

CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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CAL FIRE Provides Funds to Increase Pace and Scale of Dead Tree Removal Projects in High-Priority Counties

SACRAMENTO – Six million dollars have been awarded in a one-time grant to aid high-priority counties impacted by California’s historic tree mortality. CAL FIRE’s Local Assistance for Tree Mortality (LATM) Grant Program will provide the matching funds for counties to be able to tap into the California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) administered by the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The CAL FIRE LATM Grant Program will work cooperatively with the Cal OES CDAA program to increase reimbursement to high-priority counties to remove or fell dead and dying trees threatening public infrastructures, such as roads and buildings.

To help with the evaluation, identification, removal and disposal of dead trees threatening the public rights-of-ways and infrastructure CAL FIRE, authorized under the Legislature (SB 108), will allocate \$300,000 to each of the ten high-priority counties (Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Madera, Mariposa, Placer, Tulare, and Tuolumne). The remaining three million dollars of the LATM grant will be distributed proportionately to the estimated number of dead trees in each county based on April 2017 data. Each county will report on their progress monthly and work through Cal OES and CAL FIRE for reimbursement.

“CAL FIRE’s Local Assistance for Tree Mortality program opens up a number of opportunities for not only Madera County but the other nine high-priority counties,” said Supervisor Tom Wheeler of Madera County. “We have been trying to find creative ways to deal with tree mortality issues on a local level but funding has truly been a restraint. By contributing the match for CDAA funds, each of the counties is able to move forward with a number of priority projects that help to keep the public safe.”

Between 2010 and 2018, 129 million trees have died in California due to a combination of drought-stress and bark beetle infestation. Since 2015, over 1 million of these trees have been removed or felled in high-priority counties through the coordinated efforts of the Tree Mortality Task Force. The goal of the LATM Grant Program is to increase the number of trees removed or felled by increasing the pace and scale of tree mortality projects in high-priority counties. Each

tree removal project will need to meet the requirements of CDAA and be consistent with the local CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plan.

“Response to tree mortality has been a high-priority for CAL FIRE, our partner agencies and for each of the counties,” said Rick Carr, Southern Region Staff Chief of Resource Management, “This grant opportunity will help intensify tree removal projects having a substantial impact in removing hazardous trees. Not only will the counties be able to decrease the risk of trees falling on critical infrastructure, homes and possibly people, but it also creates a safer area for firefighters when responding to a wildfire.”

To learn more about tree mortality visit the [Tree Mortality Task Force](#) website or visit [ReadyForWildfire.org](#) to get more information on how to prepare for your property against bark beetles and how to create healthier forests.

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Media Notes:

[CAL FIRE Tree Mortality and Tree Removal Project Pictures](#)

[CAL FIRE Tree Removal Video](#)