



COMPREHENSIVE WILDFIRE RESILIENCE  
*Joseph Nordlinger – CEO | Napa Firewise*





- About Napa Firewise
- Napa Firewise Centralized Model
- Integrated Funding
- Valley Stewards 10-Year Initiative
- Mapping & Integration
- Protecting Napa Valley

## Mission:

Our mission is to reduce the risk and impacts of wildfires by utilizing fire fuel reduction and community education PROGRAMS in Napa County. We are achieving this through Fire Safe Councils, through local, state and federal grants and by educating our communities on topics SUCH as defensible space, home hardening, and fire preparedness.

## Stats:

Accomplished through 2025 – largely with public funds. Over 5,000 total acres have been treated across various treatment methods.



**2235 ACRES**

of vegetation thinned or removed to serve as a fuel break



**999 ACRES**

of vegetation thinned by animal grazing



**198 MILES**

of dozer line fuel breaks



**324 MILES**

of roadside vegetation thinning



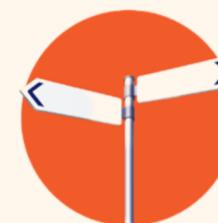
**231 HOMES**

Defensible Space costs defrayed



**20 FIREWISE**

Communities recognized by FIREWISE USA, more underway



**2100**

reflective address signs installed

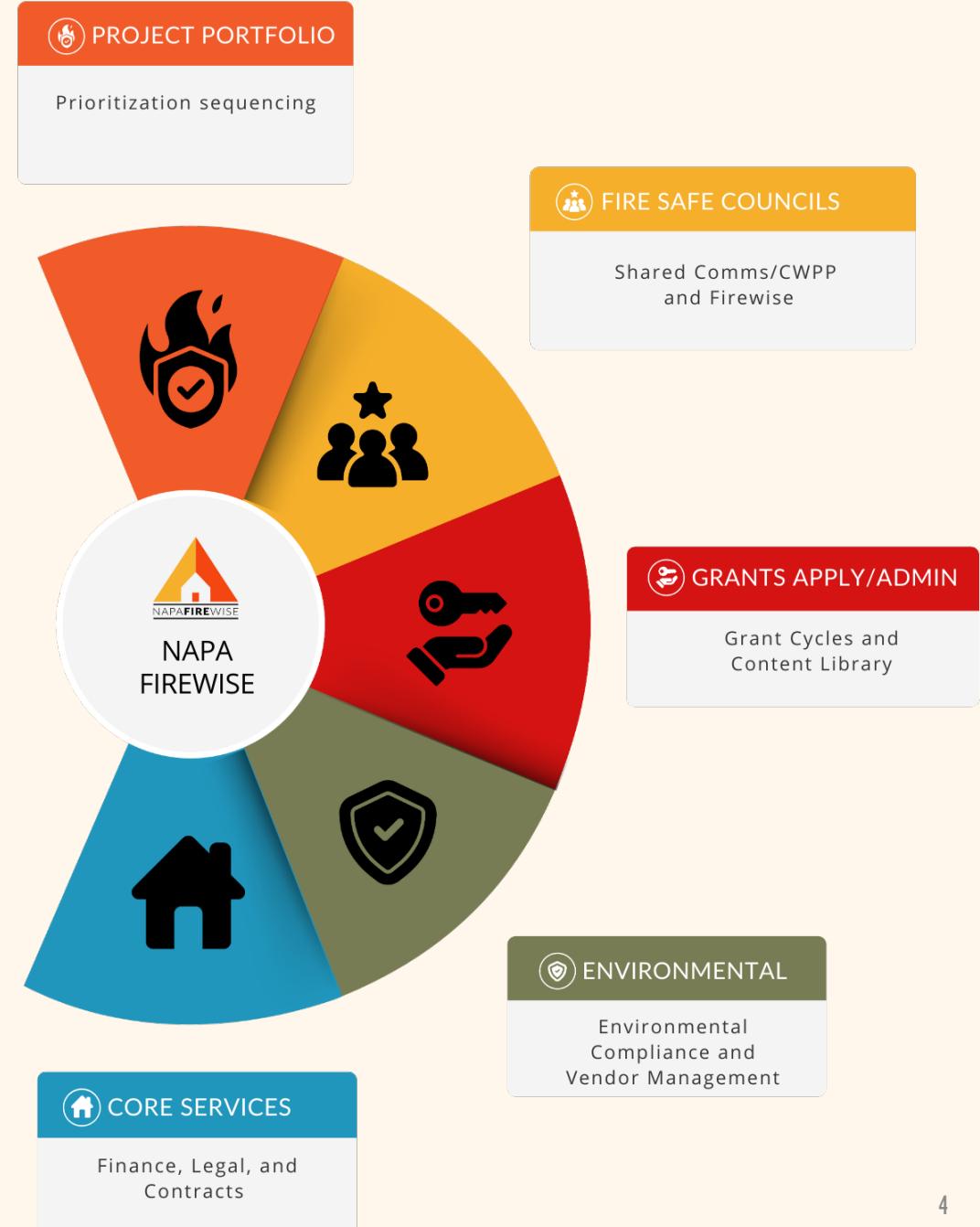
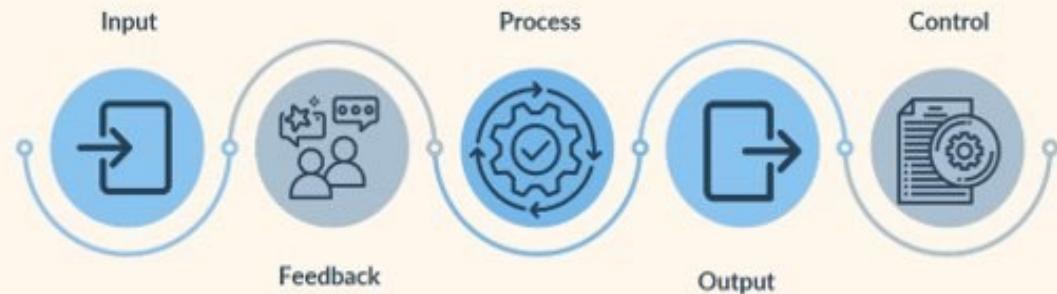


