



**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**  
**Action, Implementation and Mitigation (AIM)**  
**Updated September 2025**

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**What do you expect to be the average size of grants and how much does COCO have available per round?**

Every round of funding is different, and the amount of grants vary from the minimum (\$10,000) to the maximum amount (\$75,000). Generally, COCO has a total of \$ 400,000.00 - \$500,000 per round available.

**Does COCO provide awards to grant applicants for dollar amounts different from the requested amount?**

Yes. There have been projects in the past in which we have funded only a partial amount of the overall grant request. This is dependent on available funding and the quality of your application.

**How many proposals can be submitted at a time?**

An organization can put in as many proposals as they want, but only one project will be funded per fiscal organization. The review committee focuses on the quality of each application, specifically if the project addresses building local capacity and identifies gaps in community wildfire mitigation or is at an organizational tipping point.

**How many applications do you typically receive vs. how many do you fund? How competitive is the AIM grant?**

We typically receive 30 to 45 concept papers with every funding round. Selection of awarded programs are dependent on the quality of an applicant's program proposal, and competition is dependent on the quality of applications that come in that round, in the past we have generally awarded between 4 and 8 per round. We expect this round to be competitive.

**Are all applications competing nationally, or just within a certain geography like a state or USFS region? Will COCO fund more than one application in that same geography?**

AIM is a national program and therefore, AIM Grant applications are competing at that scale. COCO may fund more than one application in the same geographic region depending on the quality of the applications and how compelling a case is made that AIM funding will move the organizations past a tipping point. We urge applicants to coordinate and collaborate on efforts within a region where feasible. Receiving separate applications from different organizations working on risk reduction in the same area raises questions regarding collaborative efforts.

**Are adjustments in the original concept paper permitted, or expected in response to COCO comments?**

Yes, if invited to move from the Concept Paper to the full AIM Application, you may receive feedback from the Concept Paper Review Committee. You are not only allowed to adjust your proposal based on this feedback but encouraged to do so. An overall project theme change is not permitted and may result in a lower ranking for your competitive application.

**Would you differentiate between "pure" mitigation projects and other preparedness, suppression activities such as funding cisterns, adopting regulations (which can't be guaranteed) or post-fire rehab work?**

AIM funds are specifically set for pre-fire mitigation work. Cisterns and equipment specific to firefighting are not allowable under the AIM grant program. AIM cannot support any suppression activities or post-fire rehab work. If you are looking to adopt locally produced wildfire regulations (i.e. WUI Codes and Ordinances), an AIM Concept Paper can be made under the Planning Category, however, please explain how adopting these regulations will advance your programs and eventually lead to more mitigation work on the ground.

**Can work be done on State lands and could training (i.e. non-productive work) be done on Federal land? A State parcel surrounded by private land.**

AIM cannot fund any work on federal land. In general, State-owned lands are eligible for other funding sources. Funding to support training on federal lands is fine, with appropriate approvals.

**Please discuss the homeowner's match requirement.**

COCO expects private landowners to financially support mitigation work on their property with a 50% cost share. This is a best practice that is meant to increase resident ownership and long-term project maintenance. We understand that in some instances homeowners cannot meet this requirement and are willing to be flexible on a case-by-case basis. Please reach out to our AIM Team for more details.

**In addition to volunteer hours, does AIM expect a cash match from organizations?** Providing cash match from organizations highlights the investments, collaboration and commitment from diverse resources, but it is possible to use in-kind contributions for the match obligation. We do not require

you to provide a certain amount of cash match unless proposing fuel reduction projects on private, residential land. In this case, homeowners must provide a 50% cash match contribution to the mitigation occurring on their property.

**Would there be a cash match required for community-based projects (e.g. where there isn't an individual homeowner involved but, say, an HOA)?**

Yes. We expect a cash match for community-based projects, however, if your project is on HOA land or community property, the cash match component can come from HOA dues and/or additional sources besides individual homeowners.

**Does the 50/50 match apply to an already free program that requires homeowners to do the work (e.g. a chipping program that has specifications for chipping pile size that homeowners build themselves)? Do we need to track that in-kind time?**

The 50/50 match applies to an already free program. You will need to track the in-kind homeowner time that applies to your 1:1 match. Reach out to our team if you need assistance with volunteer tracking.

**On large tracts of land (160 or more acres), is there still a required 50% match? I see this as a hindrance to doing large scale mitigation.**

COCO understands that a 50% cash match from a landscape level treatment may be hard for a single landowner to take on. If you are submitting a Concept Paper for a landscape scale project with a single landowner, please explain how you will acquire the 1:1 match for the entire project and other ways the landowner or community can match this project (e.g. using Title III, in-kind match, equipment usage, etc.). Additionally, because the AIM program is focused on supporting communities, we expect you to describe how the project will benefit more than one individual property owner.

