

# JDSF Program Updates

## December 2025 – March 2026



### Timber Sales – Jason Serna

#### Personnel

- Aidan Sullivan accepted a permanent Forestry Assistant II position in December. Mr. Sullivan is a graduate of UC Berkeley and following graduation worked at the Blodgett Forest Research Station.

#### Timber Sales

- A bid tour for the AMEX Timber Sale was held on February 12<sup>th</sup>. Bid envelopes were opened on March 18, and Mendocino Forest Products, LLC was awarded the sale with a redwood price of \$365/MBF, Douglas-fir/WW price of \$10/MBF and a total sale value of \$223,400.00. This is a two-year sale. The bid package has been forwarded to Sacramento for approval.
- Work continues on the Fire Berry THP. After numerous consultations with Forest Practice, it was decided that burning prior to harvest is not appropriate in THPs. At this time, JDSF will submit two CEQA documents relating to the project. The Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) will cover the burn pre-harvest and a THP will address everything else. Submittal is expected in early April.
- Work continues on the Camp 1 THP, Camp 8 South THP and an unnamed THP southeast of Camp 20.

#### Fuel Reduction

- Pile burning continues along Road 408. Debris piles are associated with the County Road 408 Fuel Reduction Project.

#### Reforestation & Vegetation Management

- County Roads 408/409 Fuel Break – JDSF & VMP staff started assessment of fuel break units, assessing vegetation and flagging potential fire control lines, included for use for multi-use recreation. Portions of the fuel break lie within the JDSF Mushroom Management and Late-Seral Development (LSD) areas.
- Pre-commercial thinning returned to JDSF in January. For eight days crews worked thinning stands within the Park Gulch group openings originally harvested in 2014. They treated approximately 25 acres.

### Research & Demonstration – Julie Rhoads

#### Personnel

- Jessica Huang accepted the Forester I position and will transfer to MEU on April 20<sup>th</sup> after completing her commitment as a Forest Practice inspector in AEU.
- Interviews for the Limited Term (LT) Forestry Assistant II (FA II) and LT Environmental Scientist (ES) positions were conducted March 9-12<sup>th</sup>.

#### Research

- Data collection at the Fire Fuels Mitigation Study will continue with Alejandro Anasal (UC Berkeley) with UCCE staff assistance through April.
- Forestry Aides completed vegetation and seedling data collection at Lynn Webb's (Retired Annuitant) Parlin Rx Burn Regeneration Project in January.
- Stacy Standish (State Forests Research Coordinator), with input from Jeremiah Steuterman (Forester I) and University Nevada, Reno AMEX research staff, produced an Arc GIS Story Map for

the Coastal Adaptive Management Experiment displaying project information. It is published on the JDSF website under both the Timber Harvest and Research sections: [AMEX Story Map](#)

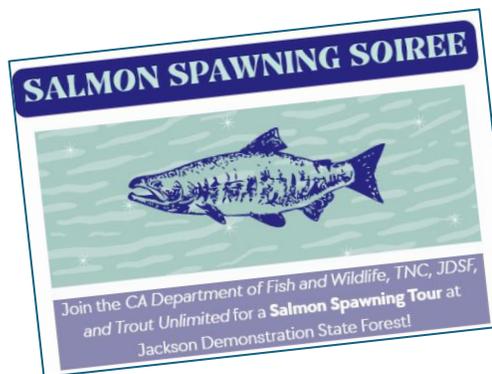
- Stacy also published a Story Map highlighting research across the Demonstration State Forests: [DSF Research](#).
- UCCE Lake and Mendocino Area Director Matthew Barnes toured JDSF with UCCE and JDSF staff on February 25<sup>th</sup> to see recent and upcoming research projects done by UCCE and JDSF staff. Tour stops included the Fire Fuels Mitigation Study, Caspar Creek Watershed, Mitchell Creek Flux Towers, and Jug Handle Pygmy Restoration.

#### Caspar Experimental Watershed

- Scott Kirby (FA II) continues to coordinate and complete trail and bridge maintenance. JDSF assisted USFS PSW staff with storm duties and road clearing throughout the winter holidays.
- The Redwood Resiliency Project data collection and analysis continue.
- Dr. Salli Dymond (Northern Arizona University) presented “Forest Harvesting Effects on Hydrological Watershed Processes – Insights from the Caspar Creek Third Experiment,” complimenting Joe Restraino’s (FRAP) discussion “Ecohydrologic Controls on Fire Hazard in a Managed Redwood Forest” at the California Forest Science Symposium (CFSS) in Sacramento on February 20<sup>th</sup>.
- The South Fork Caspar Bridge design was finalized by CGS in early March.

#### Outreach Events

- CDFW, Trout Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, and JDSF staff hosted the Salmon Spawning Tour on December 28<sup>th</sup> at Camp One. The presenter’s discussion included the fact that the Noyo River has hosted one of the longest data sets for salmon recovery numbers, informing management objectives in Mendocino County.



- Lynn and Jeremiah presented at the CFSS. Their talk “A Century of Redwood Regeneration Research from Jackson Demonstration State Forest Lands” highlighted studies on redwood regeneration and reforestation on the Forest.

- On February 28<sup>th</sup>, Robert Douglas (Senior ES) led a Bog Walk in partnership with UCCE and Jug Handle Creek Nature Center, to explore the unique plants, insects, and natural history of the bog in JDSF's Pygmy Forest in the Mitchell Creek area.



