



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet California 2025



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2024 Final
Community Forests and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$567,102
Forest Legacy	\$323,949
Forest Stewardship	\$254,997
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$897,674
State Fire Assistance	\$4,615,590
Urban and Community Forestry	\$1,154,065
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$1,419,220
Total	\$9,232,597

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 2024 Accomplishments	Value
Population	39,538,223	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	4,702
Acres of Forest Land	31,605,908	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	2,087
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	8,741,419	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	1,113
Number of NIPF Landowners	81,259	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	0
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	3,658,235	State Fire Communities Assisted	0
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	23,701,900	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	250
Number of Rural Fire Departments	750	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	246
Cities and Towns	482	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	284
Forest Based Employment	101,351	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	28,821,289
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	0	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	115,000
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	770,581,815		

Program Highlights

Conservation Education

Project Learning Tree (PLT) continues to advance K-12 environmental literacy by providing education, training and resources for teachers and educators, parents, and community leaders. PLT used new techniques and strategies to provide virtual delivery in addition to in-person opportunities. PLT has four goals and objectives for the program: 1) Deliver effective educational methodology and science content to improve scientific and environmental literacy, 2) ensure accessibility 3) seek to obtain long-term, funding to help ensure stable leadership and sustain growth, and 4) deliver program evaluation and administration. PLT ramped up workshops following a pause in early 2024 and were able to quickly reconnect with teachers and facilitators. The program has had to scale back efforts and narrow its focus while relying on and supporting the dedicated network of PLT educators and facilitators to support program efforts. PLT has hosted many educator workshops, facilitator workshops, CA State University (CSU) programs, and pre-service teacher courses. The pre-service community has been very effective with engaging youth and includes students and professors from CSU Fullerton, CSU East Bay, and Cal Poly Humboldt. University students who are trained as PLT educators are working at elementary and middle school campuses. PLT has hosted multiple Forestry Institute for Teachers (FIT) workshops sessions, participated in K- 8 Spanish translation programs, and partnered with school districts to deliver content. PLT continued to adjust to the needs of new and existing partners. This include adapting to recent wildfires in Los Angeles by partnering with and certifying Los Angeles County Fire Department-Forestry Division staff as PLT educators. In total, from May 2024-December 2024, PLT has 1 new certified facilitator, 104 new certified educators, and attracted over 220 program participants, which has reached an estimated 1,278 youth.

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 120 to 150 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 CA forests. Sudden Oak Death (SOD) is in 16 counties infesting 100+ species. The European SOD strain is now found in Del Norte Co. with three strains of the disease now within the same watershed: eradication efforts have begun. Gold-spotted Oak Borer (GSOB)

continues to spread in southern CA. Parts of San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino Cos. are infested. New infestations were found in Santa Barbara Co. 2 Invasive shot hole borers (ISHB) are found in 8 southern CA counties attacking 300+ species and reproducing in 60+ woody hosts. A new infestation in San Jose shows potential for further spread, impacting urban and riparian forests and woody crops. A third ISHB complex was located in Santa Cruz Co. showing potential for more impacts by these insect/disease complexes. A Zone of Infestation was declared. Mediterranean Oak Borer (MOB) was discovered killing valley, blue, and Oregon white oaks in Napa, Lake, Sonoma, and Sacramento Cos. Further spread was found in Yolo and El Dorado Cos. Native pests remain a concern. Aerial surveys resumed with one million acres recorded with mortality, primarily of true fir killed by fir engraver beetle mostly in the Sierra Nevada. Staff assist in early detection and response for invasive pests (EAB, ALB, spongy moth, spotted lantern fly) and native pests 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 review timber harvest plans and grant proposals and respond to public requests. Staff hold training events for public and private entities, work with other government agencies and provide education and outreach opportunities. Surveys include 12,500 ac for Douglas Fir Tussock Moth, 3,000 ac ISHB, 4,000 ac MOB, 3,000 ac GSOB and 6,000 ac of general pest evaluations statewide.

