



DECEMBER 2023

TASK FORCE UPDATES

Task Force Seeks Feedback on Treatment Dashboard: On November 14, the Task Force hosted a [Virtual Public Workshop](#) on the CA Wildfire & Landscape Resilience Interagency Treatment [Dashboard](#) to gather input to improve how data is accessed and displayed, and to ensure we are providing transparency and effective planning information. The Task Force is soliciting [feedback via survey](#); the last day to respond is January 1, 2024.

Upcoming Task Force Meeting and 2024 Meeting Dates:

- December 15, 2023: The meeting will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., live in the [CNRA Auditorium](#) and [via Zoom](#). The [agenda](#) will focus on Goal 2 of the [WFR Action Plan](#), "Strengthen the Protection of Communities."
- [2024 Meeting Dates](#):
 - April 4 & 5 – Southern CA Regional
 - June 20 – Sacramento
 - September 26 & 27 – Sierra Nevada Regional
 - December 13 – Sacramento

FEDERAL HIGHLIGHTS

DOI Invests Over \$12 Million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to Advance Wildfire Resilience in California: On November 30, the Department of the Interior [announced](#) that it has invested over \$12.2 million in fiscal year 2023 from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to advance wildfire resilience work and support fuels management projects on 27,669 acres in California. The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) is bringing much-needed help to communities across the country to increase the resilience of lands facing the threat of wildland fires and to better support federal wildland firefighters.

STATE HIGHLIGHTS

CAL FIRE Invests \$15M in California's Wood Products Infrastructure: On December 7, [CAL FIRE announced](#) the [Wood Products and Bioenergy Program](#) awarded [16 projects](#) focused on expanding the workforce development and growing the businesses involved in creating healthy, resilient forests.

Newsom Administration and Natural Resources Agency Launch Plan for Increasing Access to the Outdoors: On November 15, [CNRA announced](#) the release of the [Outdoors for All Strategy](#) which provides a blueprint to increase access to the outdoors for all Californians. Increasing access to nature is vital step to create connection and understanding of California's most pressing climate resilience issues. The Strategy includes six key priorities:

- **Establishes spaces for people and nature to thrive** by creating and maintaining more high-quality outdoor spaces of all shapes and sizes, especially in park-limited places;
- **Fosters belonging** in the outdoors through policies and programs that build a welcoming and inclusive culture;
- **Connects people and the outdoors** by improving information and transportation;



- **Co-creates with communities** through frequent and meaningful tribal consultation and community engagement, with attention to underserved communities;
- **Builds equitable career pathways and a representative workforce** by improving opportunities for all Californians to enter and sustain outdoor recreation, natural resources and restoration professions;
- **Aligns funding to achieve Outdoors for All** in partnership with federal, state, and non-governmental entities.

OPR Conducts Biomass Insurance Gaps Survey: The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), in collaboration with several Resource Conservation Districts, CLERE, Inc., WTW, and The Nature Conservancy, is conducting a study of the insurance needs and gaps within California's woody feedstock supply chain as part of the Cal FRAME Pilot Project Program. OPR is soliciting input via an anonymous [survey](#) to better understand the obstacles to greater biomass production. The information is being collected so that the state and local government can understand how to provide cheaper, better insurance products for the risks you face in your businesses.

CA Board of Forestry (BOF) Establishes a Resource Library to Support CalVTP Implementation: The [CalVTP Program EIR](#) is a tool to expedite CEQA compliance for wildfire resilience projects and facilitate efficient permitting. Since CalVTP implementation began in 2020, the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection has collected feedback about how to support efficient CalVTP use. To this end, the BOF has created an ArcGIS StoryMap and prepared the CalVTP Resource Library, which features example PSAs and PSA/Addenda, mitigation monitoring and reporting program implementation tools, updated frequently asked questions, and treatable landscape calculator.

