

# California Forest Improvement Program

## Cap Rates for Practices

### **Overview of Cap Rates**

The maximum reimbursement for each practice is “capped” at a rate set by the California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP, Program). These cap rates are established for Program consistency as well as to encourage landowners to develop cost-effective projects.

Cap rates for grant agreements approved after July 1, 2025, are listed on the following pages. For additional instructions please read the CFIP User’s Guide published on the CFIP webpage at:

<https://www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/grants/california-forest-improvement>

Several practices have multiple allowable cap rates (light, moderate, heavy) depending on site conditions. Participants are encouraged to select the single most appropriate cap rate for each practice and not mix cap rates within a given practice. Rates requested must be justified in the project description portion of the application package and approved by the CAL FIRE Forestry Assistance Specialist (FAS). For guidance in determining the appropriate cap rate for your site, please refer to the CFIP User’s Guide description of that practice.

CFIP allows participants to choose between hiring a contractor or doing the work themselves. Self-labor and contractor labor may both be used on the same project, but not on the same practice. If both are used, the RM-8 CFIP Project Budget and the project description will specify either the contractor or self-labor cap rate for each proposed practice. Changing the labor type for a practice must be discussed with the CAL FIRE FAS before it occurs and may require amendment of the grant agreement.

If the actual cost of a project practice exceeds the listed maximum cap rate, the landowner must pay the difference, regardless of the cap rate chosen. If the actual cost of a project practice comes in under the cap rate, the actual cost and not the cap rate will be used as the eligible cost when calculating the total reimbursement payable by the State. I.e., the total eligible cost is either the cap rate or the actual cost, whichever is lower.

## **Contractor Labor Cap Rates**

- Full California Cooperative Forest Management Plan:
  - \$6,696 plus \$5.20 per acre, not to exceed \$12,468.
  - RPFs developing a Full Management Plan on their own property will typically only be paid at the Mini Plan rate. At FAS discretion, RPFs may negotiate above the Mini Plan rate if negotiations are supported by cost estimates for paying employees who are working on plan development. CFIP Invoices for reimbursement must be supported by proof of payments to employees.
- Mini-Management Plan: \$2,598 plus \$1.45 per acre
- Archaeology Addendum: \$2,234 plus \$3.12/ per acre, not to exceed \$5,195
- Other Plan Addendum: \$2,234 plus \$3.12/ per acre, not to exceed \$5,195
- Emergency Forest Management Plan Tier 1: \$1,060
- Emergency Forest Management Plan Tier 2: \$2,120
- RPF Supervision: \$281 per acre for the first 20 acres, and \$94 per acre for each additional acre.
- Planting:
  - Site Preparation Herbicide – Light: \$421
  - Site Preparation Herbicide – Moderate: \$644
  - Site Preparation Herbicide – Heavy: \$868
  - Site Preparation Mechanical – Light: \$670
  - Site Preparation Mechanical – Moderate: \$1,008
  - Site Preparation Mechanical – Heavy: \$1,340
  - Substantially Damaged Site Preparation: Negotiated rate between FAS and Project Proponent
  - Trees & Planting – Light: \$338
  - Trees & Planting – Moderate: \$504
  - Trees & Planting – Heavy: \$670

- Tree Shelters: \$416
- Pre-commercial Thinning:
  - Light: \$670
  - Moderate: \$1,008
  - Heavy: \$1,340
- Release:
  - Mechanical – Light: \$670
  - Mechanical – Moderate: \$1,008
  - Mechanical – Heavy: \$1,340
  - Herbicide or Other – Light: \$421
  - Herbicide or Other – Moderate: \$644
  - Herbicide or Other – Heavy: \$868
- Pruning:
  - Light: \$281
  - Moderate: \$421
  - Heavy: \$561
- Follow-up:
  - Follow-Up Herbicide – Light: \$421
  - Follow-Up Herbicide – Moderate: \$644
  - Follow-Up Herbicide – Heavy: \$868
  - Follow-Up Mechanical or Handwork – Light: \$670
  - Follow-Up Mechanical or Handwork – Moderate: \$1,008
  - Follow-Up Mechanical or Handwork – Heavy: \$1,340
- Land Conservation/Habitat Improvement: Cap rates in this practice are variable and will be negotiated with the FAS based on site condition, acreage, the type

of project and rates used for the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

