



PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CAL FIRE and Pacific Forest Trust Announce Major Forest Health Project in Siskiyou County

Project Will Help Reduce Risk from Wildfire for Cities of Weed and Mt. Shasta

San Francisco, CA (August 17, 2017) – CAL FIRE announced a \$4,072,000 California Climate Investment grant award to Pacific Forest Trust (PFT) for its multi-partner forest health and conservation project that will reduce the likelihood and intensity of fire spreading across the iconic Black Butte and Mount Shasta forests, reducing threats to the communities of Weed and Mount Shasta. Working with the family-owned Michigan-California Timber Company, PFT's *Mt. Shasta Headwaters Forest Health and Resilience Project* will prevent development on the privately-owned Black Butte property, extend a major firebreak, thin hundreds of acres of young pine plantations, and establish permanent requirements to restore and sustain a more diverse, resilient forest.

The project's benefits, including higher levels of carbon sequestration and more fire-resilient forests, will be secured by a permanent working forest conservation easement funded through CAL FIRE's Forest Legacy Program and granted to Pacific Forest Trust on Michigan-California's 5,000-acre Black Butte property. The project will allow this large forest tract, highly visible along Interstate 5, to remain available forever for sustainable timber production and outdoor recreation.

The California Climate Investment Program reinvests the revenue generated by the state's cap and trade program to reduce climate pollution through a variety of projects that reduce greenhouse gases and help California prepare for climate change. Protecting healthy, resilient forests is a key tool in mitigating climate change.

"Investments in forest health are even more critical now because of climate change," said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE director. "California continues to invest millions of dollars into protecting working forest lands which will help increase carbon sequestration and have the added benefit of helping protect our state's vital watersheds."

"Conserving our Black Butte forestland in partnership with Pacific Forest Trust and CAL FIRE will help our company achieve its long term vision of environmental stewardship while sustainably providing timber for our nearby manufacturing facilities," Joe Gonyea III, the managing partner of the Michigan-California Timber Company said.

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“We can’t solve our climate crisis without the aid of healthy forests. We are extremely grateful for the support and recognition this CAL FIRE grant provides for this critical first phase of the *Mt. Shasta Headwaters Forest Health and Resilience Project*,” said Connie Best, Co-CEO of Pacific Forest Trust.

Fuel reduction activities are expected to begin as soon as possible while PFT continues to raise sufficient funds to acquire the conservation easement in 2018. Future phases of the project include additional thinning and forest health treatments of adjacent plantations on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest, and potentially the use of prescribed fire to further reduce fuels and restore forest health on the flanks of Mount Shasta.

The project is a collaboration among [CAL FIRE](#), [the Pacific Forest Trust](#), [Michigan-California Timber Company](#), and the [Shasta-Trinity National Forest](#). More information about the project is available at <https://www.pacificforest.org/conserving-forest-blackbutte/>.

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About Pacific Forest Trust

Since 1993, the Pacific Forest Trust has been dedicated to conserving and sustaining America’s vital, productive forest landscapes. Working with forest owners, communities, and an array of partners, we advance innovative, incentive-based strategies to safeguard our nation’s diverse forests. In so doing, we’re ensuring forests continue to provide people everywhere—from rural communities to urban centers—with a wealth of benefits, including clean water, sustainably harvested wood, green jobs, wildlife habitat, and a livable climate.

<http://www.pacificforest.org/>