



# ESCCRP

## Spring 2023 Newsletter



## Hello STAKEHOLDERS & WELCOME SPRING!

What an incredible winter in California that we have all endured. As many of you may recall, we launched the Eastern Sierra Climate & Communities Resilience Project in the fall of 2020, the first year of back-to-back record-breaking fire seasons of 2020/2021. As a result, the State of CA convened the State Wildfire Task Force which has worked to make unprecedented investments in forest resilience that are keeping our project moving right along. Now we are emerging from another record-breaking season, now in the form of snowfall, that will continue to challenge our communities well into spring with events not seen in modern day Eastern Sierra history. Despite these challenges, eastside communities are strong and working hard together to become resilient and Whitebark is proud to be a key partner in that pursuit.

Here at Whitebark there have been a lot of big changes as well, but we have worked steadily all winter and are poised to emerge stronger than ever with fresh inspiration for our work, to make a positive impact in the places we are so passionate about. I am honored to introduce the Whitebark 2.0 Board of Directors, who have helped shape a renewed mission and vision for our organization that we are excited to share with you all.

With you as a partner, a lot of hard work and a good bit of luck we have built the ESCCRP at an opportune time, and it has paid off! I hope the pages that follow inspire and give you hope in a brighter future and assure you that your contribution to this effort has not gone unnoticed. We could not have done it without you!

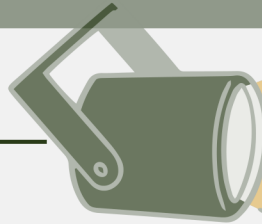
Sincerely,  
Janet Hatfield  
Executive Director, Whitebark Institute



# What's new?



## Sustainable Funding



## ESCCRP in the State Spotlight

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) annual Watershed Improvement Program Summit was held on March 1, 2023, and Whitebark Institute was invited to present our work which has been made possible by your continued dedication and involvement. The Summit was an inspiring reminder that creative collaboration and non-traditional problem solving, along with adequate funding, can lead to much needed progress.

## BIG NEWS



## Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Award

# \$3.8 million

From a \$75 million state wildfire and climate budget available to the SNC to fund projects in its service area, the SNC approved just over \$27 million in Watershed Improvement Program grants to wildfire recovery and forest resilience, recreation, and land conservation projects throughout California's Sierra Nevada-Cascade region. The largest grant for \$3.88 million was awarded to the **Whitebark Institute** for its Reds Meadow II project, which will help continue forest restoration treatments for forest health, fuels reduction, meadow restoration and public education as part of the Eastern Sierra Climate and Communities Resilience Project (ESCCRP) to create forest resilience, reduce wildfire risk, protect water quality and recreation resources and work toward economic sustainability for the Eastern Sierra region.

## Wood Utilization Grant

*To realize forest restoration projects, an end use for the woody material that will be generated is of paramount importance.*

## Biomass Utilization Technology



In January, the 2023 Wood Utilization Grant Opportunity from the USFS prompted Whitebark and Mono County, in partnership with Inyo National Forest, TSS consultants and ORMAT technologies, to put together a proposal to fund the final technology selection for a bio-energy facility that could use byproducts of the ESCCRP forest treatments. If funded, the grant would support pre-development tasks needed to help pave the way for this keystone project. Award announcements are expected in June 2023.

This work scope includes **regulatory permitting, NEPA/CEQA** and up to **30 % engineering design**.

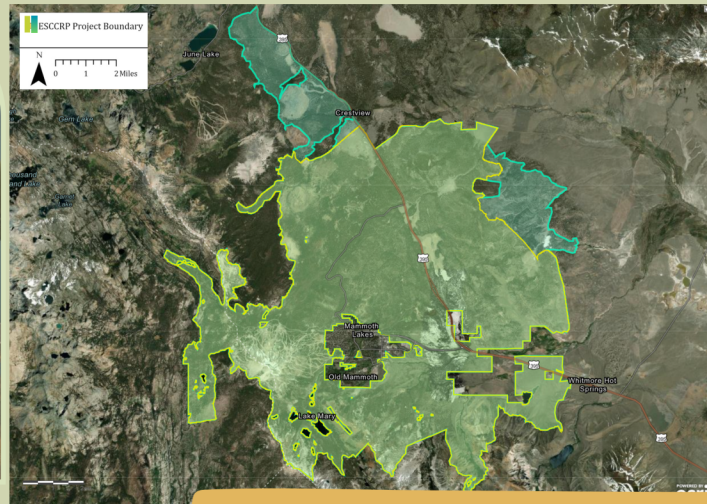
# Pace & Scale Accelerator Updates



## Environmental Planning

This timeline outlines milestones that have been completed by the Inyo National Forest and Whitebark Institute Interdisciplinary Teams (IDT) on the ESCCRP NEPA document as well as steps in the NEPA process which are upcoming.

## ESCCRP NEPA Process progress



New ESCCRP Boundary

Following public scoping and additional consideration by the INF IDT, the boundary for the ESCCRP has been extended adding 8,000 acres to north and east of the previous project area. This addition will provide continuity across project areas and create operational efficiencies in both fire and timber management.



Funding for this project provided by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife from the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (Proposition 1, CWC § 79707).



