



CALIFORNIA'S Forests & Watersheds

IN NEED OF RESTORATION

The forests and watersheds in California play an essential role in our lives and our communities. When healthy, forests provide clean water, energy, clean air, and they absorb and store carbon. Today, many California forests and watersheds are unhealthy. They are experiencing uncharacteristically large and intense wildfires, insect and disease infestations, and dramatic amounts of tree mortality. Many forests are over grown, and many streams and meadows are degraded.

Land managers are working to actively restore a small percentage of California's forests and watersheds, but current restoration efforts are grossly out of pace with what is needed. Only an ecological restoration program of unprecedented scale can alter the direction of current trends.

California Headwaters Partnership

The California Headwaters Partnership (CHP) is one of seven regions in the United States named as Resilient Lands and Waters as called for in the President's Priority Agenda for Enhancing the Climate Resilience of America's Natural Resources. The Forest Service and California Natural Resources Agency are leading this effort together to:

- Identify and map priority areas for conservation, restoration, or other investments
- Build resilience and enhance carbon storage capacity
- Develop landscape-scale strategies to assist in planning and management activities

The process used to identify and quantify forest and watershed restoration will be organized through the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP), with the goal of making California's forests and watersheds more resilient to wildfire, climate change, and invasive species.

Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program

The Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program is a large-scale restoration program focused on the health and resilience of the Sierra Nevada region. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the U.S. Forest Service are leading this effort, with support from a wide variety of partners. The WIP is designed to increase the pace and scale of restoration by:

- Aligning existing collaborative efforts,
- Increasing investment for restoration,
- Addressing key policy issues affecting restoration,
- Assessing restoration needs across public and private lands,
- Increasing infrastructure needed for restoration.

All of these steps will serve to maximize restoration work on the ground in the Sierra Nevada.



Susan River in the Lassen National Forest
Photo: Molly Simonson; USFS Region 5 Flickr

Working Together to Restore California's Forests and Watersheds

Establishing a Commitment to Resilient Forests and Watersheds

A Memorandum of Understanding between the California Natural Resources Agency and the U.S. Forest Service has been signed, committing to ongoing support of the California Headwaters Partnership and the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program.



Aligning Existing Efforts

In order to encourage restoration at a larger landscape scale, the U.S. Forest Service and the California Natural Resources Agency signed a Good Neighbor Authority master agreement, facilitating expanded federal-state partnerships to increase vital restoration work.



Crew completing hand thinning project
Photo by Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions (CHIPS)



Partnerships help restore damaged landscapes.



Prescribed fire burning
Photo by Susie Kocher at U.C. Cooperative Extension

Increasing Available Restoration Tools

Several Federal and State agency officials, along with conservation and community fire protection groups, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to expand the use of fire as a restoration tool. A careful and expanded prescribed fire program will lower the likelihood of large, uncontrollable fires by reducing the amount of fuel available to burn, and will limit pollution from larger wildfire events.



The Sierra-Cascade watersheds provide drinking water to 25 million people, almost two-thirds of California's population, and the majority of water for irrigated agriculture. Working together to restore this critical resource is of the utmost importance.



Find additional information at restorethesierra.org

Or scan QR code below with your smart device.



Produced in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service, which is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Identifying Restoration Needs

Information on critical issues and restoration opportunities are being compiled at the watershed level to provide baseline knowledge of the on-the-ground conditions and restoration needs. These assessments will help identify opportunities for immediate on-the-ground work, and provide a basis for exploring new models for accomplishing restoration work more effectively.