

First Year Accomplishment report January to December 2020

The goal of the Forest Stewardship Education Initiative is to engage forest landowners to better understand and protect their forests by developing a forest management plan. After a six month planning period, the first workshop was hosted by University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR) in January 2020. A total of 151 participants attended one of seven forest stewardship workshops held in 2020.

Forest stewardship is based on conservation principles that ensure protection of forest resources including wildlife, timber, soil, water recreational opportunities and natural beauty. Forest stewards actively manage their land by following management objectives based on multiple resources that conserve natural resources and are economically viable. Workshops focus on helping landowners become better forest stewards by helping them learn about forests and forest management and connecting them to cost-share programs and forestry professionals.



Participants measuring tree diameter during a field day

Workshop Overview

Seven workshops were held in 2020. A total of 151 people completed one of the workshop series. The first three workshops were held in person over three weekend days each, and the last four were held through a hybrid learning style involving on-line learning assignments, 8 weeks of evening zoom meetings one night

Issues for private forestland owners in California:

Private non-corporate forest lands make up about 25% of the 33 million acres of forests in California. About 9 million acres are privately owned by individuals, of which 90% own less than 50 acres of forest land. There are 87,000 owners with more than 10 acres of forest land.

Many of these landowners would like to do more to manage their landscape for resiliency against the threat of high severity wildfire and mass tree mortality. However, the operational environment for small forest landowners is challenging. Regulatory reform, new markets for wood utilization, and increased human capital and workforce are needed to help increase the pace and scale of forest management on private land.

An additional vital need is outreach and education. Active engagement with educational programs allows landowners to identify management goals and challenges, learn from experts and each other, identify resources, develop a community of practice, and more effectively manage their forest over time.

a week, and one in-person field day to demonstrate silvicultural methods and forest inventory skills. This transition to a hybrid format was done to accommodate public health restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.



Online workshop participants in July 2020

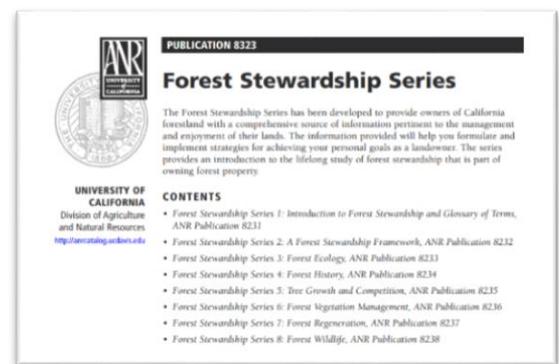
2020 workshops were held in:

- Ukiah (Mendocino county) – January
- Berkeley (Alameda county) – February
- Redding (Shasta county) – March
- Georgetown (El Dorado County) – May to July
- Meadow Valley (Plumas County) – August to October
- Santa Cruz (Santa Cruz County) – September to November
- Mariposa (Mariposa County) – November to January

Workshop Content

The workshop’s focus is to help participants draft a California Cooperative Forest Management Plan (CCFMP), which can make them eligible for state and federal cost-share programs. The curriculum relies on the [25-part Forest Stewardship Series](#), a peer-reviewed publication series on forestry and forest management published by UC ANR and targeted at family forest owners. Materials for the workshops are hosted on the California Family Forest website, <https://www.cafamilyforest.org/> and the UC ANR Forest Research and Outreach website, <https://ucanr.edu/forestry/>.

Using a flipped classroom style, participants are expected to review workshop content, including videos and on-line activities, on their own before workshop sessions. Participants participate in weekly on-line sessions with forestry experts to ask them questions specific to their situations, which promotes more in-depth individual and group learning. Participants interact with experts on ecology, silviculture, forest products marketing, business and tax aspects of owning land, regulations, and cost share programs. In working through the CCFMP, participants articulate goals for their forestland, research their properties’ management history, and begin to develop an understanding of what activities need to occur that will support their goals. Participants interact with Registered Professional Foresters and other forestry professionals, building relationships to help them develop their plans and participate in cost-share programs. During the field day, participants learn online mapping applications and how to use forest inventory tools, in addition to discussing various management goals, strategies and practice appropriate to the field site.



