FIVE YEAR REVIEW OF FOREST ACTION PLAN UPDATE REPORT

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
State of California

2020-2025

MARCH 2026

California has a State legal requirement in Public Resources Code (PRC) 4789 to assess the condition of forest and range lands that dates back to the late 1970's. In 2010, California followed guidance from the United States Forest Service (USFS) State & Private Forestry Redesign and incorporated the National Priorities into our reporting framework. This included an assessment report and a strategies document that follows the Redesign format. These documents were developed with a team of stakeholders to address cross-boundary, landscape scale actions that would be the most efficient activities to address issues of concern developed for the assessment phase of the Forest Action plan.

This document serves as a record of activities taken to address strategic actions taken as part of California's Forest Action Plan, completed in 2017.

The 2008 Farm Bill, under Title VIII – Forestry, amended the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, to include the requirement that each state develop a long-term, state-wide assessment and strategies for forest resources.

These assessments and strategies remain focused on three national priorities:

- Conserve and Manage Working Forest Landscapes for Multiple Values and Uses
- Protect Forests from Threats
- Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests

The 2018 Farm Bill was extended to September 30th 2025, and was focused on wildfire management, expanded Good Neighbor Authority (GNA), increased reforestation support, and streamlined project approvals. A new Farm Bill has not passed primarily due to congressional political disagreements including those regarding other conservation programs. Partial legislation including the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), signed July 4, 2025, redirects Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) conservation funding (nearly $20 billion) away from climate-related targets. Additionally, in March of 2025, President Trump signed the "Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production" Executive Order which aims to increase timber production targets and streamline regulations on federal lands.

States are required to review the status of their State Forest Action Plan (SFAP) every five years and to update the plans at least every ten years. This document provides a report on the:

1. SFAP five-year highlights report (required every 5 years)
2. SFAP five-year review (required every 5 years)
3. SFAP updates (required every 10 years)

State Forest Action Plan Highlights Report

This section of the report is organized under each National Priority as the heading, with individual State strategies that support those priorities. Implementation highlights are then listed to showcase the overall efforts of each of the State's programs that support those strategies.

1. CONSERVE AND MANAGE WORKING FOREST LANDSCAPES FOR MULTIPLE VALUES AND USES

Strategies Addressed:

Sustainable Forests

- Strategy 1.1 Maintain and improve the capacity of the wood products industry statewide.
- Strategy 1.2 Increase the capacity to provide incentives to non-industrial forest landowners to increase active sustainable management.

Climate Transition

- Strategy 7.1 Protect and enhance the capacity of California's forests to sequester carbon through reducing risk of loss from disturbance, protecting existing forest land, and expanding forest area through tree planting.
- Strategy 7.2 Support Adaptation Needs for Forests by Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, Improving Institutional Capacity, and Promoting a Priority Research Agenda.
- Strategy 7.3 Support Actions that Maintain, Enhance, and Protect Ecosystem Functions to Promote Biodiversity and Increase Resilience to Climate Change.

Implementation Highlights and Challenges (past 5 years):

Action(s):

Forest Legacy Program

Over 5,000 acres of forest land were added to the Forest Legacy Program within the last five years. This includes the Pacific Union College II project which conserved an important forest in Napa County and secured public recreation access. Conservation easements were purchased from non-industrial forest landowners which support active sustainable forest management, such as on the Mailliard Ranch in Mendocino County and the Mattole Headwaters Forest in Humboldt County. An ongoing challenge is the time it takes to close conservation easement projects. CAL FIRE acquires conservation easements through the Wildlife Conservation Board

and the acquisitions require approval by the California Department of General Services which can add time and complexity to the project timeline.



Emergency Forest Restoration Teams (EFRT)

EFRTs are designed to provide targeted assistance to landowners who often lack the necessary funding, expertise, or time to undertake restoration work after catastrophic wildfires. Recognizing these barriers, the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan called for the establishment of EFRTs. This initiative was aimed at ensuring that affected landowners could access the resources they need to restore their properties and mitigate further damage to their homes, lives, and the surrounding ecosystem.

Three pilot EFRTs were launched in response to the 2021 wildfires: one focusing on the Dixie Fire, another on the Caldor Fire, and the last on the Tamarack Fire. Local organizations, including the Feather River Resource Conservation District (RCD), El Dorado County/Georgetown Divide RCD, and Alpine County, took the lead in organizing these teams and developing new assistance programs tailored to the specific needs of their communities.

The funding for these projects came from CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service, allowing local agencies to hire contractors for critical tasks such as:

- Removing dead trees and biomass
- Processing dead wood on-site
- Planting conifer seedlings



Reforestation Services

Since 2020, investments by CAL FIRE, USDA Forest Service, NGOs, and private sector partners have supported:

- Between 247,000 and 505,000 acres of tree planting as part of active reforestation projects across all land ownerships statewide.
- More than 400,000 acres of other reforestation activities, such as site preparation, across all land ownerships statewide.
- Expanded capacity for cone and seed collection, resulting in over 275% increases in public seed bank deposits from 2023 to 2025.

- Increased statewide nursery seedling production capacity compared to 2023 via a new nursery owned and operated by Sierra Pacific Industries.
- Creation of the Reforestation Pipeline Partnership, through which American Forests launched the California Cone Corps and a Reforestation Pipeline Cooperative, increasing cross-jurisdictional collaboration statewide.
- Growth and strengthening of the reforestation workforce including, but not limited to, placing 40 Cone Corps members to fill critical gaps in the reforestation pipeline.



Reforestation Services use of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding

CAL FIRE was granted funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in order to support the development of natural seed orchards, which is an opportunity to select natural, native stands of trees and perform management across them to support the healthy development of cones and to support easier collection of seeds.

CAL FIRE has identified two locations on State lands on Demonstration State Forests (DSF) where CAL FIRE owns and manages the stands of trees. The two forests are Miller DSF and Mokelumne DSF. Approximately 150 acres of forest will be masticated to reduce inter-tree competition and reduce water stress.

