

Sierra Nevada Landscape Investment Strategy and Pilot Program

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Overview

1. Recap program goals and evaluation process
2. Review pilot program results and initial lessons learned
3. Discuss next steps for landscape-scale investment in SNC region

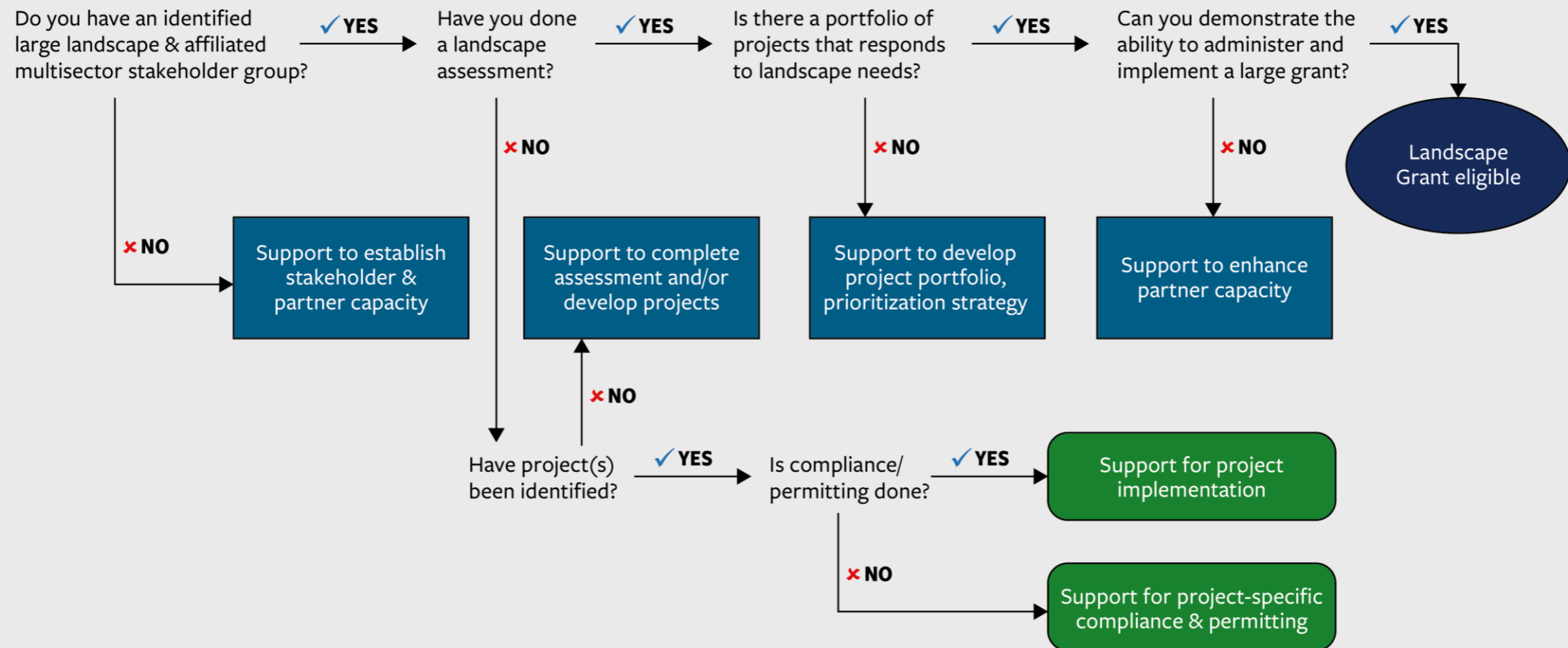
Background

- SNC developed Landscape Investment Strategy (LIS) to map out how SNC will scale up investment
- Discussed the strategy last year with SCALE partners
- SNC board authorized staff to launch Landscape Grant Pilot Program in September 2022
- Worked with agency partners to fund and develop evaluation process

Landscape Investments

Complement other SNC programs

Pathways to a Landscape Grant



SNC PROGRAMS



WIP Capacity Building



WIP Local Assistance



WIP Landscape Grants

Goals of Pilot Program

- Pool sources of funding
- Streamline administrative procedures
- Fund more cohesive projects over longer timeframe
- Test connecting Task Force data products to local managers
- Improve project outcome evaluation

