

# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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### **CAL FIRE ADDS NEW DEMONSTRATION STATE FOREST AND OVER 1,200 ACRES TO STATEWIDE TOTAL FOR RESEARCH, RESTORATION AND CONSERVATION**

(Sacramento) The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) announced today the addition of a new demonstration state forest and more than 1,200 acres to its demonstration state forest system. Acquisition of these areas continue to increase opportunities for forest restoration, critical research, and public recreation, and build upon the valuable role of California's demonstration state forest system to help answer critical questions about the important role that forest management serves in the era of climate change.

These two new areas consist of 1,151 acres of Sierra Nevada forestlands in the American River headwaters in Placer County and 120 acres adjacent to the community of Twin Peaks in San Bernardino County. The Placer County property is the second of a three-phase project with multiple partners to create a permanently protected 2,618-acre Demonstration State Forest (DSF) spanning the Upper American and Bear River watersheds in Placer and Nevada counties. The San Bernardino property has been transferred from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and will maintain the San Bernardino County Wildlife Corridor.

The new Placer County property was formerly owned by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and has been transferred to CAL FIRE through PG&E's Land Conservation Commitment in partnership with the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council. CAL FIRE will own and manage the property and the Placer Land Trust holds a conservation easement that prohibits subdivision, limits development, and maintains the scenic nature of the property.

This new procurement follows CAL FIRE's recent acquisition of 267 acres between the South Yuba River and Bear River below Lake Spaulding. The final phase of this three-phase project will be the addition of 1,200 acres near the Bear River. This is anticipated to be acquired from PG&E in early 2023.

"We're pleased to work with CAL FIRE and other partners to ensure that this beautiful forest – and the vast watershed it supports – is protected forever for public recreation, ecological health and climate resilience," says Jeff Darlington, Executive Director of the Placer Land Trust.

The new 120-acre property in San Bernardino County will be referred to as the Sawmill Demonstration State Forest. The Sawmill Property is included in the San Bernardino County Wildlife Corridor and provides important linkage to major drainages to the north and west. CAL FIRE will preserve a vegetated wildlife corridor to allow the movement of wildlife traveling through the property. The property contains various archaeological sites including a historic sawmill, from which the forest takes its name. As an area

of mixed conifer-oak and intermixed brush, as well as the inclusion of various archaeological sites, the addition of the Sawmill property is an important addition to the Demonstration State Forest System. The Sawmill DSF will provide new research, recreation, and demonstration opportunities in the San Bernardino mountains forest environment.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) who has managed the property since 2001, has several ongoing research projects on the Sawmill property, and these will continue after the transfer of jurisdiction to CAL FIRE. Research forms an important pillar of the Demonstration State Forest's purpose and CAL FIRE recognizes the value of CDFW continuing this work.

"The addition of Sawmill to the Demonstration State Forest system is an exciting opportunity. We are proud to have the southernmost demonstration forest located in the San Bernardino Unit, and we look forward to managing the property for public enjoyment, forest management education, and protection and enhancement of all resources provided by the forest ecosystem," said David Haas, Unit forester, CAL FIRE San Bernardino Unit.

Representing the most common forest types and serving as a living laboratory, CAL FIRE operates 12 Demonstration State Forests totaling over 73,500 acres. These forests provide research and demonstration opportunities for multiple benefits—recreation, watershed protection, wood products and sustainable timber production, and habitat restoration—given a changing climate and increasingly severe and intense wildfire seasons. The forests provide unique opportunities where environmental scientists, foresters, and other researchers can study the effects of various forest management and restoration techniques to help inform management practices for government, nonprofit and private forestland owners.

Common activities on state forest lands include evaluating sustainable timber harvesting techniques that test current Forest Practice Rules, watershed restoration, a variety of university research projects to help answer pressing forest management questions, and other activities such as cone collecting for seed, and recreation such as mushroom collecting, hunting, firewood gathering, horseback riding, camping, mountain biking, and hiking.

CAL FIRE will work collaboratively and closely with Placer Land Trust who holds the conservation easement on the Placer County property to ensure that the scenic, open space, forest, wildlife habitat, recreation, and historic and cultural values are protected forever. The properties will be stewarded for these multiple uses under a Forest Management Plan to be approved by the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection.

For more information about California's demonstration state forests, visit: [Demonstration State Forests \(ca.gov\)](https://www.dfs.ca.gov/forests/demonstration/)

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