The main accomplishments in this period were to identify native stands on DSF lands and draft a plan for improving access and establishing the needed contracts to complete the mastication. Further work will include selection of the best examples of the target tree species and completing more work to protect those trees from wildfire and support their health.

Forest Health Program

The Forest Health Program awarded $498 million in state funding from 2020 to 2025 treating 273,235 acres, and an additional $100 million in Post Fire Reforestation and Regeneration funds to plant 10,351,510 trees. These funds support landscape scale forest health restoration projects to restore forests to a state of climate and wildfire-resiliency. Projects are developed and led by regionally-based and collaborative efforts to conduct forest thinning, fuels reduction, prescribed fire, pest management, and reforestation. The majority of the funding comes from California's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund. While no federal funds have been received, this program has awarded grants directly to federal partners (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management) or to those partnered with federal agencies to complete projects on federal lands. Approximately 37% of state-funded treatments from

2020-2025 have gone toward improving forest health and wildfire resilience on federal lands. This program has helped to further the goals of the California Forest Carbon Plan, California's Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy, and the Climate Change Scoping Plan through investments in greenhouse gas reductions, benefiting low-income and disadvantaged communities, and achieving other important co-benefits.

Landowner Assistance/Forest Stewardship

Multiple state and federal agencies, including CAL FIRE, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and the USDA Forest Service have extended existing agreements or issued new contracts and grants to provide technical and financial assistance to landowners. These include efforts to support the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Forest Stewardship Workshops and three pilot Resource Conservation District (RCD) led Emergency Forest Restoration Teams (EFRTs), along with over 12 other EFRTs, which are already making progress on the ground Since 2021:

- CAL FIRE assisted 2,398 private forestland owners across 12,615 acres through Wildfire Resilience Block Grants and California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP). EFRTs assisted 1,065 landowners, treating 10,638 acres.
- University of California Cooperative Extension's Forest Stewardship Workshops served 606 participants.



The California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) is the State's primary landowner assistance program providing eligible landowners with technical and financial assistance for planning, reforestation and natural resource management investments that improve the quality and value of forestland. CFIP is a forestry cost-share program that provides funds to non-industrial private forest landowners with ownerships of less than 5000 acres of timberland for a variety of practices including: management plans, supervision, site preparation, planting, thinning, pruning, release, land conservation, improvement of fish and wildlife habitat, and fuels reduction. CFIP's purpose is to encourage private and public investments in forestlands and resources within the state to ensure adequate future high quality timber supplies, related employment, and other economic benefits, and to protect, maintain, and enhance the forest resources for the benefit of present and future generations. Since its establishment CFIP has helped landowners with forest improvement

activities on over 1,000,000 acres. During the most recently completed five state fiscal years (i.e. July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2025) CFIP awarded 302 grants, for a total state cost-share of $28.3 million. These 302 grants included funding for:

- Development of 104 California Cooperative Forest Management Plans covering 40,681 acres
- Development of 55 CFIP Mini Management Plans covering 3,545 acres
- Treatment of 6,049 footprint acres.



Implementation Focus (next 5 years):

Reforestation

- Aid landowners in recently burned areas in developing and implementing vegetation treatment plans to manage the re-growth of fuels to maintain reduced hazardous conditions.
- Implement and expand the use of Emergency Forest Restoration Teams to rapidly re-establish forest stands impacted by high severity wildfire.



Forest Health Program

Goal 1: Accelerate Forest Health and Resilience Treatments

> Increase the pace and scale of forest health projects to reduce wildfire risk, enhance carbon sequestration, and build long-term ecosystem resilience. Streamline planning and permitting to enable faster, landscape-scale implementation across all ownerships.

Goal 2: Protect and Enhance Forest Carbon Storage

> Safeguard existing forest carbon through proactive management that reduces loss from wildfire, pests, and disease. Expand reforestation and post-fire recovery efforts to increase carbon sequestration and forest cover statewide.

Goal 3: Strengthen Cross-Jurisdictional Collaboration

> Foster partnerships among state, federal, tribal, local, and private entities to coordinate planning and implementation across boundaries. Support regional collaboratives that

align priorities, leverage resources, and deliver landscape-scale resilience outcomes.

Goal 4: Expand Investment Beyond Forested Lands

Broaden funding to include chaparral, oak woodland, and rangeland ecosystems to create wildfire-resilient, climate-adapted landscapes. Launch a Regional Landscape Resilience Grant Program supporting integrated, multi-benefit treatments.

Goal 5: Maintain and Enhance Ecosystem Function and Biodiversity

Implement projects that restore watershed health, promote native species regeneration, and improve habitat connectivity. Integrate biodiversity and climate resilience objectives into all forest health investments.

Goal 6: Build Local and Tribal Capacity

Invest in workforce development, technical assistance, and community-based stewardship to expand local capacity for planning, implementation, and monitoring of forest health and resilience projects.

Goal 7: Measure Success and Drive Continuous Improvement

Develop and apply consistent metrics to track carbon benefits, fuel reduction, and ecosystem outcomes. Use monitoring and adaptive management to inform future priorities and ensure accountability.



Landowner Assistance/Forest Stewardship

The Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force's Forest Landowner Assistance Implementation Strategy identifies goals to empower landowners to improve the resilience of their lands, including the following key actions:

- Increase Block Grants and Support towards Partners
    - Local and regional partners will provide tailored, place-based assistance well-suited to support small landowners. CAL FIRE's Wildfire Resilience Block Grants were one of the grant programs best set up to service smaller private ownerships as it did not require all project areas to be pre-identified in the application. The grants also provided critical capacity funding for outreach, evaluation, and selection of participating landowners, activities that are typically unfunded in other grant programs.

