



October 2024

TASK FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

Sierra Nevada Regional Meeting Recap: On October 10, nearly 500 people gathered in South Lake Tahoe (and over 300 joined online) for the Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force's Sierra Nevada regional meeting, hosted by the California Tahoe Conservancy and Tahoe Fund. During the meeting the Task Force and CAL FIRE unveiled new tools that revolutionize how California tracks and communicates the state's significant progress in improving wildfire and landscape resilience. Other topics covered included progress being made in the Tahoe Basin and the benefits of landscape fuels treatments to vibrant ecosystems and economically thriving communities. Meeting highlights and panel recordings are [now available](#).

Updated Interagency Treatment Dashboard Demonstrates Progress Towards Resilience: The updated version of the [Interagency Treatment Dashboard](#) now shows vegetation management treatments for three calendar years (2021, 2022 and 2023). The Dashboard [shows significant progress](#) on multiple fronts to bolster wildfire resilience in California with more than one million acres of treatments conducted on about 700,000 acres in 2023, with many acres receiving multiple treatments such as thinning, mastication, prescribed fire, or other practices. The 2023 data show a significant increase in acres treated since 2021, largely due to a significant expansion of prescribed fire treatments, which more than doubled since 2021. These efforts have put the state on a solid path toward meeting its joint commitment with the U.S. Forest Service to complete treatments on more than a million acres by the end of 2025.

New Webpage Brings Together California's Wildfire and Landscape Resilience Monitoring and Evaluation Programs: Task Force partners collaborate closely to track vegetation management actions on the ground, monitor ecosystem responses, and assess progress of wildfire and climate resilience efforts. [A new webpage provides users a one-stop-shop](#) for detailed information on California's various monitoring and assessment programs to understand the complementary relationship between these efforts. Together, these programs leverage data and perform assessments to better understand the impact and progress of multi-billion-dollar landscape resilience programs occurring across California, providing a more holistic view of change within these ecosystems, and informing future investments.

Task Force 2025 Meeting Dates: The Task Force has released its [2025 meeting dates](#) – look for a “Save the Date” coming soon via Outlook.

- March 27-28: Regional Meeting – Marin County
- June 6: Sacramento, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- September 4-5: Regional Meeting – TBD
- December 12: Sacramento, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

STATE HIGHLIGHTS **New CAL FIRE Dashboard Shows Effectiveness of Fuels Treatments:** On October 10, CAL FIRE launched its [Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Dashboard](#) to show how



on-the-ground projects are protecting communities and landscapes when wildfire strikes. The dashboard displays Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Reports which evaluate the impacts vegetation management treatments have on fire behavior and highlight how fuel reduction activities not only assist in suppression efforts but also protect life, property, and the natural resources of California.

FEDERAL HIGHLIGHTS

USFS Invests \$15 Million to Confront California's Wildfire Crisis: On September 10, the USFS [announced](#) \$100 million will be invested in 21 new projects to expand work on the [USFS Wildfire Crisis Strategy](#) to reduce the threat of wildfire in high-risk areas across the country. [\\$15 million will fund three projects in California:](#)

- Sequoia National Forest - \$5 million to reduce wildfire risk to the Breckenridge and Pine Flat communities through thinning and prescribed fire, with wood byproducts going to a biomass facility or the local sawmill when viable.
- Eldorado National Forest - \$5 million for hazardous fuels reduction, strategic fuels breaks, and prescribed fire on the Georgetown Divide. The project will also create strategic fuel breaks near residential and commercial infrastructure in Volcanoville and Georgetown, including a high-powered electric transmission line.
- Tahoe National Forest - \$5 million to reduce hazardous fuels, create defensible space around six communities, create safe ingress and egress along 6.3 miles of road, and engage at least seven partner groups, including local tribes.

USFS Expands Trinity Alps and Castle Crags Wilderness Areas: The USFS will receive a significant land donation from the [Trust for Public Land](#) to enhance the [Trinity Alps](#) and [Castle Crags](#) wilderness areas. The Trust is donating 3,415 acres to the Shasta-Trinity and Klamath national forests, marking a major milestone in Northern California's conservation and public land expansion. The donated land is adjacent to existing wilderness areas and will expand the 537,357-acre Trinity Alps Wilderness by about 1%, and the 10,999-acre Castle Crags Wilderness by almost 3.9%. This expansion is a vital piece of the larger 6,771-acre Pacific Crest Trail – Trinity Alps to Castle Crags land acquisition project.

