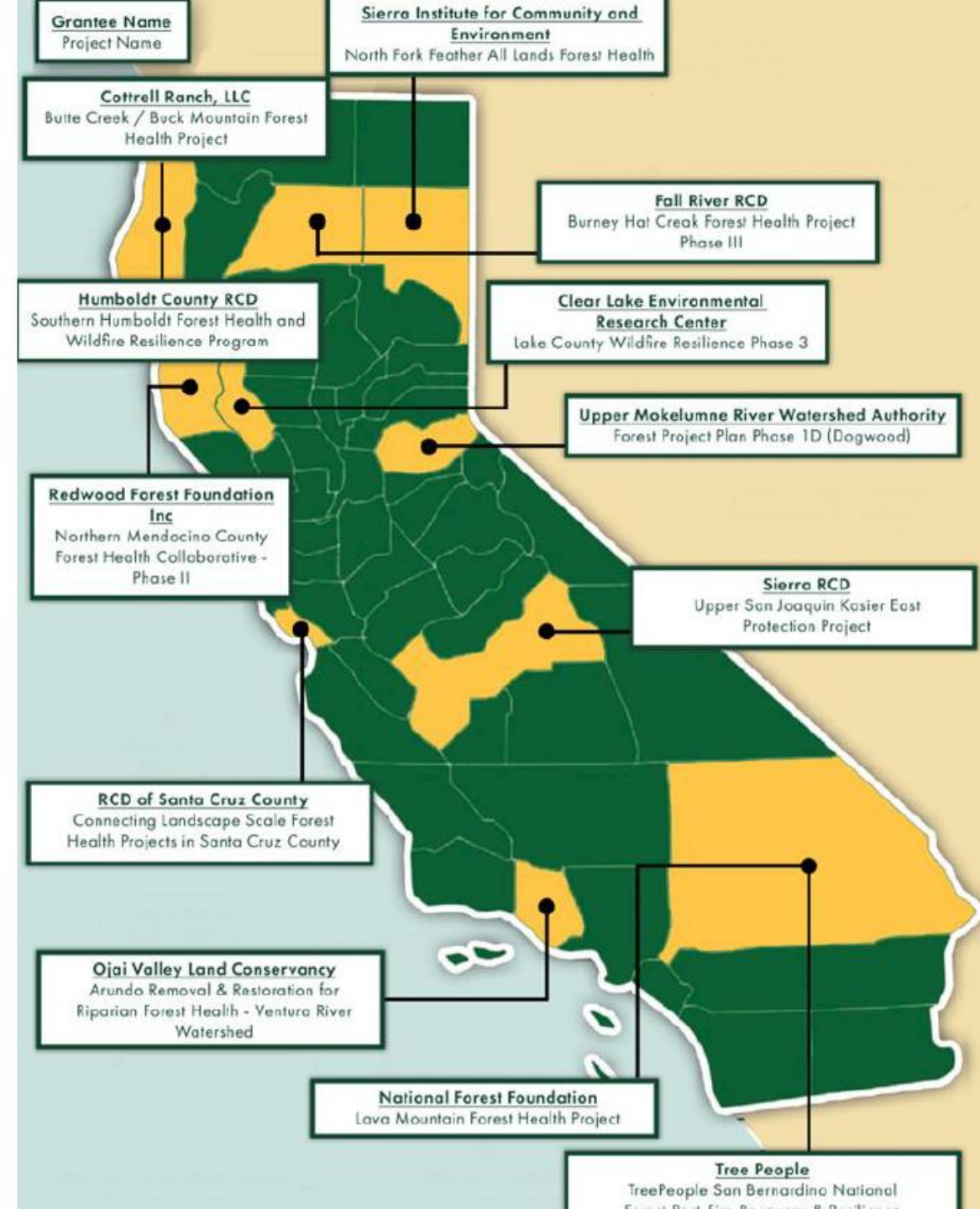
Because of this specialized vehicle, we were able to transport paramedics and essential medical equipment directly to the patient's location. Without it, our crew would have had to traverse over a mile through deep snow on foot and carry the patient back to the roadway — a process that could have taken over an hour. Instead, we were able to reach the patient and provide life-saving care within minutes.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Polaris Ranger played a critical role in saving a life that day. It exemplifies how essential the right equipment is in emergency situations, particularly in rural and difficult-to-access areas like ours.

On behalf of the entire Bridgeport Fire Department, I extend our deepest gratitude to the Whitebark Institute. Your generous grant directly contributed to a life being saved. The impact of your support goes far beyond equipment — it strengthens our ability to serve, protect, and save lives in our community. Thank you for making a difference.