- Sustain and/or Expand Education, and Technical Assistance & Financial Assistance Programs
    - Agencies and non-governmental partners will sustain and/or expand programs such as CAL FIRE's CFIP, NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and UCCE's Forest Stewardship Workshops to empower landowners to increase the resilience of their lands independently as well as educate landowners on the broader range of resources and opportunities available to them.
- Broaden Landscape Resilience Incentive Adoption
    - Building on the Forest Landowner Assistance Implementation Strategy, CNRA and CalEPA will lead a parallel effort to broaden adoption of state-led private incentive and market-based programs to accelerate active and resilience forest management. Further, the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Program will explore the development of a new sustainability certification to generate new means to incentivize resilient forest management action in both nonindustrial and industrial forests.

2. PROTECT FORESTS FROM THREATS

Strategies Addressed:

Wildfire

- Strategy 4.1 Reduce the occurrence of damaging wildfires and reduce life, property and natural resource losses through the implementation of effective and efficient fire prevention programs and activities.
- Strategy 4.2 Protect life and property from wildfire through efficient and effective fire protection planning and suppression, financial management, and firefighter/public safety strategies.
- Strategy 4.3 Reduce the impacts of wildfire on ecosystem health, public safety and private property through appropriate scientific research, education and training.
- Strategy 4.4 Address post-fire responsibilities for natural resource recovery including watershed protection, reforestation, and ecosystem restoration.

Forest Pests

- Strategy 5.1 Restore forest lands impacted by current and historical forest pest outbreaks, air pollution and invasive species.
- Strategy 5.2 Reduce/prevent forest pest outbreaks and control their spread to maintain ecosystem health, preserve ecosystem services and avoid public safety hazards associated with large scale tree mortality events.
- Strategy: 5.3 Prevent the introduction and spread of new exotic pests and invasive plant species.
- Strategy: 5.4 Rapidly control or contain outbreaks of exotic forest pests and invasive plant species.
- Strategy: 5.5 Monitor forestland to quickly identify new, and evaluate current, outbreaks of exotic forest pests and invasive plant species to protect the most vulnerable and valued forest and range land assets.

Reducing Community Wildfire Risk

- Strategy 11.1 Promote formation of Local Fire Safe Councils for priority communities.
- Strategy 11.2 Promote participation in the National Firewise/USA program.
- Strategy 11.3 Establish a statewide comparative database of community wildfire planning.
- Strategy 11.4 Reduce wildfire risk to communities.

Implementation Highlights and Challenges (past 5 years):

Cooperative Fire Protection

The State Fire Capacity funding has assisted in training approximately 1,500 firefighters and CAL FIRE personnel annually, funding fire prevention/education/detection/incident management programs and both communications and safety equipment upgrades. The Volunteer Fire Capacity Cooperative Grant program serves approximately 150 departments serving rural communities and helps units purchase much-needed equipment and

supplies. It can be challenging for small fire departments to meet funding needs, and this program assists those rural departments in maintaining compliance with safety, training and equipment requirements.

Good Neighbor Authority

Codified as 16 U.S.C. § 2113a, the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) was permanently enacted as a provision of the 2014 Farm Bill under Public Law 113-79, § 8206. GNA allows the federal government (USDA Forest Service and DOI Bureau of Land Management) to enable state government process and procedures on federal lands for authorized restoration activities. This authority is aimed at increasing pace and scale of ecosystem restoration using the suite of management options from prescribed fire* to commercial timber harvesting. The "Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production" Federal Executive Order (March 1st, 2025) calls out GNA to expand its role on federal forests to achieve goals in increasing wood product production from federal forests. GNA is a unique cooperative partnership that enables State Governments to engage their own staff, tools, capabilities, and contracting processes to facilitate authorized work on federal lands. The National Environmental Quality Act (NEPA) remains the jurisdiction of the federal landowner, but CAL FIRE can assist in the preparation and analytical work supporting final decisions. CAL FIRE is actively pursuing fuel reduction AND commercial timber harvesting opportunities on US Forest Service and BLM lands using the GNA.

State Forest Policy

The California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force is a collaborative effort to align the activities of federal, state, local, public, private and tribal organizations to confront the state's wildfire crisis. In 2021, the Task Force released a Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, which included a suite of actions to help the state reach a target of one million acres of forest management annually by 2025. The Task Force continues to meet regularly to share resources and expertise, highlight progress, and coordinate action.

Tribal Wildfire Resilience

The Tribal Wildfire Resilience Program was created in 2023 and has awarded $30 million to 22 California Native American tribes within California. These projects are planning, and implementation projects developed by California Native American tribes for managing ancestral lands, implementing and promoting Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), wildfire resilience, establishing wildfire safety for tribal communities, and cultural use of fire.



Forest Entomology and Pathology

Native insects and diseases are major disturbance factors that cause widespread damage and mortality to forested and urban landscapes. These native agents often reside in endemic states generating minor changes that sustain healthy ecosystems and keep forests productive. However, upward trends in seasonal temperatures and greater precipitation fluctuations in recent decades enhance environmental conditions that benefit damage agents. As a result, an estimated 180 million forest trees throughout the state were killed directly and indirectly by native bark beetles due drought effects from 2012-2016. In addition to native pests, other introduced insects and pathogens pose significant threats to California's trees and natural landscapes. For example, a new ambrosia beetle was confirmed killing native oaks in 2019 in Napa County, now detected in six northern counties including Sacramento County. Established exotic pests continue to spread: sudden oak death (SOD) is found in 15 northern counties infecting over 100 host species and gold-spotted oak borer (GSOB) continues to expand in San Diego and Riverside Counties with new findings in Orange and San Bernardino Counties. The invasive shot hole borer (ISHB) complex in southern CA has rapidly spread to five counties, attacking native and exotic hardwood trees.

CAL FIRE will continue to provide expertise, assistance, and promote protection of healthy ecosystems and help mitigate unwanted effects of native and non-native pests. In addition to assisting in early detection and rapid



response surveys for exotic pests throughout the state, CAL FIRE staff serve on the California Forest Pest Council and its Task Forces, as well as with local committees or groups working on pest management. The Forest Entomology and Pathology Program leverages federal funding to survey and monitor critical invasive pests, support new technology that will assist with mapping and risk rating of pest spread, and outreach and education awareness to public and partners of identification and reducing further spread.

