



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet California 2024



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2023 Estimate
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$784,989
Forest Legacy	\$3,330,440
Forest Stewardship	\$94,198
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$911,966
State Fire Assistance	\$4,264,349
Urban and Community Forestry	\$2,131,920
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$1,500,000
Total	\$13,017,862

NOTE: This funding is for all entities within the state, not just the State Forester's office.

The cooperative programs are administered and implemented through a partnership between the State of California, the USDA Forest Service and many other private and government entities. These programs promote the health and productivity of California's forest lands, rural economies, and urban forests. Emphasis focuses on timber and other forest products, fuels management, wildlife, water resources, rural economies, conservation practices, and the multiple benefits of urban forests. These programs emphasize an overarching goal of integrated landscape scale management.

Program Goals

- Improve forest resiliency to drought, natural disasters, and to climate change impacts (including wildfire, pest outbreaks, and other disturbances).
- Maintain and improve the health of California's urban and rural forests and related economies.
- Additional goals include: maintaining environmental services from forests (water supply, water quality, clean air, carbon sequestration), reducing wildfire risk to communities in the Wildland Urban Interface, and promoting renewable forest biomass energy and forest products.

Key Issues

- Wildland/Urban Interface fire hazard and fuel reduction issues; increasingly severe wildfires - impacts to communities and ecological impacts.
- The effects of climate change on forests, and the role that reforestation will play in climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Wildfire behavior – size and burn severity are ongoing issues.
- Ongoing severe drought and effects on forests and urban forests.
- Organizational staffing capacity and operational challenges associated with increased demand for firefighting and forest management resources.
- Forest health and public safety concerns related to tree mortality from both native and invasive non-native pests and diseases.
- Rapid urbanization and development in wildland areas.
- Water quality and riparian habitat rehabilitation.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2023 Accomplishments	Value
Population	39,538,223	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	3,557
Acres of Forest Land	31,605,908	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	1,605
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	8,741,419	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	568
Number of NIPF Landowners	81,259	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	644
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	3,658,235	State Fire Communities Assisted	99
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	23,701,900	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	0
Number of Rural Fire Departments	750	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	1,222
Cities and Towns	482	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	618
Forest Based Employment	101,351	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	34,207,981
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	0	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	108,587
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	770,581,815		

Program Highlights

Conservation Education

Project Learning Tree (PLT) has continued to advance K-12 environmental literacy by providing education, training and resources for teachers and other educators, parents, and community leaders. PLT adapted to new techniques and strategies to provide virtual delivery and has continued to keep educators engaged in a virtual setting. The program successfully facilitated the 4-H citizen science program and continue to seek other partners. PLT also held many in-person learning opportunities like educator workshops, facilitator workshops, CA State University (CSU) programs, and pre-service teacher courses. The pre-service community has proven to be very effective with engaging youth. Many CSU professors are also PLT facilitators. University students who are trained as PLT educators are working at over 10 elementary school campuses and at least 3 middle schools. PLT continued to adjust to the new needs of partners to work collaboratively and support educators who are challenged with providing environmental education opportunities while meeting new school restrictions; in addition, further training was needed with the release of the new PLT K-8 activity guide. Refresher workshops were held to help existing PLT educators familiar and comfortable with the new guide. In total, PLT has trained 9 facilitators, 533 certified educators, and attracted over 6,446 program participants, which has reached an estimated 5,820 youth, including interactions at outreach events such as 4-H camps. PLT has joined forces with 4-H Youth Development and Cal Nat programs within University of California Cooperative Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources, who have assisted with educational events and furthered program development. California PLT received \$102,025 to continue efforts to expand K-12 student opportunities to deepen their knowledge, awareness, and stewardship of the natural world.

Cooperative Fire Protection

The State Fire Capacity Grant funding has assisted in training approximately 1300 firefighters, funding fire prevention/education/detection programs and aviation, communications and safety equipment upgrades. The Volunteer Fire Capacity program serves approximately 166 rural fire departments and helps to purchase much-needed equipment and supplies. Funding is getting harder for small fire departments to come by and this program assists those rural fire departments in keeping pace with safety, training and equipment updates.

Forest Health Protection

Exotic pests remain the primary threat to California's forests. Sudden Oak Death (SOD) is found in 16 counties infesting 100+ species. The European SOD strain is now found in Del Norte County: eradication efforts have begun. Gold-spotted Oak Borer (GSOB) continues to spread in southern CA. All wooded parts of San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties are infested. 2

Invasive shot hole borers (ISHB) are found in 8 southern California counties attacking 300+ species and reproducing in 60+ woody hosts. A new infestation in San Jose shows potential for further spread that may impact urban and riparian forests and woody agricultural crops. A Zone of Infestation has been declared. Mediterranean Oak Borer (MOB) was discovered killing valley and blue oaks in Napa, Lake, Sonoma, and Sacramento Counties. Native pests remain a concern. Aerial surveys resumed with 2.4 million acres recorded with mortality, primarily of true fir killed by fir engraver beetle for a total of 28.8 million dead trees. Staff assist in early detection/rapid response for invasive wood borers and bark beetles (EAB, ALB, spongy moth, spotted lantern fly) as well as native insects and diseases on all state and private lands. Staff serves on the CA Forest Pest Council and its Task Forces, the CA Invasive Species Advisory Committee, and the National Forest Health Monitoring Management Team. Staff reviews timber harvest plans and grant proposals and responds to requests from the public. Staff holds training events for public and private entities, works with other state and federal agencies and provides education and outreach opportunities. Surveys include 12,500 ac for Douglas Fir Tussock Moth, 3000 ac ISHB, 4000 ac MOB, 3000 ac GSOB and 6000 ac of general pest evaluations.