Funding Partners

- CAL FIRE (\$7 mill) funds will go directly to partnership
- SNC (\$2 mill) to support recreation and tourism planning projects in landscape
- USFS (\$1 mill) flow through SNC to partnership for wildfire risk reduction/forest health implementation

Evaluation Process

- Phase 1 – eligibility review :
 - Focus on partnership
 - Prioritized capacity
 - 18 partnerships through region considered

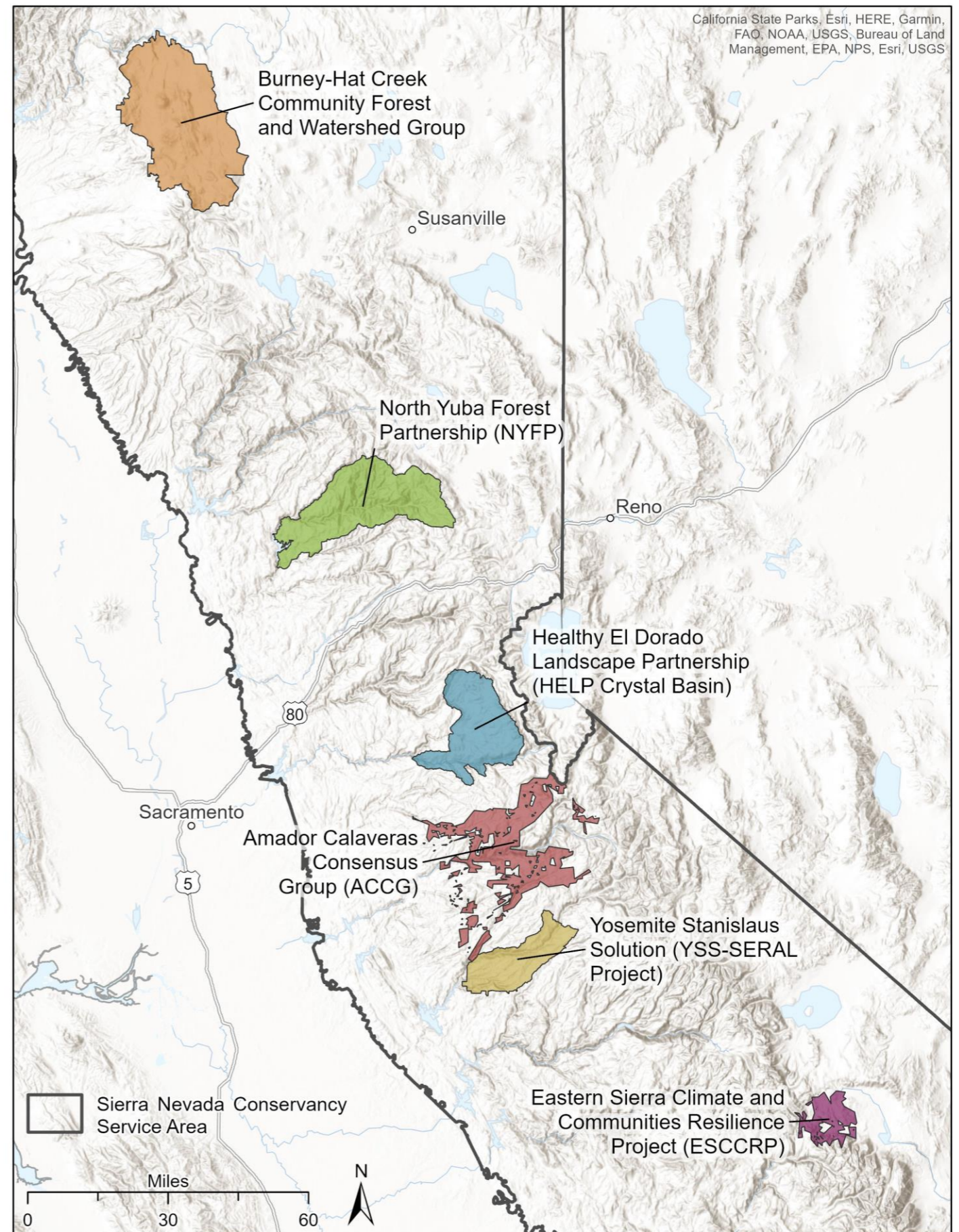
- Phase 2 -- portfolio and landscape review:
 - Focus on potential project benefits and landscape resources