Data in Support of Forest Planning

To support forest and wildfire resilience planning, CAL FIRE has been moving towards more formal and quantitative risk-informed approaches that assess both wildfire hazard, or the potential for damaging wildfire, and the potential impacts of hazardous conditions on

people, resources, processes, assets and other things we care about. CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) has developed the California Wildfire Data Explorer (cawildfiredata.org) to make statewide wildfire hazard and risk data accessible from a central location for planning. Supporting data on hazard and risk are being produced and updated under agreement with Vibrant Planet – Pyrologix. Additionally, FRAP continues to deliver many useful data layers through web-tools and viewers, and as individual datasets on its website, including data on historical wildfire perimeters, vegetation burn severity and much more.

Implementation Focus (next 5 years):

Identify and Evaluate Wildland Fire Hazards and Assets at Risk

Identify and evaluate wildland fire hazards and recognize life, property and natural resource assets at risk, including watershed, habitat, social and other values of functioning ecosystems.

- Identify and provide appropriate automated tools to facilitate the collection, analysis and consistent presentation of datasets.
- Update and maintain consistent, detailed vegetation and fuels maps across all ownerships in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- Provide regular updates to the Department's Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps.
- Develop and validate weather and climatology information for use in predicting fire behavior.



- Update fire history information and re-evaluate existing fire prediction models to obtain composite fire threat across all ownerships.
- Update existing data for values and assets at risk utilizing geographic information systems (GIS) data layers and other mapping solutions, including fire behavior-specific effects.
- Use science-based approaches to evaluate, understand and protect against the negative impacts of new and emerging threats such as climate change, insect and disease outbreaks or land use changes on forest health and public safety, including the build up of hazardous fuel conditions and resulting fire behavior.
- Engage and participate with local stakeholder groups (i.e., fire safe councils and others) to validate and prioritize the assets at risk.

Collaborative Wildfire Protection Plans

Support and participate in the collaborative development and implementation of wildland fire protection plans and other local, county

and regional plans that address fire protection and landowner objectives.

- Establish a working group, consisting of Board of Forestry members and Department staff, to develop minimum standard elements for inclusion in Unit fire plans.
- Emphasize coordination of CAL FIRE Unit fire plans with community wildfire protection plans to encourage and support one consistent approach.
- Develop county or regional fire plans by bringing together community-based groups, such as fire safe councils and affected fire and land management agencies.
- Create and support venues in which individual community members can be actively involved in local fire safe councils, community emergency response teams, FIREWISE and other community-based efforts to develop readiness plans and educate landowners to mitigate the risks and effects of wildland fire.
- Collaborate with federal and local governments, other state agencies, fire service and other organizations, to maintain and improve emergency response plans.
- Ensure planning efforts are consistent with the National Fire Plan, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, the Statewide Hazard Mitigation Plan, as well as local hazard mitigation plan and other relevant statewide strategic planning documents.
- Maximize available resources to strengthen planning efforts through the development of public/private partnerships.
- Develop fire risk mitigation treatment decision support tools to assist in project design, implementation and validation.

Increased Awareness to Reduce Losses of Life and Property

Increase awareness, knowledge and actions implemented by individuals and communities to reduce human loss and property damage from wildland fires, such as defensible space and other fuels reduction activities, fire prevention and fire safe building standards.

- Educate landowners, residents and business owners about the risks and their incumbent responsibilities of living in the wildlands, including applicable regulations, prevention measures and preplanning activities.
- Educate landowners, residents, fire safe councils and business owners to understand that fire prevention is more than defensible space, including why structures ignite, the role embers play in such ignitions and the importance of fire safe building designs and retrofits.
- Implement Zone Zero
    - Zone 0 is defined as the area from 0 to 5 feet out from a building's exterior walls, deck, or attached structures. It's the portion of the property immediately adjacent to the structure and includes the ground, walls, fences attached to the home, and anything else

physically connected to the building.

- Agencies such as CAL FIRE call it the “ember-resistant zone” because this is where wind-blown embers most often land during a wildfire and where a home is most likely to ignite if combustible material is present. Facilitate activities with individuals and organizations, as appropriate, to assist individual property owners in complying with fire safe regulations.
- Improve regulatory effectiveness, compliance monitoring and reporting pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) §4290 and §4291.
- Increase the number and effectiveness of defensible space inspections and promote an increasing level of compliance with defensible space laws and regulations through the use of CAL FIRE staffing as available, public and private organizations, and alternative inspection methods.
- Promote the consolidation of Fire Safe Regulations contained in California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 14, with CCR Titles 19 and 24, to achieve uniform application of building standards.
- Continue to evaluate new, ignition-resistant construction technologies and materials, and promote the strengthening of California building standards.
- Seek out incentives to promote the retrofit of existing structures to meet ignition-resistant building codes.



- Actively enforce and seek updates as necessary to fire prevention codes and statutes, including those regulating utilities, railroads, small engines and other categories of equipment use that contribute to fire ignition.
- Actively investigate all wildland fires. For those resulting from negligent acts, pursue appropriate civil and/or criminal actions, including cost recovery.
- Analyze trends in fire cause and focus prevention and education efforts to modify behavior and effect change.



Integrating Fire and Fuels Management Practices

Develop a method to integrate fire and fuels management practices with landowner priorities and multiple jurisdictional efforts within local, state and federal responsibility areas.

