



October 18, 2019

Nancy Vogel  
Director, Governor's Water Portfolio Program  
California Natural Resources Agency  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: California Forest Watershed Alliance Comments on the Water Resilience Portfolio**

Dear Ms. Vogel,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Water Resilience Portfolio. Founded in 2014, the California Forest Watershed Alliance (CAFWA) was formed to advocate for increasing the pace and scale of ecologically sound forest restoration practices that can help reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and promote healthier, more resilient forests across California. CAFWA is a nonpartisan, urban-rural coalition representing water interests, local governments, the conservation community, agriculture, and the forestry sector.

CAFWA's unique partnership joins diverse constituencies to seek new solutions to promote proactive, science-based, and ecologically sound forest management practices that will reduce the risk of uncharacteristic, destructive megafires. CAFWA's policy recommendations emphasize the importance of healthy forests by highlighting the multiple values that they provide, particularly with respect to watershed health and water supply. CAFWA's state-level recommendations include:

- A comprehensive, "all lands" approach to improving forest health covering large landscapes and all ownerships within California, including local, state, private and federal lands.
- Increasing the pace and scale of ecologically-based active forest management and prescribed fire.
- Supporting policies that increase the economic feasibility of forest restoration through biomass and new innovative wood products.



*The California Forest Watershed Alliance (CAFWA) is an urban-rural coalition representing water interests, local governments, the conservation community, agriculture, and the forestry sector, created to promote the restoration and improvement of California's forested watersheds. For more information, visit [www.caforestsandwatersheds.org](http://www.caforestsandwatersheds.org).*

- Encouraging the use of watershed scale planning and project implementation.
- Encouraging the use of state funding and personnel to accelerate forest restoration on all lands in California, including federal lands.
- Increasing funding and identifying new funding sources for forest restoration from federal, state, local, and private sources.

Immediate action is needed to reduce the wildfire threats to California's watersheds, water supply, and the communities that depend on them, and create healthy, resilient forests. California's Water Resilience Portfolio should recognize the critical role that healthy watersheds play in safeguarding California's water supply and the risk to water quality and quantity posed by overstocked forests and high-severity wildfire. The California Natural Resources Agency, through the Water Resilience Portfolio, should undertake and enable forest restoration in upper watersheds, assess the state of current research on headwaters and headwaters management, and identify opportunities to increase the pace and scale of upper watershed restoration through a variety of approaches including public and private funding, collaboration and partnership, and improving the efficiency of regulations and policies. Forest restoration should include ecological forestry that improves forest resilience and reduces the risk of large, high severity fires that threaten water quality and water infrastructure. By improving forest management and increasing the pace and scale of on-the-ground projects, California's headwaters can provide greater and longer-lasting benefits to the State's water system.

We look forward to reviewing the first draft of the water resilience portfolio and are committed to continue to work with you on policy and funding solutions that will protect our forests and communities from high-severity wildfire and promote healthier, more resilient watersheds throughout the state.

Sincerely,



Justin Caporusso, Vice President of External Affairs  
Rural County Representatives of California



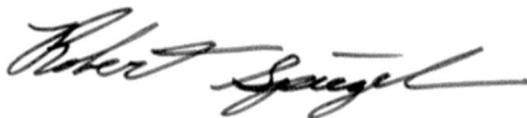
David Edelson, Forest Program Director  
The Nature Conservancy



Rich Gordon, President  
California Forestry Association



Dave Eggerton, Executive Director  
Association of California Water Agencies



Robert Spiegel, Governmental Affairs Advocate  
California Farm Bureau Federation