



2025 KEY DELIVERABLES

March 24, 2025

INTRODUCTION

In January 2021, the Governor’s Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force announced the nation’s first comprehensive Action Plan to improve the wildfire resilience of the state’s forests, wildlands and communities. Developed in coordination with a broad range of key stakeholders and agencies, the Action Plan provides a vision, framework, and roadmap for federal, state, local, tribal, and private organizations to increase the pace, scale, and effectiveness of wildfire resilience efforts in California.

These collaborative efforts have paid off. Since issuing the 2021 Action Plan, the Task Force and its participating agencies have made significant progress in achieving its goals and commitments. Task Force state and federal agencies have:

- Invested nearly \$6 billion on forest health and wildfire resilience projects and programs since 2021.
- Increased treatments to more than 700,000 acres annually, including a doubling in acres treated with prescribed fire.
- Streamlined approvals of projects through large-scale use of exemptions and the California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP).
- Created several new tools to show progress, including an Interagency Treatment Tracking System, Core Reporting Metrics, & CAL FIRE’s Fuels Treatment Effectiveness Dashboard
- Invested more than \$140 million in building the capacity of local and regional collaborative efforts.

A more complete list of Task Force partner agency accomplishments can be found [here](#). The Task Force will be updating the 2021 Action Plan later this year with updated goals and commitments.

These 2025 Key Deliverables outline the highest priority actions underway this year to achieve the commitments in the [2021 Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan](#) and to advance key new initiatives that will be highlighted in the forthcoming update of the Action Plan.



Improve Home and Community Wildfire Resilience

- 1. Accelerate Defensible Space Rules:** Scientific research has demonstrated that home hardening and defensible space practices are among the most effective practices to improve the survival of homes from wildfires. Accordingly, AB 3074 (Friedman, 2020) requires new regulations to establish an ember-resistant “Zone 0” within five feet of structures in very high fire severity zones. On February 6, Governor Newsom issued an executive order (N-18-25) directing the Board of Forestry to complete the Zone 0 rulemaking process by the end of 2025.

Action: The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection will host multiple public workshops in advance of initiating formal rulemaking in June 2025.

- 2. Update and Release Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps:** The State Fire Marshal is responsible for periodically updating Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps, which identify which areas are most vulnerable to fires and therefore are subject to updated state and local fire safety regulations. The maps for state responsibility areas (SRA) where the state is responsible for putting out fires were released in 2024. The Governor's Executive Order directs the Office of the State Fire Marshal to release updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps for areas under local government responsibility (LRA) beginning in February 2025.

Action: The State Fire Marshal began releasing the Local Responsibility Area maps in a phased approach, starting with the maps for Northern California on February 10, North Coast and Bay Area on February 24, Central Valley and Coast on March 10, and Southern and Eastern California on March 24.

- 3. Develop State Framework for Community Resilience:** In late 2023, the Task Force Fire-Adapted Communities Work Group developed a Baseline Assessment Report that summarizes current and ongoing federal, state, and local community resilience programs and identified critical gaps that need to be addressed.

Action: Building upon the Baseline Assessment Report, the Watershed Center, through funding from the Resources Legacy Fund, is facilitating an interagency and stakeholder-driven process to develop a state framework for community wildfire resilience. The framework will include actions at the state and local level that build on existing efforts, including strengthening ignition reduction, defensible space and home hardening, and community resilience programs, and a dashboard for measuring progress.



Streamline Regulatory Processes

- 4. Expedite State and Federal Permitting:** On March 1, Governor Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency suspending state statutes, rules, regulations, and requirements that fall within the jurisdiction of CNRA and CalEPA to the extent necessary for expediting critical fuels reduction projects. Also on March 1, the White House issued an Executive Order to immediately increase domestic timber production and streamline federal policies to enhance forest management, reduce wildfire risks, and decrease reliance on imported timber.

Action: In accordance with the State of Emergency, CNRA and CalEPA are developing guidance on eligible projects and the accelerated review process. Consistent with the federal Executive Order, the USFS, BLM, and USFWS will seek to eliminate all undue delays within their respective permitting processes and to suspend, revise, and rescind existing policies that impose an undue burden on timber production.

- 5. Update Prescribed Fire Review Processes:** Federal and state regulatory frameworks for prescribed fire, which include air quality permits, burn permits, and environmental review, can be cumbersome and time consuming, particularly for less resourced or infrequent burners and local air quality districts.

Action: Consistent with the State of Emergency declared by the Governor on March 1, CNRA and CalEPA, in coordination with the interagency Prescribed Fire and Air and Land Managers Workgroups, will evaluate and make recommendations for increasing the pace and scale of beneficial fire in California, including recommendations to ensure more consistency among local air pollution control districts and increasing allowable burn days. The U.S. EPA Administrator has also announced his intent to reevaluate federal rulemaking related to prescribed fire.