- Increase support of landowner-initiated hazardous fuels reduction using all available authorities, including the Prescribed Fire Program.
- Work to remove regulatory barriers that limit hazardous fuels reduction activities.
- Promote and enhance programmatic documents that assist and streamline regulatory processes.
- Assist collaborative partners by educating, improving grant capacity and other means that provide tools to achieve fuels reduction work on the landscape.
- Promote forest and rangeland health and hazardous fuels reduction. Improve utilization of all forest products, including small logs, urban green waste and biomass.
- Increase public education and awareness in support of ecologically sensitive and economically efficient vegetation management activities, including prescribed fire, forest thinning and other fuels treatment projects.
- Promote the development of multi-agency/landowner fuels reduction policies and activities at the watershed and fire shed level.
- Support the availability and utilization of CAL FIRE hand crews and other CAL FIRE resources, as well as public and private sector resources, for fuels management and prescribed fire activities, including ongoing maintenance.
- Support efforts to restore the ecological role of fire in areas and upon jurisdictions where doing so is consistent with local land management objectives and does not present an unacceptable risk to human health and safety or security of adjacent ownerships.

State Forest Policy

In 2024, California established a set of nature-based solutions climate targets, as required by Assembly Bill 1757 (2022). These targets are meant to help the state achieve its ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals while adapting to threats such as wildfire and extreme heat. They include aggressive goals for beneficial fire and other fuels reduction, forest conservation, post-fire reforestation, and urban forestry. CAL FIRE, in collaboration with other departments, will work toward

achieving these targets through many of the programs highlighted in this action plan.

Good Neighbor Authority

CAL FIRE recently signed 3 Stand-Alone agreements with the USDA Forest Service that span all 18 National Forests in California (except the Humboldt-Toiyabe). CAL FIRE also entered a statewide contract with BLM in August of 2023. In addition to the $4 million dollars provided by the Forest Service, CAL FIRE can and will facilitate critical cross boundary fuel reduction using our crews, staff, equipment, and contacting mechanisms. GNA is a critical partnership for CAL FIRE to achieve landscape level leadership in mitigating catastrophic wildfire and achieving beneficial stewardship to improve the safety and vitality of all Californians. CAL FIRE will be moving to operationalize this new agreement in the next 5 years.

Ongoing Determination of Needed Fire Suppression Resources

Determine the level of fire suppression resources necessary to protect the values and assets at risk identified during planning processes.

- Maintain an aggressive wildland fire initial attack policy that places a priority on protecting lives, property and natural resources. At the same time consider suppression strategies that incorporate values and assets at risk, as well as cost factors wherever possible.
- Develop criteria for determining suppression resource allocation based on elements such as identified



values and assets at risk, ignition density, vegetation type and condition, as well as local weather and topography. We continue to have these elements built into our local response areas and dispatch plans

- Initiate studies and analyses to identify appropriate staffing levels and equipment needs commensurate with the current and projected emergency response environment. CAL FIRE continues to review staffing levels for reallocating resources and locations based on Direct Protection Areas, response times, and values at risk.
- Seek to increase the number of CAL FIRE hand crews for use in fighting wildland fires and other emergency response activities. CAL FIRE is

pushing ongoing efforts to facilitate this and replacing the dwindling numbers of inmate crews with CAL FIRE, California Conservation Corps, and California National Guard crews.

- Initiate and maintain cooperative fire protection agreements with local, state and federal partners that value the importance of an integrated, cooperative, regional fire protection system and deliver efficient and cost-effective emergency response capabilities beneficial to all stakeholders.
- Improve policies and strategies to minimize injuries or loss of life to the public and emergency responders during emergency response activities throughout the state. CAL FIRE is always looking at ways to improve policies and strategies to enhance public and emergency responder safety
- Ensure all firefighters are provided the appropriate training, equipment and facilities necessary to successfully and safely meet the increasingly complicated and challenging fire and emergency response environment. All areas of the department continue to work on improving these areas for our employees.
- Continue to evaluate and implement new technologies to improve firefighter safety, situational awareness and emergency response effectiveness. CAL FIRE has worked on providing connectivity and Tablet Command is a prime example of this effort.
- Provide for succession planning and employee development at all levels within CAL FIRE to maintain emergency response leadership capabilities, administrative management skills and pre-fire planning expertise.
- Effectively engage and train employees across all disciplines to address both planning and emergency response utilizing a “total force” approach.



Tribal Wildfire Resilience

Goal 1: Expand tribal land management and beneficial fire

Provide grant funding to projects that plan and implement land stewardship and cultural fire. Provide resources that enable tribes and cultural practitioners to revitalize land management traditions carry out these practices at scale in all ecosystems statewide. Implement process in reforestation, native species restoration, post-fire recovery, and ecosystem renewal. Support the

first grant awards to successfully complete their projects.

Goal 2: Advance wildfire resilience for tribal communities

Implement projects that provide for fuels reduction, defensible space, education, and other resilience improvements for communities at risk from severe wildfire. Restore native vegetation and community engagement. Develop emergency response capacity of tribal communities through training tribal fire crews.

Goal 3: Train and sustain TEK practitioners across the state

Partner with tribes to train tribal members and the public in cultural fire, tending flora and fauna, and renewing ancient practices for ecosystem stewardship. In addition, develop workforce of fire crews and land management crews to implement TEK projects.

Goal 4: Strengthen tribal capacity

Support and expand planning, training, environmental compliance, and organizational development. Provide for training and support of the environmental planning, project management, policy development, and coordination of fire and land resilience projects. Share success stories. Support TREX training exchanges.

Goal 5: Build relationships with Tribal partners

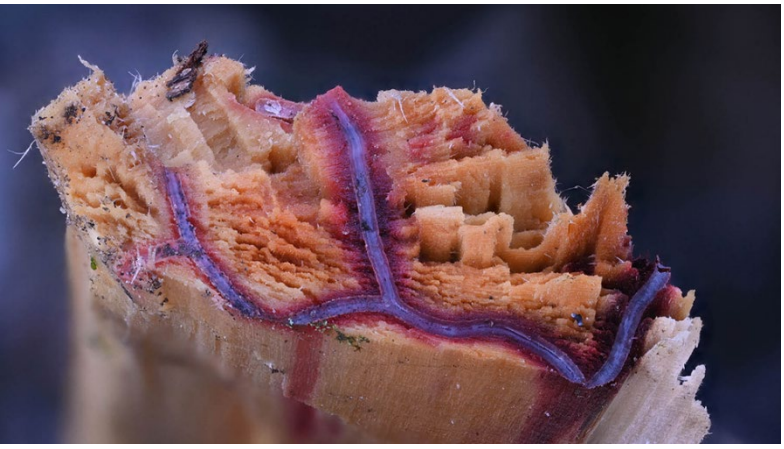
Foster partnerships among state and tribal organizations. Build long-term relationships among tribal practitioners and agencies statewide. Streamline contracting and reporting and increase compatibility between state and tribal organizations. Coordinate with other agencies doing similar work.

