



Eastern Sierra Communities Wildfire Defense Program is funded.

What happens now?

EASTERN SIERRA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

OCTOBER 22, 2025

WENDILYN GRASSESCHI - MONO COUNTY WILDFIRE MITIGATION
COORDINATOR

KRISTEN PFEILER - ESCOG/INYO COUNTY WILDFIRE COORDINATOR

Eastern Sierra Communities Wildfire Defense Program grant:



Amount: \$4.6 Million

Timeframe: 5 years

Purpose: Funds staffing, organizing, and implementation of a sustainable, two-county, local communities' hazardous fuels removal program



Applicant: Eastern Sierra Council of Governments

- *Subawards* for Inyo and Mono Counties
- *Contracts* for fuel reduction crews
- *Equipment* purchases
- *Staffing* capacity in ESCOG

Competitiveness: 58 out of 573 applicants funded nationwide

Grantor: US Forest Service \$1 billion five-year competitive Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) Program funded by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act



Background: How the grant was developed

The Eastern Sierra Communities Wildfire Defense Program grant pulls together the top concerns and priorities that we have heard consistently across all our local communities over the course of the past few years, which have been documented in each County's Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

What's been missing is the capacity to figure out how to pull it all together and get us all going in the same direction – that's what this grant does.

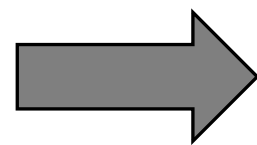
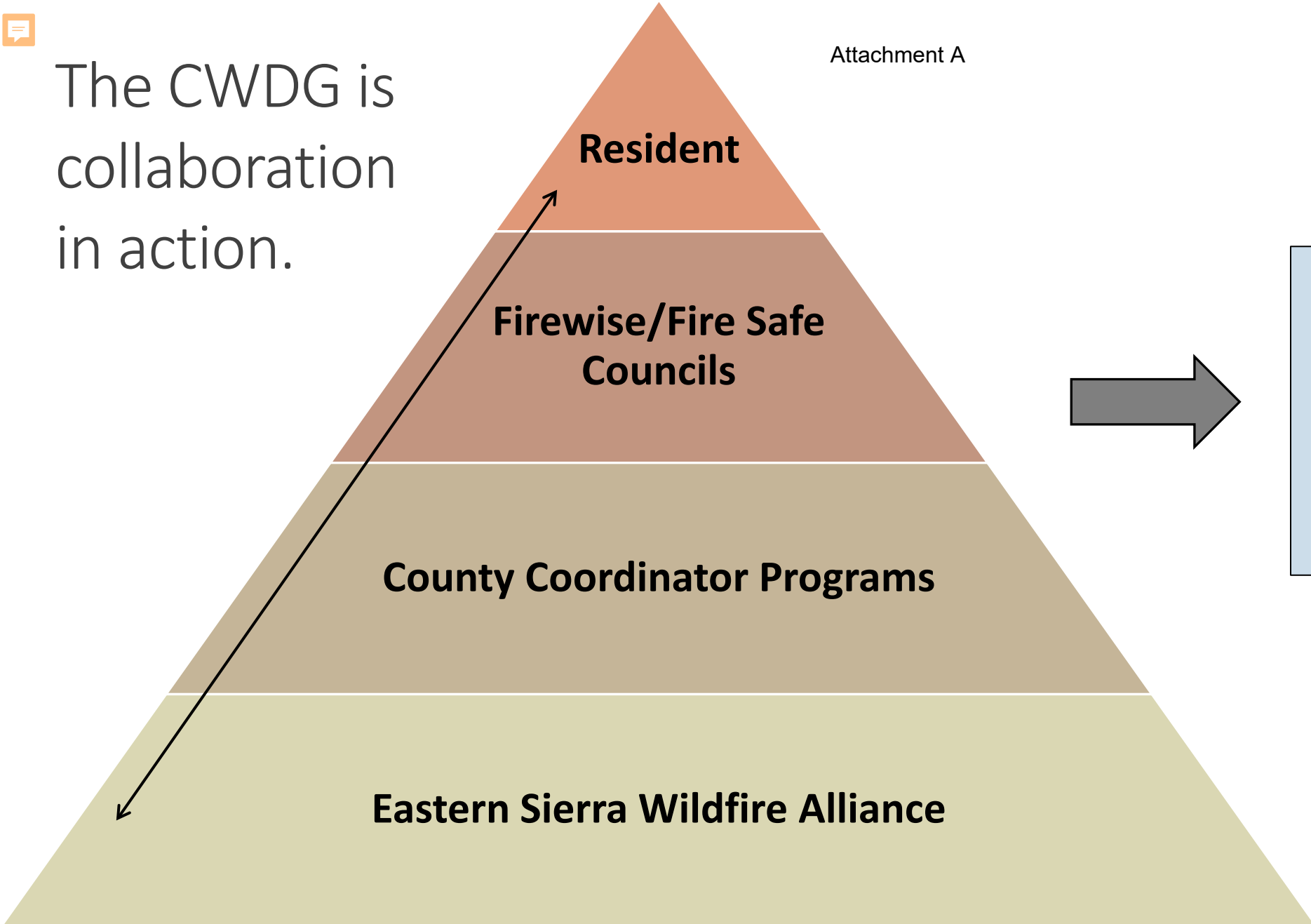
ESCOG was determined to be the best lead agency for the grant due to its regional nature and will be the main hub from which grant work will be administered.