PROGRESS THROUGH COLLABORATION

Caldor Fire Recovery Demonstrates How Emergency Forest Restoration Teams Accelerate Post-Fire Response: While non-industrial private forests make up roughly a quarter of California's forested land, they often don't have any pre-established funding or plans for immediate restoration after a wildfire. To address this critical gap, the 2021 Task Force Action Plan (Action Item 1.14) calls for the establishment of [Emergency Forest Restoration Teams \(EFRTs\)](#) to help small private forestland owners recover their lands. In 2021, three pilot EFRTs were developed in response to the Dixie, Tamarack, and Caldor fires. By the end of 2023, the three teams had [removed dead trees from 2,500 acres and planted new trees on 1,400 acres](#). On October 11, [a field tour](#) showcased how the Caldor EFRT has enabled the area to restore its natural landscapes, open recreational access, and recover economically. These pilot EFRTs are proving successful and there are now 15 EFRTs established across the state.



CAL FIRE and USFS Award \$31 million to 22 Urban Forestry Projects in CA: On September 20, [CAL FIRE and USFS announced nearly \\$31 million in Urban and Community Forestry grants](#) in California focused on urban forestry topics of management, expansion and improvement, education, workforce development, capacity building, and green schoolyards. The projects are intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve the functionality of urban forests, arrest the decline of urban forest resources, address climate change resilience, improve the quality of the environment in urban areas, and increase access to environmental career pathways. [All funded projects](#) will directly serve priority populations within one or more defined disadvantaged and/or low-income communities in an urban area.

LEGISLATION WATCH

The following bills were signed by the Governor:

AB 2276 (Wood) Forestry: timber harvesting plans: exemptions: Repeals the Small Timberland Owner Exemption, renames, amends, and extends the sunset date of the Forest Fire Prevention Exemption; and extends the sunset date of the 150'-300' Defensible Space Around a Habitable Structure Exemption to January 1, 2031.

AB 2469 (Committee on Emergency Management) Emergency Management Assistance Compact: California Wildfire Mitigation Financial Assistance Program: Removes the sunset dates for the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and would extend the sunset of the California Wildfire Mitigation Program from 2025 until 2029.

SB 310 (Dodd) Prescribed Fire: civil liability: cultural burns: Creates a process for federally recognized California Native American tribes and the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to enter into agreements to waive various State regulatory requirements to conduct prescribed fire or cultural burn projects within the tribe's ancestral territory.

SB 504 (Dodd) Wildfires: defensible space: grant programs: local governments: Requires CAL FIRE to give priority on Wildfire Prevention Grant applications to certain local government entities that provide Defensible Space Assessment data to CAL FIRE using the common reporting platform. Requires defensible space be maintained in SRA under all weather conditions and allows a 3-yr. phase-in of new ember-resistant zone standards (Zone 0).

SB 675 (Limón) Prescribed Grazing: local assistance grant program: Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program: Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force: Expands the Wildfire Prevention Grants eligible activities list to include the installation of fencing and watering improvements for prescribed grazing projects and requires CAL FIRE to consider incorporating prescribed grazing guidance developed by the Range Management Advisory Committee.

SB 946 (McGuire) Personal Income Tax Law: Corporation Tax Law: exclusions: wildfire mitigation payments: Excludes payments received from the California Wildfire Mitigation Program (CWMP) as taxable income from taxable years between January 1, 2024, and January 1, 2029.



SB 1101 (Limón) Fire prevention: prescribed fire: state contracts: maps: Exempts CAL FIRE from State contracting rules for activities that provide logistical support to large-scale prescribed fire operations, including meals, lodging, hired equipment, and land use agreements, or any related subcontract. Requires CAL FIRE to coordinate with the USFS and other entities to identify and map potential operational delineations to be used for strategic wildfire response or the proactive use of prescribed fire. Requires CAL FIRE to develop maps of the severity of impacts from wildfires across all land ownerships in the State.

PRESS BOX

The world's carbon sinks are on fire. [New York Times, October 17, 2024.](#) \$

As California bills soar, PG&E pushes costly wildfire projects over cheaper options. [Sacramento Bee, October 16, 2024.](#) \$

Kodama Systems uses robotics to prevent wildfires. [The Robot Report, October 14, 2024.](#)

Mast year: massive seed collection success for the Sugar Pine Foundation. [Tahoe Daily Tribune, October 7, 2024.](#)

Incorporating defensible space in landscaping helps protect against wildfires. [San Bernardino Sun, October 4, 2024.](#)

CAL FIRE video shows how advance fire readiness work reduced Point Fire's spread, destructive impact. [Press Democrat, October 1, 2024.](#)