Mitigating Impacting of Forest Pests

- Expand education and outreach for both the public and resource professionals, to provide guidance on identification and management of forest pests, including a better understanding of ways to limit the introduction and spread of exotic pests.
- Maintain and expand forest pest detection surveys and monitoring programs that provide early detection of emerging or expanding pest issues that threaten forest and urban habitats. Provide expertise and technical support to implement rapid response as needed.
- Use science-based approaches to assess, recognize, and protect against negative impacts of new and emerging insect and disease pests.
- Continue to develop and implement science-based Integrated Pest Management strategies to reduce spread and impact of native and exotic forest pests.
- Continue coordination and partnership with federal, state, research, and other land management agencies to gather information and effectively monitor forest pests.
- Coordinate and Integrate pest-prevention management into wildfire

reduction strategies to achieve multiple objectives when implementing treatments.

- Continue to support new technologies that may help survey, prevent, mitigate, or control pests that pose safety risks to public and property.



3. ENHANCE PUBLIC BENEFITS FROM TREES AND FORESTS

Strategies Addressed:

Urban Forestry

- Strategy 3.1 Promote urban tree planting to improve air quality and energy conservation.
- Strategy 3.2 Maintain urban tree canopy to conserve energy and improve air quality.

Non-Metro Regional Economy

- Strategy 8.1 Economic-, employment-, and housing-related measures
- Strategy 8.2 Resident-related measures
- Strategy 8.3 Politics- and governance-related measures

Wildlife Habitat

- Strategy 10.1 Reduce the loss and modification of habitat that supports wildlife and maintains California's unique biodiversity.
- Strategy 10.2 Develop policies and incentives to facilitate better integration of wildlife conservation considerations into local and regional planning and land-use decision making.
- Strategy 10.3 Sustain healthy forest ecosystems to maintain California's unique biodiversity.

Renewable Energy

- Strategy 12.1 Continue to Develop, Implement, and/or Expand Initiatives that Reduce Demand for Large Renewable Energy Projects on Forests and Rangelands
- Strategy 12.2 Promote Continued Research to Improve Guidelines, Standards, and Best Practices to Minimize the Environmental Impact of Large Renewable Energy Projects on Forests and Rangelands
- Strategy 12.3 Support expansion of transmission infrastructure for emerging renewable energy generation from sources such as biomass, wind, hydro and solar in a way that minimizes environmental impact on forests and rangelands.
- Strategy 12.4 Support Development of Biomass Energy Projects that can Facilitate Projects to Reduce Wildfire Risk and Improve Forest Health

Implementation Highlights and Challenges (past 5 years):

Urban and Community Forestry

California Public Resources Code 4799.06-4799.12.1, known as the Urban Forestry Act, was amended in 2022 to add section 4799.10.2, requiring creation of a statewide strategic plan to increase urban tree canopy cover. The plan is anticipated



to be completed by June 30, 2026. It focuses on protecting existing trees from unnecessary removal, managing existing trees to grow canopy, and planting new ones. Challenges include housing increase goals, water use, and urban fire risk. Recommended solutions focus on more comprehensive and connected policies and plans, improved expertise, workforce development, and optimizing benefits in comparison to costs. The plan is informed by a statewide urban tree canopy cover assessment, economic analysis of the urban forestry industry, and a water use analysis of renovated landscapes.

Aligned efforts have identified practices in plans including the 2023 California State Hazard Mitigation Plan, the 2026 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the 2021 California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, and the 2022 Protecting Californians from Extreme Heat State Action Plan. In addition, CAL FIRE's Urban and Community Forestry Program has worked with Green Schoolyards America to create the California Schoolyards Forest System and associated schoolyard canopy cover analysis, policy analysis, pilot projects, and networks. Many other planning efforts are underway to update or create new documents. One that is likely to be influential is the update to municipal general plan guidelines.

Informational resources have been enhanced through various outlets such as creation of CAL FIRE's Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) hub site, a UCF Program newsletter, and addition of an aggregated urban tree inventory on the Urban Forest Ecosystems Institute website. A rapid urban forest assessment tool is under development which will provide key data for local organizations.

Technical expertise is provided to local organizations to inform a range of practices. Urban wildfires in the greater Los Angeles area in January of 2025 prompted collaboration on tree risk assessment and tree recovery practices. Expertise is also shared internally, for example, by training defensible space inspectors about best practices for tree pruning and tree health.

Grants awarded from 2014 through 2024 provided State funding of $282.3 million dollars for 240 projects to leverage $37.4 million dollars of Federal IRA funding for 72 projects. State funded projects generally supported local activities such as tree planting, management plans and inventories, workforce development, information and education, wood utilization, and greening of schoolyards. Federally funded grants supported regional or statewide tools and informational resources, demonstration projects, analysis and best practice

development, and education. Grant guidelines will continue to be written within the purposes and limits of the Urban Forestry Act. Future state grants are anticipated to fund similar project types with focus shifting based upon the funding source.

CAL FIRE's Urban and Community Forestry Program is actively reviewing grants related to urban forestry and urban greening for other state agencies as well. CAL FIRE is represented in the state's climate change strategies and will be assisting with implementation. CAL FIRE participates with interdepartmental work groups such as the Health In All Policies Task Force.