The two County Coordinators will be the primary staff tasked with implementing the components of the grant by uniting existing programs, staff, and resources into one cohesive framework.



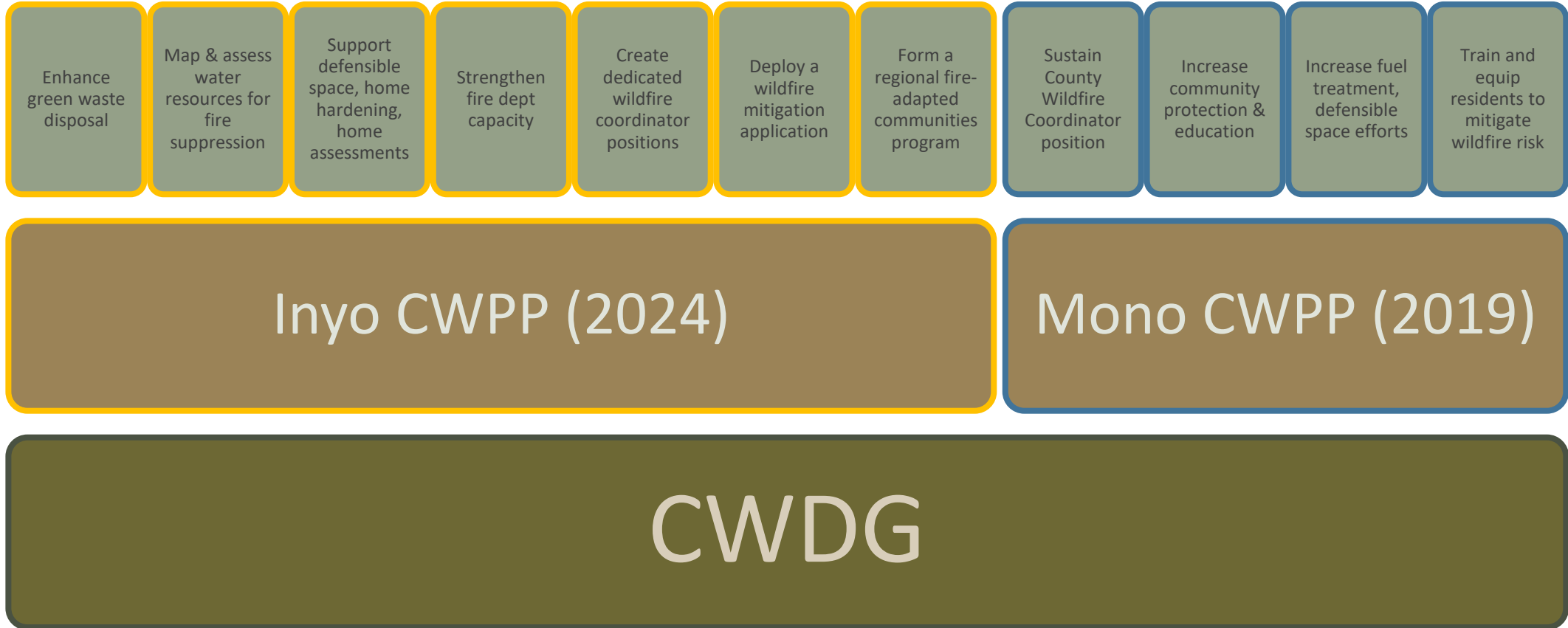
The CWDG is collaboration in action.

