



Stanislaus National Forest

Forest Service News Release

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Calaveras County, Stanislaus National Forest Sign Good Neighbor Agreement

SAN ANDREAS, Calif. — Members of the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors approved a Good Neighbor Agreement (GNA) with the Stanislaus National Forest's Calaveras Ranger District during a regular meeting of the body, May 17, 2022. The agreement paves the way for the two organizations to begin increased efforts removing hazardous trees from roadways and implementing strategic fuel breaks in the county and has the ability to last for up to 10 years.

"This agreement will help expand forest service capacity," said Calaveras Ranger District Resource Management Staff officer, Carinna Robertson. "We all want to protect our communities from catastrophic wildfire, and this is a way to get hazardous fuels reduction work done at a faster rate (i.e. increase pace and scale). This enables the FS and Calaveras County to work with different partners, increase pace and scale, and increases collaboration where everyone's voice is heard."

One of several tools available to the Forest Service, the Good Neighbor Agreement is limited to State, Local and Tribal governments. Its use is restricted to areas of forest and watershed restoration, hazardous fuels reduction, fish and wildlife habitat improvement, and treating insect or disease infected trees. Unlike other agreements used by the Forest Service, the Good Neighbor Agreement does not have a financial match obligation.

Robertson said with the Board of Supervisors approval, the agreement now goes to the Forest Service's Grant and Agreements Division for final review and signatures with work to begin in the near future. Already two projects have been outlined: removal of hazardous trees along county roads and implementation of the McKay's Strategic Fuelbreak.

"We need to find faster and more efficient ways to get work done on the ground," Robertson said. "We have so many interested parties (i.e. stakeholders, communities, and other groups/individuals) that want to help, they just don't know exactly how. With Calaveras County stepping up to help seek grant funding and work with existing and new partners this enables us to work across boundaries to see fuels reduction treatments happen at a much faster rate."

The Forest Service manages 18 National Forests in the Pacific Southwest Region, which encompasses over 20 million acres across California, and assists State and Private forest landowners in California, Hawaii and the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands. National forests supply

50 percent of the water in California and form the watershed of most major aqueducts and more than 2,400 reservoirs throughout the state. For more information, visit www.fs.usda.gov/R5.

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