



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

STAFF REPORT

To: ESCOG Joint Powers Authority
From: Elaine Kabala, ESCOG Staff
Subject: Executive Director Report
Meeting date: April 22, 2026
Prepared on: April 14, 2026
Attachments: A) Eastern Sierra Agriculture Activation Study Stakeholder Engagement Summary

Sustainable Recreation and Ecosystem Management Program:

Eastern Sierra Pace and Scale Accelerator:

- Attended Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance and Governance subcommittee meetings to coordinate regional wildfire planning, projects, and funding strategies. You can learn more about the ESWA here: <https://www.eswildfirealliance.org/>
- Met with Mono County and Inyo County staff to discuss staffing models to implement the Community Wildfire Defense Program.
- Met with Mono County staff to discuss USFS Wood Innovations grant scope.
- Met with CLERE associates to discuss Proposition 4 biomass pilot project funding.

Sustainable Recreation:

- Staff has worked with the Recreation Coordinator to kick-off the Chipmunk Canyon Existing Conditions Analysis and the Eastern Sierra Recreation Collaborative projects.
- Coordinated with Alpine County, Inyo County and Mono County to support the Tri-County Economic Impact Analysis, including data collection and communication. Public workshops are scheduled April 20 – 22 in Alpine, Mono and Inyo Counties, respectively.
- Staff has met with the Bishop Area Climbers Coalition to discuss future grants and funding for implementation of the Buttermilk Infrastructure and Recreation Initiative.

Economic Development / Sierra Jobs First:

- Administration for all Sierra Jobs First contracts, including incubating the Business Resource Center programming, and administration of two contracts for the Chipmunk Canyon Existing Conditions Analysis and the Eastern Sierra Recreation Collaborative.
- Administration of the Inyo Mono Agricultural Activation Study.

- Hosted a community input meeting for regional agricultural producers at the Business Resource Center on March 18th (see attachment A)
- Hosted an public event at the Bishop Chamber of Commerce networking event held at Blue Heron Farm on April 9th.
- Staff has been working with the Business Resource Center to develop program to implement the Sierra Jobs First Catalyst Award. ESCOG and the BRC will be partnering to work with [gener8tor](#) to provide mentorship-driven, cohort-based accelerator programs for early-stage entrepreneurs. ESCOG and the BRC are also partnering to use SJF funding to provide one-on-one marketing and website management training for businesses.
- Submitted draft Economic Development District application to the Economic Development Administration for initial feedback prior to formalizing requests for support from regional partners. After we receive feedback, staff will share the application document with the Board and regional partners.
- Staff has been coordinating with regional Sierra Jobs First project awardees regarding project development and collaboration, including the Eastern Sierra Community Foundation, the Sierra Seven Arts Alliance, and providing strategic direction for the UC Cooperative Extension Community and Economic Development Leadership class.
- Staff has participated in the working groups for Natural and Working Lands, Tourism and Sustainable Recreation and Sustainable Agriculture.
- Hosted monthly regional economic development roundtable for information sharing and collaboration, including Inyo County, Mono County, the City of Bishop, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Alpine County, the Bishop Paiute Tribe, the Sierra Business Council, the Eastern Sierra Business Resource Center, Chambers of Commerce (Mammoth, Bishop, Lone Pine), the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (Go Biz), and RCRC.
- Attended the Owens Valley Career Development Career Development Center Inyo Mono Workforce Coalition, which intends to improve workforce development coordination across the region.
- Staff provided technical assistance supporting two CA FWD Resilience Accelerator grants advancing economic development partners: 1) the Owens Valley Career Development Center Inyo Mono Workforce Coalition and 2) Eastern Sierra Farm Fresh Food Hub Feasibility Study.

ESCOG Administration:

- Staff met with Regional Managers to discuss ESCOG direction and programs of work, including aligning future programs around the strategic plans of each jurisdiction and ongoing coordination with regional management.
- Staff has been supporting and participating in the Regional Housing Needs Assessment planning process.
- Ongoing grant administration and reporting for the CDFW Proposition 1 grant, Inyo National Forest Liaison Grant, and four California Jobs First Initiative grants.
- Staff has updated the ESCOG website to reflect new projects and programs.