**23 FIRE SAFE**

COUNCILS  
Local community action supported

# Structural Efficiency

*Vertical Integration through the Napa Firewise model.  
Delivering on the entire resilience value chain*



# INTEGRATED FUNDING

## *Foundation of Achievable Fire Resilience*

Wildfire resilience depends on **shared investment** — no single landowner, agency, or donor can address the challenge alone. NCFF's integrated funding model blends public, private, and philanthropic resources to close gaps and expand impact. Delivering all of this at scale means aligning shared self-interests.

### Three Funding Streams:

#### Public Funding

County contracts, state and federal grants, utility partnerships, and CAL FIRE programs

#### Private Investment

Landowner participation and cost-sharing for defensible space and fuel treatments

#### Philanthropic Support

Donor contributions that connect efforts across boundaries and sustain innovation

SHARED INVESTMENT = COORDINATED ACTION → EFFICIENT INVESTMENT → RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

# INTEGRATED LAND SERVICES



*As a nonprofit, we secure and manage grant and county funding, coordinate closely with CAL FIRE, local fire authorities, and provide fee-for-service planning and project management for private landowners.*

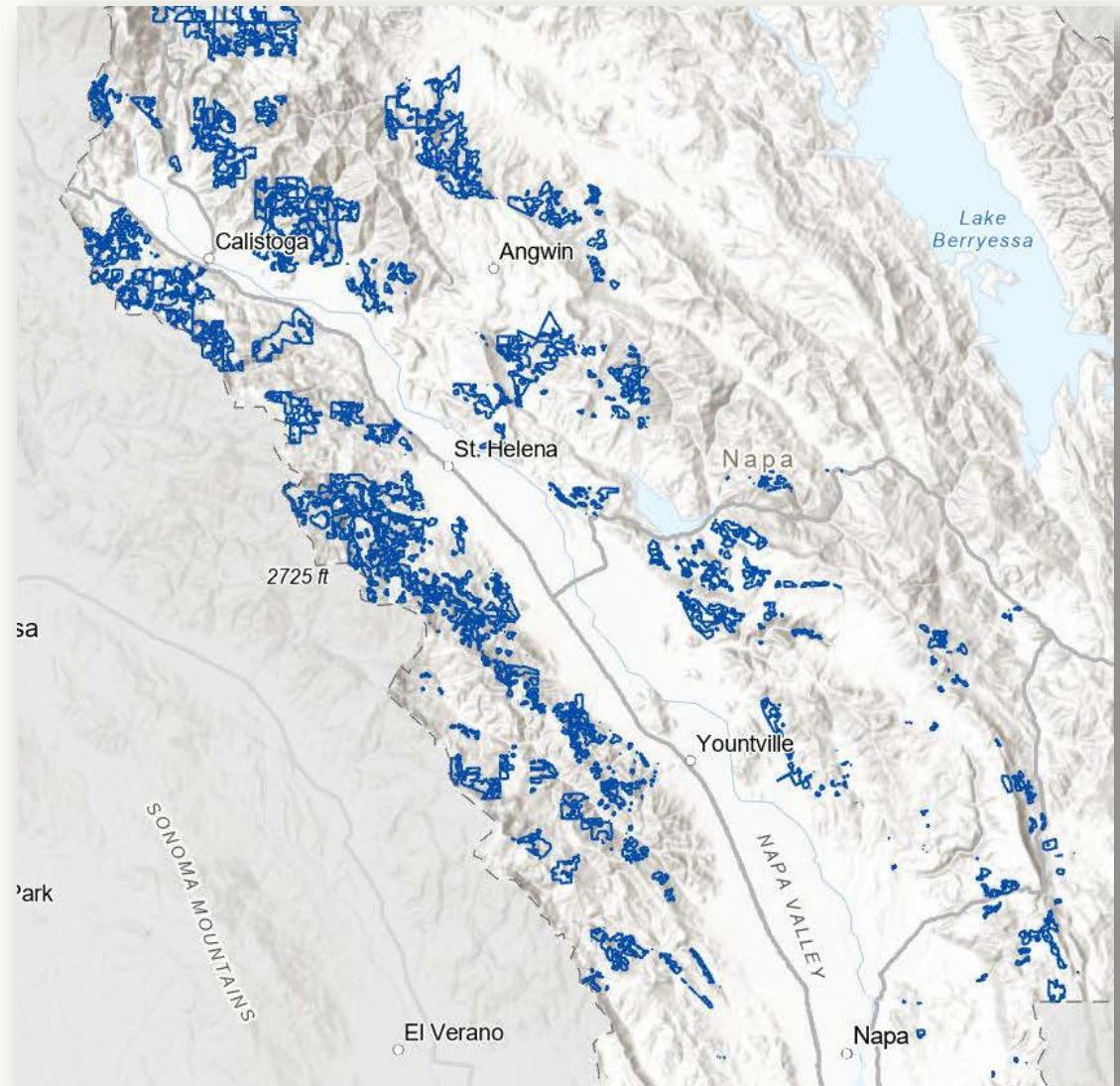
*By serving as a single coordinating platform, we reduce fragmentation across agencies, nonprofits, and landowners while using public and private dollars as force multipliers—maximizing impact for funders, improving access and outcomes for residents, and enabling wildfire resilience projects to move from concept to sustained, on-the-ground results across public and private lands.*

*NCFF also leverages other resilience programs like EQIP and NBFIP to avoid fragmented resilience*

# The challenge ahead

Despite public grants and agency support, an **estimated 50,000 acres of forested land remain vulnerable and untreated**—especially on private lands on the western side of the county where the values at risk are greatest. These rural areas threaten distinct suburban population centers.

