



JULY 2022

## STATE HIGHLIGHTS

**CAL FIRE Reaches Goal of 100,000 Acres Treated Ahead of Schedule:** On June 21, [Governor Newsom announced](#) that CAL FIRE has treated 110,925 acres in preparation for the upcoming wildfire season, which exceeds its *Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan* goal of treating 100,000 acres annually by 2025. This work during the last fiscal year includes more than 600 fuel reduction projects. Data continues to be reported to and validated by CAL FIRE.

**Governor Signs State Forest and Wildfire Budget:** On June 30, Governor Newsom signed a state budget that includes an additional \$670 million for programs that will provide immediate benefits during the 2022 fire season and help the state prepare for the 2023 fire season. [Key investments](#) include \$400 million for wildfire resilience projects, \$265 million for strategic fuel breaks, and \$5 million to expand defensible space inspections. The budget also sets aside an additional \$530 million over two years for forest and wildfire resilience programs that will be allocated in the summer pending additional discussions with the legislature.

**SNC approves more than \$21 million in wildfire recovery and forest resilience grants:** The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) awarded \$21.8 million to [19 forest resilience and wildfire recovery projects](#) at its June board meeting. Thirteen of the projects will take place on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management lands, where federal land management agencies committed an additional \$4.8 million to the projects. SNC also recently launched [the second cycle of its \\$50 million Wildfire Recovery and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program](#).

**Caltrans Pushes Fire-Resilience Roadways Strategy:** Based on a series of workshops with leading fire experts, Caltrans has adopted a more comprehensive and aggressive [fuels reduction strategy](#) to reduce wildfire ignition probability and establish shaded fuel breaks along the travel routes it maintains. Under its new approach, the model highway roadside will have a more open appearance, with broader spacing between mature trees, and acres of thinned brush with an understory of new growth shaded by the overhead canopy.

**CAL FIRE Updates Homeowner's Guide:** CAL FIRE has [updated its Ready Set Go homeowner's guide](#) for creating and maintaining defensible space and hardening homes. The guide emphasizes the importance of retrofitting with ignition-resistance or noncombustible materials to protect against the threat of flying embers, direct flame contact and radiant heat exposure.

**UC Cooperative Extension Issues New Private Landowner Guide – Planning and Permitting Forest Fuel-Reduction Projects:** UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) has released *Planning and Permitting Forest Fuel Reduction Projects on Private Lands in California*, [a comprehensive guide](#) to the



planning and permitting processes involved in improving the health and resilience of small, privately-owned lands. The guide and other valuable resources, including the *Forest Management Handbook for Small Parcel Landowners* issued by CAL FIRE and the USFS this spring, can be found on the [Private Landowner Assistance page](#) of the Task Force website.

**Launch of Tiüvac'a'ai (healthy land) Tribal Conservation Corps:** On June 10, the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) joined the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians in announcing [the launch of the Tiüvac'a'ai \(healthy land\) Tribal Conservation Corps](#). The Tiüvac'a'ai Tribal Conservation Corps' hands-on training program, funded by the Department of Conservation's Regional Forest and Fire Capacity (RFFC) Program, will train Native youth and young adults on tribal-led stewardship practices that promote and restore tribal cultural values, and improve climate and fire resilience.

## FEDERAL HIGHLIGHTS

**USFS Invests in Deferred Maintenance Projects:** The USFS will [invest nearly \\$55 million](#) from the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) to support 41 projects across California and Hawaii in Fiscal Year 2022. These projects [are part of \\$503 million](#) in GAOA-funded investments across USDA-managed lands nationwide to address deferred maintenance, improve infrastructure, increase user access, and support rural economies while also meeting conservation goals.

**Infrastructure Law Boosts Federal Funding:** Federal agencies will receive \$103 million in fiscal year 2022 for [wildfire risk reduction efforts](#) throughout the country from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The initial distribution of funding will invest across BIA, BLM, USFWS, NPS, U.S. Geological Survey and other Department of the Interior offices to reduce wildfire risk, support post-fire rehabilitation, and fund wildfire science.

**USDA Seeks Proposals for Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership:** The USFS and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are seeking proposals by August 5, 2022, for the [Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership](#). Through the new three-year projects, landowners will work with local USDA experts and partners to apply targeted forestry management practices on their land, such as thinning, hazardous fuel treatments, fire breaks and other systems to meet unique forestry challenges in their area.