Attachment A





The Program weaves together 11 top mitigation recommendations outlined in the CWPPs



Mono
Topaz
Coleville
Walker
Bridgeport
Mono City
Lee Vining
June Lake
Mammoth Lakes
Crowley Lake
Sunny Slopes - Tom's Place
Swall Meadows - Paradise
Benton
Hammil Valley
Chalfant
White Mountain Estates

Inyo	Attachment A
Round Valley - 40 Acres	
Mustang Mesa	
Bishop Paiute Reservation	
Bishop	
Starlite	
Aspendell - South Fork	
Wilkerson	
Big Pine	
Birch Creek	
Fort Independence	
Independence	
Lone Pine	
Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Reservation	
Alabama Hills	
Keeler	
Olancha - Cartago	
Darwin	
Homewood Canyon	
Shoshone - Tecopa	





Attachment A

Firewise USA & Fire Safe Councils

34
High-risk, low-income communities served

Education + FireSide HIZ Assessments

1,250
Home ignition zone assessments completed

Local Fuel Reduction Crews Assist

200
High-risk homes treated

Community Cleanup Events

340
Community cleanup events held

County Public Works Chips & Hauls Fuel

Biomass to Compost Site

9,500
Tons of hazardous fuel removed

CAL FIRE, Fire Dept Inspections

Pulling it all together



The Program Goals



1. Establish a Regional Communities Wildfire Defense Program within ESCOG to create a coordinated wildfire resilience program for long-term mitigation support.