\* Properties must be in compliance with the Forest Practice Act at the time of application. Properties with unpermitted conversions, are not eligible for funding. The area listed within Public Resources Code 4291 (defensible space) is not eligible for reimbursement. Disposal of slash, stumps, or other materials generated by commercial timber operations are not eligible for reimbursement. Materials/slash generated by CFIP practices must meet a 30" maximum height from the ground, utilizing lop and scatter, for the entirety of the associated practice area, at the completion of the associated practice. Lop and scatter is not eligible as a follow-up practice, and is compensated within the rate of the generating practice.

## **Self-Labor Cap Rates**

The self-labor rate for each practice is capped at **75%** of the equivalent contractor labor cap rate, from the above pages.

Self-labor may be performed by the landowner, their family members, and/or direct employees, and must be explained and justified in the project description. Self-labor is at the discretion of both the FAS and Stewardship Forester.

When a landowner elects to perform the work themselves, they must track and record their hourly rates for their work. These records must be maintained by the landowner and available by request to the FAS.

The following rates are based on Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) rates for California, federal fiscal year 2024, and may be used to estimate self-labor costs. These rates may not be exceeded for landowner owned equipment and include fuel and maintenance but not labor. Labor for an employee, contractor, or day laborer shall be the actual wage paid and shall be verified by a signed invoice or duplicate check. The equipment and labor rates do not apply to contractors or rented equipment where actual receipts are required. Additional equipment or supplies shall be approved through the local FAS.

- Labor: \$34.20
- Wheel mounted backhoe excavator with horsepower range of 60 to 90: \$67.16
- Track mounted dozer with horsepower range of 60 to 90. (e.g., D3, D4): \$79.45
- Track mounted dozer with horsepower range of 125 to 160. (e.g., D5, D6): \$101.74
- Track mounted dozer with horsepower range of 160 to 250. (e.g., D7, D8): \$185.56
- Track mounted hydraulic excavator with bucket capacity range of 0.3 to 0.8 cubic yards: \$102.68
- Track mounted hydraulic excavator with bucket capacity range of 0.8 to 1.5 cubic yards: \$132.43
- Track mounted hydraulic excavator with bucket capacity range of 1.5 to 2.5 cubic yards: \$147.14
- Skid steer loader with horsepower range of 60 to 90: \$57.72
- Chainsaw or gasoline powered pole chainsaw: \$6.39
- Forestry mulcher, flail shredder, hydro axe, brush cutter, etc.: \$118.61

- Agricultural tractor with horsepower range of less than 50: \$17.19
- Agricultural tractor with horsepower range of 50 to 90: \$36.87
- Agricultural tractor with horsepower range of 90 to 140: \$76.23
- Agricultural tractor with horsepower range of 140 to 190: \$102.47
- Dump truck for moving bulk material. Typical capacity is 12 ton or 8 cubic yards: \$56.04
- Dump truck for moving bulk material. Typical capacity is 16 ton or 12 cubic yards: \$106.23
- Dump truck for moving bulk material. Typical capacity is 25 ton or 18 cubic yards: \$105.84
- Chipper, 6-inch capacity, typically 35 horsepower (includes chipper & power unit): \$35.50
- Chipper, 12-inch capacity, typically 130 horsepower (includes chipper & power unit): \$55
- Chipper, 15-inch capacity, typically 165 horsepower (includes chipper & power unit): \$77.11
- Wheeled front end loader with horsepower range of 80 to 110: \$61.12
- Wheeled front end loader with horsepower range of 110 to 140: \$63.88
- Track loader, 95 horsepower: \$98.49
- Log skidder: \$62.55
- Feller buncher: \$147.14