



*Mobilizing the  
people of Santa  
Clara County to  
protect their  
homes,  
communities and  
environment from  
wildfires*

# Santa Clara County FireSafe Council

## 2018 Annual Report

In 2018, the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council focused on growth.

The hazardous fuel reduction program grew by 45% as we increased the number of projects and the total number of acres treated. We tripled the number of Special Needs Assistance Program projects, offering more help to those who needed it most.

Our education program saw a 62% increase in the number of events. We shared our defensible space, ember awareness and evacuation workshops with residents throughout the county, saving lives as residents prepared their homes and families for wildfire.

continued as we helped push the Countywide Community Wildfire Preparedness Plan, CWPP, through the approval process. The CWPP helps determine how we can best help residents prepare for wildfire. This year we secured new funding for planning initiatives that will begin in 2019.

2018 saw a lot of the groundwork completed to begin our growing process and set the foundation for our work in 2019. We have a lot of exciting projects to look forward to in the next year. Let's continue to work together to make our homes and communities safer.

**Patty Ciesla, Executive Director  
Santa Clara County FireSafe  
Council**

### Planning program activities



## Community Outreach and Education Program

**In 2018, we continued to reach new heights with our youth and adult education program as we interacted with 1703 adults and 1482 youth participants during 34 events.**

California has again set new historical records for wildfire behavior, expense and loss of life. The need for Santa Clara County to remain vigilant has never been greater. In a 2018, we saw a 50% increase in our adult outreach program. We were able to teach homeowners how to make a difference and delivered an initial framework for neighbors to work together.

We conducted eight wildfire evacuation workshops to local communities. These neighborhood-based workshops helped residents prepare their evacuation plans and go bags.

Our home ignition zone assessment program was launched. WUI residents requested hands on property inspections and we made recommendations about ignition zones and taught residents how to find hazards on their property and reduce them.

From Smokey Bear, children learned about sources of potential ignition, how to avoid potential sparks and who to get help from if they need it. Smokey and our booth appeared and shared information at 26 schools, libraries, summer camps and festivals throughout the county.

Our residents are and will continue to be their own best first defense against wildfires. We will continue to strengthen our communities by providing the education and resources they need.



We thank the many volunteers that support our education programs. We couldn't bring Smokey to the schools, festivals, and events without you!







Vegetation management has been a key element of our approach to wildfire readiness since the FireSafe Council was founded.

In 2018, we processed 156 chipping applications for residents throughout the county, chipping over 7,979 cubic yards of material. Our chipping program helped protect an estimated 620 homes, 2,170 people, and over \$580 million in property values.

We created defensible space for seven residents through SNAP projects, helping people that are unable to complete the work



## Hazardous Fuel Reduction Programs

We reduce hazardous fuels to lower wildfire risks through five projects: Defensible Space Chipping, Special Needs Assistance (SNAP), Neighborhood Fuel Reduction, Roadside Escape Routes, and Landscape-Scale Fuel Breaks.

themselves either due to physical or financial difficulties.

Through our hazardous fuel reduction program, we served communities at risk of wildfire by implementing components of our long-term plan for each area. Several of our projects connected to and extended work completed in prior years to create more effective and contiguous escape route and fuel break networks. Our projects increased the safety of residents, motorists, and firefighters and helped protect lives, property and natural resources.

We continued our longstanding partnership with the City of Palo Alto. This year we completed 7.9 miles of escape route clearing along Page Mill, Los Trancos and Arastradero roads. This collaboration between the City and the FireSafe Council also included reducing fuel loads within Foot Hill Park.

In Saratoga, we completed .3 miles of roadside fuel reduction clearing around the Montalvo area and 1.5 miles of fuel reduction along Highway 9. The Highway 9 project is a multi-phase project that has spanned several years.