**House Introduces Save Our Sequoias Act:** On June 23, the U.S. House of Representatives introduced the [Save Our Sequoias Act](#). The bipartisan bill would streamline federal processes to allow quicker tree removal and the clearing of dangerous undergrowth in the approximately 73 giant sequoia groves in the Sierra Nevada. The Act also calls for allotting \$325 million over 10 years for projects, along with an immediate emergency declaration to begin reforestation efforts.

**CBO Issues "Impacts from Wildfire" Report:** In [this report](#), the Congressional Budget Office a) analyzes trends in wildfire activity b) considers the effects of wildfires on the federal budget, the environment, people's health, and the



economy and c) reviews forest-management practices meant to reduce the likelihood and seriousness of fire-related disasters.

## LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

**Creek Fire Recovery:** In 2020, the Creek Fire burned 379,895 acres and destroyed 858 structures. At Rock Haven, near Shaver Lake in Fresno County, 17 homes and 160 acres survived. A [recent CAL FIRE video](#) depicts how CAL FIRE's [California Forest Improvement Program](#) (CFIP) helped these landowners save their properties and better manage their forestland. CFIP helps eligible private forest landowners with technical and financial assistance for planning, reforestation and resource management investments that improve the quality and value of forestland.

**Angelus Oaks Wildfire Resilience Project:** Partnering with the USFS and with support from Southern California Edison and CAL FIRE's Forest Health Program, the [National Forest Foundation \(NFF\) treated approximately 171 acres in the Angelus Oaks Community](#) as part of a larger 3,500-acre post-fire restoration and forest resilience project in the San Bernardino National Forest, one of the most urbanized and wildfire-prone forests in the nation. NFF also partnered with the Urban Conservation Corps to provide employment opportunities to youth of color from the San Bernardino area.

**Boggs Demonstration State Forest Research:** CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) has implemented a long-term, post-fire reforestation study at Boggs Mountain Demonstration State Forest. [A recent video](#) shows the damage the 2015 Valley Fire inflicted on the Forest and highlights CAL FIRE's subsequent reforestation and research efforts. The results of this study will help inform landowners about different options for post-fire reforestation. The experiments and research conducted on Demonstration State Forests helps inform management practices for government, nonprofit and private forestland owners. Private forestland ownerships comprise 40% of California's forestland and are key to sustaining forests for all California.

## PRESS BOX

- [This Indigenous Practice Fights Fire with Fire](#). National Geographic, June 14, 2022.
- [Congress wants to save California's giant sequoias from worsening wildfires](#). San Francisco Chronicle, June 21, 2022.
- [CAL FIRE's summer camp inspires young women to become future of the fire service](#). KCRA3, June 27, 2022.
- [CA Forestry tour highlights Lake Tahoe fire reduction projects](#). Fox 40, June 27, 2022.
- [Sierra Pacific Industries closing nearly 2 million acres due to wildfire risks](#). Sacramento Bee, June 6, 2022.
- [Big Basin Redwoods State Park to reopen July 22 for first time since massive fire](#). San Jose Mercury News, June 30



## LEGISLATION WATCH

**AB 1717 (Aguiar-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 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 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.

**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.

## SCIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

**American Lung Association Report:** [Can Prescribed Fires Mitigate Health Harm? A Review of Air Quality and Public Health Implications of Wildfire and Prescribed Fire](#), prepared by PSE Healthy Energy, looks at the current research on the potential of prescribed burning to mitigate the increasing health and air quality risks from catastrophic wildfires.

**Fertel, Hannah M., et al.** "Growth and spatial patterns of natural regeneration in Sierra Nevada mixed-conifer forests with a restored fire regime." [Forest Ecology and Management 519 \(2022\): 120270.](#)

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Positions Opening Soon:** CNRA and CAL FIRE will soon be posting positions in support of the California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force. For updates on those positions visit the [Task Force Linked In page](#).

**July 21 Task Force Meeting:** [July's Task Force meeting](#) will be hosted in person at the California Natural Resources Building in Sacramento and online via webinar. It will be recorded. Highlights include updates on the Task Force efforts to improve regulatory efficiency and creating an interagency tracking system.