Phase 1 Results - Ready Landscapes

Passing Scores:

- Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)*
- Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group*
- Eastern Sierra Climate and Communities Resilience Project (ESCCRP)*
- Healthy Eldorado Landscape Partnership (HELP)*
- North Yuba Forest Partnership (NYFP)
- Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (YSS)

*Finalists selected for phase 2 evaluation



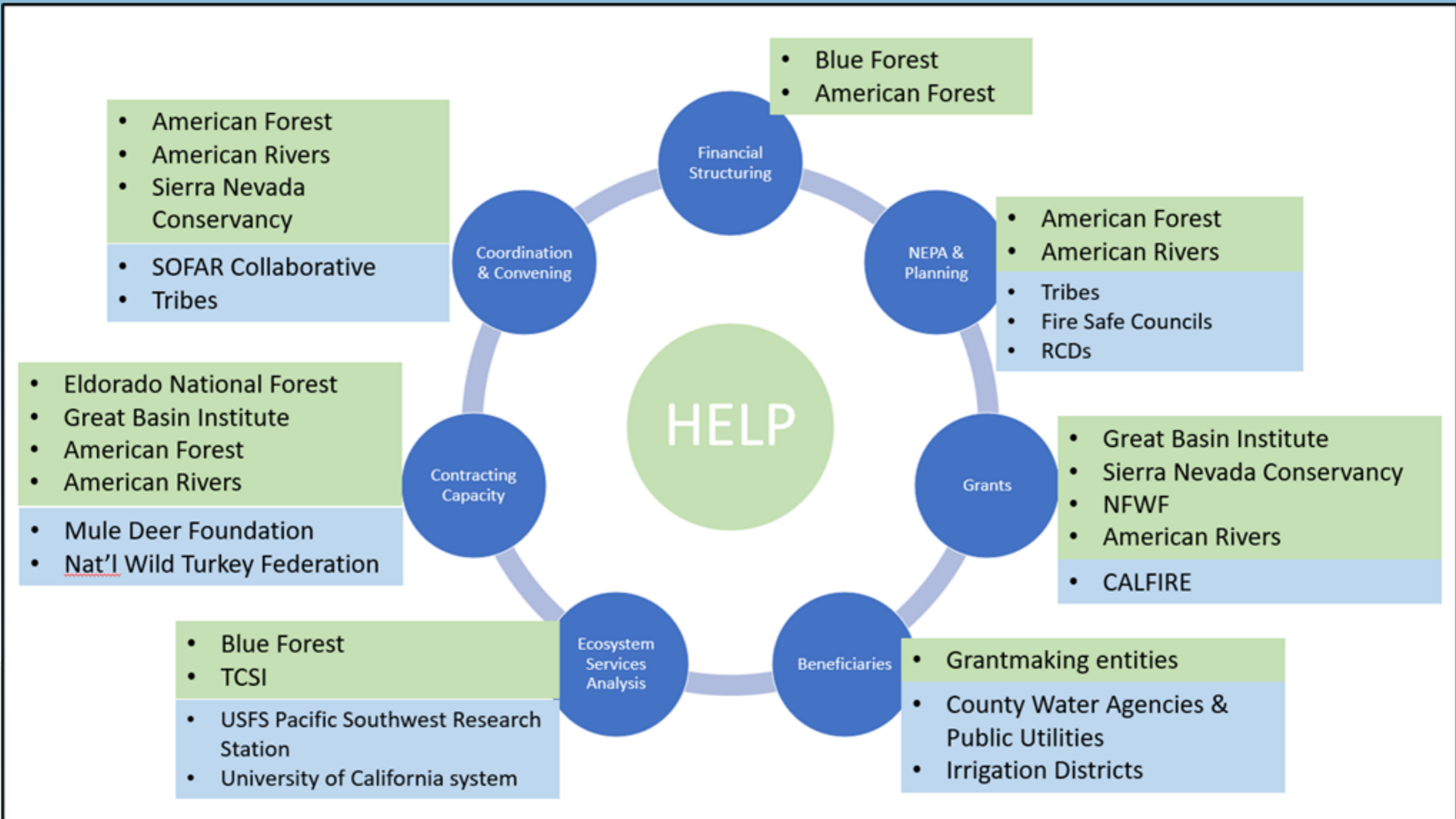
Phase 2 Process

- Qualitative assessment – interviews mostly
- Project area analysis – overlay priority maps from USFS and CAL FIRE, understand if treatments make sense
- Quantitative – link evaluation criteria to pillars of resilience then compare landscapes based on SNC regional data

