



JANUARY 2024

TASK FORCE UPDATES

Recap from December 15 Meeting: The Task Force held its final meeting of 2023 at the California Natural Resources Agency in Sacramento. The meeting focused on the topic of Fire Adapted Communities and the work being done throughout the state to achieve more resilient communities. [Recordings of the sessions](#) are available on the Task Force website, highlights include:

- **California's Progress on Empowering Community Adaptation:** CAL FIRE and the CA Fire Safe Council [shared updates](#) on how both statewide programs and local communities are building adaptive capacity and improving wildfire outcomes.
- **California's Roadmap for Creating Fire Adapted Communities:** The Task Force's Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) Work Group [reviewed](#) the recently completed FAC Baseline Assessment and next steps in developing a statewide roadmap for community fire adaptation.
- **Regional Leaders' Perspective on Community Resilience to Fire:** A panel of regional leaders [discussed](#) how California's communities are adapting to and preparing for more extreme fires, and the best ways state and federal institutions can support these communities.

Task Force to Host Core Metrics Workshop: The Task Force will host a [Virtual Public Workshop](#) on February 9 to gather feedback on a list of proposed Core Metrics that will be selected to track and report progress for each of the Pillars of Landscape Resilience which are part of the Task Force [Regional Resource Kits](#).

Task Force Releases First in Series of "Issue Areas in Depth" with Fire Adapted Communities Webpage: Starting with an overview and deep dive into [Fire Adapted Communities](#), the Task Force is releasing a series of [Issue Area articles](#) to increase understanding and awareness of the important work being done on variety of pressing wildfire resilience topics. Each will provide a clear description of the issue area, along with case studies, examples, progress metrics, infographics, and multi-media.

Task Force Highlights from 2023: The Task Force released a summary of the [2023 Year in Review](#). Highlights include:

- **Regional Resource Kits Finalized:** Regional Profiles and Regional Resource Kits are [now available](#) for all four regions of California. The kits bring together the scientific data needed to help regional entities plan, prioritize, and monitor projects.
- **Interagency Treatment System Dashboard Launched:** A beta version of the Wildfire & Landscape Resilience Interagency Treatment System and Dashboard [was released](#) in August of 2023. The Dashboard is a highly interactive online tool that displays the location and size of wildfire and landscape resilience treatments throughout the state, helping to guide practitioners on where to plan new projects.
- **Planscape Beta Released:** With a full launch expected in 2024, Planscape's Explore function [can be accessed now](#). This unique wildfire resilience decision support tool helps regional planners prioritize



landscape treatments to mitigate fire risk, maximize ecological benefits, and help landscapes adapt to climate change.

- **Joint Strategies Completed:** Task Force Work Groups completed and launched their Joint Strategies for [Beneficial Fire](#) and [Sustainable Outdoor Recreation](#). Look forward to Reforestation Pipeline, Resilient State Lands and Private Landowner strategies to be published in early 2024.
- **Regional Meetings Held in Southern, Central and Northern California:** Three [regional meetings](#) were held in 2023, and three more in Sacramento. These meetings brought together hundreds of people from across the state to learn new information, make new connections, and find inspiration to make positive change and help California better adapt to wildfires.

FEDERAL HIGHLIGHTS

USFS Advances Commitment to Protect Old-Growth Forests: On December 19, 2023, the USFS published a Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for a [National Old Growth Amendment](#) in the Federal Register. This would amend all 128 forest land management plans across the country to conserve and restore old-growth forests across the National Forest System to maintain and improve amounts and distributions of old-growth to improve resilience and climate-adaptability of our forests.

Shasta-Trinity National Forest Achieves nearly 18,000 Prescribed Burn Acres in 2023: Shasta Trinity National Forest reported that its prescribed burn program treated nearly 18,000 acres in 2023 in an effort to restore fire to its natural role in the ecosystem, reduce risk to communities, and ensure healthy landscapes. Over 80% of these acres were within the Wildland Urban Interface. Prescribed burns were calculated to cost \$150 per acre. The largest individual burn project covered over 5,000 acres. Shasta Trinity NF's successes in implementing large-scale prescribed burns are indicators of progress being made toward achieving goals set in the [Task Force's Beneficial Fire Strategy](#).

USFS Opens Public Engagement to Amend Northwest Forest Plan: On December 18, 2023, the USFS published a [Notice of Intent](#) to amend the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) and prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Amendments to the plan are intended to improve resistance and resilience to fire, support adaptation to and mitigation of climate change, ensure tribal inclusion in developing and implementing plan direction, protect mature and old-growth forests, and support sustainable communities affected by forest management in the NWFP landscape. [Comments may be submitted](#) until February 2, 2024.

STATE HIGHLIGHTS

CAL FIRE Publishes 2023 Year in Review: The [year-end recap](#) highlights snow and flood incident response, AI innovation, OSFM's 100-year anniversary, and innovative programs and investments.

PROGRESS THROUGH COLLABORATION

North Yuba Landscape Resilience Project an Example of Collaborative Funding: A 2020 Sierra Nevada Conservancy [grant in support of planning efforts by the North Yuba Forest Partnership](#) leveraged a \$160 million USFS investment which will allow much-needed work to be completed across 275,000 acres of federal land within the North Yuba River watershed. While federal projects are ramping



up, others have already started thanks to private funding from a [forest-resilience bond](#) created by [Blue Forest Conservation](#).

