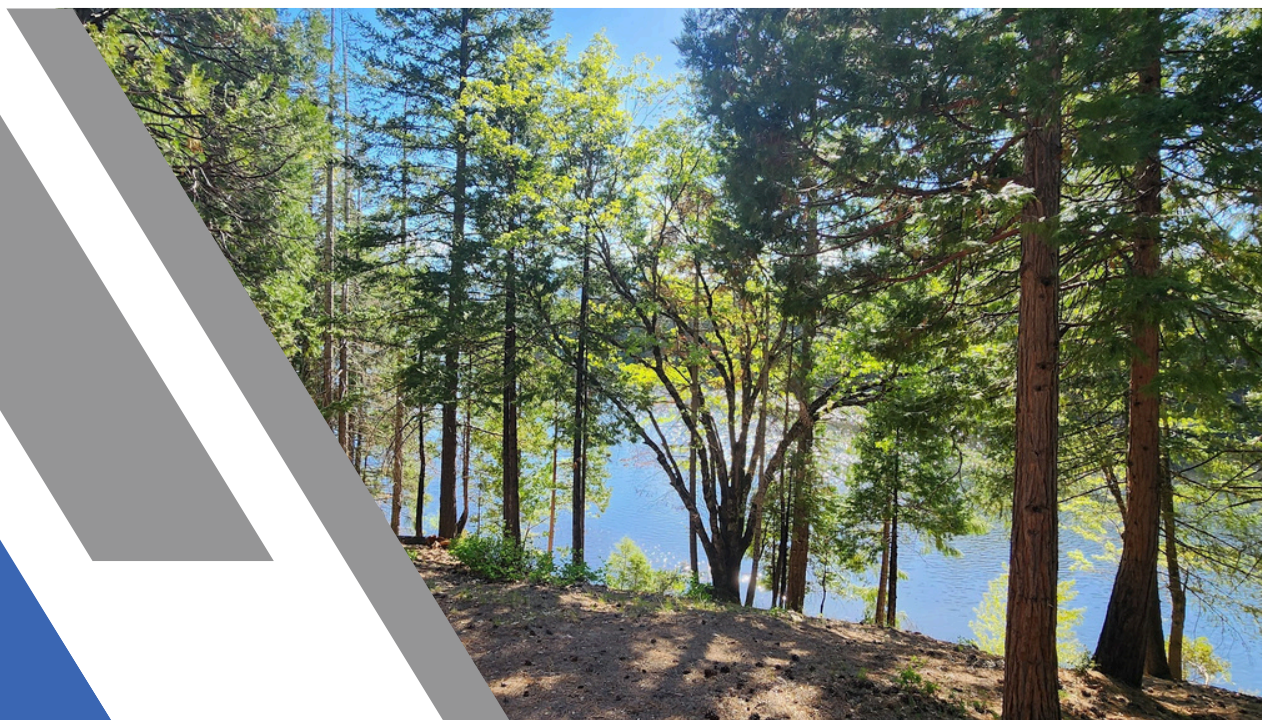




ANNUAL REPORT

2025



www.calforests.org

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE: DREW CRANE, CRANE MILLS

As we look ahead to the opportunities and challenges before us, I reflect with pride and gratitude on what we have accomplished together as an association. It is an honor to work alongside the professionals who constitute the Board of Directors, Calforests' talented staff, and the consultants who support our work. The dedication, steady leadership, and active involvement of Board members have been instrumental in steering the California Forestry Association toward continued success.

Over the past year, Calforests has continued to reach new heights thanks to our collaborative efforts and shared commitment to California's working forests. Our strengthened relationship with The California Forest Foundation has created new opportunities for public education and advocacy, especially through immersive forest tours that connect legislators and policymakers directly with California's forests. By bringing decision-makers into the woods to see active management, wildlife habitat, and wildfire prevention work firsthand, these tours are helping leaders understand the complexity and value of sustainable forestry in a way no briefing book ever could.