Business and Workforce Development

The Business and Workforce Develop grant program provides grants to fund forestry-sector businesses and workforce development projects. Grantees are attracted to financial incentives to invest in clean technologies, develop innovative ways to process wood products, and support the growth of a strong-forest sector workforce. Since 2022, they have awarded $130M to 120 grantees to support workforce development and business development efforts. These investments assist with accelerating California's pace and scale of forest restoration, expand market pathways for low-value wood, and help build a skilled workforce to sustain these efforts.

Wood Products Program

The Wood Products and Bioenergy Team seek to maintain and enhance the forest-sector workforce and businesses of California to promote healthy resilient



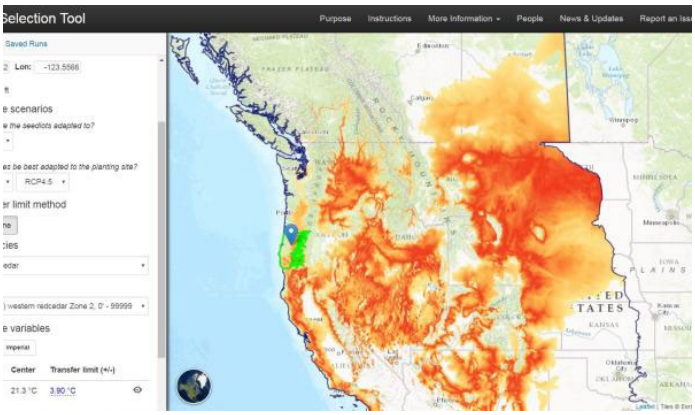
forests throughout the state by supporting a diverse set of business development and workforce development projects. Through grants, technical assistance, and interagency coordination, the Team strengthens California's wood products supply chain while increasing the pace and scale of forest restoration. The Team provides the Department policy expertise on wood products innovation and workforce development and regularly collaborate with other State and federal organizations working on these issues.

Conservation Education

With funding from CAL FIRE, the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) Forest Stewardship Education Initiative delivered twenty-five 9-week education and outreach webinars (co-horts) for 499 active participants across CA between 2021 and 2025. They also coordinated 115 site visits between program participants and Registered Professional Foresters (RPFs) to discuss management practices for 10,547 acres of forestland. As a result of these site visits 20% of participants updated their existing plans, 38% developed or are in the processes of developing a plan, 28 participants applied for and received cost-share funding

through California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP), Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) or North Bay Forest Improvement Program (NBFIP), and 14 participants received grants or cost-share funding through local programs. Forty-one consulting RPFs, four NRCS/RCD foresters and two CRMs have participated in site visits with workshop participants. The program also delivered an additional thirty webinars and field days on forestry related topics, and four day-long California Tree School events for 275 people.

With funding from the US Forest Service, 8 post-fire forest resilience workshops were hosted since 2022 serving 275 people affected by fires in forested areas across the state. The workshops consisted of five to seven weeks of weekly zoom sessions and an in-person field trip day to illustrate post-fire forest management strategies in person. Since post-fire forest management best practices are highly variable, curriculum was customized to each area based on the severity of the fire, time since fire occurred, ecosystem and region. Customized content included erosion control, hazard tree removal and salvage logging, tree planting, and control of vegetation competing with tree seedlings. Additional topics included managing resprouting trees including redwoods and oaks, and use of herbicides, grazing and prescribed fire. In addition, an application was created to identify private land burned between 2019 and 2021 and the reforestation opportunities where fires burned at high severity. An assessment of the success of new Emergency Forest Restoration Teams developed to help landowners after the 2021 Caldor, Dixie and Tamarack fires. Reforestation camps were hosted with Resource Conservation Districts in California to help disseminate research-based information on reforestation best practices to practitioners. UC ANR worked with local RCDs to develop reforestation monitoring protocols, mentor RCD staff in data collection and analyzed the monitoring



data and reported out on planting results.

California Reforestation Resources

The USDA California Climate Hub, in partnership with CAL FIRE developed two recent products: the California Reforestation Toolshed and the California Climate-informed Reforestation Guidance booklets (included in the Toolshed site).

- The California Reforestation Toolshed is a recently published website that consolidates reforestation resources in one easy-to-use location. Many valuable reforestation resources exist, but they are hosted in various formats by the different organizations and initiatives that created them, which can make finding relevant resources for a reforestation project challenging and time-consuming. The Toolshed was created to enable the

reforestation community to access essential knowledge more easily.

- Second, the California Climate-Informed Reforestation Guidance booklets are now available to view and download on the Toolshed (searching “booklet” is one quick way to find them). These booklets provide regionally specific recommendations for site preparation, planting, and post-planting management actions that can help establish forests resilient to climate change and wildfires.

Forest Health Research Grants

CAL FIRE has funded research to address the potential shift in the distributions and ranges of dominant tree and shrub species that are likely to result from projected future climatic changes. It has recently increased resources to monitor elevated tree mortality that has resulted from prolonged drought conditions. Future forest management actions and investment will likely target forest areas with high tree mortality to improve forest health. These actions are a part of a suite of ongoing forest management activities to promote ecosystem resilience and forest health.



Implementation Focus (next 5 years):

Reforestation Services

- Grow the statewide network of practitioners and workforce
- Invest in high-quality native seed stocks
- Integrate climate-informed practices into reforestation efforts statewide
- Assess the extent of type conversion in shrublands

Post-Fire Recovery

Address post-fire responsibilities for natural resource recovery, including watershed protection, reforestation and ecosystem restoration.

Workforce and Business Development/Wood Products Program Goals

- Strengthen California’s Wood Products Infrastructure
  Support investments in the development and expansion of wood processing facilities that utilize low-value forest biomass from wildfire resilience projects.