As many forests fail to recover from wildfires, replanting efforts face huge odds - and obstacles. [Associated Press, September 30, 2024.](#)

1,300 homeowners to lose insurance after company assesses wildfire risk. [Newsweek, September 26, 2024.](#)

Placer County secures \$1.5M grant to bolster wildfire resilience in Foresthill Divide. [Yuba Net, September 25, 2024.](#)

California will create nation's first public model to predict insurance wildfire losses. [San Francisco Chronicle, September 17, 2024.](#) \$

California's wildfires are less deadly this year. [Politico, September 18, 2024.](#)

CAL FIRE asks people to stop flying drones over fires because it delays their firefighting. [KCAL News, September 18, 2024.](#)

How researchers measure wildfire smoke exposure doesn't capture long-term health effects – and hides racial disparities. [KQED, September 18, 2024.](#)

Cal Poly Humboldt, State to collaborate on wildfire modeling project. [Times Standard, September 17, 2024.](#)



The misleadingly named 'Fix Our Forests Act' would do anything but. [The Hill, September 17, 2024.](#)

To build back burned forests, California needs a lot more seeds. [Mercury News, September 9, 2024.](#)

In California, controlled fires can save homes. Why aren't more happening? [New York Times, September 7, 2024.](#) \$

Indigenous fire practices show potential for wildfire resilience in California. [Environmental Health News, September 4, 2024.](#)

**TASK FORCE
MEDIA
COVERAGE**

California's new, cutting-edge dashboards map the progress of wildfire resilience work that protects communities. [California Governor's Office Press Release, October 10, 2024.](#)

California unveils first-of-its-kind dashboards mapping out fire-prevention work to protect communities. [CA Natural Resources Agency Press Release, October 10, 2024.](#)

Are California's forests becoming more resilient to wildfire? State leaders say yes. [San Francisco Chronicle, October 10, 2024.](#) \$

What's working: pilot program designed to help private landowners jumpstart restoration is claiming some wins. [Politico, October 11, 2024.](#)

Flame wars: Californians are raking their forests and it's working. [Politico, October 10, 2024.](#)

Sierra Nevada regional meeting held for first time in Tahoe. [Tahoe Daily Tribune, October 15, 2024.](#)

California unveils new tools to track wildfire resilience progress. [AgNet West, October 16, 2024.](#)

California fire dashboard tracks statewide resilience efforts. [Planetizen, October 16, 2024.](#)

California announces new fire treatment mapping tools. [Agri-Pulse, October 16, 2024.](#) \$

Central Valley residents can now track state's wildfire prevention work. [yourcentralvalley.com, October 14, 2024.](#)

**LATEST IN
SCIENCE**

Effects of recent wildfires on giant sequoia groves were anomalous at millennial timescales: a response to Hanson et al. [Stephenson, Nathan L., et al. Fire Ecology 20.1 \(2024\): 89.](#)



Fire history in northern Sierra Nevada mixed conifer forests across a distinct gradient in productivity. [Coppoletta, Michelle, et al. *Fire Ecology* 20.1 \(2024\): 86.](#)

Forest fire size amplifies postfire land surface warming. [Zhao, J., Yue, C., Wang, J. et al. *Nature* 633, 828–834 \(2024\).](#)

Forest structural complexity and ignition pattern influence simulated prescribed fire effects. [Bonner, Sophie R., et al. *Fire Ecology* 20.1 \(2024\): 82.](#)

Sequoia sempervirens and Pseudotsuga menziesii tree growth and drought resistance following restoration thinning in secondary northern coast redwood forests of California. [Lalemand, Laura B., et al. *Forest Ecology and Management* 569 \(2024\): 122149.](#)

Severity of a megafire reduced by interactions of wildland fire suppression operations and previous burns. [Harris, Lucas B., et al. *Environmental Research Letters* \(2024\).](#)

When do contemporary wildfires restore forest structures in the Sierra Nevada? [Chamberlain, Caden P., et al. *Fire Ecology* 20.1 \(2024\): 91.](#)

The cost of operational complexity: A causal assessment of pre-fire mitigation and wildfire suppression. [Young, Jesse D., et al. *Forest Policy and Economics* 169 \(2024\): 103351.](#)

The temporal trend and disparity in short-term health impacts of fine particulate matter in California (2006–2019). [Chen, Chen, Anais Teyton, and Tarik Benmarhnia. *Science of the Total Environment* \(2024\): 176543.](#)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Coalitions and Collaboratives (COCO): Action, Implementation, and Mitigation (AIM) Program: [This program](#) builds capacity of place-based organizations that focus on community wildfire mitigation with personnel, planning, and project funding. [Concept papers due October 25, 2024.](#)

