



March 1, 2019

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor, State of California  
State Capitol, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Addressing California's Forest Health, Wildfires, and Public Safety**

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the California Forest Watershed Alliance (CAFWA), we are writing to express our support for the significant investment in forest health, fire prevention, and fuels reduction provided by your 2019-2020 Budget Proposal, and the call for action to mitigate wildfires in your Executive Order N-05-19.

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 diverse interests and active work on landscape scale forest resilience projects provide a path for improving the health of California's forests.

We greatly appreciate your effort to address some of the underlying issues that have led to the megafires the state has experienced in recent years. We believe your actions in the first few days of your Administration are an important step to mitigate California's wildfire risk and to reverse decades of forest mismanagement and fire suppression efforts. CAFWA strongly supports the \$200 million in the Budget to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). Priority should be given to forest resilience and fuels reduction projects that utilize a comprehensive, "all lands" approach covering large landscapes and all ownerships within California, including local, state, private, and federal lands. Priority should also be given to community preparedness, including grants for vegetation management and creation of defensible space around homes within forest communities.

We look forward to working with your Administration on policy and funding solutions that will protect our forests and communities from high-severity wildfire and promote healthier, more resilient forests throughout the state.

Sincerely,

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

Robert Spiegel, Governmental Affairs Advocate  
California Farm Bureau Federation

David Edelson, Forest Program Director  
The Nature Conservancy

Rich Gordon, President  
California Forestry Association

Dave Eggerton, Executive Director  
Association of California Water Agencies