This has also been a year of significant policy engagement. We successfully sponsored and helped implement the Forest Resilience Exemption, streamlining tools available to landowners for active forest management, while engaging constructively on major climate and biomass legislation that directly affects our members' ability to operate and innovate. Our ongoing work with federal and state partners on issues ranging from timber supply to fire suppression underscores Calforests' role as a trusted voice for practical, science-based forest management. At the same time, California remains vulnerable to significant wildfire impacts, and recent fires have disrupted log markets, strained infrastructure, and affected members across the state. These realities reinforce why expanding the pace and scale of forest treatments and maintaining a strong forest products sector remain central to our mission.

We have also continued investing in the next generation of forestry professionals through workforce initiatives, university partnerships, and scholarship programs, recognizing that long-term resilience depends on skilled people as much as sound policy.

As Chair, I am pleased to report that our association remains in excellent financial health. We have maintained and modestly increased reserve funds while avoiding increases in member dues. This stability allows us to invest strategically in advocacy, communications, workforce development, and member services as we move into 2026 and beyond.

Looking ahead, I am optimistic. Calforests is well positioned organizationally, financially, and strategically to continue advancing the interests of our members and the broader forest products sector. We enter 2026 with momentum, credibility, and a clear sense of purpose. I extend my sincere thanks to each member, our dedicated staff, and our invaluable partners. It is a privilege to serve as your Chair, and I look forward to continuing our work together to build an even stronger, more resilient forestry sector in California.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE: MATT DIAS, PRESIDENT AND CEO

As I enter my fifth year with the California Forestry Association, I’m reminded of a saying: “The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now.” In our case, the best time to plant a policy, strengthen our workforce, or educate policymakers and the public about what our industry stands for is now. And here we are, growing stronger, adapting faster, and standing taller than ever as California confronts the realities of wildfire, disaster relief, and affordability, balanced against ambitious climate goals.

Calforests and its members have proven time and again that the forest products sector is nothing if not resilient. Through economic shifts, evolving regulations, and intense wildfire seasons, our commitment to sustainable forestry practices, environmental stewardship, and thriving rural economies has remained steadfast. We continue to demonstrate that working forests and a healthy environment are not in conflict. They depend on each other.

Over the past year, Calforests has strengthened its role as a trusted voice in Sacramento and across California. We have engaged in legislation and administrative processes affecting permitting, forest health, wood products utilization, biomass, facility management, and transportation, always with a focus on aligning policy with the realities of working forests and infrastructure on the ground. Encouraging messaging from the federal Administration and USFS is speaking to increased fiber production in Region 5, signaling improved supply conditions and renewed operational momentum across federal lands. In addition, the forest products sector is making progress and being viewed as a legitimate partner in helping California meet its goals of increasing wildfire prevention and restoration treatments across all lands. This is currently further supported in the launching of the California Public Private Innovation (CPPI) program led and built out by the Calforests team. Our message remains clear: active, sustainable forest management is essential to reducing catastrophic wildfire risk and meeting the state’s climate and housing objectives.

Calforests’ voice is also being heard far beyond our own membership. In 2025, Calforests secured 24 earned media placements reaching an audience of more than 200 million, ensuring our perspective on wildfire, forest management, and rural economies was represented in major state and national outlets. We also continue to engage in national policy discussions, including testimony before Congress on increasing the pace and scale of forest treatments and strengthening public–private partnerships. These efforts reinforce Calforests’ position as a credible, solutions-focused leader for the sector.

Workforce development has become an even more prominent strategic priority for our association. Building on the California Forestry Sector Jobs Initiative, we are working with partners in education, labor, communities, and government to promote clear pathways into forest-sector careers. Through campus engagement programs like Beyond the Timberline, expanded job fair outreach, and the launch of our workforce promotion video, *The People Behind California’s Forestry Industry*, we are elevating awareness of forestry careers and building durable pipelines into our sector. This work supports a more diverse and skilled workforce and ensures our members can find the talent needed to carry out proactive forest management and wildfire resilience efforts statewide.