February 28<sup>th</sup> Bog Walk



Engine 1166 staff completing the orientation for Fire Science Education days

- Julie Rhoads (Forester II), Caitlin Grace (FA II), Anya Cutter (Forestry Aide), and Engine 1166 staff supported the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council's Fire Science Education days on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> for Fort Bragg Middle School students at Jug Handle Creek Nature Center. Students used "burn boards" with matches and cotton balls to observe how fire behavior changes depending on fuel loading, slope, or weather conditions. Staff also lead them on a walk in the woods to talk about fire adapted tree species in California ecosystems.
- Robert, Caitlin, and Fred Postler (FA II) hosted several Fungi Forays between December and February. These forays are some of the few free informational fungi events held on the Mendocino Coast and they tend to draw quite a crowd. In addition to other highlights of Forest activities, public outreach and educational event invitations are shared on JDSF's social media platforms. Caitlin and Robert also participated in the special event foray hosted by the Fungus



Federation of Santa Cruz where they led a smaller group of mycophiles out to areas on Road 500. Overall, the fungi forays served over 225 members of the public and have been loved by beginner mushroom-enthusiasts and professional scientists alike.

#### Wildlife & Botanical Resources

- Robert is coordinating with North Coast Field Biologists for contracted Northern Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet surveys in 2026.
- End-of-year compliance reports were submitted to the USFWS and CDFW for NSO banding. No NSO were banded on JDSF this year, however, four NSOs were banded in the greater study area on State Parks.
- Robert is developing workflows for processing BirdNET results from automated recording units (ARUs) deployed across the forest for compliance and research projects.; he also added a new project to Wildlife Insights for camera trap data being collected for the Pygmy Forest Restoration Project at two locations. The first run captured a mountain lion at both locations, as well as American black bear, gray fox, brush rabbit, striped skunk, and Columbian black-tailed deer.
- JDSF and Sacramento staff completed quarterly battery and memory card exchanges for ARUs and cameras for the Fire Fuels Mitigation project in February.
- Charlie Wright (ORISE scholar) assisted with the development of a workflow to batch process data collected with temperature probes. The intent will be to use this process to make all the historical temperature data available in a database, and ultimately, linked with spatial information and maintained in GIS. Charlie finished his appointment at the end of February.
- Barred Owl research updates: two subadult Barred Owls were removed on JDSF in December: one from Waterfall Grove and the other from Dresser Grove. The University of Wisconsin is preparing to resume Barred Owl removal in Mendocino and Sonoma counties on a full-time basis as a new source of funding is working its way through the State's contracting process.

#### Recreation, Roads & Sustainability – Erik Wahl

##### Recreation

- The February 14<sup>th</sup> Recreation Task Force (RTF) meeting was conducted at the Russian Gulch Horse Camp (State Parks) and Redtail Horse Camp (JDSF-Camp 1). General notes on conditions, maintenance needs and potential improvements to these and the horse camp at Camp 20 were provided. The general discussion involved opportunities to maintain and improve horse camp facilities. Erik Wahl pointed out reducing coral size, minor excavations and combining sites would provide more area to park, however, longer trailers would not likely be accommodated. Prior to the meeting, JDSF equipment operators improved the road into the Redtail Horse Camp, reducing the gradient to 10%. The group was reminded that converting “Tin Can” to a horse camp was not supported, where Redtail could be reworked to a horse camp only in cooperation with a user-group and where measures would follow CDFW guidelines to protect streams and water quality.
- JDSF Recreation Survey - Cal-Poly-San Luis Obispo completed over 400 surveys, exceeding targets. Staff is expected to complete a draft report in mid-April.
- Vehicles damaged saturated soils and removed wooden structures at the Camp 1 Day Use. This and other recent illegal activities lead to CDFW's expressing concern to fish collection and measurements tools, etc.

- On March 11<sup>th</sup>, the Mendocino Coast Cyclists (MCC) met to discuss “sanctioning” a flagged trail line NW of the County Road 408/409 intersection. The area is on flat ground with numerous skid trails and dead-end paths created from mushroom gathering, hikers and bikers. Discussions included desired goals in areas allocated for Late-Seral Development (LSD), first steps towards restoration and how the trail could support a fuel break with prescribe burning. Six MCC members walked the entire flag line, taking note on existing trails, need for abandoning unwanted trails, rerouting and other opportunities to extend the fuel break towards Russian Gulch State Park.



*Marc Jensen (JAG member), clearing large Cypress at entrance to Jughandle Reserve, State Parks*

## Roads & Restoration

- Jughandle Restoration & Research Project
  - UC Berkley summarized 2025 field activities, including data collection in 36 permanent monitoring plots across three (3) treatment units. Each plot consisted of three (3) circular plots and four (4) transects, inventorying overstory and understory trees, canopy cover, understory vegetation, ground cover and surface fuels.
  - On December 13<sup>th</sup> the RTF met to discuss the proposed work on roads, trails and the Ecological Staircase Boardwalk. The RTF agreed that full replacement of the 30+ year old boardwalk structure may be cost-prohibitive and that ongoing maintenance of tread and fasteners would be a more plausible option. JDSF and State Parks discussed arranging a cooperative workday sometime in Spring.
  - JDSF staff and others are working to present the project to the CDFW SERP program along with submitting a general and site-specific measure package.
- The Chamberlain Creek Fish Passage Implementation Project is expected to begin in August. The project will restore access for all life stages of salmonids to 1.6 miles of spawning and rearing habitat, replacing the fish-barrier culvert with a new engineered 26-foot diameter, round culvert embedded approximately 9-feet into the native streambed and realigned to the natural stream channel. Project management will be conducted by the Mendocino Land Trust.
- Trout Unlimited met with JDSF and State Park to revisit improving Road 720 within the Little North Fork and Big River flood plain. Work will include an engineered design crossing Railroad Gulch.