The cover page of the 25-part Forest Stewardship leaflet series



California Family Forest website

Participants rated the workshop highly. Of the 135 answering this workshop evaluation question, 66% rated the workshop as excellent and 25% as very good. They agreed that information presented was informative and comprehensive (62% strongly agreed and 38% agreed). As a result of this workshop, 74% strongly agreed and 24% agreed that they had a better idea of how to develop a forest management plan.

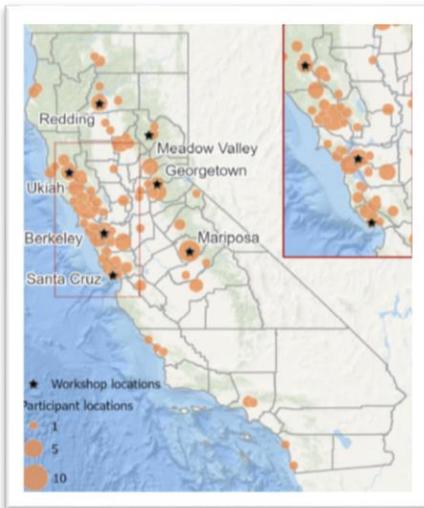
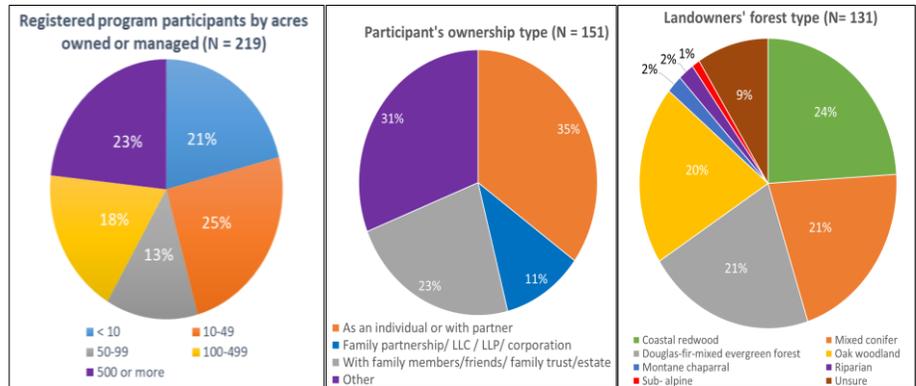
Comments written by participants on evaluation forms have included:

- “Workshop is great, good technical information, making local contacts is extremely important. So, it was great to see so many experts.”
- “I feel much clearer on the steps to make a forest management plan, what I can do myself, and what we need to a hire a professional for.”
- “Thank you for offering this workshop. Even in a pandemic it was effective. Now I have work to do!!”
- “I’ve attended several hundred cooperative extension meetings in my career in agriculture, this ranks very highly in comparison.”
- “Finding out about this workshop came at a time when I was struggling to know what to do to preserve and protect our family lands. I am so very grateful and appreciative of the effort that went into creating this program.”
- “The information provided both online and in our sessions raised my level of knowledge incredibly. I also, now know even more of what I don’t know!”

Participant Overview

A total of 219 people registered for these workshops and 151 completed them (one workshop was canceled and rescheduled due to pandemic uncertainties). Each workshop averaged between 20 to 30 participants. Participants were asked about their properties on registration. 56% of participants had a residence on or within a mile of their land and 48% had not received information/advice about managing their land in the last five years.

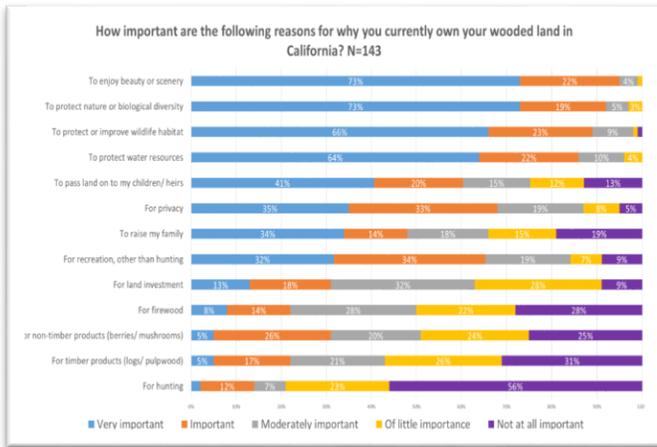
Ownership size: The acres owned or managed by participants varied greatly. About a fifth of all participants were in each land ownership size category. 23% of participants had over 500 acres of land each (controlling over 25,000 acres total). 21% had less than 10 acres (controlling less than 460 acres total).