- Private forested lands are the largest untreated threat. In Napa County, to treat the most topographically strategic 20,000 acres, \$50 million in landscape-level forest health treatments is needed.
- Insurance companies are **walking away because they have no way of knowing where resilience exists**. Landowners without proven, active mitigation are finding insurance to be unaffordable or unavailable.



# THE VALLEY STEWARDS INITIATIVE

The Valley Stewards Initiative, developed in close coordination with CAL FIRE LNU and dozens of insurance carriers, strengthens Napa County's wildfire preparedness by guiding investments on private land and mapping critical assets for firefighters. Early implementation revealed strong landowner readiness, meaning targeted funding will deliver greater impact. This initiative will exceed our target 100+ Enhanced Resilience Sites while increasing the return on public and private dollars.

## Types of Landowners



- Already invested
- Can do more with guidance
- Need support

## Funding Pathways



- \$ Landowner Investments
- \$ Grants & Cost-Share
- \$ Philanthropy/Donations

## Safer & Resilient Communities



Integrating resilience across parcels

# MAPPING RESILIENCY

## *Creating an Environment for Rapid Containment*

### Standardized Elements within an ERS:

The Valley Stewards Initiative is intended to standardize resilience elements and mapping, which is critical for tactical response and mutual aid. An ERS must be significant enough in size, 50+ acres, and include elements such as listed below, but not limited to:



