CA ad hoc Forest Biomass Working Group – eNewsletter 49/2021

CAL FIRE Business and Workforce Development Grant Program - Coming soon. CAL FIRE's Wood Products and Bioenergy team seeks to maintain and enhance the wood products infrastructure of California to promote healthy resilient forests throughout the state by supporting a diverse set of business development and workforce development projects. - *Eligible business development projects* include facilities, operations, and professional services that support the restoration of healthy, resilient forests. - *Eligible workforce development projects* include universities, colleges, government and community organizations, and businesses that aim to increase workforce capacity in the fields of logging, fuels treatment, transportation, manufacturing, or other support services that bolster the development of a resilient forest sector workforce. - *Research and development projects* related to both business and workforce development will also be considered. Proposal solicitation is expected in January 2022. Check the Wood Products and Bioenergy website for updates.

CAL FIRE announces availability of Funding for Projects that proactively address Fire Prevention and Forest Health. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) announced the availability of up to $240 million for Fire Prevention and Forest Health grant projects, and is soliciting applications for projects that prevent catastrophic wildfires, protect communities, and restore forests to healthy, functioning ecosystems while also sequestering carbon and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
CAL FIRE's *Fire Prevention Grants Program* seeks to award up to $120 million for local projects in and near fire threatened communities that focus on increasing the protection of people, structures, and communities. Qualified activities include hazardous fuels reduction, wildfire prevention planning and wildfire prevention education with an emphasis on improving public health and safety while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Due by 3:00 PM on February 9, 2022.
CAL FIRE's *Forest Health Grant Program* will award up to $120 million to landscape-level forest restoration projects that increase forest resilience to catastrophic disturbance. Eligible activities include forest fuels reduction, fire reintroduction, reforestation, and the utilization of forest biomass. Due by 3:00 PM on March 3, 2022.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Webinar. The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds plans and projects that reduce the effects of future natural disasters. In California, these funds are administered by the Cal OES HMGP Unit. Eligible sub-applicants include state agencies, local governments, special districts, and some private non-profits. For more information about this program please visit our HMGP webpage. Please join the Cal OES Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Team for an informational webinar on December 14, 2021 from 2PM to 3PM PST. During the webinar, they will address the following topics: Overview of the Notice of Funding Opportunity; Cal OES Funding Priorities; Sub-applicant and project eligibility; Notice of Interest (NOI) requirements; Sub-applicant elements; Application and funding timelines. To review the 2021 HMGP Notice of funding Opportunity, please follow this link: Cal OES 2021 HMGP NOFO.pdf. This opportunity provides funding for communities to implement mitigation activities to reduce risk to life and property from natural hazards. In CA, natural hazards include wildfire, earthquake, drought, extreme weather, flooding, and other impacts of climate change. HMGP funding can also support the development of Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP) and project scoping activities. The webinar will be conducted via Microsoft Teams. Click here to join the meeting. NOIs due to Cal OES via the Engage Cal OES Portal by December 31, 2021.

2022 Wood Innovations & Community Wood Grants. The USDA Forest Service Wood Innovations Grant and Community Wood Grant Programs are now accepting applications. These grants are designed to develop and expand the use of wood products and strengthen emerging wood energy markets that support sustainable forest management – particularly in areas of high wildfire risk. The *Wood Innovations Grant* Program stimulates and expands wood products and wood energy markets. Focus areas include mass timber, renewable wood energy, and technological development that supports fuel reduction and sustainable forest management. The *Community Wood Grant* Program provides funding to install thermally led community wood energy systems or to build innovative wood product manufacturing facilities. The program places extra emphasis on assisting sawmills in economically challenged areas to retool or add advanced technology.
A USFS Region 5-specific webinar was offered on Wednesday, November 17th. The recording is available here, the presentation slides are here. Potential applicants are recommended to review the webinar to meet Region 5 Wood and Biomass Specialists Larry Swan and Helena Murray. The application period for both programs closes on Wednesday, January 19, 2022.

Big Trees, tall Buildings: How Forests can help solve Global Warming through Carbon Storage. For the world to avoid ecological and social catastrophe, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 2018 issued a warning, that humans must quickly and radically transform the systems that provide energy - by ceasing to burn fossil fuels. Greenhouse gas emissions, the scientists said, must drop by half no later than 2030, and to zero by 2050. Three years later, in August 2021, the IPCC returned with what the UN's secretary general labeled "a code red for humanity." The wildfires, droughts, hurricanes, and brutal cold snaps of recent years were evidence that so much carbon dioxide is already cooking the atmosphere that further calamities are inevitable. In addition to phasing out fossil carbon, one of the remedies consistently mentioned by the IPCC is "natural carbon storage." The capture and storage of carbon through natural processes in the soil, wetlands, forests and wood products - followed by its monetization - began more than 20 years ago. Now, with corporate and organizational pledges of "net-zero" emissions growing by the week, groups are scrambling for ways to accomplish those goals. Natural carbon storage is part of the answer.