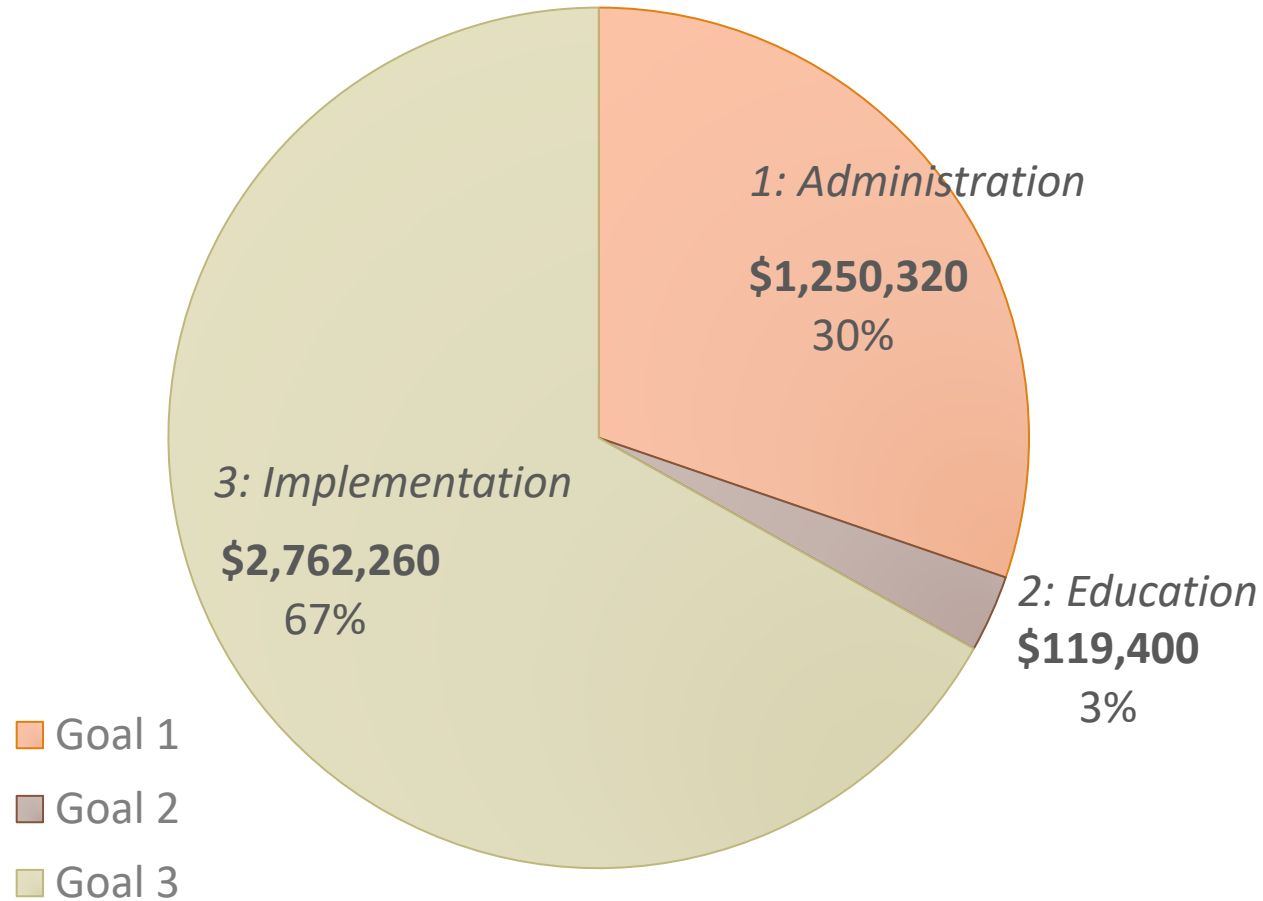


2. Empower residents to mitigate wildfire risks by training and equipping them to assess and reduce hazards on their properties and within their communities.



3. Develop a Regional Hazardous Fuel Removal System to implement a sustainable approach to large-scale vegetation management and debris removal.

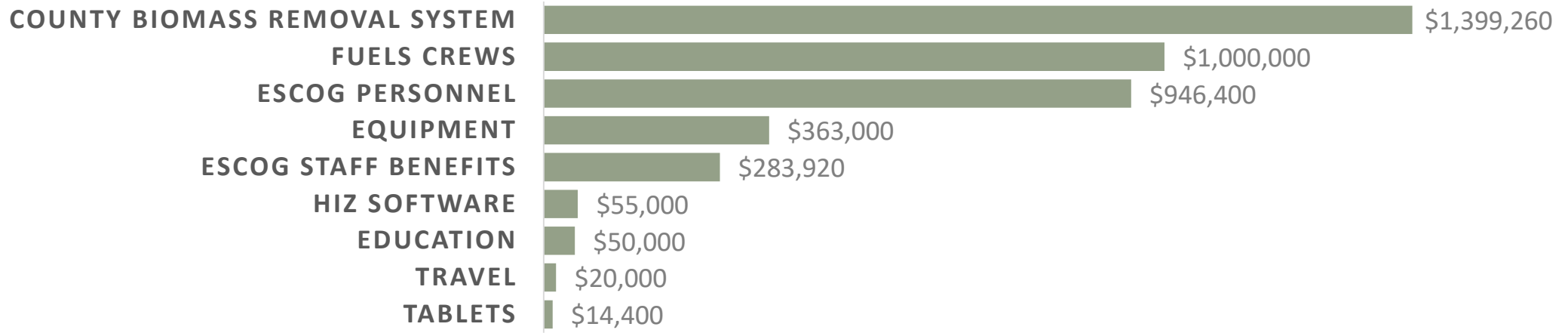
The Program is focused on **implementation** with the intention to build a sustainable **administrative** backbone.