Ownership type: 35% of participants owned their land as an individual or with a partner. 34% owned it with family through partnerships, LLCs or family trusts. 31% had other ownership types. These included non-profits, land trusts, homeowners’ associations, camp managers, local and state parks and open space districts, community colleges and tribes.

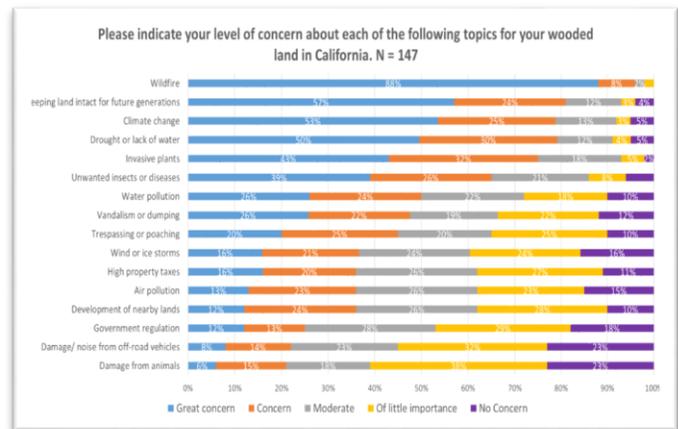
Forest type: Participating landowners owned a range of forest types, with 24% having redwood, 21% mixed conifer, 21% Douglas-fir mixed evergreen and 20% with oak woodlands. 9% of participants weren’t sure what type of woodland they owned when they started the course.

Forest location: Participants in the workshop owned land in most of the forested counties in California. The majority of participants in year one owned land in coastal areas between Ukiah and Santa Cruz.

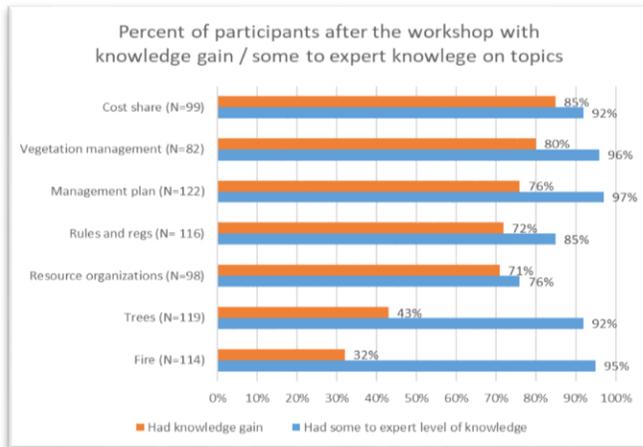


Ownership reasons: When asked how important different reasons were for their ownership of forest lands, the vast majority emphasized enjoying their forest’s beauty (95% said this was important or very important), nature (92%), wildlife (89%) or water (86%). 61% said passing land on to heirs was important or very important, as was having privacy (68%), recreation (66%) or raising a family (48%). Utilitarian reasons such as land investment (31%), use of non-timber products (31%), timber (22%), firewood (17%), and hunting (14%) were rated the least important reasons to own forestland by participants.

Participant concerns: Participants overwhelmingly rated wildfire as a concern or great concern (96%). Keeping land intact for future generations (81%), drought (80%), climate change (78%), invasive plants (75%) and insects and disease (65%) were also a concern or great concern. Of least concern was development of nearby lands (36%), government regulations (25%), off road vehicle damage (22%) and animal damage (21%).



Participant Learning Outcomes



During each weekly session, participants were asked to rate their knowledge about management topics both before and after the session in order to measure their change in knowledge. As a result of the workshop, participants gained knowledge about all subjects taught, with the most participants gaining knowledge on cost share programs (85%), vegetation management (80%), management plans (76%), forestry rules and regulations (72%), and resource organizations (71%). Three quarters of participants rated themselves as having some to an expert level of knowledge on all workshop topics after the workshops.

