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Nevada Fire Chiefs Association & BLM Nevada – Wildfire Risk Reduction Program Webinar

Comprehensive Transcript – January 7, 2026 1:00PST

Speakers:

- **Kelli Baratti**, Executive Director, Nevada Fire Chiefs Association
- **Kelsey Griffiee**, Deputy State FMO of Fuels and Planning, BLM Nevada
- **Kelly Blackmon**
- **Various Attendees via Chat**

Opening Remarks

Kelli Baratti:

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Kelli Baratti Baratti. I'm the Executive Director for the Nevada Fire Chiefs Association.

We are excited to be kicking off our **second year** of the Wildfire Risk Reduction Program, a partnership between **BLM Nevada** and the **Nevada Fire Chiefs Association**. I want to introduce **Kelsey Griffiee Griffey**, my partner in crime. Go ahead, Kelsey Griffiee.

Program Overview

Kelsey Griffiee:

Thanks, Kelli Baratti. Hi, everyone. I'm Kelsey Griffiee Griffiee, Deputy State FMO of Fuels and Planning for BLM Nevada. This partnership with the Nevada Fire Chiefs has been incredible, helping us provide sub-awards to high-risk communities statewide.

After a successful inaugural year, we're excited for year two — and we are putting even more money on the table because of the strong response. Kelli Baratti, let me know if you need help with the PowerPoint. Back to you.

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Program Background

Kelli Baratti:

Thanks, Kelsey Griffie. Stand by — helping someone get logged in.

OK. For background, Kelsey Griffie approached me about forming this partnership, and after presenting it to the board of directors, we moved forward. We worked on this for a year and a half before launching last year.

We have a **five-year cooperative agreement** with BLM. I'm grateful to Kelsey Griffie and Tyson Gripp for their support and expertise. I'm very proud of the communities that participated in the first year — they were our “guinea pigs” and they accomplished incredible work.

I'll now share my screen and begin walking through the PowerPoint. Please place questions into the chat — we'll monitor them and answer either during or at the end.

Application Information

Kelli Baratti:

The **application period is live now** on the Nevada Fire Chiefs Association website.

- **Deadline:** March 1st (which is a Sunday)
→ Applications will be accepted through **Monday, March 2nd**.
- This year, the program **will not fund education/outreach projects**.
The goal is to prioritize **hazardous fuels reduction** and treat as many acres as possible.
- Available funding increased significantly to **\$847,665**.

All required documents are posted on the website in the order you'll need them. Contact me with any questions — if I don't know the answer, Kelsey Griffie or our subject matter experts can help.

Scoring Criteria

We provided detailed scoring information this year. Key weighted factors include:

1. Nexus to BLM Land (heavily weighted)

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Because funding originates from BLM, projects must demonstrate a connection.
Nexus = typically within 2 miles of BLM-managed land.

2. Cost Effectiveness

We consider:

- Cost per acre
- Method effectiveness
- Whether the treatment is the most reasonable approach for the area

3. Match / In-Kind Contribution

While **no match is required**, documenting any match or in-kind support strengthens the program and helps maintain flexibility in future federal guidance.

Examples of in-kind contributions:

- Staff time
- Use of agency equipment
- Partner organizations assisting
- Cost-sharing with other agencies

Kelsey Griffie:

BLM increasingly wants to see some form of in-kind contribution. Last year, most awardees provided match through waived indirect costs, staff time, or phased project contributions.

Questions from the Chat

Q1: Should education/outreach be incorporated within a fuels mitigation project?

Kelsey Griffie:

Not required. Avoid adding standalone education activities. Natural outreach (signage, notifying neighbors, etc.) is fine.

Kelli Baratti:

Agreed — share your good work with the community but focus funds on acres treated.

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Q2: How are multiple projects scored?

Kelli Baratti:

Each project is scored **individually**.

Kelsey Griffie:

If your community has multiple areas, let's talk one-on-one about how to structure that.