To each member of Calforests, I want to say: you are the roots that keep this association grounded and the branches that allow it to reach new heights. Your commitment to responsible forest and facility management, your investment in innovation and safety, and your support for the communities where you operate ensure the vitality of our industry and the health of California's forests.

Looking ahead, let us continue working together with the same grit, determination, and focus that have brought us this far. Calforests has long been a leading voice for the forest products sector in California, and together we will continue building a future where our forests are healthier, our communities are safer and more prosperous, and our industry remains a model of resilience and partnership.

In closing, I extend my deepest gratitude for your hard work, passion, and unwavering support, but also cannot overlook the value of our internal team as well. I often state that we are a small and mighty team, efficient in action and dedicated in spirit to supporting the Calforests mission. While it is an honor to serve as the President/CEO, the organization would not be what it is without the entire Calforests team. Together, we will ensure that the legacy of our forests, and the people and communities who depend on them, endures for generations to come.

REGULATORY AFFAIRS REPORT: GEORGE GENTRY, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

In 2025, the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection adopted two rule packages of significance to the Association.

The first, *Watercourse Crossing and Emergency Notice Watercourse Crossing Requirements 2025*, clarified key definitions and removed vague or ambiguous language from existing regulations.

The second, *Emergency Forest Resilience and Oak Woodland Exemption 2025*, originated as AB 2276 in November 2024. The Association sponsored AB 2276, which established the Forest Resilience Exemption and replaced both the Small Landowner Exemption and the Forest Fire Prevention Exemption. The new exemption builds upon and improves the prior frameworks, creating a more streamlined and functional tool for landowners.

The enacting legislation included emergency adoption authority. Through the coordinated efforts of Board staff, the Department, and stakeholders, the exemption became effective January 16. During the year, the Board developed permanent regulations and submitted them to the Office of Administrative Law. The package was approved with the exception of canopy standards, which will require additional clarifying language.

Looking ahead to 2026, several rulemakings remain pending final action:

- Vegetation and Fuels in the WLPZ – Intended to allow limited equipment use to remove hazardous fuels near watercourses.
- Exemption Use on Active or Overlapping Plans – Clarifies that exemptions may not be layered onto active operations, while likely preserving limited use of 1038(b) (10% Dead, Diseased, and Dying) to address emergent mortality events.
- Completion Notices for Emergency Notice Timber Operations – Addresses a regulatory gap by formalizing notification requirements when Emergency Notice Operations are complete.

The Board is also evaluating issues related to silvicultural standards, Licensed Timber Operator responsibilities, and clarification of the term “plan area.” These issues are more complex than they initially appear, as changes in one section of the rules often intersect with other regulatory provisions, creating potential unintended consequences.

Beyond traditional rulemaking, the Board will consider updated management plans for the Demonstration State Forest System, most notably the Jackson Demonstration State Forest. This process is expected to be both substantive and closely scrutinized.

Finally, the Board continues work on “Zone Zero” regulations establishing defensible space requirements within 0–5 feet of structures. This remains a technically and politically challenging regulatory effort.

California Forest Management Task Force

Association staff remained actively engaged with the California Forest Management Task Force and contributed significantly to the development of its final work plan.

Key objectives include:

- Development of clearer guidance for plan preparers and reviewers.
- “Permit Synchronization,” an effort to better align permitting timelines and requirements under the Forest Practice Act and Forest Practice Rules with Water Board and California Department of Fish and Wildlife processes, including waste discharge requirements and lake and streambed alteration permits.

The State retained the NiVAK Group to conduct a Lean Six Sigma evaluation of the Timber Harvest Plan process to identify opportunities for efficiency and improvement. That report is expected to be released in March.

**PUBLIC RESOURCES AND WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION REPORT: ELIZABETH “LIZ” BERGER,
VICE PRESIDENT OF CLIMATE AND ENERGY**

Fire Suppression Strategy and Cross-Boundary Coordination

The Fire Suppression Strategy Committee paused formal meetings with CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) following the end of season November 2025 closeout session and will reconvene in early spring to initiate pre-season coordination for 2026. The pause reflects a transition from post-season evaluation to forward-looking operational planning.