With sincere appreciation,

Nick Way
Chief
Bridgeport Fire Department
916-716-0414
bptfire@gmail.com



GGRF/California Climate Investments

- CAL FIRE Forest Health \$72M
- 13 Large-Scale Projects

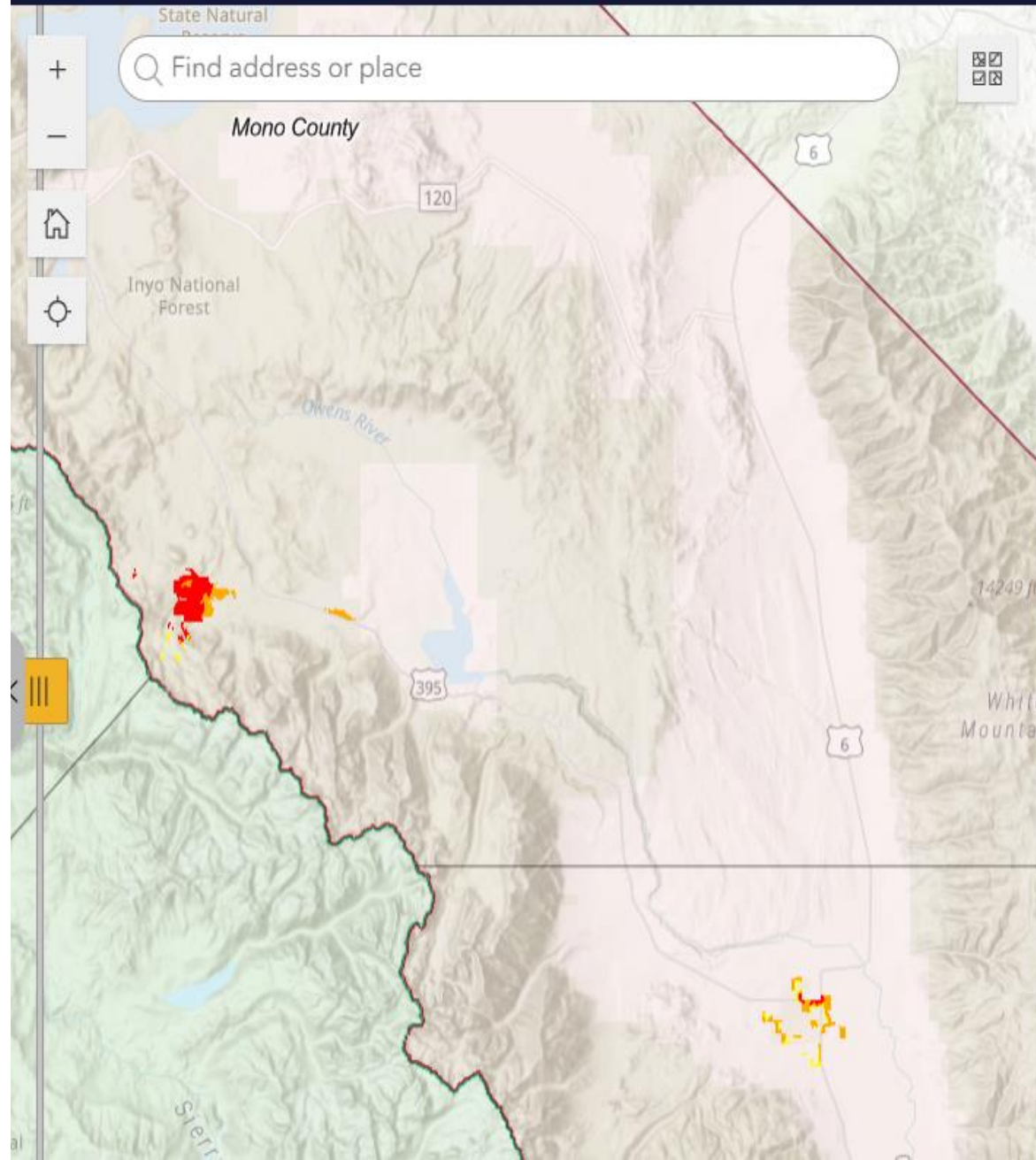




Hazard Zone Maps

CALFIRE Fire Resource Assessment Program (FRAP)

If anything, the maps are likely to understate the extent of the danger. That's because the hazard maps are meant to predict the likelihood of wildfire, said Berlant, not "conflagrations."