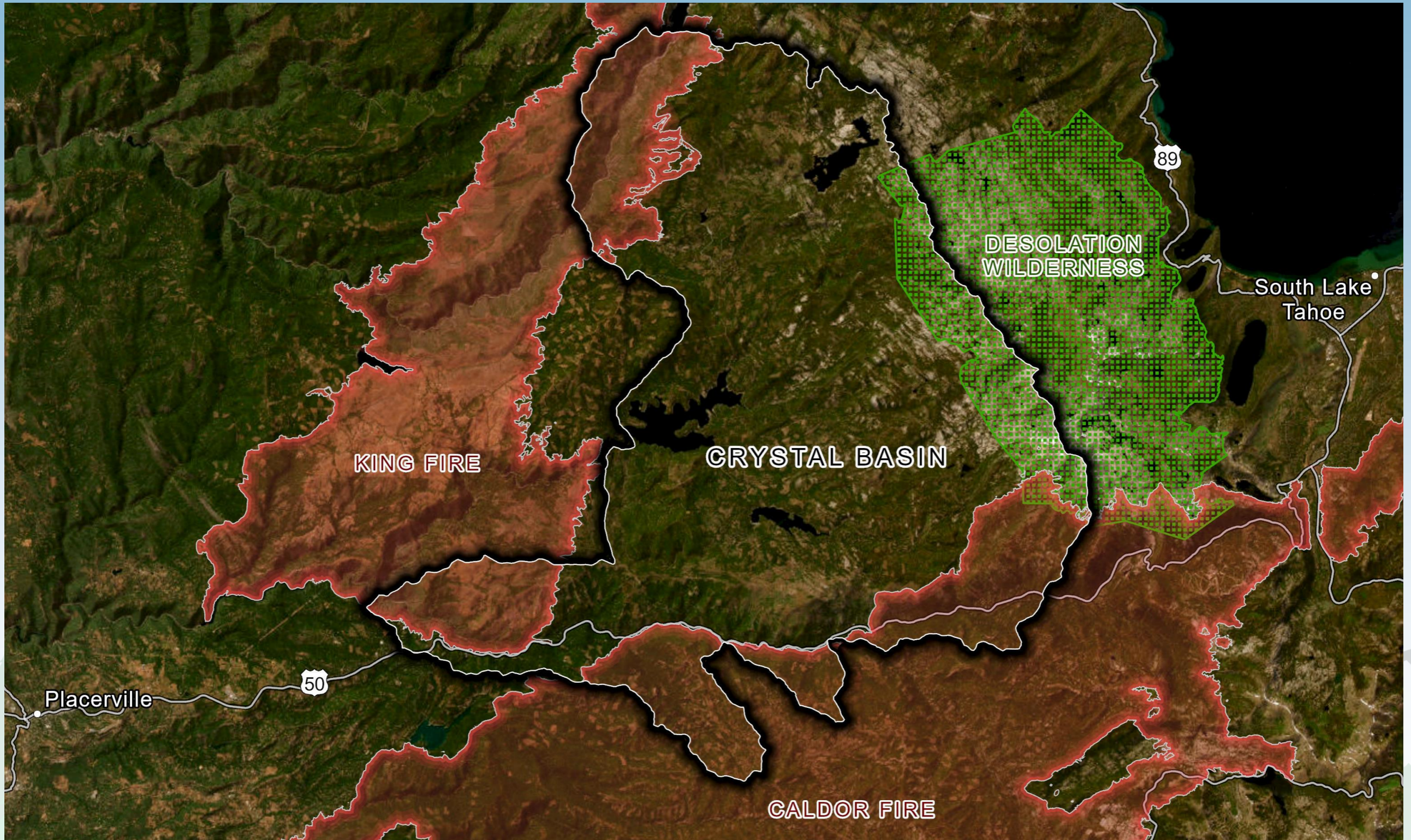
Results – HELP/Crystal Basin

- USFS, SNC, and CAL FIRE jointly recommended HELP
- Highly capable partnership with Great Basin Institute to serve as fiscal sponsor
- Landscape aligns well with funding opportunities and agency priorities including USFS 10-year strategy
- 7300 acres NEPA ready projects with total cost over \$23 million