Cost per Goal



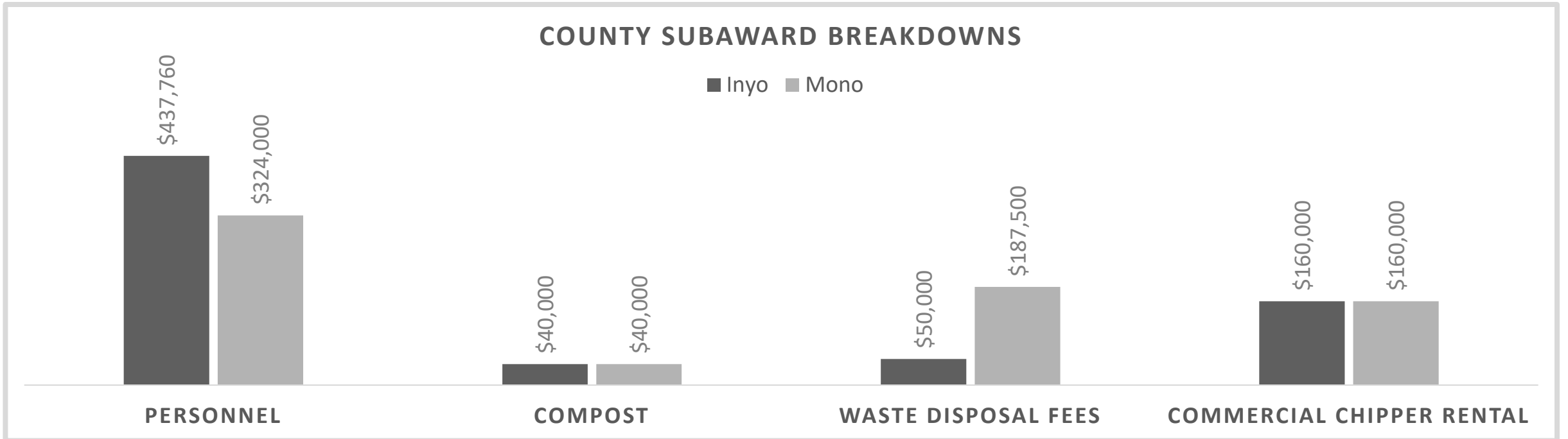
Attachment A
COSTS PER ITEM



ITEM	COSTS
COUNTY BIOMASS REMOVAL SYSTEM	\$ 1,399,260
FUELS CREWS	\$ 1,000,000
ESCOG PERSONNEL	\$ 946,400
EQUIPMENT	\$ 363,000
ESCOG STAFF BENEFITS	\$ 283,920
HIZ SOFTWARE	\$ 55,000
EDUCATION	\$ 50,000
TRAVEL	\$ 20,000
TABLETS	\$ 14,400
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	\$ 4,131,980

