



California Forestry Association

1215 K Street, Suite 1830
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 444-6592 fax (916) 444-0170
www.foresthealth.org cfa@foresthealth.org

NEWS ADVISORY FOR REPORTERS & EDITORS

For Immediate Release: August 23, 2010

Media Contact: Bob Mion
916-444-6592, bobmion@foresthealth.org

California Forestry Association Warns Wildfire Threat Rises as Fuels Accumulate

Millions of forested acres, homes stand at high risk; experts available for comment

Sacramento, CA -- California's forestlands stand choked with unprecedented fuel loads that pose significant danger to communities, homes, wildlife and firefighters. A wet winter has combined with decreased harvest activity to create dangerous conditions on many of California's forestlands.

Issues: Approximately 10 million acres and more than 3 million homes in California face high risk of severe wildfire.

Timber harvest on public lands has decreased 90 percent since 1990, the same timeframe in which firefighting costs have skyrocketed as fuels have accumulated. Taxpayers spend \$1 billion annually to fight wildfire in California and next to nothing to reduce forest fuels.

A lack of management on public lands, 100 years of aggressive fire-suppression policies and decades of restricted harvest have allowed uncharacteristic fuel loads to accumulate. High-intensity wildfire is on the rise in California, with 2007 and 2008 experiencing increases in severe wildfire of more than 300 percent over the previous 5-year average.

USDA Forest Service research shows that thinning forests can reduce wildfire severity by up to 60 percent and reduce greenhouse gas emissions up to 65 percent.

For every tree growing in Southern California forests, three are dying. Roughly 2 million acres have been decimated by bark beetle attacks.

Inquiries: The California Forestry Association is available to statewide news media as a key source of objective information, credible scientific data, and as a conduit for contacting respected authorities. Contact the California Forestry Association at 1215 K Street, Suite 1830, Sacramento, CA 95814 | 916-444-6592 | www.foresthealth.org.

Details: Visit <http://www.foresthealth.org/Media.html> for information on solutions to California's wildfire crisis, key statistics and expert commentary on forestry and wildfire issues.

###

CFA is committed to keeping the public informed on issues surrounding efforts to keep California forests healthy, sustainable and well-managed for water, wildlife, the economy and carbon benefit.