HELP Structure



Crystal Basin

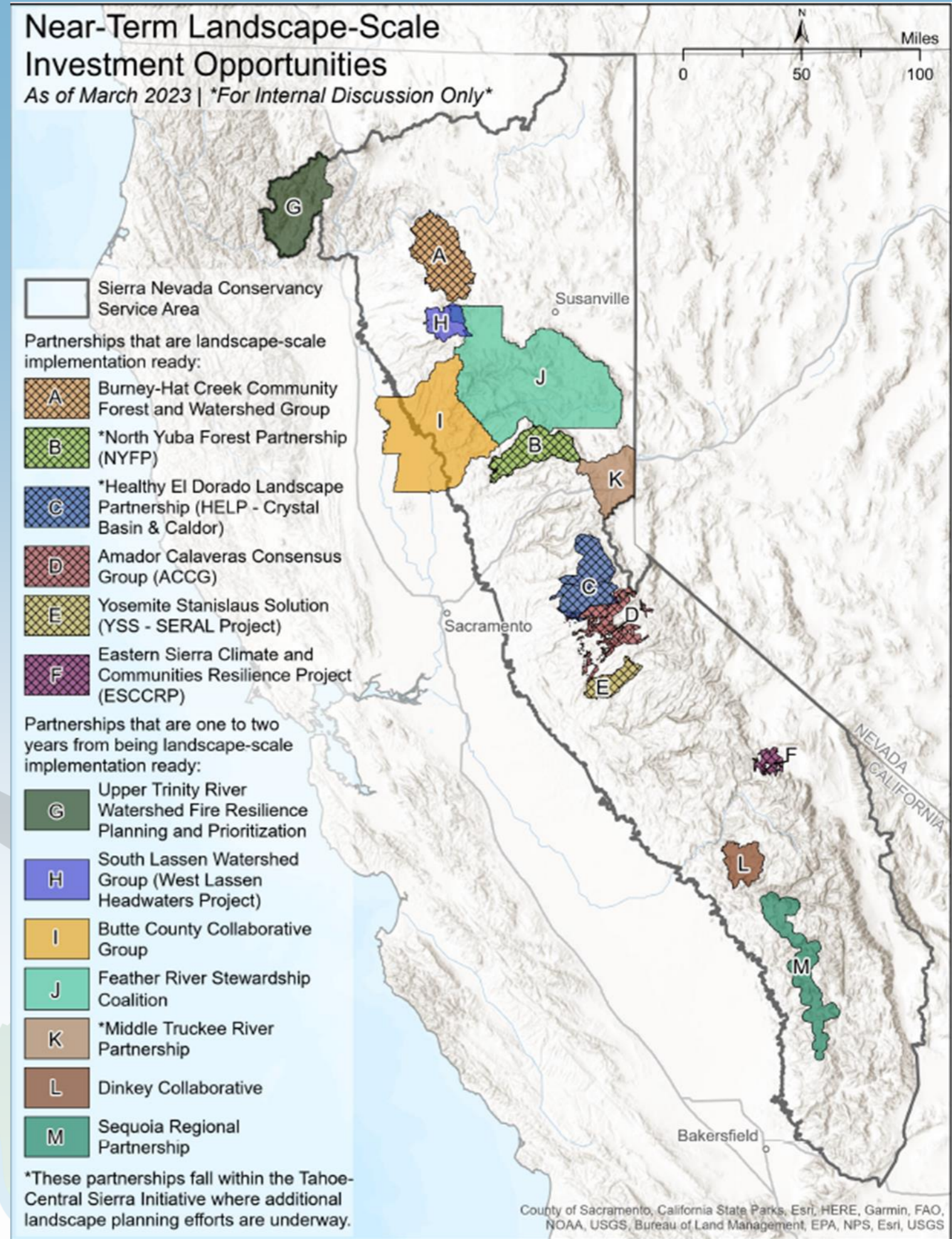


Initial Lessons Learned

- Pooling and coordinating funding is difficult – administrative barriers remain an issue and programs aren't designed for this scale of investment
- Data and decision making – likely best for validation and storytelling rather than evaluation. Projects are occurring in important places
- Low burden on applicants, but streamlining and timeline still to be determined
- A lot of value in assessing partnership readiness to inform capacity building effort

