



California Forestry Association

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California Wildfire Season 2010: Data, Trends and Commentary

Number of California acres burned, 2009	411,631
Avg. number of Calif. acres burned, 2005 - 2009	757,000
Avg. annual cost to fight Calif. wildfires, 2005 - 2009	\$1 billion
Number of Calif. acres at high risk of severe wildfire	10 million
Number of Calif. homes at risk of wildfire	3.2 million
Firefighter lives lost due to wildfire, 2005-2009	20
Tons of greenhouse gas emissions (CO2 equiv) from wildfire, 2001 - 2008	142 million
Number of cars operating for a year that generate equivalent emissions from wildfire, 2001 - 2008	30 million
Percent reduction in carbon emissions from wildfire attainable from sustainable forest thinning	65
Potential percent increase in carbon sequestration capacity, managed versus unmanaged forests	400
Trees per acre, Sierra Nevada forests, Gold Rush era	50 - 70
Trees per acre, Sierra Nevada forests, 2010	400
Rate at which Southern Calif. forests are dying compared to growing	3:1
Acres of Calif. forestland decimated by beetle attacks	2 million
Percent decrease in harvest from Calif. public forestland, 1990 - 2009	90
Percent of California sawmills closed since 1990	70
Percent of wood used in Calif. that is imported	80
Percent of annual Calif. forest growth that is harvested	26
Number of direct jobs that could be created by returning harvest to half of 1990 levels	3,000
Ratio of jobs created per investment dollar, forestry infrastructure v. road and bridge repair	2:1

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“Until we address the uncharacteristic fuel loads we have allowed to accumulate on California’s public forestlands, we can expect increases in catastrophic wildfire and firefighting costs.”

David A. Bischel, president
California Forestry Association

“Harvest on public forestlands is down 90 percent over the last 25 years, the same timeframe in which firefighting costs have skyrocketed.”

William Stewart, Ph.D.,
UC-Berkeley forestry specialist

“Thinning forests can reduce wildfire severity by up to 60 percent and remove up to 400 percent more carbon from the air than leaving forests alone.”

Robert F. Powers, Ph.D.,
Retired USDA Forest Service researcher

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