Q3: Are moderate-risk communities competitive?

Kelsey Griffie:

Yes. Risk maps don't tell the whole story — practitioners know where the real risks are. Don't limit yourself.

Q4: Can unincorporated towns (e.g., in Nye County) apply?

Kelli Baratti:

Yes — but applicants **must have a SAM.gov account**. If a VFD or town lacks one, they should partner with a county or city that has an active account.

Q5: Can tribes submit a single application for multiple communities?

Kelli Baratti:

Each entity with its own SAM.gov account can apply separately. One combined application is possible only if submitted under a **single** SAM.gov account holder.

Q6: What issues did Cold Creek HOA encounter with SAM.gov?

Kelli Baratti:

The SAM process is strict:

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- Requires a verifiable physical address (P.O. boxes not allowed)
- Undergoes multi-agency review, including Department of Defense
- Requires timely responses (72 hours–1 week)

Cold Creek struggled with completing these steps, but we're exploring support options.

Q7: Can equipment be used as cost share?

Kelsey Griffie:
Yes — document it clearly.

Q8: Does applying as one community vs. a valley cluster affect scoring?

Kelsey Griffie:
No. Just remember the **\$75,000 cap per project**.

Kelli Baratti:
Also consider bookkeeping challenges across combined communities.

Q9: What if you cannot meet the BLM Nexus requirement?

Kelsey Griffie:
You lose all 10 points.
For areas like Lake Tahoe (North Lake FPD), BLM nexus is difficult — SNPLMA funding may be a better option.

Review of Year 1 Projects

Six projects were funded (from 15 applicants requesting nearly \$1M).

1. Pershing County – Roadside Fuels Reduction

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Addressing high roadside ignition rates with extensive roadside clearing.

2. Humboldt County – Senior & Disability Defensible Space Assistance

Helping residents unable to complete fuels mitigation.
Also created local small-business economic opportunities.

3. Lincoln County – Fuel Breaks Around Pioche

Completed key linkages between existing fuel breaks and improved community safety.

4. Cold Creek Canyon HOA – Clark County

Approved but not yet funded due to SAM.gov issues.
Partnership alternatives are being explored.

5. Sparks Fire Department – Green Waste Disposal Program

Provided disposal options for homeowners conducting defensible space work.
Community response was overwhelming.

6. Central Lyon County – Multi-Partner Riparian Fuels Reduction

Collaborated with county parks, water districts, conservancy groups, and the fire district.
Included vegetation timing strategies (e.g., white top mitigation).

Project Flexibility

Kelsey Griffie:

We welcome diverse project types. Not just fuel breaks — but green waste dumpsters, private parcel treatments, and more, as long as they reduce wildfire risk.

2026 Funding & Timeline

Total Available: \$847,665

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Key Dates:

- **Applications open:** Now
- **Deadline:** March 2 (since March 1 is Sunday)
- **March:**
 - Multi-agency review
 - Scoring
 - Prioritization
 - NFCA Board approval
 - Notifications to successful applicants

Why this timing matters:

Awardees must go before their governing board (county commission, city council, HOA board) to accept funds. This can take several weeks.

Acceptance documentation required:

- Meeting minutes **or**
- Signed resolution confirming acceptance of funds and responsibility

Contact Information

Both Kelli Baratti and Kelsey Griffie's contact information was displayed and shared in the chat.

Final Q&A Recap

All questions were addressed, including:

- Match documentation appears only in the **application**, not quarterly reports.
- Cost share is flexible and applicant-defined.
- BLM nexus is mandatory for corresponding points.
- SAM.gov compliance is essential for eligibility.

Closing Remarks

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Kelsey Griffie:

Please reach out. We're happy to discuss project ideas. We intend to award all funds to impactful projects across Nevada.

Kelli Baratti:

I'll be reaching out to some year-one projects to ask permission to post their applications as examples. Thank you all — let's get going. I'm excited. Happy New Year!

Attendees:

"Thank you."

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