Forest Legacy

In 2023, the Federal Forest Legacy Program (FLP) completed and closed one project, Mattole Headwaters Forest in Northern California. This project conserved 1,222 acres of nonindustrial private forest land threatened with potential development and conversion, with a total investment of \$5,760,000. The Federal program worked on five open projects, slated to conserve over 49,000 acres with over \$19M in federal funding. In 2023, in addition to closing on Mattole Headwaters Forest mentioned above, the State Forest Legacy Program closed on two projects, Reist Ranch and Weger Ranch, totaling over 3,900 acres conserved with a state investment of over \$9M. The State Program also worked on three open projects, slated to conserve over 8,000 acres with over \$12M in state funding. Additionally, through a 2023 grant solicitation four new projects were added to the State program which are slated to conserve over 5,400 acres with over \$10M in state funding. California is working on awarding Forest Legacy capacity expansion grants with federal funding from the Inflation Reduction Act to expand conservation capacity in the state. California will continue to solicit and forward applications to the Community Forest Program. Additionally, California will continue to solicit, rank, and forward projects to the Federal Forest Legacy Program for consideration at the National level.

Forest Stewardship

The federal Forest Stewardship Program and Forest Health Management Program in combination with California's Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) provided valuable technical assistance and funds for Stewardship Planning, timber stand improvement, forest rehabilitation, reforestation and fuels reduction. The funding allows many landowners to work with California Registered Professional Foresters to develop Stewardship plans to help them achieve their management goals. CAL FIRE is utilizing the California Cooperative Forest Management Plan to produce one plan that qualifies for a variety of State and Federal funding.

In 2023 California programs provided broad educational forums including the Forest Landowner Stewardship Initiative, Forest Stewardship Grants, the Forestland Steward Newsletter (7300 readers). The Forest Stewardship Education Initiative is an educational program for private forest landowners in California. The program provides education on forest restoration, fuels reduction, permitting, and funding opportunities. The program has curriculum on forest stewardship for electronic and in-person workshops. 2023 saw expansion to include Post Fire Workshops. Five nine-week workshops, 4 evening webinars, and 6 field days were delivered to 180+ landowners. Forest Stewardship Grants expanded forest stewardship planning and management to small, private forest landowners, building capacity. In 2023, California granted \$500,000 to 10 organizations.

The Forestland Steward is a collaborative publication between CAL FIRE, Placer RCD, UC Coop Extension, and the USFS. The newsletter is published three times yearly and offers helpful and relevant information for managing small, non-industrial lands. With updated policy information, agency input, and science-driven management recommendations, the newsletter provides landowners with broadly applicable information to create healthy and sustainable forests.

Landowner Assistance

California has expanded several landowner assistance programs in 2023. These include the California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP), Emergency Forest Restoration Teams (EFRTs), Wildfire Resilience

Block Grants (WRBG), and Reforestation Services Program (RSP). CFIP is the primary program providing landowners with technical and financial assistance. CFIP provides cost share funds to non-industrial private forest landowners for management plans, reforestation, thinning, pruning, release, and conservation practices. CFIP has helped landowners with forest improvement activities on over 1,000,000 acres since inception. In 2023, CFIP had 132 agreements for over \$8M affecting over 18,000 acres. The WRBG program provides financial and technical forestry assistance through grants to partner organizations. The partner grantee creates a program of forest management technical and funding assistance that is tailored for the local area. This program funds smaller parcels and some practices not funded under other programs. In 2023, there were 10 WRBGs for \$27M in state funds, which will affect 23,392 acres and benefit 12,233 landowners. Partnering with the USFS and local organizations CAL FIRE has expanded disaster recovery support to private forest landowners. Three EFRTs were funded to perform outreach, technical assistance and post fire recovery work in 2023 reducing fire hazard and restoring forest cover to thousands of acres. California is continuing to learn from EFRTs and is developing a cross-boundary strategy to address rapid recovery of forestland. (RSP) produced over 200lbs of tree seed and over 270,000 tree seedlings in 2023 which were made available for private landowners to support their recovery efforts. The RSP partnered with nonprofits, private businesses and the USFS to develop the first-ever Reforestation Cooperative, expanded surveys and collection of conifer cones, and granted funding for construction of new nursery facilities.

Urban and Community Forestry

The U&CF Program has forged strong partnerships with local governments and non-profits to advance its objectives. At 95% of the population considered urban, and with some of the largest population centers in the U.S., California has a great need for the program. California funded 29 Green Schoolyards grants in fiscal year 2022-2023 for approximately \$121 million in state funds. The U&CF Program also received a \$43.2 million investment through the 2023 Inflation Reduction Act, the largest state allocation across the country. \$30 million in additional state funding is available to the program in the current (23/24) fiscal year. There is a continued emphasis on serving disadvantaged communities and "in need" schools with state funds, a good match for the program given that analysis has shown a strong relationship between disadvantaged status and lack of urban tree canopy cover. State funded grants are used for tree planting and care, urban forest management plans, inventories, local policies and ordinances, canopy analysis, educational projects, urban forest workforce development, urban wood utilization, and green schoolyards. Staff continues to spend a lot of time overseeing state funded grants, working with grantees, and providing a great deal of technical and policy assistance to local governments, non-profits, districts, and private companies. They also participate in educational and public events, including arbor day events. USFS grant funds support an urban forestry education and outreach position, as well as partnerships and priority projects. Priority projects are primarily for educational purposes and for projects that build overall urban forestry capacity in California, such as technological tools and best management practices and guidelines. The program also works on integrating urban forestry activity and policy throughout state government. The program's advisory committee has a current program strategic plan that is being implemented.

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