A central focus remains expansion of cross-boundary fuel breaks. Discussions continue regarding federal and state funding capacity for planning and implementation, including potential utilization of Good Neighbor Authority agreements, Proposition 4 grants, CAL FIRE Forest Health grants, and congressional earmarks. Ensuring alignment of funding streams with on-the-ground capacity remains critical to delivering measurable wildfire risk reduction.

Calforests also drafted a new Fire Suppression and Fuels Break Memorandum of Understanding with USFS Region 5, modeled after existing NAFO agreements but broadened to include additional Calforests members. The draft is currently under agency review and is expected to strengthen coordination during active fire response and fuels treatment implementation.

At the federal level, significant structural changes are underway within wildland fire management. DOI Secretarial Order 3443 initiated unification of Department of the Interior fire programs under a new U.S. Wildland Fire Service framework. A broader proposal to consolidate USDA fire operations into this new agency remains under evaluation, with a feasibility study expected to conclude before the end of 2026. Congressional authorization would be required for full implementation. Calforests continues to monitor these developments closely due to their potential operational and budgetary impacts on fire management and forest treatment programs.

Federal Forest Management and Market Conditions

The U.S. Forest Service received its FY 2026 appropriation prior to the January 30 deadline, avoiding a continuing resolution and potential shutdown. The approved budget is largely flat, similar to FY 2025, avoiding deeper reductions that had been anticipated earlier in the cycle. Program-level allocations are still being finalized. A USDA reorganization plan remains pending, and a permanent hiring pause for non-fire personnel continues, though reassignments and limited time-bound promotions are permitted.

USFS Chief Schultz has articulated a “back-to-basics” approach centered on safety, wildfire protection, active forest management, energy and resource development, disaster recovery, recreation access, regulatory efficiency, and strengthened partnerships. The agency has also signaled a shift toward becoming leaner and more results-focused, with greater emphasis on fiscal discipline and operational efficiency.

Region 5 personnel changes occurred across multiple national forests and deputy regional forester roles. These leadership transitions will influence near-term planning, project prioritization, and operational continuity across California’s National Forest System lands.

Timber sale activity has increased compared to the same period last year. As of February 23, 2026, Region 5 had sold 145 MMBF, with 85 percent sawtimber, 7 percent fuelwood, and 8 percent biomass. This represents a significant increase over the prior year's pace. The estimated total volume expected to be sold in FY 2026 is 393 MMBF. Continued monitoring of sale volumes and product mix remains important for understanding market stability and supply conditions.

Public-Private Partnerships and Market Development

The California Public Private Innovation (CPPI) pilot continues to advance, with implementation underway on multiple projects and additional Supplemental Project Agreements being executed. Expansion efforts include development of an additional Master Stewardship Agreement and exploratory discussions with the Bureau of Land Management. The CPPI working group maintains regular engagement with USFS and BLM leadership.

Nationally, the Federal Forest Resource Coalition approved a transition to the Federal Timber Purchasers Coalition, adopting new bylaws and a simplified dues structure. Calforests representation will continue through Travis Joseph of AFRC. Calforests assessments associated with FFRC are currently on hold pending member input regarding future funding priorities.

Calforests has also supported efforts to explore formation of a California Mass Timber Coalition. Early discussions have generated broad stakeholder support, and additional convenings are being hosted to determine potential structural alignment within existing trade associations. Development of in-state mass timber capacity remains a strategic opportunity for market diversification and forest product innovation.

Federal Legislative and Grant Tracking

Calforests continues to track several federal initiatives with potential implications for forest management and market development.

The Wood Innovations, Community Wood, and Wood Products Infrastructure Assistance grant programs are currently open, with applications due April 22, 2026. These programs support infrastructure, market diversification, and utilization of forest products. Award levels range from \$300,000 to \$2 million depending on program category.

