



## AUGUST 2022

**TASK FORCE  
HIGHLIGHTS**

**July Task Force Meeting:** The July 21 [Task Force meeting](#) in Sacramento included updates on several key deliverables in the [Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan](#):

- Development of an [Interagency Tracking System](#) of acres treated by federal, state, local agencies;
- A demonstration of CAL FIRE's new [Fuels Reduction Viewer](#);
- A summary of the USFS Region 5 Post-Fire Recovery Plan; and
- A presentation on an interagency process to improve and enhance CalTREES, CAL FIRE's online timber harvest permitting system, and enhance CalVTP implementation.

**CALREC Vision Issues Draft Joint Strategy for Sustainable Recreation:** The Joint Strategy, a key deliverable in the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, aims to improve [access to sustainable outdoor recreation](#) as communities adapt to the risk and impacts of wildfire and smoke. Workshops will be held on Zoom from August 17 to August 24. The draft Joint Strategy will be shared with workshop registrants in mid-August.

**Task Force Recruits State Coordinator and Communications Coordinator:** CNRA is now recruiting for the two new positions to support the Task Force. CAL FIRE will also soon post two new positions. For updates, and to apply, visit the [Task Force Linked In page](#).

**STATE  
HIGHLIGHTS**

**Cal OES Awards \$25 Million to Local Organizations to Protect Vulnerable Communities from Disasters:** In this second wave of funding, the California Department of Emergency Services [awarded grants to 93 community partners](#) to ensure the state's most vulnerable are ready when disaster strikes. These grants prioritize communities that are considered both socially vulnerable and at a high risk of being impacted by wildfire, flood, earthquake, drought, or heatwave.

**CAL FIRE Launches Fuels Reduction Project Viewer:** The [viewer](#), also known as CalMAPPER, makes it easier for the public to see the location of recent and planned fuels reduction projects, including prescribed fire, fuel breaks, and roadside clearance projects. Projects completed or underway by other state agencies will be added in the next several months.

**DOC Issues Final Regional Forest & Fire Capacity (RFFC) Program Grant Guidelines:** The [guidelines](#) support DOC's RFFC grants, funded by the Governor's \$110 million investment in the RFFC Program, to build local capacity and fund projects that create fire-adapted communities and landscapes.



**Watershed Research and Training Center Awards \$1 million to Prescribed Burn Associations:** Through funding from DOC's RFFC Program, the [awards](#) are focused on building local capacity, PBA organizational development, and planning for local prescribed burns. The nine PBAs were funded based on their demonstrated potential to build local leadership, willingness to assist other PBA peers, and commitment to training and learning opportunities.

**Bear River Headwaters Now Protected as a State Forest:** CAL FIRE has acquired 267 acres in the [Bear River Headwaters](#) of the South Yuba River from PG&E. The parcel of mixed conifers and mountain meadows will be added to CAL FIRE's system of Demonstration State Forests.

**Fire Adapted Communities Pathways Tool Now Available:** The Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network, together with Dr. Travis Paveglio, has released a new tool for fire adaptation practitioners, community members and policymakers. [The Fire Adapted Communities Pathways Tool](#) helps users identify a community, determine an initial "community archetype" and suggest fire adaptation practices, tools and approaches suited to similar communities. It then helps users create a 'pathway' that is tailored to their community conditions.

## FEDERAL HIGHLIGHTS

**U.S. Economic Development Administration Awards \$21.5 Million for CA Workforce Training in Forest Health and Fire Safety.** Through its proposed [CA Resilient Careers in Forestry](#) program, the Foundation for California Community Colleges (FCCC) will partner with employers, educational institutions, and local community-based organizations to build a state-wide infrastructure for training in forest health and fire safety. The 32 winning projects were selected from a pool of 509 applicants.

**USDA/USFS Launch \$1 Billion Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program:** [Grants](#) of up to \$250,000 will be awarded to create and update community wildfire protection plans or conduct outreach and education, and grants of up to \$10 million will be awarded for associated infrastructure and resilience projects. Notices of Funding Opportunities are available for [Western States](#) and [Tribes](#), with applications due October 7, 2022.