Program Impacts

Participants were asked to complete an evaluation survey after their last workshop session indicating their intentions for action. On this post-workshop survey, over three quarters indicated they planned to develop a management plan, consult with their local CALFIRE/NRCS/ RCD offices and apply for cost share funding. 89%

said they planned to consult with a Registered Professional Foresters. The percentage who very much or definitely plan to carry out a specific action is listed below:



85% Plan to develop a management plan



86% Plan to consult with their local RCD/NRCS office



78% Plan to consult with local Cal Fire office

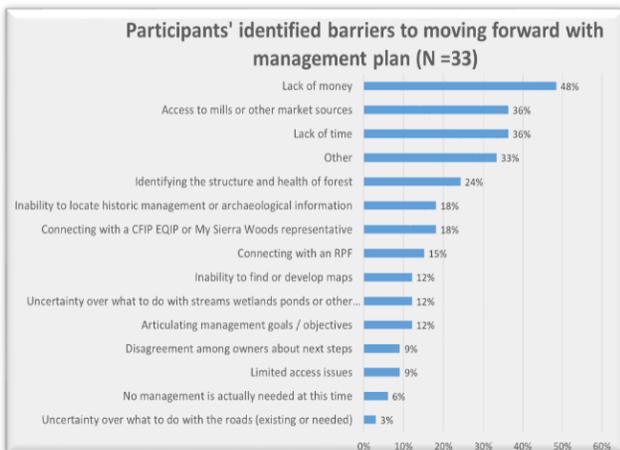


89% Plan to consult with an RPF



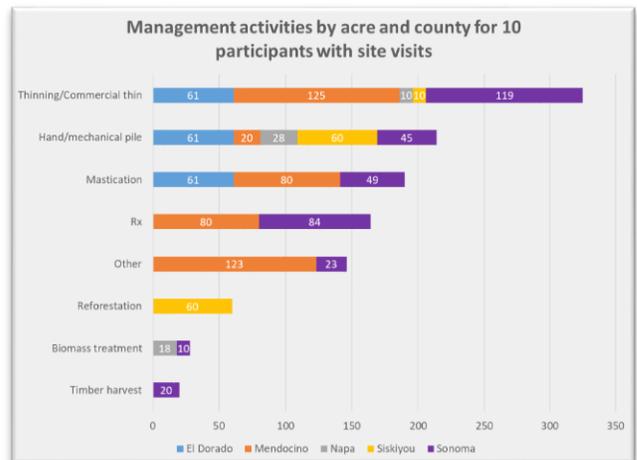
78% Plan to apply for cost-share

In September 2020, participants were sent a follow up survey to complete online to gauge their progress. Of those responding (N=33), 66% had written out their management goals and 60% had made progress on developing a management plan, 39% had made contact with an RPF and 15% have begun a cost-share funding process. 78% have begun implementing some management activities from their plans, demonstrating improved management that contributes to protecting California's forests.



Participants were also asked to identify barriers to moving forward with their management plants. The largest barriers cited were lack of funds (48%), time (36%), and access to mills or markets (36%). Uncertainty or lack of information to develop their plan was identified as a barrier by some – including information on forest structure and health (24%), historic/archaeological information (18%), maps (12%), streams and wetlands (12%), roads (3%). 12% still had trouble articulating management goals, 9% had disagreement among owners about next steps, and 9% had access issues.

Completion of the workshop series entitled participants to a \$400 stipend for a registered professional forester to conduct an initial site visit on their land. The goal of this site visit is for the RPF to assess participants' plans and goals and identify management practices to meet their goals. It's also to help landowners learn more about RPF services and potentially set up an on-going relationship with the forester. A total of 10 participants had visits by an RPF using the stipend by the end of 2020. Together these participants manage over 2,500 acres of forested lands. RPFs recommended a variety of practices on these properties, with the most common recommendations being thinning, piling and burning, mastication and prescribed fire.



