

**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION****NORTHERN REGION HEADQUARTERS**

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## **CALIFORNIA FOREST IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FACT SHEET**

**What is the California Forest Improvement Program?** The California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) is a State cost-share program aimed at improving the economic value and environmental quality of forest lands. CFIP projects help sustain forest and wildlife resources to meet our future needs for a healthy environment and productive forests. Qualified landowners can generally be reimbursed up to 75 percent of their expenses for tree planting, thinning, release, fuels management, erosion control, and fish and wildlife habitat improvement projects. Ninety percent cost share rates may apply for projects on land damaged by wild fires, diseases, insects, wind, floods, landslides or earthquakes during the last ten years.

### **What kind of projects are funded by CFIP?**

- Preparation of a Management Plan and project supervision by a Registered Professional Forester
- Site preparation, tree planting, and follow-up activities, such as adding browse guards, to enhance tree survival and growth
- Tree thinning, release, and pruning
- Fuels management and slash disposal work, if located more than 100 feet from dwellings
- Erosion control, including revegetation, road rehabilitation, and installation of structures such as waterbars, rock crossings, or check dams, to reduce soil erosion and stream sedimentation
- Fish and wildlife habitat improvement, including planting native oaks or riparian species, installing exclusion fencing around watercourses and wetlands, and stream restoration projects.

The minimum project size for tree planting, thin/release/pruning, or fuels management work is five acres. The five-acre limitation does not apply to erosion control or fish and wildlife habitat improvement projects. Any work required under the Forest Practice Act is not eligible for CFIP funding. Planting or thinning of trees for use as Christmas trees, greenery or fire wood is also not eligible.

**What are the minimum qualifications?** The property must contain at least 20, but not more than 5,000 acres of forest land, and the property zoning must allow forest management activities to occur. Forest land is defined as areas having at least ten percent tree cover, or suitable land where native tree species will be planted.

### **How do I apply for funding?**

- 1) Contact your local CAL FIRE forester to discuss funding availability, obtain application forms and a list of local consulting foresters, and schedule a site inspection.
- 2) Additional paperwork, including a Project Description and Map, Payee Data Record, Environmental (CEQA) Checklist, and an Archeological Report will be prepared by you, your forester, or CAL FIRE. Project approval generally takes approximately one month after all contract paperwork has been submitted to Sacramento.
- 3) When you receive an approval letter and signed contract, work on your project can begin.

### **How do I apply for reimbursement?**

- 1) You must make the initial payment for all labor and materials for your project. Call your CAL FIRE forester to schedule a completion inspection when work on the project is finished.
- 2) Submit copies of receipts, invoices, or cancelled checks with your signed CFIP Invoice form. If you did some of the labor yourself you must also submit a record, such as the CFIP Participants' Cost Accounting Worksheet, of the work you performed..
- 3) You can expect to receive your payment approximately two months after the CAL FIRE forester submits your billing to Sacramento.

### **What else do I need to know?**

- Environmental review of your project must include providing project notifications to local agency and tribal representatives.
- You will receive a 1099R form for the tax year(s) in which you receive a CFIP reimbursement payment.
- CFIP contracts are in effect for up to three years.
- CFIP project work must be maintained at least ten years.