In Lexington Hills, we continued work on the Highway 17 corridor fuel break as we completed a fuel reduction project in a neighborhood with one access road just above the highway. This project treated 22 acres. We also completed Phase 2 of the Black Road shaded fuel break and worked to reduce the fuel load left from the Loma Fire along Loma Chiquita Road.

By collaborating with our partners, we were able to complete a total of eight fuel break and evacuation route projects that included 12.5 miles and 50.8 acres of fuel reduction.



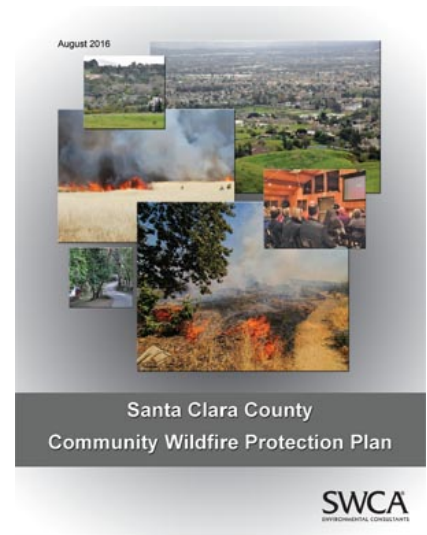
## Planning Program

Our council participated in the development of the Countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan, CWPP, in addition to GIS mapping and project planning.

Our planning program continued working with Santa Clara County Fire Department throughout 2018 on the Countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). This CWPP will open doors for us when applying for additional grants. The CWPP will assist the council and our partners in preparing workplans for the next few years.

We applied for and received grant funding to support GIS mapping and a traffic study that will take place in 2019. The GIS mapping will not only allow us to better track our progress but to share the information with our many partnering agencies. The traffic study will be conducted on one main street but the data that we collect will allow us to better understand and prepare for evacuations in multiple communities.

The planning program has been running on a very minimal budget and now that we have funding designated to planning program activities, we are very excited about what we will be able to do over the next year.



## Funding and Community Support

Thanks to our funders and contributing partners for making our programs possible!

Our funding in 2018 came from a wide variety of sources. We had two US Forest Service grants that provided nearly a third of our income and were awarded another at the end of the year. We wrapped up our CAL FIRE SRA grant that funded fuel reduction along the Highway 17 corridor and applied for a new CAL FIRE grant to extend work in that area.

Although federal and state grants provided a significant amount of support for ongoing projects, the bulk of our funding in 2018 came from our local partners. This is vital as all our federal grants require a one to one match from local partners. PG&E continued to be a very important partner and provided us with a generous grant again this year for fuel reduction projects. Santa Clara County Fire Department has been a supporter of our programs from the Councils inception and this year renewed their generous grant for our work in the WUI areas. The City of Palo Alto, City of Saratoga, Saratoga Fire District, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Chemeketa Park Mutual Water Company and the Redwood Estates Services Association all continued their financial support of our work.

The Firefighters Charitable Foundation, San Jose Water Company, and State Farm Insurance also continued funding our work with needed unrestricted grants which helped us cover overhead and fundraising expenses that are critical to our success.

