

## **CCCS \$250,000 Grant Funds Status Report**

**January 15, 2025**

FRCC received two grant offerings from SB23-005—one from Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) and one through Colorado Community College System (CCCS). These funds complement each other in providing enhanced wildland fire and forest health educational opportunities. This report focuses on the funds received from CCCS.

FRCC received \$250,000 in spring of 2024 through CCCS to put towards the growth of its forest health and wildland fire programs which are housed in the Natural Resources program. In the first six months of receipt of the grant funds, the following has been achieved.

- A wildland fire consulting organization was hired to conduct wildland fire professional training and certification courses. Four courses were offered in Fall of 2024.
- Two drones (UAV) with infra-red sensing technology have been purchased to compliment training of wildland fire professionals, as UAV's are increasingly being used in the wildland fire field.
- FRCC is meeting with stake holders to develop a one time "fire academy" designed to offer additional wildland fire training opportunities to professionals and educators.
- Leveraging SB03-005 funds from the CDHE Letter of Intent process a full time forestry faculty was hired to meet the demand of those wishing for more training in wildland fire education and prevention. The hiring of the grant funded faculty member allowed FRCC to offer additional courses aimed at forest health and fire mitigation. SB23-005 CCCS funds provided the means to purchase additional field equipment so that all courses were equipped with adequate field gear.
- As part of the CDHE funding mentioned above, FRCC received funds to hire a wildland fire and career coordinator. This position was hired last month and started Jan 13<sup>th</sup>. The position will facilitate additional training in wildland fire education.