

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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Final Land Acquisition Brings Total to 85,135 Acres for Research, Demonstration, and Public Recreation Benefits

Sacramento – The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) announced today the completion of State Demonstration Forest Lands acquisition from the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). The 6,982-acre Pit Tunnel (Big Bend) property, located in Shasta County, was the final property transferred to CAL FIRE in late February, 2023.

In total, PG&E has donated 14,948 acres of forestland across seven properties to CAL FIRE through the [Pacific Watershed Stewardship Council](#). This brings the [State Demonstration Forest \(DSF\) system](#) to 85,135 total acres across 14 forests. The Pit Tunnel property will become the third largest DSF behind Jackson (48,652 acres) in Mendocino County and LaTour (9,033 acres) in Shasta County.

“CAL FIRE is pleased to successfully conclude the acquisitions of demonstration state forest lands from PG&E,” said Matthew Reischman, CAL FIRE Deputy Director of Resource Management. “These new lands cover a diverse range of forest types and environments, and CAL FIRE is excited by the research, demonstration, and public recreation opportunities that these new properties provide.”

CAL FIRE will own and manage the Pit Tunnel property in partnership with the [Shasta Land Trust](#), who holds a conservation easement to conserve the land in perpetuity for sustainable forestry, natural resource protection, outdoor recreation, open space conservation, and the protection of historic and cultural resources.

“The Shasta Land Trust is happy to partner with CAL FIRE on this exciting project for our community,” said Paul Vienneau, Executive Director of the Shasta Land Trust. “Utilizing our local lands as demonstration forests to better understand how to interact with these properties long into the future has benefits that will last for generations to come. As a local land trust focused on protecting these vital resources, we are ready to play our part.”

The addition of nearly 15,000 acres to the CAL FIRE demonstration state forest system is another exciting chapter in California state forest stewardship. The original properties that started the state forest system were first acquired nearly a century ago as clear-cut forests. Since then, CAL FIRE has successfully demonstrated how to re-generate forests, restore habitat, and provide for public recreation, among many other values. These forests provide unique opportunities to research topics like forest health, conservation and restoration, and climate and fire resiliency.

The DSF serve as a living laboratory for research and demonstration projects— an increasingly important function given a changing climate and increasingly severe and intense wildfire seasons. Environmental scientists, foresters, and other researchers 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.

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

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