NRCS-CA
Forestry

WFLC, Nov. 2019

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRCS in California

- State Office in Davis
- 4 Area Offices
- 60 Field Offices
- Over 600 employees in CA
NRCS-CA Forestry Technical Assistance

- NRCS civil service foresters (9)
- Many partners helping NRCS forestry (RCDs, CARCD, NACD, and AFF) – (15 staff)
- “Technical Service Providers” – TSPs – (14)
- Contracted forestry consultants (2)
- Limited direct CAL FIRE (State forestry agency) assistance
- High reliance on “Licensed Registered Professional Foresters”
Financial Assistance

- Mostly EQIP
- $5-16 Million/year
- 5,000 to 10,000 acres/year treated
- Many funding “pools”
• Create a forest that is resilient to wildfire and pests and has the ability to recover.

• Fewer, larger, well spaced trees

• Remove “ladder fuels”
Avoid or minimize this
Major Forestry Practices

- Forest Management Plans
- Forest Stand Improvement
- Woody Residue Treatment
- Site Preparation
- Tree Shrub Establish
- Brush Management
Catastrophic forestry impacts forestry

Large damaging wildfire and drought related bark beetle infestation

Impacts not seen in CA history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Size - Acres</th>
<th>Structures Lost</th>
<th>Lives lost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rim Fire</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Tuolumne Co.</td>
<td>257 k</td>
<td>212</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Valley Fire</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Lake County</td>
<td>76 k</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bark Beetles drought related tree mortality</td>
<td>2010-2018</td>
<td>Central Sierras Nevada Mtns</td>
<td>10 counties</td>
<td>&gt;150 million trees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North CA (Tubbs, Atlas, Redwood complex)</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Sonoma and Napa Co.</td>
<td>245 k</td>
<td>&gt;8900</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mendocino Complex</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Mendocino and Lake Co.</td>
<td>459 k</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Fire</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Butte Co.</td>
<td>153 k</td>
<td>&gt;1800</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carr Fire</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Shasta Co.</td>
<td>229 k</td>
<td>1604</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PGE power blackouts</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Statewide high wind fire haz areas</td>
<td>Millions of people affected</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unprecedented cooperation with CA forestry entities

- Governor’s Forest Management Task Force
- Gov and Presidential EOs
- Massive influx of $ for forest health and fire prevention
- Renewed emphasis on forestry infrastructure
- Pace and Scale of forestry
NRCS-CA Forestry Role and Actions

• **Urgent and high priorities:** fire reduction, and cat wildfire and bark beetle mortality restoration.

• **Focus on all phases of NRCS forestry conservation work.**

• NRCS-CA goal of increasing its forestry conservation work
New Focus – Wildland Urban Interface

- Is it really new?
- WUI Brings its own set of issues
- EQIP contract with multiple landowners.
- Working with CAL FIRE Fire Prevention grant projects
Participation in cooperative forestry projects with partners

- Leverage advanced planning efforts
- Outreach and recruitment of NRCS clients
- Follow awarded grant projects
- Examples - Reforestation coordination
- Success in USFS/NRCS Joint Chiefs Restoration Program
Expanded Forestry Technical Assistance Capacity

- **FILL CIVIL SERVICE FORESTRY POSITIONS**

- **FORESTRY AGREEMENTS**
  - Gives flexibility
  - Major partners: RCDs, AFF
  - Over 15 forestry staff supplied by agreements
  - NACD $ has been very helpful bonus!!
Expanded Forestry Technical Assistance Capacity

- Expanded Pool of TSPs
- "CAL FIRE TSP"
- Forestry Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ)
- Partner Agreement Challenges
Expanded Forestry Technical Assistance Capacity

• PREScribed FIRE HELP

➢ Working on CAL FIRE participation with NRCS clients in prescribed burning ---- challenges in CA.

➢ Using Burn Boss TSPs, private burning contractors, BIA, prescribed burning associations, and UC coop extension helping NRCS-CA.

➢ Slow progress.
CAL FIRE - state agency coop agreement?

- Closer involvement in grant projects.
- Could use their FMP - TSP or “Entity” TSP for all RPFs;
- Prescribed fire help via CAL FIRE VMP;
- Burn boss certification program for more qualified burn bosses;
- Sharing “Forestry Assistance Staff” for EQIP and CAL FIRE’s CFIP.
- Archeological review help.
- Development of ‘Forest Carbon” FMP
Summary: NRCS-CA forestry in the future

- UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION AMONG FORESTRY PARTNERS
- LEVERAGE ADVANCED PLANNING EFFORTS
- FIND PROJECT DELIVERY EFFICIENCIES
- MORE ENGAGEMENT WITH PARTNERS
- EXPANDED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS
- USE WOODY DEBRIS FROM EQIP
Thanks ----

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