

RCPP Crisis to Opportunity: Tree Mortality in the Central Sierra

A New Opportunity for Private Non-Industrial Forest Landowners

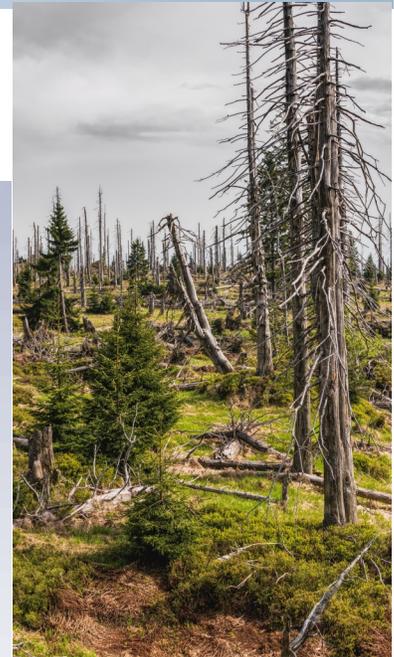
The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are partnering to bring a new assistance program to forest land owners in the Central Sierra dealing with bark beetle tree mortality. The tree mortality crisis has created an undue burden on land owners and communities in the Central Sierra. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program Crisis to Opportunity: Tree mortality in the Central Sierra is a response to this crisis.

Local Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) in partnership with NRCS field offices, can provide technical assistance to forest landowners with beetle kill trees on their land. This assistance will produce forest management/conservation plans at no or low cost to landowners. The conservation plans will include practices aimed at hazard tree removal, fuel reduction, forest stand improvement, and reforestation where appropriate. Eligible forest conservation plans will be submitted to the RCPP Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for ranking by NRCS. Selected plans will have the option to enter into a contract with NRCS for conservation practice incentive payments. These payments average about 50% of the cost of each conservation practice. The program is designed to encourage forest management and provide some support for landowners acting to protect their forest resource.

Work Within the 100-foot Defensible Space

This program recognizes that the high cost of removing hazard trees and the overwhelming need to take action on private lands can prevent necessary management from occurring. Allowing work to be performed within the defensible space on non-industrial private forest land is a key piece of supporting the health and safety of the Central Sierra's forested communities. It is crucial to note, the high cost of tree removal and treatment near structures. While the EQIP payments cover a portion of the cost, the total removal cost per tree within the 100-foot zone may be more than \$1000 per tree

Non-industrial private forest landowners in the 10 county High Hazard Tree Mortality Zone (Placer, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kern) with at least one beetle-kill conifer on their property are eligible for RCPP services.



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- For technical assistance to private forest landowners contact your local Resource Conservation District and NRCS field office
- Technical assistance provided by the RCD will help you understand the condition of your forested lands, assess your management goals, present options, and culminate in a Forest Management or Forest Conservation Plans
- Landowners may be eligible for incentive payments through the NRCS EQIP Sierra Tree Mortality RCPP fund pool
- Payments are intended to incentivize management, and are not designed to cover the entire cost of work
- Find the RCD near you at CARCD.org

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