- Expand Bioenergy Production from Forest Residuals
  Support the construction or enhancement of bioenergy facilities that convert forest residues into electricity, heat, and biofuels, reducing open-air pile burning. Wood Products will work closely with utilities and regulators to address permitting and interconnection challenges while promoting innovative, low-emission technologies.
- Grow and Sustain the Forest Sector Workforce
  Through targeted workforce development grants, train new and existing workers in forest operations, transportation, manufacturing, and bioenergy. Partner with community colleges, labor groups, and tribal programs to create accessible career pathways and strengthen local economies.
- Advance Research and Innovation
  Fund applied research to develop new markets for small-diameter wood and residual biomass, with a focus on commercializing emerging technologies. Partnerships between industry, universities, and nonprofits will be prioritized, and research findings will be shared broadly to inform future investments.
- Reduce Wildfire Risk through Market Development
  By increasing the volume of forest biomass processed into products or energy, we will help reduce wildfire fuels while supporting rural economies. Materials from priority landscape resilience projects will be targeted, and Wood Products will facilitate collaborations that connect harvesters, haulers, processors, and end-users.

Conservation Education

Over the next 5 years, the UC ANR Forest Stewardship Education Initiative has plans to host 4-5 new stewardship cohorts each year; continue to provide support for, and increase the number of, site visits; further landowner connections with natural resource professionals; and provide the best current scientific information to landowners managing forestland. The program will continue to provide additional field days and webinars based on landowner input of topics; and host two CA Tree Schools each year. Current program funding ends June 30, 2027. Our goal is to secure additional funding to ensure the program continues to provide education and outreach to forest landowners and managers across California for the foreseeable future.

State Forest Action Plan Five Year Review

REVIEW OF FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM (FLP) ASSESSMENT OF NEED

The State Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee, named the Joint Forestry Committee (JFC), and CAL FIRE met in person in May of 2024 to discuss and review the Forest Legacy Program information in the SFAP. During the meeting a presentation was given by CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program regarding the status of the 2024 Forest and Range Assessment and the status of the SFAP. Additionally, CAL FIRE's Forest Legacy Program gave a presentation on the Assessment of Need (AON), the history of AON updates, the status of the AON, and the five-year AON review checklist questions. Following the meeting, CAL FIRE completed a detailed review of the AON/SFAP utilizing the AON Review Checklist. The AON checklist was provided to the JFC for review and consultation. During the August 2025 JFC meeting, the committee approved a letter which was signed by the committee Chair Sophia Lemmo. The letter, "concluded that the AON adequately addresses program requirements therefore amendments or updates to the AON are not necessary."

UPDATES TO STATE FOREST ACTION PLAN

Review the status of the SFAP

New Data Needs and Issues for all National Priorities:

California Senate Bill 1101 directed CAL FIRE to identify and map a comprehensive network of potential operational delineations (PODs) that can be used for strategic wildfire response or the proactive use of prescribed fire. PODs are fire management and planning units (polygons) that have boundaries defined by potential control features that can be leveraged for fire containment during a wildfire or prescribed fire. Combined with quantitative risk assessment, PODs are also useful for planning and prioritizing large areas for risk reduction and wildfire resilience projects. POD's will be developed at the CAL FIRE unit level to integrate unique needs of local stakeholders and particular characteristics of each unit. Initial data processing and development for PODs will be performed by and accessible through tools developed by Oregon State University and will eventually be available through the CA Wildfire Data Explorer.

Concurrently, the CAL FIRE office of the State Fire Marshal is working with Vibrant Planet on the use of their proprietary platform for planning and prioritizing wildfire risk reduction projects for communities. This platform takes a similar quantitative, and user-driven approach to planning and prioritizing work. Combined with PODs, this approach will eventually support prioritization at both large (e.g. watershed) scales and at project-scales. The Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task

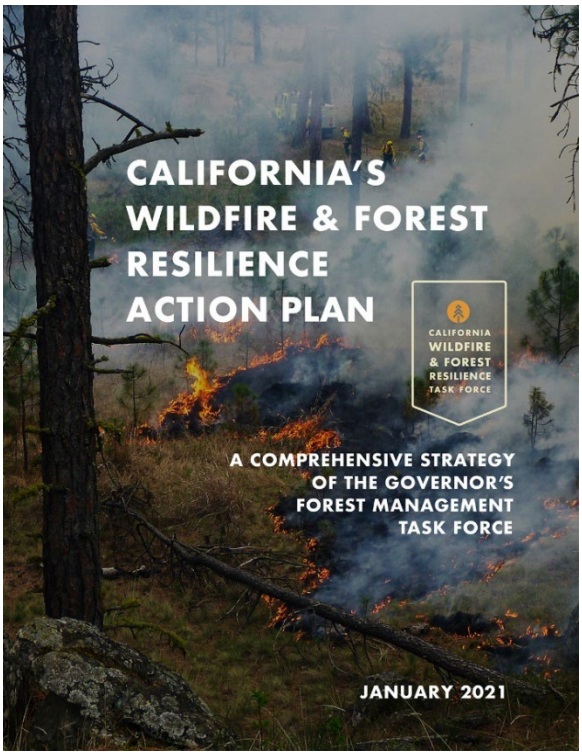
Force continues to develop its Data Hub in coordination with UC San Diego, which includes the Interagency Treatment Tracking System (ITS), and the California

Landscape Metrics (CLM). The ITS provides current data on fuel treatment activities, and the CLM provides a large array of data for planning organized around the 10 pillars of resilience.

Informal check-in with stakeholders regarding implementation

The California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force was created as an interagency organization designed to foster collaboration and to promote resilience to wildfire, promote forest health, and build community capacity. The Task Force consists of federal, state, local, public, private, and tribal organizations that share these mutual goals.

The Task Force developed a Wildfire Forest Resilience Action Plan in 2021. The WFR Task Force is required to update the plan on a 5-year cycle. This plan has broad vetting amongst State, Federal, and Local entities that are all striving to improve wildfire and forest resilience. It is proposed that California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan can also meet the Federal requirement for a State Action Plan. It is anticipated that the next update to the Wildfire Forest Resilience Action Plan will be completed and released by summer of 2026. Please refer to the task force website for additional Information.



California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan (2021) (WFR Task Force Action Plan)