PRESS BOX

California tech founder relinquishes nearly 1,000 acres of private land for public use. [SFGATE, January 3, 2024.](#)

State OKs major insurance company to raise homeowner rates by 20% in California. [Sacramento Bee, December 28, 2023.](#) \$

As tree species face decline, 'assisted migration' gains popularity in Pacific Northwest. [Associated Press, December 28, 2023.](#)

How a San Diego group uses wildfire reduction work to treat homelessness. [Cal Matters, December 27, 2023.](#)

Opinion: The mighty coast redwoods are born to change. But can they evolve fast enough to survive climate warming? [Los Angeles Times, December 26, 2023.](#) \$

Meadows a key part of forest health. [KQED, December 25, 2023](#)

10,000 acres of California land bought by Hoopa Valley Tribe. [SFGATE, December 21, 2023.](#)

Our forests need more fire, not less. [The Atlantic, December 20, 2023](#)

Column: Stand down, Smokey Bear. Burnie the Bobcat wants to start good fires. [Los Angeles Times, December 19, 2023.](#) \$

Wildfires can unlock cancer-causing chemicals from the soil, new research finds. [CNN, December 19, 2023](#)

LATEST IN SCIENCE

Pile burning after conifer removal from aspen stands affects tree mortality, regeneration, and understory recovery. [Berrill, John-Pascal, et al. *Forest Ecology and Management* 553 \(2024\): 121602](#)

How are long-term stand structure, fuel profiles, and potential fire behavior affected by fuel treatment type and intensity in Interior Pacific Northwest forests? [Radcliffe, Don C., et al. *Forest Ecology and Management* 553 \(2024\): 121594](#)

The role of fuel treatments in mitigating wildfire risk. [Zong, Xuezheng, Xiaorui Tian, and Xianli Wang. *Landscape and Urban Planning* 242 \(2024\): 104957](#)

Model analysis of post-fire management and potential reburn fire behavior. [Kennedy, Maureen C., Morris C. Johnson, and Sarah C. Harrison. *Journal of environmental management* 351 \(2024\): 119664](#)



Response of pollinator taxa to fire is consistent with historic fire regimes in the Sierra Nevada and mediated through floral richness. [Tarbill, Gina L., Angela M. White, and Rahel Sollmann, *Ecology and Evolution* 13.12 \(2023\): e10761](#)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

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. Pre-proposals are due on January 18, 2024.

CAL FIRE Grant Programs:

- **Wildfire Prevention:** Funding from the [Wildfire Prevention Grant Program](#) will be awarded to local projects that address the risk of wildfire and reduce wildfire potential to communities. View the [workshop webinar recording](#). Applications are due January 10, 2024.
- **Forest Health:** [CAL FIRE's Forest Health Program](#) will fund up to \$120 million forest fuels reduction, prescribed fire, pest management and reforestation projects and \$50 million post-fire reforestation and regeneration projects. View the [virtual workshop](#). Applications are due January 15, 2024.
- **Forest Health Research:** This [grant program](#) will award \$4.5 million for scientific research projects that address wildfire and forest health issues critical to the State of California. Grants will be offered in five categories: 1. Wildfire and Forest Research, 2. State Forests Research, 3. Graduate Student Research, 4. Scientific Synthesis and Tool Development, and 5. Special Topics Research. Proposals are due January 24, 2024.
- **Business and Workforce Development:** [CAL FIRE Wood Products and Bioenergy](#) expects to open the solicitation for a new round of funding on January 15, 2024.

USFS Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program: [This program](#) supports the establishment of community forests through the fee title acquisition of private forest lands. Applications due January 12, 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.

LOOKING AHEAD Task Force 2024 Meeting Dates: The Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force will be holding meetings on the following [dates](#):

- April 4 & 5 – Southern CA Region
- June 20 – Sacramento
- September 26 & 27 – Sierra Nevada Region
- December 13 – Sacramento



January 10: NIST, NOAA, & ASCE Community Wildfire Resilience Workshop: The National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) are hosting a [workshop](#) to identify leading practices for incorporating climate projections in community resilience planning working to advance infrastructure planning to support wildfire resilient communities. The workshop will help inform updates on climate resilience to NIST's Community Resilience Planning Guide (CRPG) for Buildings and Infrastructure Systems (2015) for U.S. communities.

January 31 - May 15: USFS Region 5 Climate Change Integration Team (CCIT) Webinar Series:

The 2024 webinar series includes the following topics:

- [Wednesday, January 31 10:00 - 11:30 AM PT](#): The Next Generation of Climate Models – Background & Applications
- [Wednesday April 10 10:00 - 11:30 AM PT](#): Exploring the Urban Forestry and Climate Change Nexus
- [Wednesday, May 15 10:00 - 11:30 AM PT](#): Climate-Informed Design Considerations for Transportation Infrastructure

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 Forestry Strategies & Innovations (FSI) Conference: FSI brings together the state's forestry sector and key partners 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.