- 6. Streamline State Environmental Reviews:** The Board of Forestry established the California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) in 2020 to enable rapid environmental review for large and complex wildfire risk reduction treatments in the state's 20 million acres of wildland-urban interface (WUI) lands known as the State Responsibility Area (SRA). This program has shortened the planning process to several months for most projects.

Action: As described in the Governor's State of Emergency, the Board of Forestry, in coordination with CAL FIRE and key stakeholders, will take immediate steps to



update the California Vegetation Treatment Program Environmental Impact Report (CalVTP EIR) to increase CalVTP's efficiency and utilization. These actions may include extending CalVTP coverage to the Local Responsibility Area (LRA), facilitating projects in the coastal zone, enabling projects to benefit from combined Fish and Game approvals, and adding coverage for projects with biomass cost-recovery components.

Expand Landscape-Scale Resilience Programs

7. Establish a Comprehensive Fuel Break Network and Fire Management Zones:

Properly maintained and strategically placed fuel breaks, such as those along roads or electrical powerlines, significantly improve wildfire containment and provide crucial access points for fire suppression teams. Federal, state, local, and private landowners and agencies have made significant investments in creating and maintaining fuel breaks, including a more than 2,000-mile network established by Sierra Pacific Industries and other private landowners. In Southern California, partners are building a strategic fuel break network to bolster ignition reduction and community preparation efforts in the region's unique chaparral landscapes.

These agencies and landowners are also building a network of fire management zones (also known as potential operational delineations, or PODs) that describe the roads, ridge tops, fuel breaks, and other landscape features needed for strategic wildfire response and the proactive use of prescribed fire. In 2024, the Legislature enacted and the Governor signed legislation directing CAL FIRE to develop a comprehensive network of fire management zones ([SB 1101, Limón](#)).

Action: To expand and better align efforts across landowner boundaries throughout the state, CAL FIRE, in coordination with the USFS, Calforests and other key landowners and stakeholders, will initiate development of a comprehensive network of strategic fuel breaks and fire management zones.

8. Develop a Network of Regional Resilience Strategies Eligible for Regional Grants and Regulatory Relief:

The federal Wildfire Crisis Strategy and state Regional Forest and Fire Capacity (RFFC) Program have spurred the expansion of collaborative, science-based, wildfire resilience strategies throughout the state. These strategies identify priority areas for treatments and community-based actions and include locally supported pipelines of projects across multiple agencies and ownerships.

Regional resilience strategies provide an opportunity for state and federal funding agencies to provide regional block grants and other multi-year awards for multiple projects which rapidly increase the pace and scale of wildfire resilience efforts.



Regional grants, in turn, provide more stable and sustained funding to local collaboratives and help address workforce and supply reliability issues. State and federal agencies could also incentivize the development of these plans by streamlining regulatory processes now based on individual project reviews.

Action: As part of the update to the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan, CAL FIRE, the Department of Conservation, the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI), and State Conservancies will work with the USFS and regional partners to develop a state-wide network of regional resilience strategies, guidelines for providing regional grant funding, and proposals for regulatory relief to accelerate implementation. These plans can also serve as vehicles for promoting projects with multiple benefits, including water quality and supply, watershed restoration, rural economic development, and recreation.

- 9. Launch Resilient State Lands Initiative:** The Task Force convened a State-Owned Lands Working Group in 2022 to create a comprehensive strategy to improve the health and resilience of more than 3.8 million acres of state lands. Together, these parks, wildlife areas, demonstration forests, and more encompass some of the most biologically rich ecosystems and habitat corridors, treasured recreation areas, and essential road infrastructure in the nation. The Governor's proposed budget includes \$33.4 million to State Parks, Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), CAL FIRE, and the State Lands Commission to support implementation of this strategy.

Action: State Parks and CDFW, in coordination with CAL FIRE, the State Lands Commission, Caltrans, and the State's Conservancies, will continue to implement wildfire resilience projects, and finalize the interagency Resilient State Lands Initiative to improve and showcase the wildfire and ecological resilience of state-owned land.

- 10. Launch a Utility Wildfire Resilience Partnership Program:** The state's public and investor-owned utilities are investing billions of dollars in reducing ignitions along power line corridors, but with few exceptions, there could be much more coordination between these efforts and related landscape and community resilience programs.

Action: Building upon the success of the Lake Tahoe Powerline Resilience Corridor Project, the state Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety (Energy Safety), in coordination with CAL FIRE and the state's public and investor-owned utilities, shall develop a strategy to more effectively align utility corridor investments and projects with adjacent landscape and community resilient investments, programs and projects.