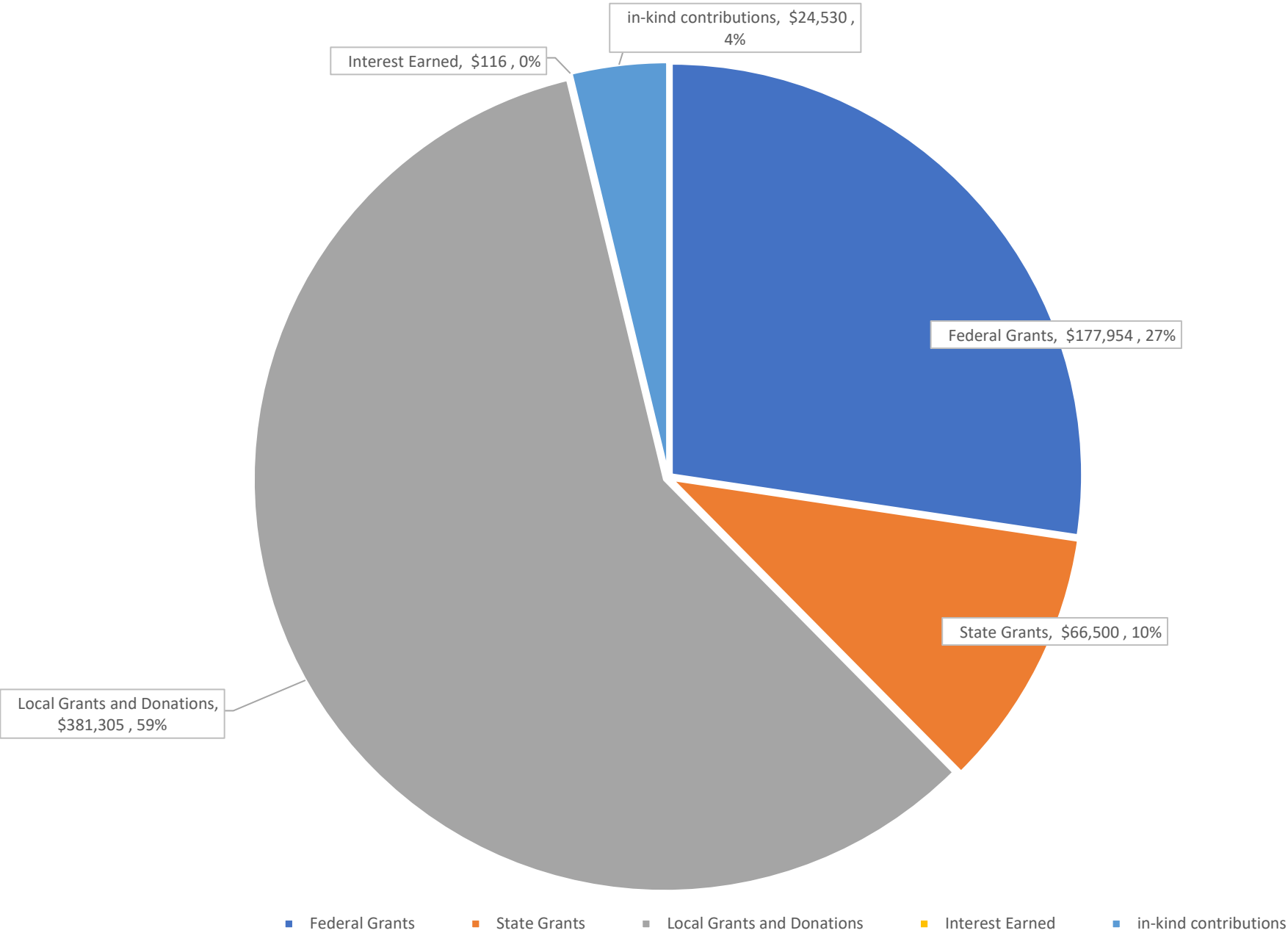
We couldn't provide our services without the great in-kind support of our partners in fire, parks and roads departments, Santa Clara County Roads & Airports, and Caltrans. They provided a wide variety of donations including traffic control, fuel reduction work, technical advice and project planning. The partnerships we have developed with San Jose Fire, County Parks, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority and other local agencies are invaluable.

Every year residents of the wildland-urban interface areas continue to show their appreciation for our programs through individual donations. As the demand for our programs grows these private donations will become even more crucial to our success. We could not do this work without their support.