#### Access & Safety

- Roads & fuel breaks
- Turnarounds & trails
- Defensible space



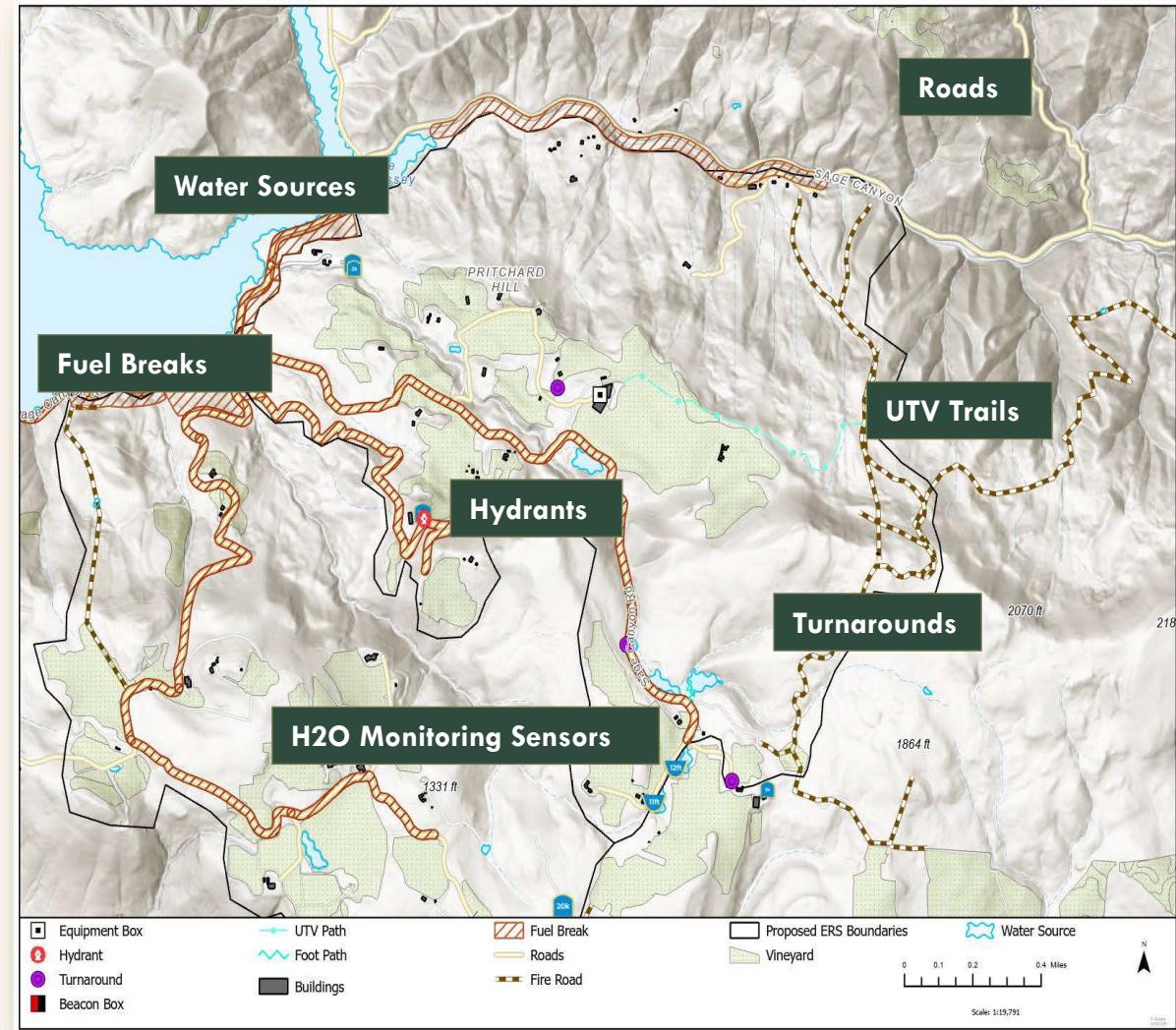
#### Critical Resources

- Hydrants, water sources and storage
- Redundant utility systems
- Water monitoring sensors



#### Monitoring & Communication

- Water monitoring sensors
- Signage
- Landing Zones



# FIREFIGHTER INTEGRATION

*Turning ERS into response advantage*

*This is where mitigation becomes operational advantage.*

## Tactical Response

ERS features are visible to firefighters and Incident Command during incidents.

## Operational Planning

ERS data supports pre-fire planning and faster containment decisions.



# INCIDENT CASE STUDIES

NAPA **FIRE** WISE



## Toll Fire: July 2024

- occurred in area adjacent to an enhanced resilience site constructed by Napa Firewise
- included a strategic ridge top fuel break along with critical access and water
- The fire was rapidly contained with no loss of structures
- CAL FIRE was able to stage along the containment line and use it as a fallback line.
- Firefighters utilized the site to call in retardant drops, and the fire was held to 40 acres with no structures lost.
- NCFF critical dozer containment lines and the enhanced resilience of residents resulted in prompt containment.



## Long Fire (Brand): August 2025

- The site of the fire is a home and winery in an ERS that is under development.
- The landowner was prepared and had invested in additional water, water conveyance, fuel reduction and access
- Surrounding resilience elements were mapped into Tablet Command.
- Local firefighters had been familiarized about this ERS being developed along Long Ranch Road.
- Responding firefighters knew where resilience elements were located which resulted in rapid containment at under 5 acres. No loss occurred.

## Pickett Fire/Dutch Henry: August 2025

- Multiple containment and fuel reduction projects conducted by Napa Firewise contributed to holding fire and driving more rapid containment.
- Several surrounding neighborhoods are under development as ERS locations.
- Surrounding resilience elements were mapped into Tablet Command.
- Local firefighters utilized Napa Firewise and landowner data to drive containment operations and quickly executed containment efforts.
- Local Battalion Chiefs had been familiarized about these resilience assets and areas where ERS locations were being developed along Dutch Henry, Ink Grade, Oat Hill Mine, Aetna Springs and others.