The NDN Collective Community Action Fund: [This program](#) supports tribes, tribal nonprofit organizations, and other Indigenous communities and organizations most impacted by local challenges, ensuring that resources and decision-making ability lies with those who are best equipped to solve pressing issues and address imminent threats, including wildfire. [Deadline is October 31, 2024.](#)

CAL FIRE Forest Health Research Grant Program: [The Forest Health Research Program](#) is offering \$4 million in research funding through its [FY 2024-2025 grant solicitation](#). These grants will support research that directly benefits landowners, resource agencies, fire management organizations, and decision-makers throughout the state.

Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Grant Program: [This grant program](#) is administered by the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition and supports high impact projects that promote collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes, leverage public and private resources, and advance



priorities identified in a State Forest Action Plan or other restoration strategy. Deadline is November 15, 2024.

Scale Collaborative Capacity Micro-Grant Opportunity: [These grants](#) are intended to assist collaborative groups in strengthening their capacity to move forward work on the national forests and across boundaries by addressing specific collaborative group needs. Eligible applicants include non-profits, collaborative groups, and partner entities that participate in the collaborative (e.g., Resource Conservation Districts). Deadline is November 15, 2024.

Cal OES Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Post Fire: [This program](#) provides mitigation project funding to implement mitigation activities that reduce risk to life, property, and infrastructure from wildfire in areas where FEMA has approved a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) declaration during the previous Federal fiscal year. 2024 FMAG eligible counties include Butte, Mariposa, Riverside, Kern, Tehama, Lake, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles. Notice of interest due November 15, 2024.

The USFS Landscape Scale Restoration Grant Program for Federally Recognized Tribes: [This grant](#) supports collaborative, high-impact projects that leverage public and private resources and further priorities identified in a science-based restoration strategy, such as a tribal forest plan, state forest action plan, or other equivalent restoration strategy. Deadline is December 16, 2024.

The Council of Western State Foresters Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Grant Program: [This program](#) funds fuel reduction, education, and planning projects that mitigate risk from wildland fire within the WUI. Deadline is December 20, 2024.

WCB Climate Adaptation and Resilience Program: [This program](#) funds projects that provide climate adaptation and resilience on California's natural and working lands. Rolling application.

The Headwaters Economics Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire: This [technical assistance program](#) provides support for communities to reduce wildfire risks through improved land-use planning, compelling communication, and applied research. Rolling application.

Wetlands and Mountain Meadows Restoration: [This program](#) provides funding for projects that restore or enhance wetlands and watershed ecosystems and provide co-benefits, consistent with the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy and Pathways to 30x30. Rolling Application.

LOOKING AHEAD

October 23-24: National Forest Products Week and National Bioenergy Day Events:

- October 23: Tuolumne Biomass Tour, Jamestown
- October 23: Panel Discussion, UC Berkeley
- October 24: Open House & Talk 'n Tour, Forestree Collective, Sebastopol



October 24: Calaveras Big Trees State Park (SP) Prescribed Burn Town Hall: From 6-7pm, an in-person (Calaveras Big Trees SP, Educational Resources Room, 1170 CA-4, Arnold, CA) and [virtual](#) town hall will describe California State Parks plans to conduct prescribed burns in Calaveras Big Trees SP with assistance from CAL FIRE, US Forest Service, and National Park Service. The treatments will cover approximately 1,300-acres in the South Grove area and an additional 247 acres in the vicinity of West Moran and Love Creek.

October 30 – November 13: Cal Poly's Fuels and Vegetation Education Program workshops and webinars:

- Lessons Learned about Forest Restoration from the West Mount Shasta Forest Resiliency Project [webinar](#) on October 30 from 9 a.m. – 4:35 p.m.
- Partnering with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the CalVTP to protect wildlife and promote wildfire resilience [webinar](#) on November 13, from 1 p.m.- 3:35 p.m.

November 12-13: California Forest Pest Council's 73rd Annual Meeting: Held at UC Davis's Putah Creek Lodge, [the agenda](#) will be focused on familiar and unexpected new threats to California's forests.

January 13-17: California State-Certified Prescribed Fire Burn Boss (CARX) Training in Siskiyou County: This in-person classroom-based [course](#) provides information about and develops the skills required for planning and managing prescribed fire on State or private lands. Deadline to apply: October 28th at 5 p.m.

