

Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership

Central Sierra Recovery and Restoration Project

2017-2019



Widespread tree mortality in the Sierra Nevada

The southern Sierra Nevada in California are famous for such iconic places as Yosemite Valley and the giant sequoia groves. Less well known is that it has experienced the worst of the recent California tree mortality event. This epic event unfolded over several years and killed tens of millions of trees in and around the Sierra National Forest. Consequently urgent management activities have been needed on both public and private lands to mitigate the risks to local communities and at-risk wildlife. This Joint Chiefs' project helped in reducing fuel loads and removing hazard trees in the wildland urban interface. These practices are critical in reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfire to local communities and sensitive habitats. Given the magnitude of the threat new partnerships were formed and existing partnerships strengthened to meet the moment. Local Resource Conservation Districts, Fire Safe Councils, county agencies, public utilities, and state agencies all joined together. In year three, this project was also able to leverage additional funding from the new California Climate Investment grant.

PROJECT IMPACT:

3,100+ acres

Treatments to more than 3,100 acres helped create a defensible space for fire fighters to protect four communities during the 2018 Ferguson Fire.

USFS & NRCS JCLRP funds awarded 2017-2019: \$10,959,944
Total USDA and partner project funds: \$12,939,944

PROJECT RESULTS



Removing hazardous trees



Hazard tree removal: local communities, roads, and active restoration sites were protected by felling hazardous trees.



Protecting habitat for at-risk species: fuel reduction treatments helping Pacific fisher, great grey owl, western pond turtle, and foothill yellow-legged frog.



Supporting rural economies: reducing fire hazards helps sustain the tourism industry of the Sierra Nevada foothills and preserve the scenic rural character.

USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service are working together to improve the health of forests where public forests and grasslands connect to privately owned lands. Through the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, the two USDA agencies are restoring landscapes by reducing wildfire threats to communities and landowners, protecting water quality and enhancing wildlife habitat.

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Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership CENTRAL SIERRA RECOVERY AND RESTORATION PROJECT



Home nestled in the forest of the Sierra Nevada foothills

Protecting Natural Resources and Communities

Elaine Seymour and her family have been in Mariposa county since the early 1980s. Before purchasing, they were very familiar with the property as having major soil erosion problems and improper drainage. They went into the purchase knowing it needed work, and wanting to change it for the better.

Their 55-acre ranch has horses, pigs, and a goat; and they border the Sierra National Forest. So, their backyard is also home to wild quail, turkeys, coyotes, mountain lions, bobcats, squirrels, and occasionally a couple of bear cubs. Great grey owls, western pond turtles, and pacific fishers have also been seen in the area.

"We sought out NRCS because we wanted to make improvements on our land," Seymour said. "From the start, it was an incredible feeling. NRCS was so willing to help us. They take us to another level of caring for our land."

Through the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership Program, the Seymour's have a conservation plan to remove invasive species, improve forest health, enhance wildlife habitat, and revegetate critical areas to reduce soil erosion.

"If we want to keep our forest and private owned areas around our forest healthy, the NRCS program is necessary," she added. "Their programs also make it possible for the wildlife to grow and prosper, while educating owners to help make this all happen."

Elaine's husband Tom also applauds NRCS for helping to care for their land, so he's eager to let their neighbors know about the NRCS programs and services available. "NRCS is so kind," he said. "They are good people."

View more about the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership in California at <http://agnetwest.com/tree-mortality-work-paying-off-during-fires/>

For more information, please visit nrcs.usda.gov/JointChiefsReports



Fire fighting crew

Key Partners

CAL FIRE

Mariposa County Resource Conservation District

Mariposa County

PG&E

Mariposa Office of Emergency Services

Mariposa County Fire Safe Council

Mariposa Biomass Workgroup

California Climate Investment (CCI)
Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds

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