



FOREST & FIRE FACTS

Looking to the Source: Watersheds of the Sierra Nevada

Sierra Nevada forests provide up to 50% of California's annual timber yield.

Sustainable managed forests provide important habitat, help clean our air and water, and aid in the natural storage of water by protecting the snowpack.

Sierra Nevada forests remove and store carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere providing a net carbon sink of 5 million metric tons of CO₂ per year.

An acre of Sierra Nevada forest removes more CO₂ from the atmosphere than an acre of Amazon rainforest.

Fires within the Sierra Nevada have consumed approximately 2.2 million acres between 1999 and 2008.

Wildfire frequency in the Sierra Nevada increased 4-fold between 1988 and 2003: 6 ½ times more land was burned, the fire season increased an average of 78 days, and average fire duration increased from 7.8 to 37 days compared to the number of days in the preceding 16 years.

There are at least 84,000 acres of scorched public land in the Sierra Nevada in need of restoration.

Over 43% of the total acres within the Sierra Nevada Region have a very high or extreme fire hazard rating.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of people living in *very high or extreme* fire hazard areas of the Sierra Nevada grew by 16% .

94% of the land slated for rural residential development in the Sierra Nevada is classified by CAL FIRE as *very high or extreme* fire hazard.

Natural wildfires have historically been a vital component of healthy ecosystems in the Sierra Nevada, but historic timber practices and decades of fire suppression have led to overgrown and unhealthy forests in many parts of the region, which are much more susceptible to catastrophic wildfire. Catastrophic wildfires release tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere .

Overabundant fuels or “biomass” can be removed from forests and used to create value added wood products or to produce renewable, clean energy. Utilizing biomass from our forests creates green jobs.