11. Expand Prescribed Grazing: As state and federal agencies scale up efforts to meet shared treatment targets, prescribed grazing plays an important role in protecting life and property, supporting ecological goals, and creating local economic opportunities. SB 675 (Limon, 2023) requires the Task Force, on or before June 30, 2025, to develop a strategic action plan to expand the use of prescribed grazing, and for the State Board of Forestry to develop guidance for local and regional prescribed grazing plans.

Action: UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, in coordination with the Board of Forestry and UC, will develop a strategic action plan for prescribed grazing, including a scope and schedule for mapping priority areas where grazing can protect communities, critical infrastructure, and ecosystems, and identifying policy and regulatory needs to better support prescribed grazing projects.

Expand Beneficial Fire

12. Establish a Beneficial Fire Learning Hub/Training Network: The Action Plan and the Strategic Plan for the Beneficial Use of Prescribed Fire both called for the development of a Prescribed Fire Training Center to coordinate training opportunities for public and private beneficial fire practitioners throughout California. Subsequently, AB 642 (Friedman, 2021) required the State Fire Marshal to develop a proposal, and the Governor's proposed 2025/26 budget includes \$5 million over five years to launch the development of a center.

Action: Subject to available funds, CAL FIRE will partner with the USFS, UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, and other key tribal, NGO, and agency partners will prepare to launch a Beneficial Fire Learning Hub/Training Network that provides guidance, instruction, and hands-on training statewide. By engaging a wide range of partners and landscapes, the Network will enable training opportunities for public, private, and cultural fire practitioners and restore beneficial fire to ecosystems across California.

13. Expand Cultural Burning: State legislation enacted last year (SB 310, Dodd, 2024) allows federally recognized tribes in California to burn without state permits once they enter into agreements with the California Natural Resources Agency and local air quality officials. In late February, the Karuk Tribe signed the first agreement with state officials.

Action: CNRA and CAL FIRE will continue to partner with tribes in developing additional agreements to expand cultural burning throughout the state.



Expand Post-Fire Restoration Programs

14. Develop Reforestation Strategy: Post-fire restoration, particularly in landscapes that have experienced high intensity fire, is essential to maintain the health and productivity of California's forests and wildlands. Through the Task Force, American Forests, the USFS, CAL FIRE and other agencies have established a Reforestation Pipeline Partnership to better coordinate post-burn reforestation activities on public and private lands, and the USFS issued a Regional Reforestation Implementation Plan in March 2024.

Action: Building upon the work of the Pipeline Partnership and the USFS Implementation Plan, the USDA Agricultural Research Service, in coordination with the USFS, CAL FIRE, and other key agencies and stakeholders, will coordinate the development of an all-lands needs assessment and strategy to identify priority areas, remove barriers, and rapidly increase the scale and pace of post-fire restoration.

15. Expand Emergency Forest Restoration Teams: The 2021 Action Plan called for the development of Emergency Forest Restoration Teams (EFRTs) to help private landowners recover from catastrophic wildfires. Through regional grants and multi-year awards from CAL FIRE, the USFS, and NRCS to local and regional agencies, EFRTs provide rapid assessments and technical and financial assistance to restore private forest lands and help prevent further damage to life, property, and natural resources. 15 EFRTs have been developed in recent years, but there is no formal process for awarding them funds immediately after fires.

Action: CAL FIRE, in coordination with the USFS and NRCS, will establish a streamlined process for allocating available funding to EFRTs immediately after fires.

Create a Sustainable Wood Products Market and Forest Sector Jobs

16. Expand Timber Production: The President's Executive Order directs the USFS and BLM to immediately increase domestic timber production and streamline federal policies to enhance forest management, reduce wildfire risks, and decrease reliance on imported timber.

Action: Consistent with the Executive Order, the USFS and BLM, in coordination with the Task Force interagency wood utilization workgroup, will accelerate ongoing programs to facilitate increased timber production, sound forest management, reduced delivery times, and decreased timber supply uncertainty. These actions may include expanding Good Neighbor Agreements, stewardship contracting,



and agreements or contracts with Native American tribes under the Tribal Forest Protection Act.

17. Expand the State's Wood Processing Infrastructure: Increasing the capacity of industries that can process logs and woody biomass into valuable products is critical to meet the state's wildfire resilience, air quality, and economic development goals. However, developers of new or repurposed wood processing facilities face several challenges, including financing, permitting, assurances of supplies, and grid interconnections.

Action: The Department of Conservation and CAL FIRE, in coordination with the USFS, Calforests, and other key agencies and stakeholders, will co-lead a strike team to facilitate the permitting and operation of at least five wood processing facilities by the end of 2025. The strike team will focus on facilities that are idled, under construction, or near construction.

18. Establish a Mass Timber Initiative: Mass timber and other advanced wood products have significant potential to decrease reliance on foreign timber, decarbonize new construction, provide affordable housing, and to jump start an emerging market for California's wood products.

