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Diverse voices respond to increased tree mortality

Rural counties, farm, forest, water and conservation interests

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Today, the U.S. Forest Service announced that tree mortality in California has killed 129 million trees, up 27 million from this time last year. In response to the increased tree mortality numbers, the California Forest Watershed Alliance released the following statement:

“These growing tree mortality numbers are not a surprise given the current state of California’s public forestlands. They are however devastating to the landscape, threatening public resources and local communities. This ongoing epidemic underscores the importance of ecologically based forest management activities in protecting our communities and public resources,” said Justin Caporusso, chair of the California Forest Watershed Alliance.

“As a diverse group of voices, we’ve come together because we see the immediate need to solve our current forest health crisis for the benefit of all California residents.”

“As California works to adapt to rising temperatures and prolonged drought, we must be ready to address how our most precious resources are managed, so we can continue to enjoy clean air and water, abundant wildlife habitat, recreation and sustainable wood products.”

“As a group that represents rural counties, farmland, forestlands, water interests and conservation, we’re advocating at both the state and federal level to:

- Increase the pace and scale of ecologically based thinning to improve the health of our forests, reduce wildfire risk and protect water supplies;
- Find a fix to the fire-borrowing issue that will restore funding for proactive management, reforestation and restoration activities; and,
- Advance projects and partnerships that improve forest health on a landscape level.”

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 caforestsandwatersheds.org.

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