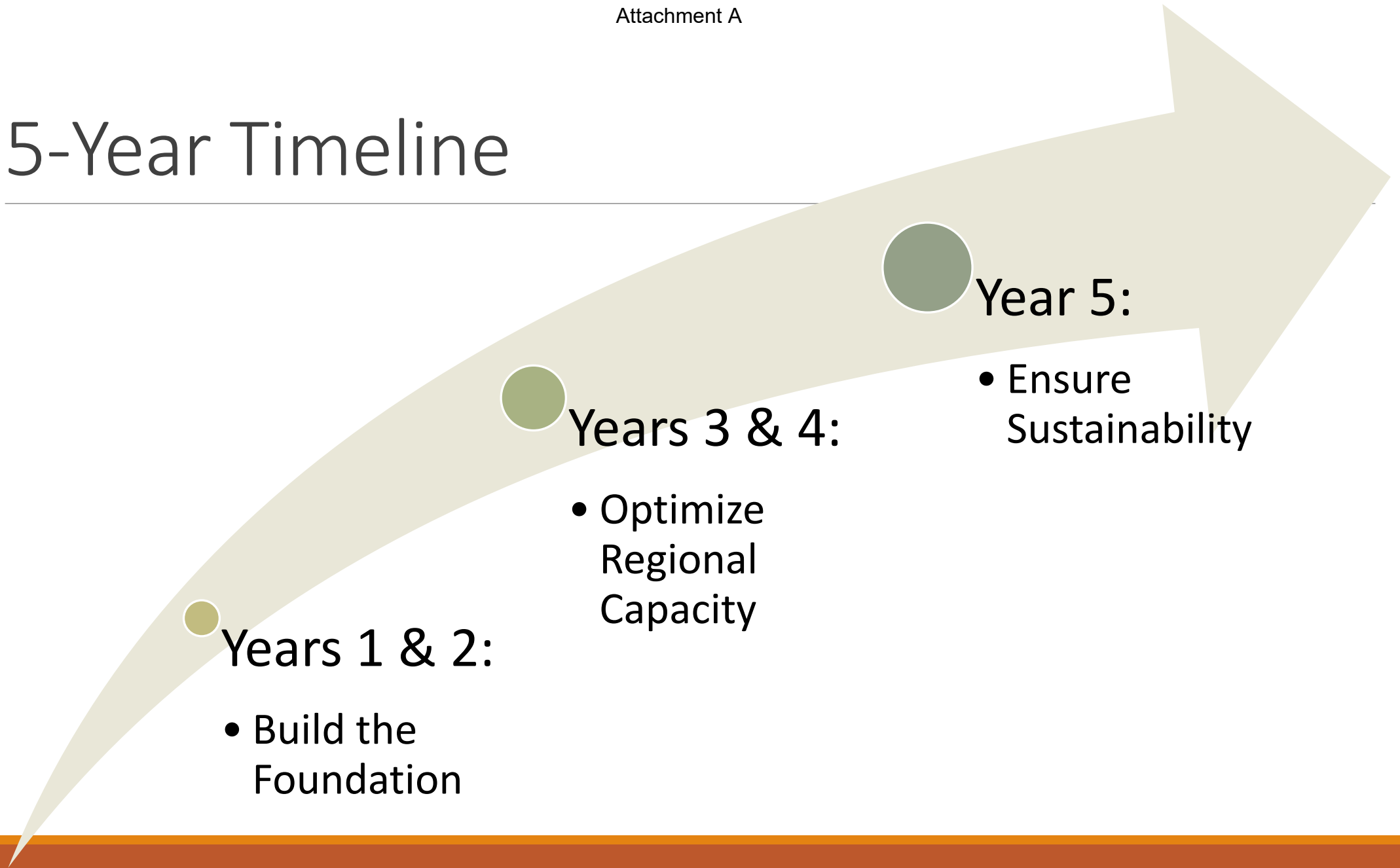
Attachment A

ITEM	INYO	MONO
PERSONNEL	\$437,760	\$324,000
COMPOST	\$40,000	\$40,000
WASTE DISPOSAL FEES	\$50,000	\$187,500
COMMERCIAL CHIPPER RENTAL	\$160,000	\$160,000
TOTAL	\$687,760	\$711,500



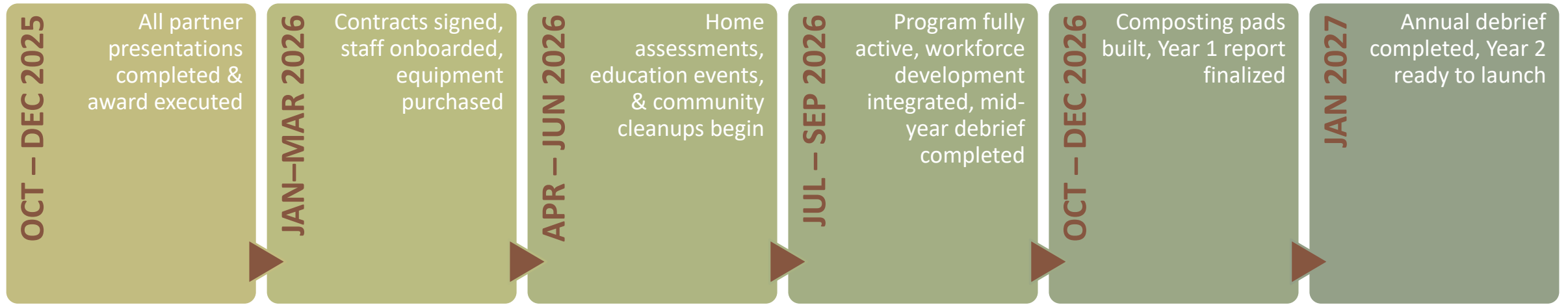


5-Year Timeline





Program Launch Timeline





This Program invests in long-term sustainability by:

Taking consistent actions that make homes and communities safer from wildfire.

Establishing staff & infrastructure

for hauling & processing biomass, including maintenance & management of equipment

Creating local jobs and supporting workforce development

- Career pathways through Cerro Coso internships
- Sustainable, year-round work for local crews

Generating solutions for biomass disposal

- Air Curtain Burner
- Composting
- Chipping