**USDA/USFS Issue Reforestation and Climate Adaptation Plans:** The [nationwide strategy](#) will address a reforestation backlog of four million acres and plant more than one billion trees over the next decade. USDA also announced [13 new climate adaptation plans](#), which outline how each USDA agency will incorporate climate change into their operations and decisions to support communities, agriculture and forests nationwide.

**Forest Service Taking Emergency Action to Protect Giant Sequoias:** The USFS is undertaking [emergency fuels reduction treatments](#) on 13,337 acres to improve survival of 12 giant sequoia groves against immediate wildfire threats. These actions make use of the agency's existing authorities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to conduct emergency fuels treatments to remove surface and ladder fuels as expeditiously as possible.



**Intertribal Roundtable on Confronting the Wildfire Crisis:** The USFS recently partnered with the Intertribal Timber Council to design and host an [Intertribal Roundtable](#). The Roundtable provided a unique opportunity to engage more than 50 tribal leaders, tribal staff and USFS executive leadership to create a pathway to co-develop solutions to the ongoing wildfire crisis. The Intertribal Timber Council published a [report](#) on this important dialogue.

**USFS Modifies Local and Tribal Match Requirements:** USFS Chief Randy Moore [released interim policy direction](#) that allows partners to use in-kind and other contributions to meet match requirements, and to waive them for tribes and partners in underserved communities.

## LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

**Wildfire Resilience Work Helps Save Yosemite Sequoias:** Forest fuels reduction work along the Wawona Road near Yosemite, funded in part by CAL FIRE Forest Health grants, [made the Washburn fire easier to contain and saved countless acres and the world-renowned giant Sequoias](#). Fire crews were able to use the road as a fuel break to hold the fire. Observers noted that flames were inches to a few feet in length in the treated area and tens to hundreds of feet high in the untreated areas.

**Prescribed Fire Success Story: 2021 River Fire:** [CAL FIRE created this video](#) to show how defensible space and prescribed fire played a direct role in Grupe Ranch surviving the 2021 River Fire near Colfax in Nevada County. Prescribed fire is one of the many tools CAL FIRE uses to manage vegetation on the landscape and protect communities from wildfire.

**New El Dorado/Amador Prescribed Burn Association Conducts First Private Landowner Burns:** A new Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) in El Dorado and Amador counties has [recently conducted workshops](#) and several burns with private landowners and is planning a burn plan writing workshop in August. A total of nine PBAs across the state received sub-awards to fund leadership, peer mentorship, and training.

**AFF Launches The Family Forest:** American Forest Foundation (AFF) has created a brand-new virtual community, [The Family Forest](#), designed to be a space where landowners, foresters, and conservation professionals can interact, share resources and tips, and ask each other questions. AFF created this community in response to many appeals from landowners who wanted to learn what people like them were doing to better care for their land.

## PRESS BOX

- Op-Ed: Why Forest Managers Need to Team Up with Indigenous Fire Practitioners. [LA Times, July 31, 2022](#) (subscription required)
- Why Two California Wildfires Had Very Different Outcomes. [LA Times, July 30, 2022](#) (subscription required)
- Opinion: The Case Against Commercial Logging in Wildfire-Prone Forests [New York Times, July 30, 2022](#) (subscription required)
- Why Wildfire Evacuations Are So Hard to Plan. [The Atlantic, July 28, 2022](#)



- California's megafires are burning more intensely than before. Controlled burns can help snuff that risk. [KCRA News, July 28, 2022](#)
- Forests For the Future. [California Bountiful Magazine, July/August 2022](#)
- State Can Fight Fire with Prescribed Fire by Funding Jobs in The Field. [CalMatters, July 27, 2022](#)
- Forests In the America West Need More "Good Fire." Tribes Can Help. [Slate, July 27, 2022](#)
- At Yosemite, A Preservation Plan That Calls for Chain Saws. [New York Times, July 27, 2022](#) (subscription required)
- Yosemite's giant sequoias were saved by forest thinning. Here's why some want it stopped. [Sacramento Bee, July 17, 2022](#) (subscription required)
- Yosemite's Mariposa Grove will survive Washburn Fire, says park's forest ecologist. [San Francisco Chronicle, July 11, 2022](#).
- Wildfire Weather Research/Women in Fire Restoration. [CapRadio: Insight Podcast, July 11, 2022](#).