Forest Legacy

In 2024, the Federal Forest Legacy Program (FLP) completed and closed one project, Pacific Union College Phase II in Napa County. This project conserved 264 acres of private forest land threatened with potential development and conversion and is adjacent to 864 acres of forest land conserved by the first phase of the project. The conservation easement was purchased for \$4,000,000 with funding from CAL FIRE, USFS, and the Land Trust of Napa County. The Federal program worked on five open projects, which when completed will conserve 49,000 acres, totaling over \$20,000,000 in Federal investment. In addition to closing on Pacific Union College II project mentioned above, the State Forest Legacy Program closed on one project, Upper Bear Creek Meadows, which conserved 4,768 acres of working forest land in Siskiyou County. The conservation easement was purchased for \$5,735,000 with funding from CAL FIRE and the Wildlife Conservation Board. The State program also worked on five open projects, which when completed will conserve over 9,000 acres with over \$15,000,000 in State investment. Additionally, through a 2024 grant solicitation three new projects were added to the State program with over \$8,500,000 in state funding. With additional Federal funding for program administration, CAL FIRE awarded two Forest Legacy capacity grants to increase conservation capacity in the state. CAL FIRE will continue to solicit and forward applications to the Federal Community Forest Program. Additionally, CAL FIRE 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 California's Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) provided technical assistance and funds for planning, timber stand improvement, forest rehabilitation, reforestation and fuels reduction. The funding allows landowners to work with CA Registered Professional Foresters to develop stewardship plans to help them achieve management goals. CA is utilizing the California Cooperative Forest Management Plan, a single plan that qualifies for a variety of State and Federal funding. In 2024 CA programs provided educational forums like the Forest Landowner Stewardship Initiative (FLSI), Forest Stewardship Grants, the Forestland Steward Newsletter (7300 readers).

One ongoing example is FLSI, an educational program for private forest landowners in CA. The program provides education on forest restoration, fuels reduction, permitting, and funding. The program has curriculum for electronic and in-person workshops. 2024 also saw a continuation of the Post Fire Workshops. Twelve educational events were held in 2024. This included four nine-week stewardship workshop series completed by 64 participants. This workshop series was via a hybrid learning style involving online learning assignments, nine weeks of remote meetings, and one in-person field day to view silvicultural methods and build forestry skills like inventory, mapping, and plant ID. Grants expanded forest stewardship planning and management to small, private forest landowners, building capacity. 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 information 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

CA continues to offer several landowner assistance programs. These include the CA Forest Improvement Program (CFIP), Emergency Forest Restoration Teams (EFRTs), Wildfire Resilience Block Grants (WRBG), and Reforestation Services Program (RSP). CFIP provides landowners with technical and financial assistance. CFIP funds non-industrial private forest landowners for management plans, reforestation, thinning, pruning, release, and conservation practices. CFIP has helped landowners on over 1,000,000 acres since inception. In calendar year 2024, CFIP awarded 38 grants to landowners. These grants cover 2,922 acres of forest management planning, and 2,390 acres of reforestation and forest health. For WRBG, 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 2024, there were 4 WRBGs for \$10M in state funds, which will affect 2,950 acres and benefit 239 landowners. Partnering with the USFS and local organizations the program has expanded disaster recovery support to private forest landowners. More than 15 EFRTs and EFRT like organizations previously funded in 2022 and 2023, continue to perform outreach, technical assistance and post fire recovery work reducing fire hazard and restoring forest cover to thousands of acres. CA is continuing to learn from EFRTs and is developing a cross-boundary strategy to address rapid recovery of forestland. RSP produced over 4200 lbs. of tree seed in 2024, marking one of the largest cone collection seasons in over 20 years. Over 270,000 tree seedlings 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 NGOs to advance objectives. At 95% of the population considered urban, and with many of the largest population centers in the U.S., CA has great need for the program. The program received a \$43.2 million in investment in 2023, with nearly \$31 million being sub-granted to local organizations during 2024-2025. \$28 million in state funding was provided to 20 Green Schoolyards Childcare grants during fiscal year 2023-2024. Legislative appropriations approved in fiscal year 2024-2025 included \$15 million for Green Schoolyards in the Aliso Canyon impact area of Los Angeles Co. and \$5 million for the San Joaquin Co area. There is a continued emphasis on communities and "in need" schools with state funds. A good match given the strong proven relationship between such areas and lack of urban tree canopy cover. State funded grants are for tree planting and care, urban forest management plans, inventories, local policies and ordinances, canopy analysis, educational projects, workforce development, urban wood utilization, and green schoolyards. Staff spends a lot of time overseeing grants, working with grantees, and providing lots of technical and policy assistance to local governments, non-profits, districts, and others. They also participate in public events, including arbor day events. USFS grant funds support an education and outreach position, as well as partnerships and priority projects. Priority projects are primarily for educational purposes and for projects that build overall capacity in California, such as technology 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, with a new strategic plan being drafted, anticipating completion before June 30, 2026.

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