Calforests is also monitoring the Fix Our Forests Act and related Senate action, maintaining coordination with national partners regarding positioning and advocacy strategy.

The Standardizing Permitting and Expediting Economic Development (SPEED) Act has advanced in the House and seeks to improve permitting timelines and modernize NEPA implementation. Calforests continues to evaluate potential impacts on project planning and delivery.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT: KRIS ROSA AND CRAIG SWAIM, ROSTRUM

The 2025 legislative session reflected continued focus on wildfire resilience, climate policy implementation, forest health investment, and workforce reform. Calforests remained actively engaged throughout the year, working in coalition with allied stakeholders and policymakers to advance practical solutions that support active forest management, strengthen rural economies, and improve public safety. The following measures represent key areas where the Association contributed leadership, technical expertise, and strategic advocacy.

Key Legislation

AB 706 (Aguiar-Curry) – Forest Organic Residue, Energy, and Safety Transformation and Wildfire Prevention Fund Act

Supported by Calforests and a broad coalition of allied stakeholders, including the New California Coalition and the California Farm Bureau, AB 706 would establish a new program to reduce wildfire risk by providing financial support for the procurement, transportation, and beneficial use of forest biomass residuals.

The bill passed the Assembly without a single “no” vote, reflecting strong bipartisan support. It was subsequently held in the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee for further consideration in 2026. Refinement of program structure and identification of a stable funding source remain key priorities for Calforests moving forward.

AB 1207 (Irwin) – Climate Change: Cap-and-Invest Extension

Calforests, in coordination with the California Forest Carbon Coalition, engaged extensively in discussions surrounding AB 1207 and supported its passage. The legislation extends California’s landmark cap-and-trade program through 2045 and renames it the Cap-and-Invest Program.

Importantly, the bill maintains the use of carbon offset credits, with offsets used in one compliance year removed from the following year’s emissions budget and permanently retired. This structure preserves the role of forest-based offsets within California’s broader climate strategy while reinforcing overall program integrity.

SB 840 (Limon) – Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Spending Plan

SB 840 updates the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) spending plan by restructuring continuous appropriations and establishing legislative intent for future funding allocations.

The bill extends up to \$200 million annually for CAL FIRE’s Healthy Forests Program, which was previously scheduled to sunset in 2029. It also requires the California Air Resources Board to update all compliance offset protocols every five years to reflect best available science.

The legislation establishes a tiered funding structure:

Tier 1

- Manufacturing Tax Credit (\$100–150 million)

- SRA Fee Backfill (\$70–90 million)
- Legislative Climate Bureau (\$3 million)

Tier 2

- High-Speed Rail (\$1 billion)
- Legislative Priorities (\$1 billion)

Tier 3

- Strategic Growth Council (\$850 million)
- Intercity Rail (\$400 million)
- CARB Community Air Protection (\$250 million)
- Low Carbon Transit Operations (\$200 million)
- Healthy and Resilient Forest Programs (\$200 million)
- Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Program (\$130 million)

Tier 3 allocations are subject to proportional reductions if annual GGRF revenues are insufficient to fully fund the spending plan.

Support for Firefighter Workforce Reforms

In 2025, Calforests worked closely with the Forest Fire Recruitment Program and legislative leaders to advance a package of bills improving compensation, benefits, and opportunities for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated firefighters who play a vital role in California’s wildfire response and prevention efforts.

This advocacy resulted in the Governor signing the following measures:

AB 247 (Bryan) – Incarcerated Firefighter Wages

Requires incarcerated firefighters to be paid \$7.25 per hour when actively serving on a wildfire hand crew.

AB 799 (C. Rodriguez) – Death Benefit

Provides a death benefit to the families of incarcerated firefighters killed in the line of duty.

AB 952 (Elhawary) – Youth Offender Camp Pilot Program

Makes the Youth Offender Camp Pilot Program permanent and authorizes expansion to additional youth correctional facilities.