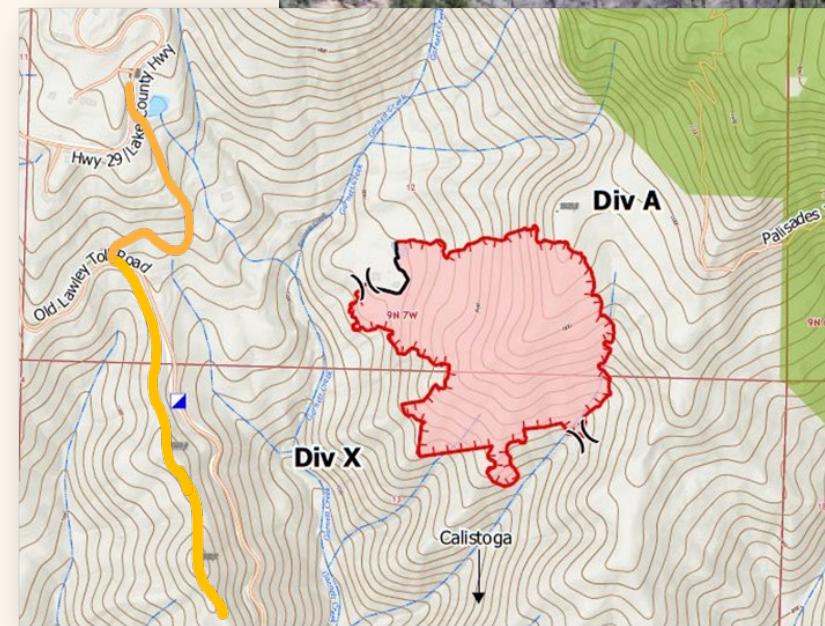
# TOLL FIRE CASE STUDY

NAPA **FIRE** WISE

The development of the Valley Stewards Initiative is intended to standardize resilience elements and mapping, which is critical for tactical response and mutual aid. CAL FIRE has worked with NCFF on the previous maps to identify the highest priority Enhanced Resiliency areas.

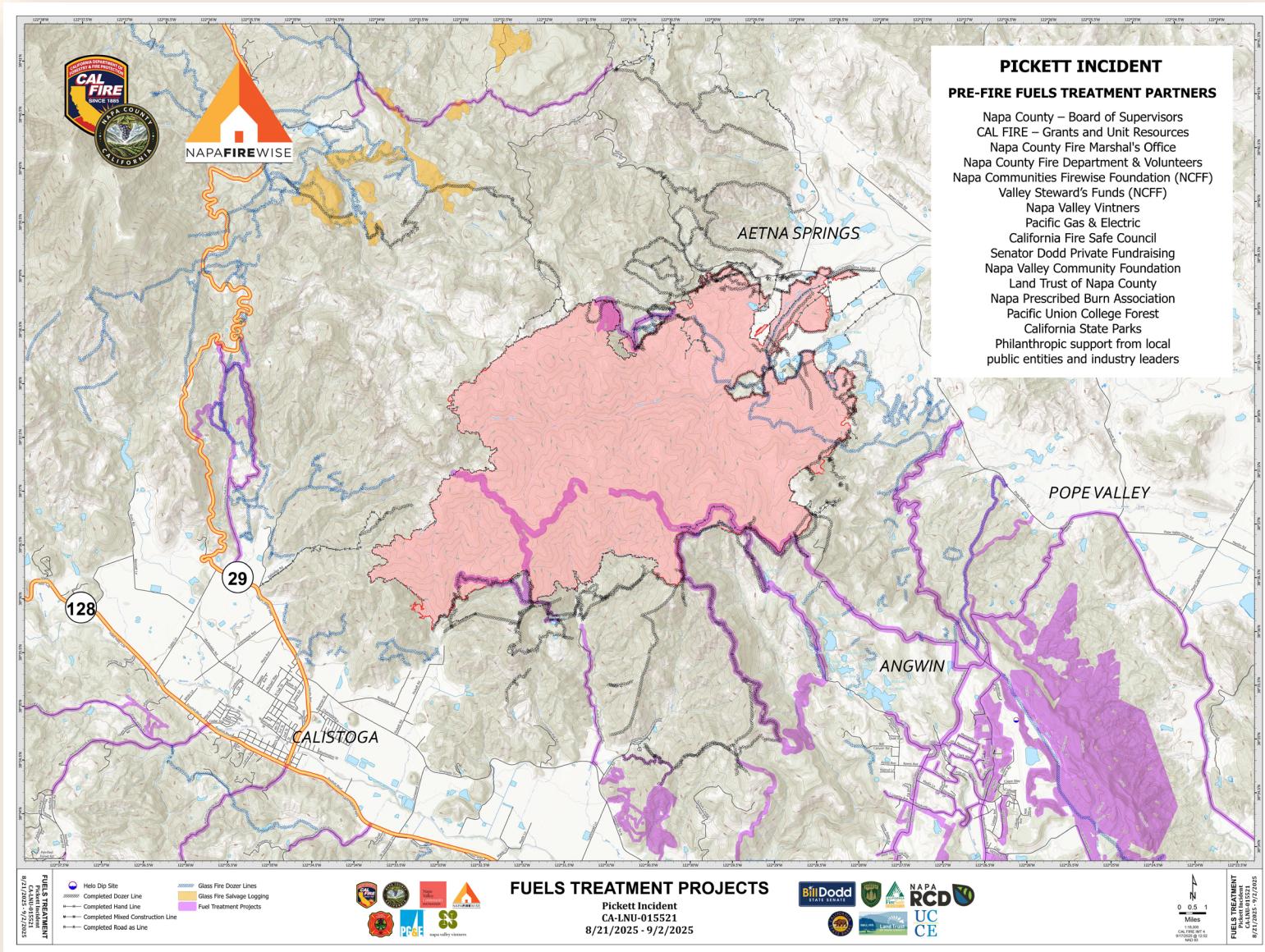
This initiative ensures the following:

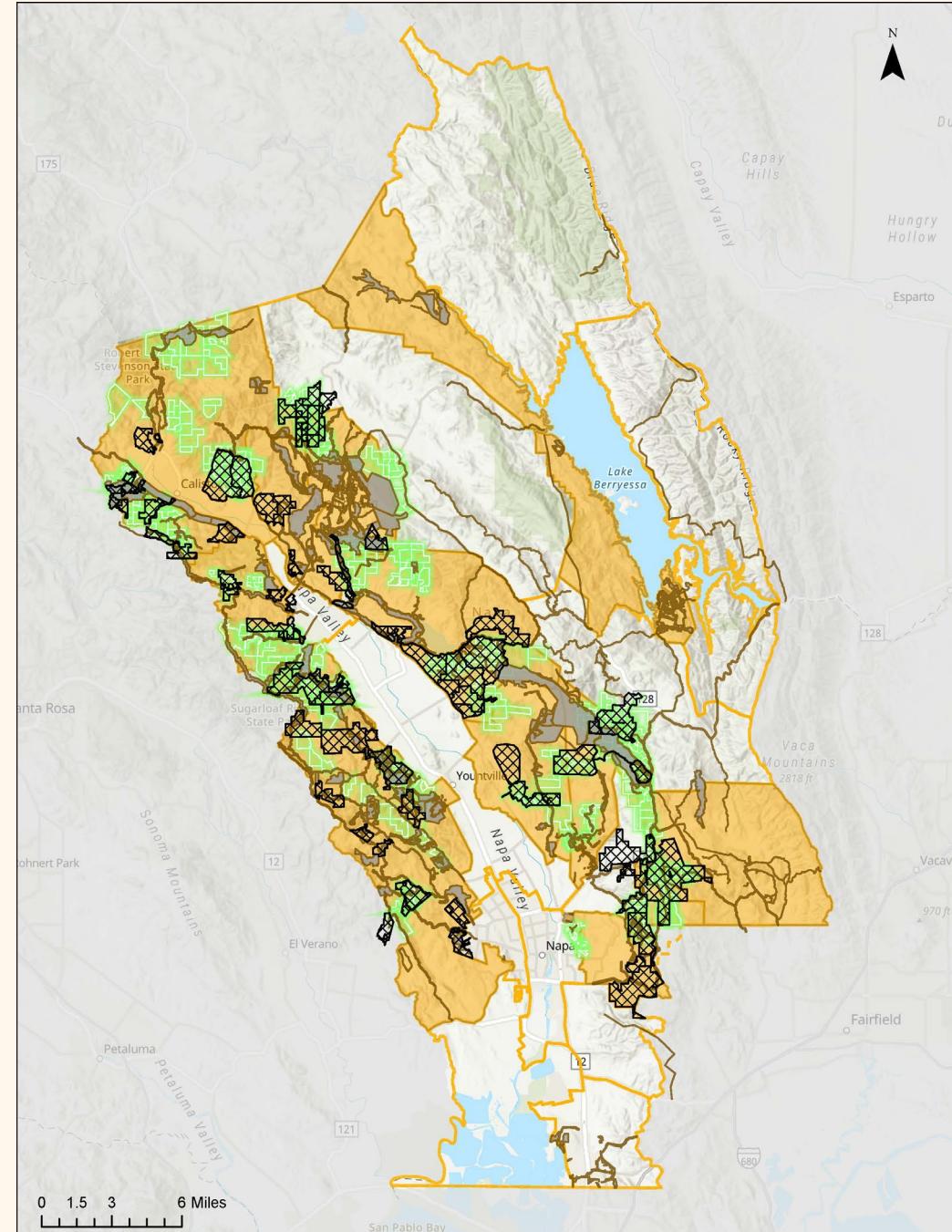
- Commitment to maintenance with capacity to annually designate
- Ensure the appropriate treatment prescription is implemented
- Implement critical elements ahead of wildfires so they can be utilized during incidents
- Targeted reduction of fuels in high-risk areas