Action: The Joint Institute for Wood Products Innovation, in coordination with key agencies and stakeholders, will develop a mass timber and other advanced wood products initiative to advance the use of innovative wood products in building construction. The initiative will identify opportunities for the use of advanced wood products for housing, examine building codes, and identify opportunities to support in-state manufacturing.

19. Establish Regional Woody Biomass Partnerships: New markets and facilities to process forest materials have been hampered by the lack of long-term feedstock supply contracts. To address this challenge, the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI) has funded six pilot projects to establish new regional agreements or entities to serve as a broker for long-term contracts.

Action: Several of the regional partnerships will enter into new agreements and/or establish joint power authorities in 2025 to help secure long-term feedstock supplies.

20. Assess and Address Workforce Gaps: Forest and fire resilience projects are facing severe labor shortages throughout the state, and the lack of qualified employees is slowing the pace of projects. This labor gap must be addressed to meet and sustain our wildfire resilience targets.



Action: The Sierra Business Council and The Watershed Center will conduct a comprehensive labor market analysis to identify the workforce needed to meet the targets set in the updated Wildfire and Landscape Resilience Action Plan, develop a strategy to address gaps in current workforce, and quantify the socioeconomic benefits from increasing the wildfire resilience workforce.

Build a Science-Based Framework for Measuring Progress

21. Establish a Landscape and Community Resilience Data Hub: The 2021 Action Plan called for the establishment of a Data Hub to serve as a multi-institutional information clearinghouse for collecting and making available up-to-date and actionable information to accelerate wildfire resilience planning, priority-setting, and reporting. Since then, the Task Force has developed an Interagency Treatment Tracking System and a series of data-rich Regional Resource Kits to help local and regional agencies better plan, prioritize, and evaluate the multiple benefits of forest and wildland health projects.

Action: Subject to available funding, the Task Force will develop a California Wildfire and Landscape Resilience Data Hub for science-based products, tools, and data systems, including the Interagency Treatment Tracking System, Regional Resource Kits, and other platforms to better prioritize and measure progress in achieving community and landscape resilience.

22. Develop Wildfire Data Standards and Evaluate Existing Technologies: The state's wildfire crisis has prompted an explosion of private sector tools and increased calls for the state to develop new data sets, models and dashboards to better plan, prioritize, and assess the effectiveness of community and landscape-scale wildfire resilience projects. These include proposals for new community home hardening and defensible space data sets, fire spread models, a wildfire smoke and health data platform, and many others.

Action: The Task Force Science Advisory Panel co-chairs, in coordination with CAL FIRE, LCI, the Climate and Wildfire Institute, and the Moore Foundation, will develop an assessment of state and local needs for wildfire data sets, models, and platforms and inventory current public and private efforts to address those need by May 1, 2025; and develop a framework for standardizing datasets by September 1, 2025.

23. Establish Core Performance Metrics: The development of core reporting metrics is essential to help document the benefits of landscape treatments beyond acres treated, the effectiveness of community resilience programs, and to track progress toward multiple objectives – including reducing fire risk to communities, restoring



landscape resilience, and enhancing biodiversity, carbon storage, water security, air quality, and social and economic health.

Action: The Task Force's Science Advisory Panel, in coordination with relevant agencies and stakeholders, will complete the development of core reporting metrics as part of the 2025 update of the Action Plan.

24. Develop Inventory and Assessment of Conservation Requirements: Conservation requirements for individual listed and sensitive species have multiplied in recent years and increasingly restrict the flexibility of land managers to conduct prescribed fire, thinning, and other ecosystem health projects. They are also generally not linked to an overarching framework for ecological resilience or to regional climate adaptation, watershed health, biodiversity, or habitat connectivity goals.

Action: The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, in partnership with CNRA, DFW, and the USFS, will develop an inventory of the current regulatory requirements for listed species in the state's forested areas, create a dashboard, and develop recommendations to better align and integrate these requirements with broader state habitat and biodiversity goals.

25. Update the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Plan: SB456 (Laird, 2021) requires the Task Force to update the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan by March 2026, and every five years thereafter. It also requires that it be coordinated with other state frameworks, and with the phased development of the 20-year plan identified in the 2020 Shared Stewardship between the state and the Pacific Southwest Region of the USFS.

Action: The Task Force will coordinate the development of the 2025 update of the Action Plan in coordination with key agencies, regional partners, and stakeholders. The Update will be centered around five major goals:

- Expanding large-landscape and community resilience programs
- Supporting regionally tailored strategies
- Building a science-based framework for priority-setting and measuring progress
- Promoting multiple benefits and addressing multiple mandates
- Enhancing efficiency and capacity

The Action Plan will include new targets and commitments in each of these areas, and a revised organizational framework.

