

USFS LEGACY PROJECTS in CALIFORNIA

PROTECTING PRIVATE FOREST LANDS FROM CONVERSION TO NON-FOREST USES

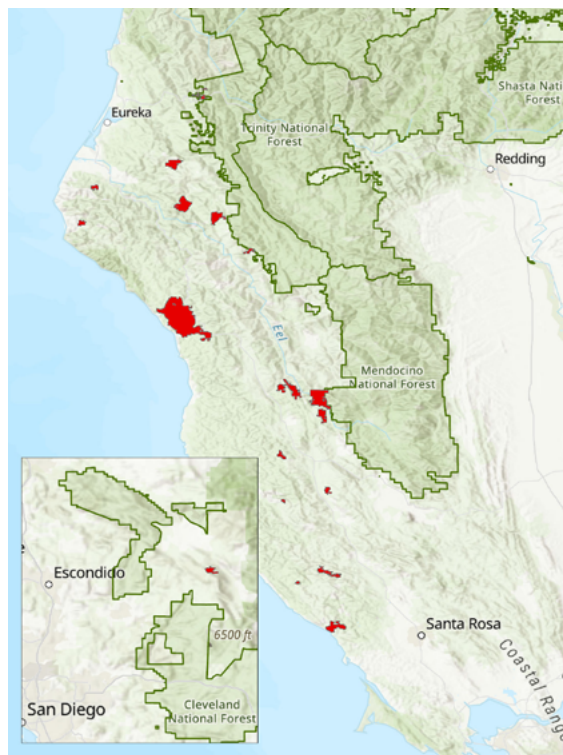
Rainbow Ridge CE
Photo by CAL FIRE

About Forest Legacy Program

Development of the nation's forested areas poses an increasing threat to maintaining the integrity of our country's valuable forest lands. Intact forest lands supply timber products, wildlife habitat, soil and watershed protection, aesthetics, and recreational opportunities. However, as these areas are fragmented and disappear, so do the benefits they provide. While local governments commonly guide development away from the most sensitive areas through traditional land use controls, sometimes these measures are not sufficient to fully protect the forested component of our natural resource base.

The Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978, as amended in 1990, recognizes that the majority of the Nation's productive forest lands are in private ownership; that private landowners are facing increased pressure to convert their forest lands to other uses; that greater population density, user demands and restrictions on Federal and other public lands are placing increased pressures on private lands to provide a wide variety of products and services from working forests including timber and other forest commodities, fish and wildlife habitat, watershed function and water supply, aesthetic qualities, historical and cultural resources, and recreational opportunities; and that good stewardship of privately held forest lands requires a long-term commitment that can be fostered through a partnership of Federal, State, local government and individual efforts.

- The purpose of the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) is to protect environmentally important forestland threatened with conversion to non-forest uses, such as subdivision for residential or commercial development. Protecting forests will ensure California's forests continue to be a significant carbon storage "sink" by avoiding conversion to non-forest uses that will result in GHG emissions rather than carbon sequestration.
- To help maintain the integrity and traditional uses of private forestlands, the FLP promotes the use of permanent conservation easements. These easements provide a new approach, a new tool, with which the federal government, in cooperation with state and local agencies, private organizations, and individuals can preserve the rich heritage of private forests.
- The program is entirely voluntary. Landowners who wish to participate may sell or transfer particular rights, such as the right to develop the property or to allow public access, while retaining ownership of the property and the right to use it in any way consistent with the terms of the easement. Forest management activities, including timber harvesting, hunting, fishing and hiking are encouraged provided they are consistent with the program's purpose.



More information can be found at the following websites:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml>

http://calfire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_forestryassistance_legacy

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Dana Walsh

California Forest Legacy and Stewardship Program
Manager USDA Forest Service
Pacific Southwest Region, State & Private Forestry
Ph: 530-450-5555 | dana.walsh@usda.gov

