

# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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### **CAL FIRE Invests in Workforce and Business Development**

**Sacramento** – The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has awarded \$33 million to business development and workforce development projects that support healthy, resilient forests and the people and ecosystems that depend on them.

CAL FIRE’s Wood Products and Bioenergy Team awarded [30 grants](#) to applicants that include non-profit organizations, businesses, universities and community colleges, and local governments. These partners are implementing projects to create a robust and diversified wood products industry to facilitate the economic and sustainable management of California’s forests, as outlined in [California’s Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan](#).

Ten workforce development projects will train over 5,000 individuals in prescribed fire, fuels treatment, firefighting, and forestry. Grants will educate and prepare students for careers in forest management, increase prescribed fire training, and prepare and support formerly incarcerated people for employment in fire suppression, fuels treatment, and forestry.

A total of 14 businesses were awarded grants that will create 120 jobs and utilize 750,000 tons of forest biomass that would otherwise remain in the woods or be burned in open piles. Two of the projects will support reforestation by expanding the State’s native tree seed bank and growing seedlings. Additional funds went to six research and development efforts that seek novel uses for forest biomass sourced from wildfire mitigation projects.

“Forest biomass that is generated from restoration projects remains a burn risk unless it can be repurposed. These grants recruit and train people for those jobs and develop technologies and markets for wood products.” Chief Joe Tyler, CAL FIRE Director.

Most of the funded projects benefit disadvantaged or low-income communities. The economic opportunities provided by these investments are in addition to the expected benefits from carbon storage in wood products and the substitution of fossil fuels and steel, concrete, and other non-renewable building materials.

CAL FIRE’s workforce and business grants were made available through State of California General Funds. The solicitation remains open to new grant applications. Please visit [CAL FIRE’s Wood Products and Bioenergy webpage](#) for details.

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