## LEGISLATION WATCH

**SB 926 (Dodd) Prescribed Fire Liability Pilot Program: Prescribed Fire Claims Fund.** Requires CAL FIRE to establish the Prescribed Fire Liability Pilot Program, pursuant to SB 170 (Skinner), and to consult with the Department of General Services in establishing a Prescribed Fire Claims Fund.

**AB 1154 (Patterson) California Environmental Quality Act: exemption: egress route projects: fire safety.** Creates a CEQA exemption for egress route projects undertaken by a public agency in fire-prone subdivisions that have been identified by the Board of Forestry as lacking in sufficient egress routes.

**AB 1717 (Aguilar-Curry) Public works: definition.** Expands the definition of public works to include fuels reduction work as part of wildfire mitigation projects and thus require the payment of prevailing wage for such projects.

**AB 2251 (Calderon) Urban forestry: statewide strategic plan: statewide map.** Requires CAL FIRE to develop a statewide strategic plan by 2025 to increase tree canopy coverage in urban areas by 10 percent by 2035.

**AB 2377 (Muratsuchi) Fire prevention: Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency: responsibilities.** Directs CNRA and the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force (Task Force) to oversee the coordination and synchronization of permits and agreements necessary to reach the State's goal of treating 500,000 acres annually by 2025, and then prioritize those acres for fire and fuels treatment.



**AB 2649 (Garcia and Stone) Natural Carbon Sequestration and Resilience Act of 2022.** Requires CNRA, on or before July 1, 2023, in coordination with its departments, including CARB and CDFA, to refine existing and establish new natural carbon sequestration pathways and strategies where appropriate.

**AB 2705 (Quirk-Silva) Housing: fire safety standards.** Prevents local governments from performing discretionary approval of residential development in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs) unless specific fire safety and building standards are met, and requires the State Fire Marshal, in consultation with the Director of CAL FIRE and the Director of HCD, to provide financial assistance to harden at least 300,000 homes in VHFHSZs in the next three years if funding is appropriated by the Legislature.

**AB 2878 (Aguiar-Curry) Forest Biomass Waste Utilization Program.** Establishes the Forest Waste Biomass Utilization Program at the Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation to develop an implementation plan to meet the goals of specified statewide forest management plans.

## SCIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- **Comparing Geography and Severity of Managed Wildfires in California and the Southwest USA before and after the Implementation of the 2009 Policy Guidance;** Iniguez et al., 2022; [Forests 2022, 13\(5\), 793](#).
- **Mechanisms of Forest Resilience;** Falk et al., 2022; [Forest Ecology and Management, Volume 512 \(2022\), Article 120129](#).
- **Water balance for gaged watersheds in the Central Sierra Nevada, California and Nevada, United States;** Roche et al., 2022; [Frontiers for Global Change, 22](#).
- **Losses of tree cover in California driven by increasing fire disturbance and climate stress;** Wang et al., 2022; [AGU Advances, 3, e2021AV000654](#).

## LOOKING AHEAD

DOC Forest Biofuels-Gasification Pilot Program: DOC anticipates opening a competitive solicitation in late August under its [Forest Biofuels/Gasification Pilot Program](#). Pilot projects need be located onsite in the Sierra Nevada and focused on creating carbon-negative hydrogen and/or liquid fuel from forest biomass. DOC will award grants to up to 8 projects at a maximum of \$500,000 each.

**Sierra Nevada Regional Task Force Meeting, September 27, 2022:** The California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force will host its second regional meeting at the Nevada County Fairgrounds in Grass Valley, CA from 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM. Look for the meeting invitation via email. Visit the [Meetings](#) page of the website for more information on upcoming meetings and for recordings of previous meetings.

