

Financial assistance programs for forest landowners

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Cost-Share Program Examples

USDA (Federal)

- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
- Farm Services Agency (FSA) Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP)
- US Fish & Wildlife Service Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

State

- CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) CA Forest Improvement Program (CFIP)

Regional

- North Bay Forest Improvement Program (NBFIP) for Lake, Mendocino, Napa and Sonoma Counties

- All will cover non-commercial forest health or restoration work
- Landowner works with a Registered Professional Forester (RPF) or the technical assistance person at the agency
- Landowner hires and pays contractor, or in some cases can do the work themselves, and are later reimbursed for a portion of costs
- Landowner must apply and be selected
- Funding for these programs is variable



Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- Provides both financial and technical assistance free of charge for agricultural producers and forest landowners for non-commercial activities
- In order for an on-the-ground practice or treatment to receive financial assistance, it must be shown to be treating (or improving) an NRCS resource concern or be part of a series or suite of practices that do so.
- Provides reimbursement for treatments at a pre-determined flat rate per acre, up to \$450,000.
- Landowner will receive a 1099 and need to report EQIP payments on their tax return



*Road/culvert work photo: Evan Smith,
NRCS Grass Valley*



Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Covered forestry practices include:

- Site preparation and reforestation
- Thinning live trees, brush management, treatment of beetle infestations
- Woody residue treatment-pruning, mastication, chipping, piling and burning
- Firebreaks
- Erosion control (including road improvements, and streambank protections and crossings)



Mastication photo: Susie Kocher, UC ANR

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)



- Landowners must agree to keep the land in forest use for at least ten years
- Environmental evaluation (NEPA) is done by NRCS staff
- A forest management plan is required if forestry practices are requested
- Application will be ranked and funding allocations will be made to highest ranked projects
- If awarded, contract practices are scheduled within a 2-3 year timeframe

Contact NRCS planner to make an appointment for a site visit to assess resource concerns and potential projects

Locate service centers at: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/contact/find-a-service-center>

CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

CA Forest Improvement Program (CFIP)

Provides 80-90% cost share to protect, maintain or enhance forest resources up to treatment-specific cap rates (90% on substantially damaged forestland)

Covers:

- Development of, or addendums to, a forest management plan
- Professional forester (RPF) project supervision
- Site preparation, trees, and planting
- Timber stand improvement and fuels reduction
- Various fish and wildlife habitat projects including erosion control, planting of native oaks, decommissioning and improving roads, etc.



Vegetation management photo: CAL FIRE

CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

CA Forest Improvement Program (CFIP)

- Zoning must be compatible with forest resource management
- Must own 20-5,000 acres of non-industrial forest land in CA to be eligible
- CFIP projects must be at least five contiguous acres
- Must agree to a deed restriction to keep land in forest use for 10 years
- Landowners must hire an RPF to complete application
- Commercial timber operations not eligible
- No mixing of grant funds



Tree thinning and mastication photo: CAL FIRE

CA Forest Improvement Program (CFIP)

- An approved CA Cooperative Forest Management Plan (CCFMP) or Non-industrial Timber Management Plan (NTMP) is required for treatment cost reimbursement. CFIP can fund plan development or updating
 - CFIP Mini Management Plans (MMPs) are accepted for less than 50 contiguous acres or substantially damaged
 - Emergency Forest Management Plans (EFMPs) accepted for land in immediate need of reforestation after an Emergency Notice for tree removal has been completed
- CFIP User's Guide and contact list for local Forestry Assistance Specialists (FAS) available at <https://www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/grants/california-forest-improvement>



Other sources of assistance

- Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs)- <https://carcd.org/>
- NRCS- <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>
- UCCE- [Forest Stewardship Workshops - Forest Research and Outreach](https://link.ucanr.edu/stewardshipworkshops)
<https://link.ucanr.edu/stewardshipworkshops>
- Fire safe councils- <https://cafiresafecouncil.org/>
- Prescribed burn associations- <https://calpba.org/>
- Firewise communities- <https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa>

Thank you