AB 812 (Lowenthal) – Recall and Resentencing

Authorizes a court, upon recommendation from the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, to consider a resentencing request submitted by an incarcerated firefighter.

Political Action Committee (PAC)

The Calforests Political Action Committee (PAC) exists to support the campaigns of State Legislature candidates. In 2025, the PAC contributed nearly \$42,500 to 28 candidates.

COMMUNICATIONS REPORT: YIANNI KAZANIS, MOZAIC MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Earned Media Impact in 2025

In 2025, Calforests strengthened its position as a leading voice in forestry policy, wildfire resilience, and workforce development through a strategic earned media program that delivered statewide and national visibility. Over the reporting period, Calforests secured 24 pieces of coverage across online, broadcast, and policy-focused outlets, reaching a combined audience of 202 million. Coverage generated an estimated 703,000 views and more than 17,700 social engagements, reflecting both scale and meaningful public interaction.

Media placements spanned high-authority regional, statewide, and national outlets, with an average domain authority score of 69, reinforcing credibility and search visibility. Coverage included prominent platforms such as the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *CalMatters*, *CBS News Los Angeles*, *KTLA*, *POLITICO*, and *The New York Times*, positioning Calforests within major policy and climate conversations. Industry and sector-specific publications further amplified key workforce, biomass, and stewardship messages to targeted audiences.

Thematically, earned media centered on wildfire prevention funding, fuel-break partnerships, federal forest policy debates, workforce investment, and sustainable forest management. Several stories highlighted major public-private agreements, biomass and fuel reduction initiatives, and legislative or regulatory developments affecting forest protections. This balanced mix of proactive placements and rapid-response commentary ensured that Calforests' perspective was consistently represented in evolving policy discussions.

Importantly, coverage extended beyond industry trade outlets into mainstream and political media, expanding exposure to policymakers, business leaders, and the broader public. The diversity of outlets demonstrates Calforests' ability to engage both specialized forestry stakeholders and general news audiences, reinforcing the association's credibility as a trusted source on forest health and wildfire mitigation.

Together, these earned media outcomes strengthened awareness of Calforests' advocacy priorities, amplified workforce and climate resilience messaging, and positioned the association as a consistent and authoritative voice in California's forestry policy landscape. To read more about the association's earned media outcomes, please click [here](#).

Social Media Impact in 2025

In 2025, Calforests continued to strengthen its digital presence, using a more consistent posting cadence and targeted promotional support to expand visibility, drive traffic, and deepen engagement across platforms. Performance gains were especially strong in the final quarter of the reporting period, reflecting increased content consistency and strategic amplification of priority messages.

On LinkedIn, Calforests maintained a steady and fully organic presence, publishing 89 posts over the year and generating 81,095 total impressions. More importantly, LinkedIn drove meaningful audience action, resulting in 4,505 clicks to Calforests content, reinforcing the platform's role as a

reliable driver of traffic to policy updates, forestry news, workforce initiatives, and event information. Engagement included 2,232 reactions, 92 comments, and 24 reposts, demonstrating sustained interaction among industry professionals and stakeholders.

Instagram performance accelerated significantly, particularly in the last 90 days of the reporting period. During that timeframe alone, Calforests generated 322,900 views and reached 144,254 accounts. Notably, 92 percent of views came from non-followers, indicating strong discovery beyond the existing audience and expanded visibility within new communities. Engagement actions totaled 6,250 interactions in the same period, while conversion behaviors increased sharply, including 7,067 profile visits and 627 external link taps. These metrics signal growing interest in Calforests' updates, events, and educational content.

Audience growth followed this upward trajectory. In the final 90 days, Calforests gained a net 789 new Instagram followers, bringing the total to 2,727, representing a 40.7 percent increase. Based on current performance patterns, annual Instagram visibility is projected at approximately 1.2 to 1.4 million views and 450,000 to 600,000 accounts reached, with sustained engagement and link-driven activity dependent on continued posting cadence and strategic paid support.