2025 Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Area, as Recommended by the State Fire Marshal

Fire Hazard Severity Zone

- Very High
- High
- Moderate

2007-2011 Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Area, as Recommended by the State Fire Marshal

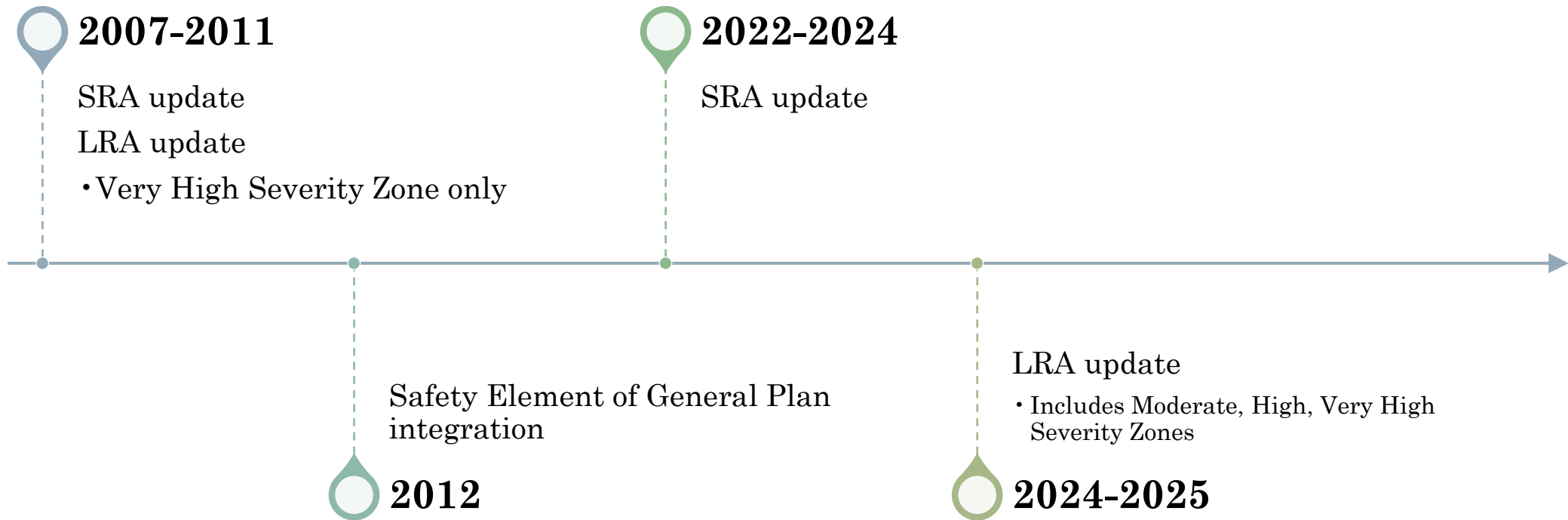
- Very High

FHSZ Rollout Phases

Rollout Phase

- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Phase 3
- Phase 4

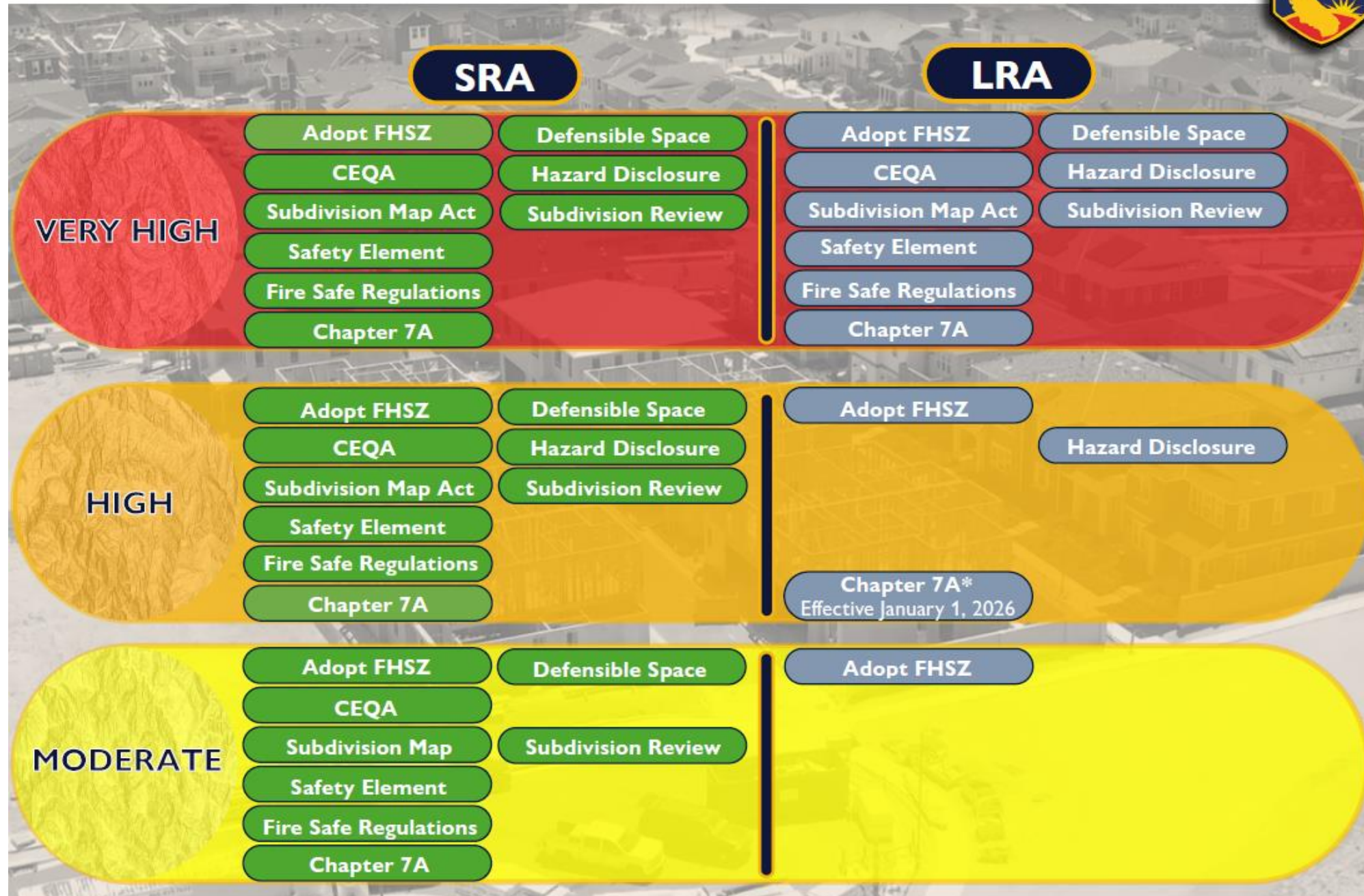
Latest Updates



Examples of State Minimum Requirements



“The reason we map these areas is to tie these really important wildfire mitigations to them, helping us to ensure that as we build out new communities we’re building to the level of hazard that exists, giving them an increased chance of surviving a wildfire,” said State Fire Marshal Daniel Berlant.





CAL FIRE hazard maps do not affect insurance rates or availability

Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara issued a [fact sheet](#) explaining that CAL FIRE hazard maps do not affect insurance rates or availability. A [Spanish-language fact sheet](#) is also available.

For many years, insurance companies have been using wildfire risk models for determining where they will write and renew policies, and how much premium to charge a policyholder -- not the Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps. CAL FIRE's maps are required by law and their purpose is to drive local planning decisions, not insurance decisions.

Commissioner's POV: "Let me be clear: The CAL FIRE hazard maps are not used for insurance rates or underwriting decisions. But they will empower communities with more accurate information about the very real hazards we face. The reality is we all need to do more to protect our homes and communities from wildfires. When communities know and understand their risks, they can plan and prepare."

Background: The Department of Insurance is implementing a Sustainable Insurance Strategy aimed at supporting safer communities. Based on feedback gathered from thousands of town halls and meetings with homeowners, businesses, and individual consumers, Commissioner Lara implemented an aggressive approach to modernize insurance regulations to address insurance accessibility challenges for consumers.

Commissioner Lara's new [Safer from Wildfires regulation](#) clarifies what actions you should take to reduce wildfire risks and receive an insurance discount.

Insurance companies use computerized wildfire catastrophe models to determine which homes to write based on the risk of loss. Building on the Safer from Wildfires initiative — the nation's first wildfire safety discount program — the strategy requires catastrophe models to account for mitigation efforts by homeowners, businesses, and communities, something not possible even a few months ago under outdated regulations.

Learn More: The Department of Insurance fact sheet is posted at [CAL FIRE's Fire Hazard Severity Zone web page](#) where you can learn more about enhancing your property's fire safety and view current versions of maps.