PROGRESS THROUGH COLLABORATION

American Forests Partners with USDA Forest Service to Expand Reforestation Across National Forests: On December 6, American Forests [announced](#) a \$20 million agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service to help the agency address a 4-million-acre backlog of burned, damaged forests nationally over the next five years. Over 40% of the 4 million acres identified for reforestation are in California. Built on the foundation of the [REPLANT Act](#), this will expand nursery production, grow the forestry workforce and increase seed collection capabilities. Together, the Forest Service and American Forests will use landscape-level planning and climate-informed restoration practices to advance goals identified in the agency's [National Forest System Reforestation Strategy](#).

California Fire Science Consortium Land and Fire Management Needs Assessment: The California Fire Science Consortium is leading [a survey](#) to gain an updated understanding of needs around knowledge exchange, information sources, and scientific research. All are welcome, from those working in fire as well as those in non-fire roles to complete the survey to help inform science delivery and regional knowledge exchange within California. The survey will be open until January 1, 2024.



Public-Private Collaboration Focuses on Forest Resilience & Watershed

Health: On November 9, the USFS Service joined ofi (Olam Food Ingredients), the National Forest Foundation (NFF), and Unilever-brand Knorr in the Sierra National Forest for a day of service. The mission for the day was to clear encroaching conifers from a meadow in the Pine Flats Watershed, an area that supplies approximately 50% of the water to California's San Joaquin Valley. This is the first day of service under a [2022 memorandum of understanding](#) between USFS, Knorr, ofi and the NFF to fund a series of watershed restoration projects.

PRESS BOX

We need farmers to fight wildfires. So why doesn't California agree? [San Francisco Chronicle, December 6, 2023.](#) \$

What a lawsuit over planting sequoias tells us about mega fires. [Los Angeles Times, December 4, 2023.](#) \$

After a mild fire year, Southern California crews look ahead to 2024. [Los Angeles Times, December 4, 2023.](#) \$

Study: Western U.S. wildfires undo 2 decades of air quality progress. [Axios, December 4, 2023.](#)

Why wildfires are burning hotter and longer. [Smithsonian Magazine, November 30, 2023.](#)

The story behind California's only Black-led land trust. [San Francisco Chronicle, November 27, 2023.](#) \$

Why environmentalists are suing the National Park Service to prevent it from planting trees. [CNN, November 27, 2023.](#)

Scientists Warn That Increasing Wildfires Risk Wood and Paper Shortage. [Newsweek, November 20, 2023.](#)

As insurers stop covering prescribed burns, states and communities step up. [Mongabay, November 15, 2023.](#)

'Fire is living': How this Woodland nature preserve uses cultural burning for regrowth. [The Sacramento Bee, November 14, 2023.](#)

Can goats and sheep stop wildfires? This shepherdess is rallying the flock. [The Guardian, November 11, 2023.](#)

Has California addressed the failures that led to the deadly Camp fire five years ago? [Los Angeles Times, November 8, 2023.](#) \$

A California town was leveled by a wildfire. Three years on, it feels the world has forgotten. [The Guardian, November 6, 2023.](#)



LATEST IN SCIENCE

Developing effective wildfire risk mitigation plans for the wildland urban interface. [Murray et al., International Journal of Applied Earth Observation and Geoinformation 124 \(2023\): 103531.](#)

Evaluation of filtration efficiency of various filter media in addressing wildfire smoke in indoor environments: importance of particle size and composition. [Shirman et al., Atmosphere 14.12 \(2023\): 1729.](#)

Forest restoration and fuels reduction work: Different pathways for achieving success in the Sierra Nevada. [Stephens et al., Ecological Applications: e2932.](#)

Improving Societal Resilience Through a GIS-based Approach to Manage Road Transport Networks Under Wildfire Hazards. [Arango et al., Transportation Engineering \(2023\): 100219.](#)

Low-intensity fires mitigate the risk of high-intensity wildfires in California's forests. [Wu et al., Science advances 9.45 \(2023\): eadi4123.](#)

Long-term mortality burden trends attributed to black carbon and PM_{2.5} from wildfire emissions across the continental USA from 2000 to 2020: a deep learning modelling study. [Wei, et al., Lancet Planetary Health \(2023\) e963-e975.](#)