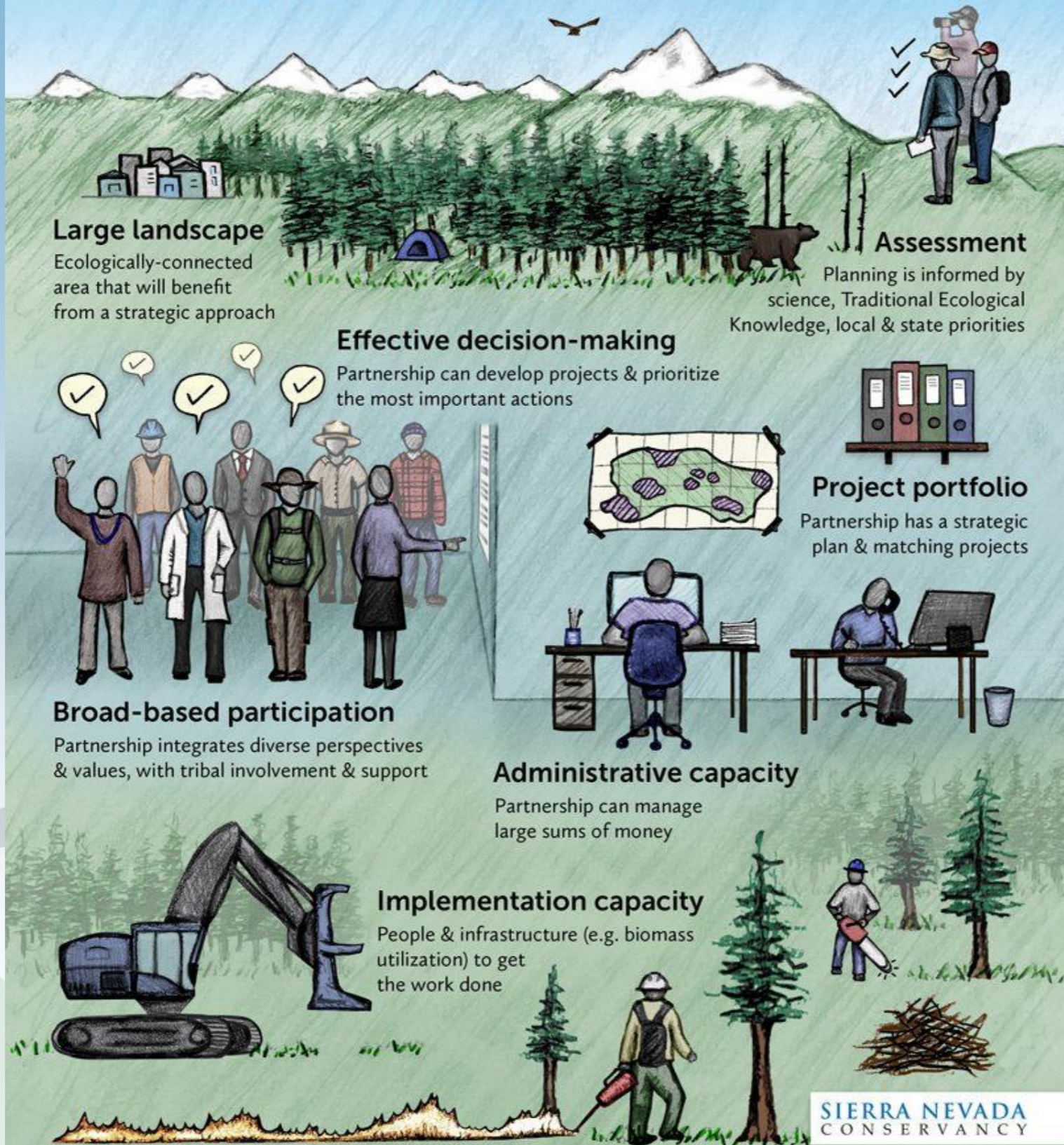
Next Steps:

- Continue to focus on readiness as primary frame
- Use RFFC to identify partnership needs and address them
- Communicate results from pilot program to inform funding alignment



LANDSCAPE GRANT READINESS

What it takes to work at scale



Questions/Discussion

- Questions on results or process?
- Reflections on our “readiness first” framing?
- Ideas on how SNC can support partnerships in scaling up?
- What kind of \$ to pool and align?