Toll Fire containment boundary highlighting ridgeline fuel break implemented in 2024 across three landowners and funded by Napa Valley Vintners.

# PICKETT FIRE CASE STUDY





# COUNTY WIDE PROTECTION

*Together, NCFF's leadership, project work, and Enhanced Resiliency Sites form a countywide system that protects everyone, not just individual properties.*

Mapped areas are topographically strategic to provide the highest countywide impact.

Enhanced Resiliency Sites connect into a cohesive system across the county providing layering buffers to disrupt fire progress.

NCFF grant funded project work in combination with The Valley Stewards Initiative and fee for service projects provide comprehensive resilience.

Even residents **without large landholdings** benefit from reduced fire intensity and more rapid containment.

# PUBLIC BENEFIT

*The Valley Stewards Initiative was designed through the lens of first responders, insurers, and landowners to deliver shared, public-facing outcomes.*

## Firefighter & Response

*Firefighter Safety & Rapid Containment*

- ERS and adjacent treatments influence fire behavior where responders engage
- Real-time visibility supports safer tactics during incidents
- Improved conditions for faster initial and extended attack direct and indirect attack

## Insurance & Risk Reduction

*Insurance Stability & Market Response*

- Early insurer engagement has already supported multiple policy renewals
- Insurers recognize risk reduction beyond ERS boundaries
- Landscape-scale mitigation supports broader coverage and market competition

## Integrated Community Engagement

*Aligned Collaboration*

- Landowner coordination
- Integrated work at scale
- Democratizing access to resources
- Intelligent use of philanthropy for community benefit

# CHANNELS TO SCALE

## *State/National*

The Enhanced Resilience Site (ERS) framework is designed to scale beyond Napa County.

Napa Firewise is ready for active discussions to extend ERS across CAL FIRE units statewide.

Existing statewide and national networks provide immediate pathways for adoption.

## State Channels



CAL FIRE Unit Command



California Fire Safe Council



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF  
RESOURCE  
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

CA Resource  
Conservation Districts  
(98)

## National Channels



National Association of  
Conservation Districts (3000)



THANK YOU!



Let's Connect

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