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# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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## Over 15,000 Acres in Mendocino County Protected

### Over 15,000 Acres in Mendocino Now County Protected Through Partnership

**Sacramento** – As part of CAL FIRE's Forest Legacy Program 15,620 acres are now protected from development under the Eel River Peninsula Conservation Project. Three separate properties Summer Camp Ranch, Garcia Creek Ranch, and Foster Mountain Ranch collectively make up the conservation easement. Landowners are encouraged to continue to manage their natural resources for sustainable timber production harvesting, hunting, fishing, grazing, and recreation.

Conditions of the easement require sustained yield forestry which allows more time for trees to grow before harvesting, maintenance of the habitat for wildlife, especially the Tule Elk and Pacific Fischer, and grazing plans that reduce flammable grasses while maintaining valuable grasslands.

These lands are home to the Tule Elk, which are found only in California, and their survival is paramount. They are the most specialized elk in North America and inhabit oak woodlands and grasslands. From an estimated historic population of 500 thousand, there were less than 50 by 1875. Today there are approximately 4,000 Tule Elk in 22 different herds.

Funding for this project was provided by and in partnership with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, CAL FIRE's Forest Legacy Program, and the Wildlife Conservation Board. The purchase of these working forest conservation easements was completed utilizing grant funding from the US Forest Service (\$7 million), the Wildlife Conservation Board (\$3.5 million) and a significant donation from the landowners.

CAL FIRE has many years of experience with managing working forests conservation easements under its Forest Legacy Program and with the latest acquisition has now protected more than 100,000 acres. Working forest conservation easements encourage active forest management, which can generate revenue needed to maintain intact forest tracts and prevent conversion to non-forest uses, increase growth, resilience, and health and protect wildlife while promoting carbon sequestration and mitigating climate change.

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#### Media Notes

Pictures of Summer Camp Ranch and Foster Mountain Ranch and of wildlife that live on these wildlands:  
<http://tinyurl.com/jnljtpb>