**What criteria do you need to determine a low-income community?** COCO will make exceptions to the 50% cash match for individuals with economic and health burdens. Applicants must describe the communities' needs and the process for assessing the need for reduced or no-cash match from a homeowner who falls within this description. Applications assisting low-income community members in high-risk wildfire areas **still require a proposal with 1:1 match for the AIM Award.**

**What sort of documentation/justification would you like to see in the Concept Paper for low-income communities and lower match requirements?**

- Please explain whether this is a new or existing program for your organization, as well as how you are determining the resident's eligibility (income level, disability, etc.) and what documentation you are requiring from them.
- Provide your outreach plan to engage these residents.
- Description of how you are determining that the residents own their homes (and can authorize treatment), etc.
- A map showing the area is indeed considered to be at high risk of wildfire.

**Please provide some criteria for implementing cost-share programs.**

As with any cost-share program description, we also want to see the specific details of the program such as:

- Who will conduct the assessment and provide recommendations of what needs to be done?
- Will your organization provide the mitigation crew, or would you hire a contractor?
- If you hire a contractor, what is your process to vet them?
- What are your requirements if the residents are allowed to choose the contractor? Is more than one bid required? Must they take the low bid, or can they choose the contractor they are comfortable with?
- Who inspects the completed work?
- Do you require any volunteer time towards the project or a minimal cash contribution?
- Are you requesting a full or partial waiver of the homeowner's contribution?
- Do you require any home hardening efforts (removing needles from gutters and roofs, moving firewood, etc.) or just the creation of defensible space?
- How many acres do you hope to treat?
- Where will you derive additional match resources to be sure you meet the 1:1 match requirement?

**Should all projects have some direct tie to hazardous fuels reduction even if it's a capacity building/personnel focused application?**

The short answer is yes. If you are requesting personnel capacity, that person is ideally either performing work on the ground, maybe as a mitigation specialist or forester, or serves a support role performing tasks that allow other staff to focus on collaborative efforts or spend more time on the ground. Capacity building can also involve engaging a facilitator to coordinate a collaborative effort that would ultimately lead to hazardous fuels reduction.

**Would COCO look favorably at paying for partnership development between organizations that offer cost-share funding for fuel reduction treatments, or should it be capacity building only within our organization?**

The capacity building does not need to be just within your organization; however, it does need to be clear who is managing the funding, how decisions will be made on the expenditure, and who is responsible for providing the match.

**Do we need to show how we will maintain funding for the position in the future? Or can we identify that as part of our capacity needs as well?**

We recognize that it may be difficult, especially for grant-funded organizations, to know if they will be able to find funding to continue a position, but articulating known grant opportunities that you will apply for, or a financial promise from a county or city, should be provided when possible. Ideally, AIM is looking for something concrete as to how you will approach sustaining the position.

**What if the 1:1 cash match is coming from the town or organization's general fund? Do you still want to see individual property owner contributions?**

Yes. AIM's goal is to support and cultivate sustainable organizations, not provide free services to residents. Wildfire is an issue where we will be successful if we take the approach of, "We are all in this together." We all have a role to play AND a contribution to make.

**Do you fund planning efforts, such as a 5-year strategic organization plan that supports implementation of CWPP?**

We do support CWPP development and implementation; however, since project prioritization is supposed to be part of a completed CWPP, there would need to be compelling reasons to fund further planning efforts. Furthermore, a detailed description of what actions have been completed from a past CWPP (if your proposal intends to update one) is essential to understand why a new CWPP is needed.

**Could efforts from another capacity-building grant geared toward forest health and wildfire resilience be counted toward in-kind match for AIM? It is not an on-the-ground implementation grant, but a grant that supports that work along with partnership development and a landscape prioritization plan for other organizations on a regional scale.**

Yes. We are flexible on accepting match if it is not from another federal grant source and the program of work aligns with the proposed use of AIM funding and contractual timeline.

**Any chance of an exception to the \$5,000 equipment policy, for example, if a \$50,000 air curtain burner is what you really need to hit a tipping point?** There will not be any exception to the \$5,000 equipment category at this time. Equipment use can be used as match, for example if a truck is borrowed from a partner that can be match at the federally listed hourly rate. Equipment purchases can be used as match if it aligns with the scope of work and period of performance and is priced at \$10,000 per unit or less.

**Does the AIM grant support purchasing grazing animals such as goats?**

No, the grant could not help with the purchase of goats. This grant opportunity is not open to private businesses; it is intended to assist wildfire councils, fire departments and other nonprofit organizations involved in hazardous fuels reduction. However, if an organization had a project that involved using the goats for fuels reduction, that would be entertained as a proposal (through a nonprofit organization or other eligible entity). Residents and homeowner associations are not eligible to apply for the grant.

**Would the use of biochar be considered as a means to reduce forest fuels on an AIM-funded project?**

The use of biochar is not excluded from AIM funding; however, based on some concerns regarding the efficacy of biochar operations, we would want to see a very compelling justification for its use.