# 2023 Implementation Updates



## Forestry Operations

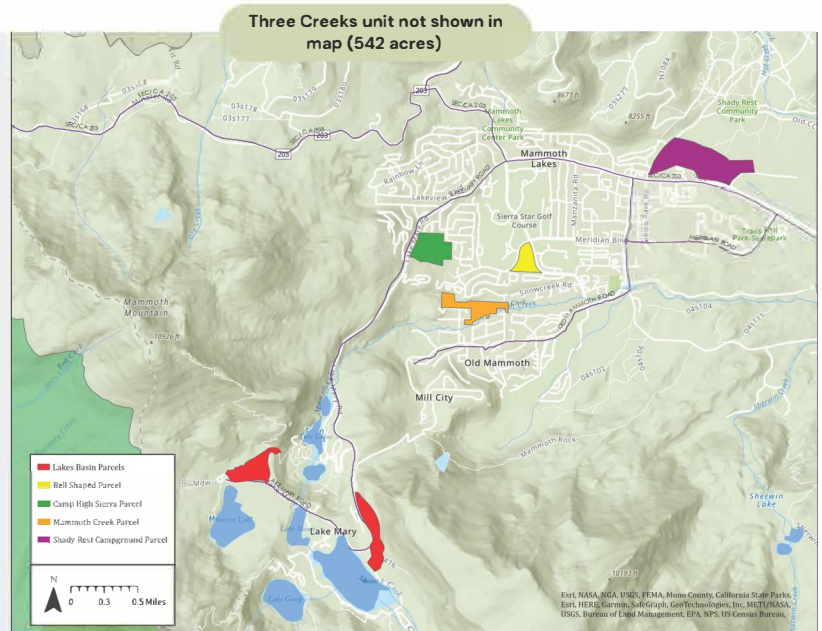
### Treatment Units

Through CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant Program funding and in partnership with Inyo National Forest, Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Lakes Fire Department, City of Los Angeles, and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, Whitebark Institute will be conducting fuels reduction on INF and non-federal units during summer 2023 (view map). Treatments of the 765 acres will include the removal of live, dead, and infested trees with mechanical equipment to increase stand vigor and reduce future tree mortality induced by tree competition for water. Units implementation might be delayed due to extreme winter and soil saturation.

community meetings  
july-august

In person and online meetings will be hosted to discuss project details with homeowners and community members for the non-federal parcels.

forest treatments  
august-november



ESCCRP: Phase I 2023 Treatment Units Overview Map

Forestry Workforce Policy Brief



READ THE REPORT

## Local Workforce



The need to catalyze workforce development efforts through regional economic development efforts supported by the State is another urgent priority. Building a workforce is imperative to getting the work completed now that the funding is flowing.



Funding for this project provided by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's Forest Health Program.

The Forest Health Program is a part of California Climate Investments (CCI), a statewide program that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing GHG emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment—particularly in disadvantaged communities.

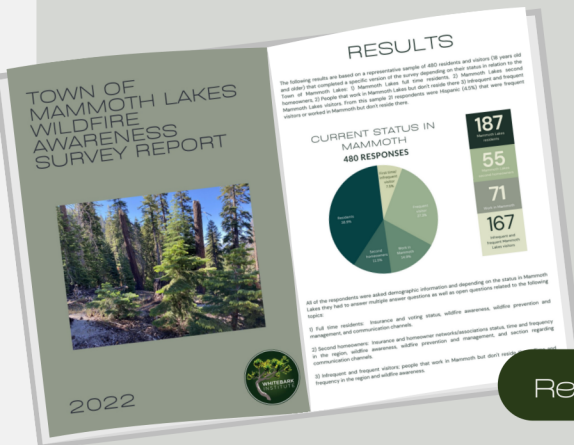


# Outreach & Education



## Wildfire awareness survey report

We would like to share with you the results of the survey applied at the end of 2022. The findings provide an insight into what full time residents, second homeowners, visitors and people that work in the Town of Mammoth think about wildfires and prevention measures, helping to set the base for the development of outreach and education content.



[Read report](#)

Look forward to a **summer schedule packed** full of events, workshops, talks and trivia!  
Together, we are building resilience and becoming **Fire Adapted Communities.**

**FireWorks**  
EDUCATOR WORKSHOP  
20-21  
MAY 2023

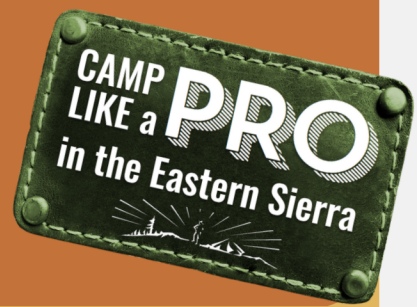
FREE hands on training & classroom-ready resources

After nearly two years of work Whitebark is bringing the Missoula Fireworks Program to the eastern Sierra!

This is an awesome opportunity to learn how to teach applicable real world science of fire ecology to kids growing up here who regularly experience wildfire events.

Please share invitation.

[LEARN MORE](#)



## Wildfire prevention education campaign

Our Eastern Sierra communities reside in the wildland urban interface, so it is vital that visitors and residents understand the importance of wildfire safety and preparation. Through a generous outreach grant from CalFire, we will be partnering with collaborators of the Camp Like a Pro campaign to bring wildfire awareness and prevention measures to our recreating population of Inyo, Mono and Alpine counties over the next three years.

Residents will be given the resources they need to learn how to form FireWise neighborhoods by creating defensible space and hardening their homes thanks to a second year of funding from Southern CA Edison.