

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY & FIRE PROTECTION



REFORESTATION SERVICES PROGRAM AT A GLANCE (2025)

Who We Are

CAL FIRE's Reforestation Services Program (RSP) has been based out of the L.A. Moran Reforestation Center (LAMRC) since 1921. The program serves all California forestlands by providing resources to protect and restore disturbed and degraded forests, maximizing their values, enhancing ecosystem functions, and increasing resiliency from climatic impacts. The RSP provides seeds and seedlings genetically suited and climate-adapted to growing sites for landowners and forest managers, while also offering technical and financial assistance.

Challenges

The challenges for the program include:

- Shortage of trained personnel in all aspects of reforestation.
- A lack of quality seed for many forest types and locations.
- Limited access to private forestlands.
- Limited long-term seed storage capacity.
- Inadequate nursery growing space.



Figure 1: Recently collected Incense cedar cones sit in a bushel bag, awaiting transportation to the LAMRC for processing. The vast majority of cones collected in 2025 were Incense cedar.

With the growing need for seeds and seedlings brought on by catastrophic wildfires, climate change, insects, disease, and other impacts to forests, the demand for reforestation services is unprecedented.

Increasing Workforce and Partnerships

One issue in continuing reforestation has been a lack of training, staff, and communication between affected stakeholders. Internally, the program continues to regularly fill positions due to factors such as term durations, promotions, etc. Given the number of positions this affects, staffing levels fluctuate regularly and impact operations seasonally. We continue to appreciate the various foresters, scientists, analysts, and cooperators who help us accomplish our goals.

Outside partners and projects include agreements to assist with:

- Tree climbing, cone surveying, cone collection, and related practical training.
- Nursery establishment in new locations.
- Land access and information sharing on cone productivity.
- Strategic long-term planning to address persistent problems in reforestation.

Cone Collection and Seed Processing

To obtain the high-quality conifer seed, CAL FIRE continued to cooperate with the Northern Sierra Tree Improvement Association (NSTIA). Throughout 2025, RSP Staff and cooperators conducted 1,031 Cone Surveys across California. CAL FIRE works closely with highly trained climbers to harvest cones produced at the tree canopy’s top. Once harvested, all cones are delivered to the center where they are processed to extract seeds and are laboratory tested. Some bushels are distributed directly to their partner, hence the difference in bushels funded and bushels processed at LAMRC. The State Seed Bank houses fully-processed seeds for long-term storage and distribution for reforestation purposes.

Cone Processing Statistics for 2025	
Total bushels collected	3,145
Total bushels being processed	2993
Projected resulting pounds of seed	2,323

Banking on the Future

The State Seed Bank is a long-term repository of quality tree seed stored in a zero-degree freezer. RSP inventory can produce up to 100 million seedlings. Using the results of RSP’s annual [Assessment of Seed Needs](#), it was concluded that to reforest just 25% of California’s private forestlands, the State Seed Bank will need to expand its capacity by over 300%, requiring us to collect and process over 50,000 bushels of conifer cones.

This allowed the RSP to reevaluate its stored seed lots to identify appropriate amounts to maintain current and future reforestation needs.

Seed Statistics for 2025	
Pounds of available seed in storage	23418
Pounds of private seed in storage	19914
Number of species in inventory	67
Pounds of seed distributed	1366.3

Seedling Statistics for 2025	
Seedling net production	190,172
Number of orders	46
Percentage to private landowners	52%
Seedling production for post-fire	89%
Acreage capable for planting	951
*At 200 trees per acre	

Growing Next Generation Forests

California faces an ever-increasing need for large-scale reforestation to restore ecosystems, combat climate change, and safeguard biodiversity in the wake of devastating wildfires and habitat loss.

RSP plans to build internal capacity while supporting external ventures. The Reforestation Center hopes to vastly improve seed storage capacity and nursery output in years to come while supporting local and regional efforts.

CAL FIRE is a steadfast partner in the [Reforestation Pipeline Partnership](#), where industry professionals are sharing information and resources to overcome challenges and build upon success.

CAL FIRE looks forward to 2026 as we build on our historical legacy by supporting research and innovative designs, strengthening partnerships, and educating constituents.

For more information, to provide feedback, to [arrange center tours](#), or to solicit assistance, please get in touch with our staff and explore our services. You may call us at our direct line at (530) 753-2441, visit [our website](#), or email us at reforestation@fire.ca.gov.