Old reserves and ancient buds fuel regrowth of coast redwood after catastrophic fire. [Peltier et al., Nature Plants \(2023\): 1-8.](#)

Terrestrial carbon dynamics in an era of increasing wildfire." [Hudiburg et al., Nature Climate Change 13.12 \(2023\): 1306-1316.](#)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Wood Innovations, Community Wood, and Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Grants: Nearly \$50 million in USFS grant funding is available in [Wood Innovations, Community Wood, and Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance Grants](#). The U.S. Forest Service is seeking proposals that support crucial links between resilient, healthy forests, strong rural economies, and jobs in the forestry sector. [Applications are due December 15.](#)

Community Wildfire Defense Tribal Grants: The USFS Landscape Scale Restoration Grant Program for Federally Recognized Tribes is [now open](#). The program funds collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes on tribal lands. [The deadline is December 15.](#)

CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention Grant Program: Funding from the Department's [Wildfire Prevention Grant Program](#) will be awarded to local projects that address the risk of wildfire and reduce wildfire potential to communities. Funded activities will include hazardous fuel reduction, wildfire prevention planning, and wildfire prevention education with an emphasis on protecting communities, improving public health and safety, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. View the [workshop webinar recording](#). [Applications are due January 10, 2024.](#)



USFS Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program: [This program](#) supports the establishment of community forests through fee simple acquisition of private forest land to protect it from conversion to non-forest uses and provide community benefits. Applications due January 12, 2024.

CAL FIRE Forest Health Grants: [CAL FIRE's Forest Health Program](#) funds active restoration and reforestation activities aimed at providing for more resilient and sustained forests to ensure future existence of forests in California while also mitigating climate change, protecting communities from fire risk, strengthening rural economies and improving California's water & air. Applications are due January 15, 2024.

The Council of Western State Foresters Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Grant Program: [This grant program](#) is intended to mitigate risk from wildland fire within the WUI through hazard-fuel reduction, information and education, assessment and planning, and monitoring through community and landowner action. The deadline is January 18, 2024.

NFWF and USFS Announce \$50M for Landscape-scale Grants:
The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), in partnership with USFS-Region 5, has \$50M available for landscape-scale grants—targeting landscapes encompassing up to 250,000 acres—to address comprehensive efforts to restore forest ecosystems. The priorities outlined in the [California Headwaters RFP](#) include ecological restoration and protection at a landscape scale using a comprehensive approach that takes into account the interdependencies between water and fire. NFWF is hosting a [webinar](#) on December 12 at 1:00 p.m. PST. Pre-proposals are due on January 18, 2024.

LOOKING AHEAD

December 12: Forest Health Grants and Forest Practice Documents Webinar: Cal Poly is hosting a [webinar](#) on forest health grants and forest practice documents to discuss how they be used together to create a more resilient landscape. Participants will increase their knowledge of how to utilize forest health grant funds, Timber Harvest Plans, and other forest-practice documents to accomplish forest-health projects.

December 13-15: CA Resource Conservation Districts 78th Annual Conference: [Sacramento.](#)

December 13: Applications of the Lost Meadow Model for Management webinar: This [webinar](#), hosted by the USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station on December 13 from 1-3 p.m., will cover:

- A machine learning model that identifies potential “lost meadows” which can support meadow restoration
- Demo: How to access and use the maps generated by the model
- The role and importance of montane meadows

February 1: Collaborative Fuels Reduction Projects Webinar: Cal Poly will host a [collaborative fuels reduction webinar](#). Representatives from the Resource Conservation District (RCD) of Tehama County, the National Park Service,



CAL FIRE, and Battle Creek Meadows Ranch will discuss how lead agencies, partners, and communities can collaboratively design and implement fuels-reduction projects.

February 26-27: Calforests Annual Conference, “Forestry Strategies & Innovations (FSI)”: FSI brings together the state's forestry sector and key partners in an effort to engage in critical policy level conversations, to evaluate and improve best practices, to share important knowledge and innovations, and to invite key stakeholders to further the work of forest management and wildfire protection. [Registration is open now](#) for the event in downtown Sacramento.