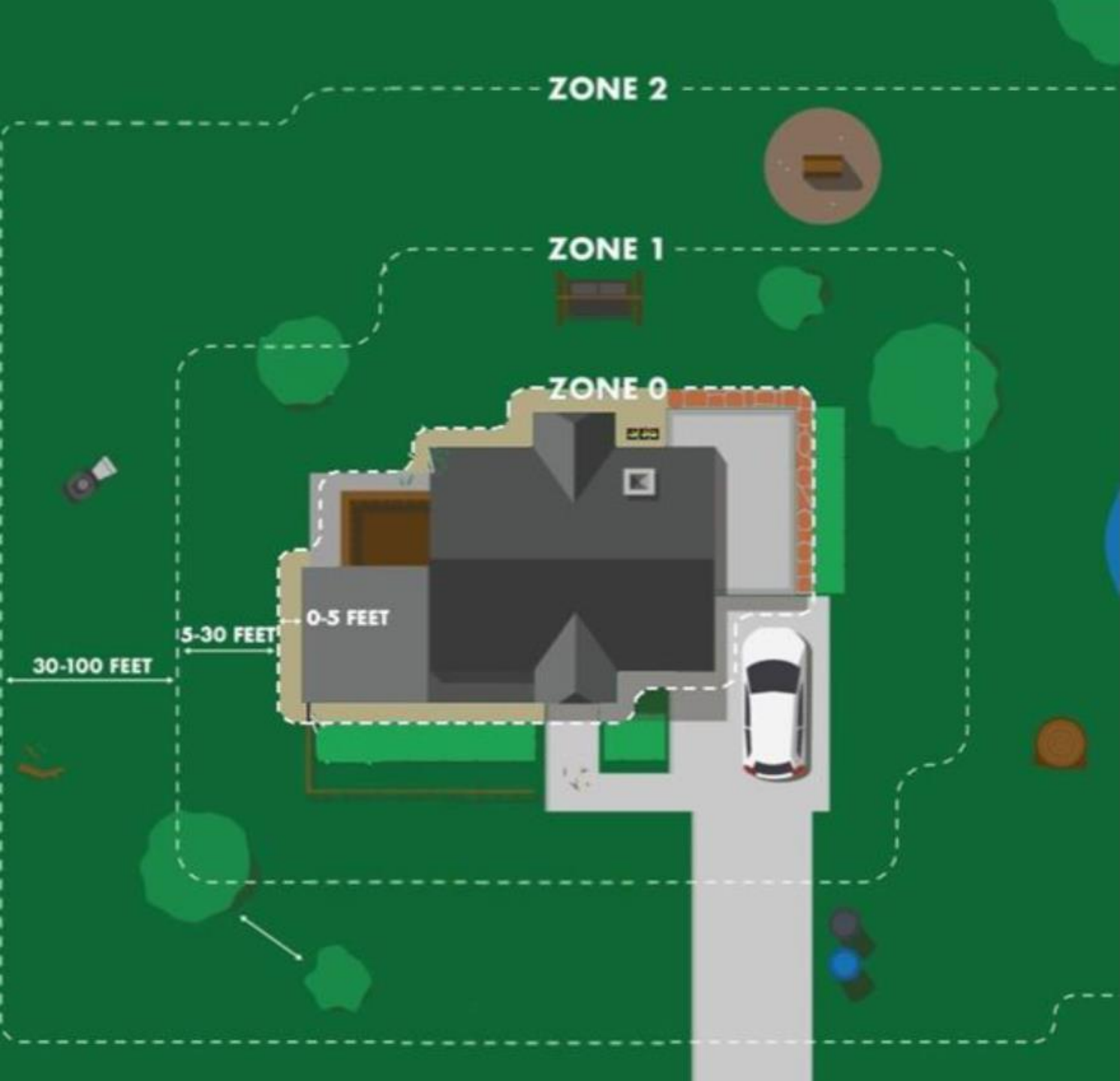


How is this
going to
impact my
insurance?



Zone Zero

- EO N-18-24 requires BOF to complete rulemaking by Dec. 31, 2025
- Upcoming BOF meeting, June 16, 2025
- Previous workshops
 - March 4, April 7, May 12





CALIFORNIA'S TOP PRIORITIES TO INCREASE WILDFIRE RESILIENCE

- **Improve** home and community wildfire resilience
- **Streamline** regulatory processes
- **Expand** landscape-scale resilience programs
- **Scale-up** beneficial fire
- **Increase** post-fire restoration programs
- **Create** forest sector jobs and a sustainable wood products market
- **Build** a science-based framework for measuring progress



GOVERNOR
GAVIN NEWSOM

25 Key Deliverables

Mar 24, 2025

California doubles down to protect communities from wildfire with 25 key deliverables for 2025