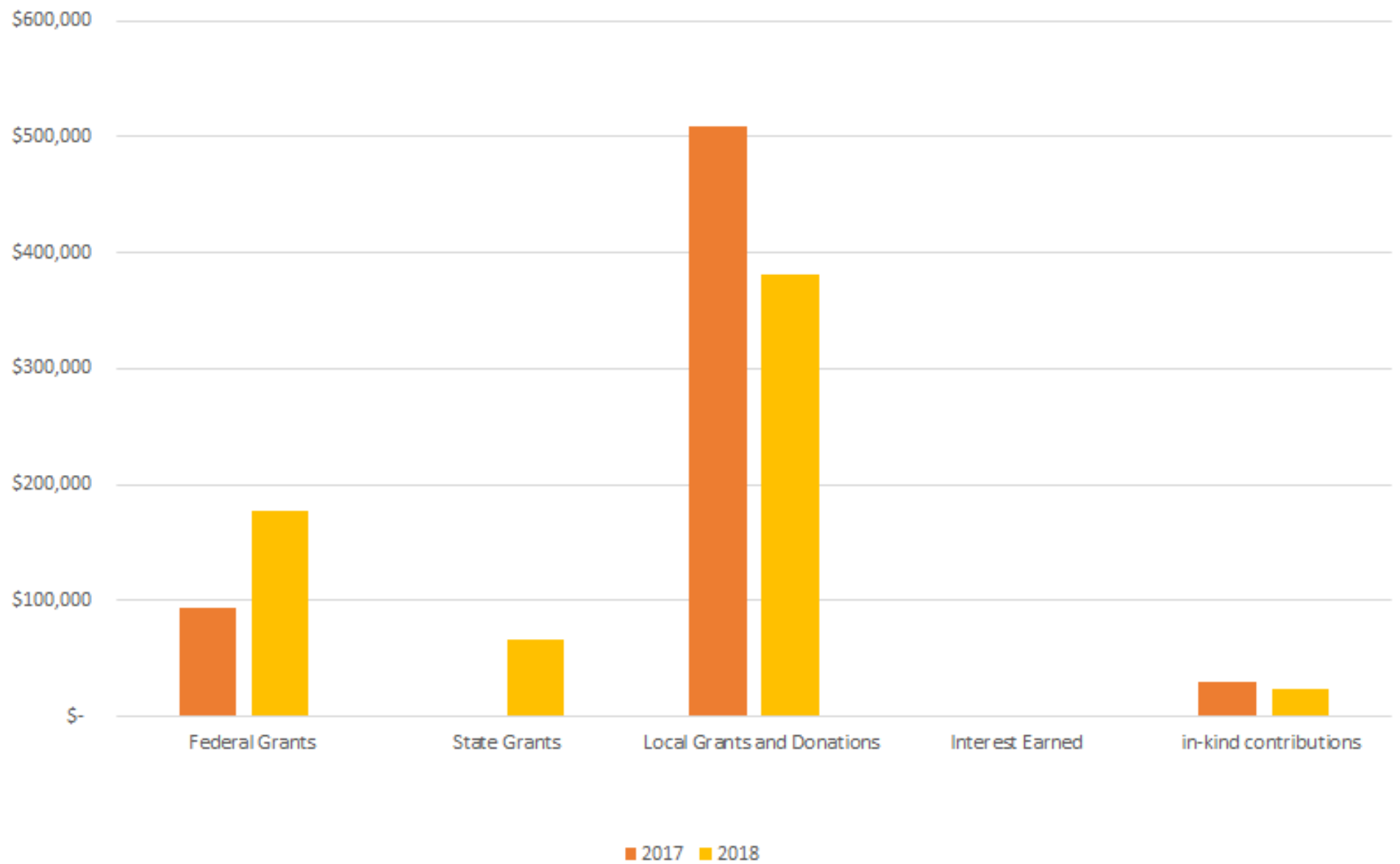




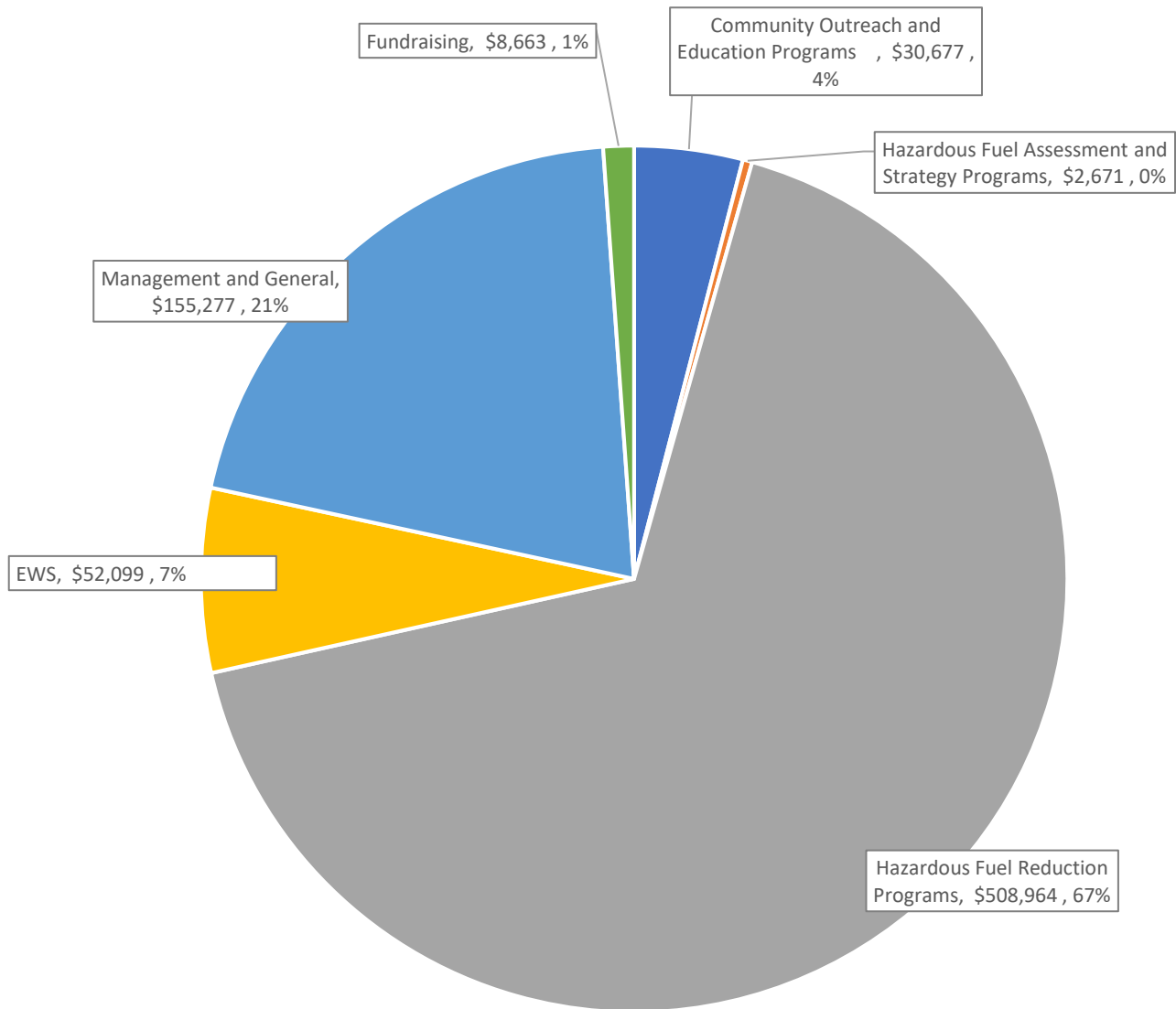
2018 Income by Category



Income by Category 2017 vs 2018



## 2018 Expenses by Program



■ Community Outreach and Education Programs  
■ Hazardous Fuel Reduction Programs  
■ Management and General

■ Hazardous Fuel Assessment and Strategy Programs  
■ Early Warning Camera System (EWS)  
■ Fundraising



### Expenses by Category 2017 vs 2018