Collaboration

Forest stewardship workshops are held in collaboration with local, state and federal governments, community-based organizations, nonprofits and private industry partners including the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Resource Conservation Districts, Fire Safe Councils and Cal Fire. Workshop partners have participated on planning committees, provided location and logistical support, given presentations, participated in group breakout sessions, and assisted workshop participants in plan development. This collaboration allows participants to share knowledge and develop relationships with local agencies and professionals. Participants rely on these relationships with RPFs to develop their forest management plans and use the contacts they've made with CALFIRE and RCDs to then apply for CFIP and EQIP cost-share opportunities.



Steering Committee

Many thanks to our steering committee of leaders from partner organizations that help steer implementation of the initiative. The committee meets every other month to review progress and give input on next steps. Thanks to 2020 Steering Committee members:

- Larry Camp – Forest Landowners of California
- Kevin Conway- CALFIRE
- Andrea Eggleton - FRST Corp
- Tracy Katelman – ForEverGreen Forestry
- Max Odland – California Association of RCDs
- Jason Wells – Sonoma County RCD
- Martin Twer – The Watershed Research and Training Center



Larry Camp, left, Forest Landowners of California, talks to a workshop participant

The workshops have been supported by the UC ANR Forestry Work Group, including, advisors and specialists:

- Mike Jones mjones@ucdavis.edu
- Rick Satomi rpsatomi@ucanr.edu
- Ryan Tompkins retompkins@ucanr.edu
- Yana Valachovic yvala@ucanr.edu.
- Bill Stewart billstewart@berkeley.edu
- Rob York ryork@berkeley.edu



Partnership with Berkeley Forests has also been key to the success of the initiative.

Workshop participants discussing fuels reduction projects during the in-person field day at Blodgett Research Forest in July 2020



Suggested Citation: Kocher, Susan and Kim Ingram. 2021. *Forest Stewardship Education Initiative: First Year Accomplishment report, January to December 2020*. A report on progress of the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources program. Davis, CA. 7 pages.

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Save the Date!

Register now for a California Forest Stewardship Workshop

Online beginning November 3, 2020 – January 11, 2021, and in-person Saturday, November 21st, Mariposa County

Hosted by:
University of California Cooperative Extension

in collaboration with:
American Forest Foundation
CAL FIRE
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
California Fire Safe Council
Forest Landowners of California
USFS Region 5

Join the workshop to understand and protect your forests by developing a Forest Management Plan. Topics include:

- Forest management objectives and planning
- Forest health, insects and disease
- Forest and fire ecology, wildlife, watersheds
- Fuels reduction and forest resource marketing
- Mapping, inventory and silviculture
- Project development & permitting
- Getting professional help and cost-share opportunities

Participants will utilize online resources on their own time to complete learning modules and short activities. Zoom meetings with all participants and presenters will take place once a week on Mondays, 6-7:30pm. The in-person field day will cover silviculture, forest inventory and mapping activities. Participants who complete the workshop will be **eligible for a free site visit** with a California Registered Professional Forester.

Registration for the workshop is \$60. Sign up now at:
<http://ucanr.edu/forestryworkshops/>
 For questions, contact Kim Ingram, kcingram@ucanr.edu.



The Forest Stewardship Education Initiative is a CAL FIRE funded contract (8CA04547), awarded July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2021, to Susie Kocher, RPF#2874, University of California Cooperative Extension, to help landowners develop forest management plans.





About the Initiative:

The Forest Stewardship Education Initiative was developed based on a recommendation by the Forest Management Task Force's Forest Landowner Outreach and Education Working Group. CalFire contracted with Forestry Advisor Susie Kocher sdkocher@ucanr.edu (Registered Professional Forester #2874) to implement the pilot program from July 1st, 2019 to June 30th, 2021. Kim Ingram, kcingram@ucanr.edu, was hired as coordinator in November 2019 and workshops started in January 2020. For more information, see <http://ucanr.edu/forestryworkshops/>.

About UC ANR:

The University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources brings the power of UC to all 58 California counties. Through research and Cooperative Extension in agriculture, natural resources, nutrition, economic and youth development, our mission is to improve the lives of all Californians. Learn more at ucanr.edu. This project supports UC ANR's work to:

- Promote economic prosperity in California
- Protect California's natural resources
- Build climate-resilient communities and ecosystems

Workshop participant working one-on-one with a Registered Professional Forester



Workshop flyer