

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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New vision for the Jackson Demonstration State Forest prioritizes tribal co-management, cultural resource stewardship and restoration ecology

(**Mendocino County, CA**) Following months of collaborative discussions and consultations with community members, tribal leaders, conservation organizations and forest operators, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) released a new vision this week outlining how the Jackson Demonstration State Forest will be managed in the age of climate change. The document is available on our [website](#).

Shared as a series of action steps—some already taken, with others to be incorporated by the Jackson Advisory Group into future management plans—the vision grounds the Jackson Demonstration State Forest in a foundation of science and equity.

One of the most prominent additions included in the future vision: introducing a new forest co-management concept with sovereign tribal nations that regard the area in Mendocino County as their ancestral home.

The vision also includes guiding principles to inform an updated management plan. Other key items include CAL FIRE and California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) leaders devoting an added \$10 million to support forest operations, aiming to remove any potential pressure on timber harvests to cover costs. Several new seats have been added to the Jackson Advisory Group, including a tribal member and a redwood scientist, and CAL FIRE requested an update to the Jackson Management Plan four years early. Specifically, these additions include:

- Updating the 10-year Jackson Management Plan to focus on climate science and research, restoration ecology and economies, and further exploration of the multiple benefits of restoring redwood forests;
- Expanding the Jackson Advisory Group to incorporate a breadth of expertise and experiences as the group advises CAL FIRE on JDSF management issues;
- Establishing a Tribal Advisory Council and dedicating percentages of revenue generated from the forest for tribal priorities, among other activities to come from co-management agreements;
- Dedicating \$10 million in General Fund dollars to cover administrative and management costs, thus alleviating revenue pressures on the forest while seeking permanent funding for implementing the new vision;
- Revising operations so that current timber plans focus on smaller trees and halting removal of trees over 48 inches in diameter, including permanent protection of large, specified trees for enhancing future carbon sequestration and prioritizing forest management that demonstrates climate resiliency outcomes and large, complex forest conditions.
- Continuing efforts to prioritize communication and public engagement efforts throughout this work.

“We are proud to share this new vision for the future of the Jackson Demonstration State Forest, one that reflects the many different perspectives that cherish the forest as we do,” said Deputy Director of Resource Management, Matthew Reischman. “We’ve arrived here because of the commitment of many to come to the table and find solutions with us on critically important forest management issues. We are proud that months of tough discussions have come together for a historic path forward for forest management in California—and a vision that both aims to fulfill previous commitments while launching new opportunity.”

CAL FIRE and CNRA’s new vision was released at the Jackson Advisory Group regular meeting today, where it was shared in a public forum. The Jackson Advisory Group represents a broad spectrum of natural resource, community, tribal and conservation stakeholders and serves as the advisory body for reviewing management activities for the forest.

“This has been a long and thorough process focused on the first steps of modernizing the Demonstration Forest model. We couldn’t be more grateful to the Tribal leaders who have been front and center with the conversations, the community around Jackson Forest, CAL FIRE, and the California Natural Resources Agency for all of the incredible time and effort they have put into this endeavor,” Senator Mike McGuire said. “Obviously there is much more work ahead with the advancement of the master plan, but I believe this is an excellent start. Refocusing Jackson to be a place of research on the climate crisis and wildfire resiliency is crucial to so many of us on the North Coast and around the state.”

As operational details are further developed for implementation, staff will continue work on previous contractual commitments for the remainder of the year with the actions listed above incorporated immediately into these operations. This includes ongoing government-to-government consultations with tribal partners and regular public updates to the JAG and others.

“The Nature Conservancy supports this new vision bringing tribal expertise and critical scientific questions to the center of Jackson’s management actions in partnership with CAL FIRE. This new vision will help modernize the management of the Jackson State Forest and inform environmentally sustainable forestry practices in the age of climate change,” said Jay Ziegler, Director of External Affairs and Policy, The Nature Conservancy .

“Save the Redwoods League is honored to join the Jackson Advisory Group and help shape the future management of this important coast redwood forest,” said Sam Hodder, President and Chief Executive Officer for Save the Redwoods League. “The Jackson Demonstration Forest is a living laboratory that will help us answer critical questions about how best to restore California’s coastal redwood forests to be a source of resilience and carbon sequestration and biodiversity in an era of climate disruption. We are excited to partner with CAL FIRE, Indigenous, Tribal, and Native people, and conservation partners in shaping future management activities to promote sustainable restoration and recreation management that can be applied across the entire coast redwood geography.”

CAL FIRE’s nine demonstration state forests, including the Jackson, serve as a living laboratory for how to care for and manage California’s forest lands for multiple benefits, including ecological and watershed protection, wood products and timber production, recreation, and habitat restoration. The Jackson Forest provides unique research and demonstration opportunities in a coastal redwood forest where environmental scientists, foresters, and other researchers can study the effects of various forest management and restoration techniques. Potential Elder Tree (PET) retention, road abandonment for improved instream fisheries habitat, forest thinning to increase forest resilience to fire, and regeneration studies are a few examples of research practices underway at Jackson Demonstration State Forest.

- For more information about the Jackson Demonstration State Forest, visit: [Jackson \(ca.gov\)](https://www.ca.gov/jackson)
- For more information about California’s demonstration state forests, visit: [Demonstration State Forests \(ca.gov\)](https://www.ca.gov/demonstration-state-forests)