Across both platforms, performance trends confirm that educational myth-busting content, wildfire and operations updates, workforce messaging, and timely event promotion generate the strongest reach and click-driven engagement. Together, these efforts reinforce Calforests' role as a credible, responsive voice for California's forestry sector and demonstrate how disciplined digital strategy can support advocacy, member engagement, and industry education.

Beyond the Timberline: Connecting Future Forestry Leaders

In 2025, Calforests successfully advanced its Beyond the Timberline career exploration series, strengthening direct engagement between forestry students and industry professionals across California's three university forestry programs: California Polytechnic State University, California Polytechnic University Humboldt, and the University of California, Berkeley.

The 2025 series included coordinated campus visits in October at Cal Poly Humboldt (October 6), UC Berkeley (October 8), and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (October 9). Each visit featured structured Q&A sessions with students, classroom discussions, panel presentations, small-group meetings, and informal networking events designed to foster candid dialogue about career pathways in forestry. These interactions provided students with direct access to industry leaders while giving employers the opportunity to better understand emerging workforce interests and academic preparation.

Beyond the Timberline builds on a collaborative framework first established at the Calforests Annual Meeting in 2022, where Calforests and university partners identified a shared goal: to attract more students into California's forestry programs and ensure graduates are equipped with skills aligned to evolving public and private sector workforce needs. The initiative continues to be guided by insights from the Calforests Workforce and Training Research Report and an adaptive Action Plan reviewed regularly with university leadership.

The 2025 series demonstrated the strength of this coordinated approach. By bringing industry directly into the classroom and student spaces, Calforests reinforced career awareness, strengthened university partnerships, and advanced a long-term workforce pipeline strategy that supports forest health, wildfire resilience, and sustainable forest management statewide.

California Forestry Sector Jobs Initiative

In 2025, the California Forestry Sector Jobs Initiative continued to expand statewide awareness of career opportunities in forestry. Led by Calforests in partnership with CAL FIRE and supported by Mozaic Media & Communications, the initiative strengthened its outreach efforts to build a more visible and accessible workforce pipeline.

Community engagement remained a central focus. The initiative maintained a presence at job fairs across Northern and Southern California, connecting directly with students, job seekers, and community members interested in careers in forest health, wildfire prevention, and natural resource management. Outreach efforts were further amplified through ongoing social media campaigns designed to raise awareness about the diversity of career pathways within the forestry sector.

A major milestone in 2025 was the launch of a new workforce promotion video, *The People Behind California's Forestry Industry*, which highlights the professionals working across the sector and the meaningful, mission-driven careers available throughout the state. The video is available at: <https://www.caforestryworkforce.com/>

Together, these efforts advanced the initiative's core goal: expanding awareness, increasing access, and strengthening California's forestry workforce to meet growing demands tied to wildfire resilience, forest management, and climate adaptation.

DAVID A. BISCHEL FORESTRY SCHOLARSHIP

The David A. Bischel Forestry Scholarship honors the life and legacy of David Bischel, who served as President and CEO of the California Forestry Association for twenty-two years and was a lifelong advocate for active, science-based forest management. A graduate of UC Berkeley and UC Davis and a Registered Professional Forester, Dave dedicated his career to advancing sound forest policy, strengthening professional standards, and promoting responsible stewardship of California's forestlands. His leadership helped shape modern forestry practice in California and elevate the role of professional foresters in public policy.

Established through a collaboration between The Forest Foundation and the California Forestry Association, the scholarship supports students who embody Dave's passion for forestry, commitment to active management, and dedication to advancing forest health. The program is designed not only to provide financial support, but also to recognize emerging leaders who demonstrate a strong understanding of forestry's role in wildfire resilience, ecosystem management, and sustainable natural resource practices.

The 2025 David A. Bischel Forestry Scholarship recipients are:

- Alex Tupala Horwood, University of California, Berkeley
- Belen Sibal, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
- Dylan C. Belitski, California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

These students represent the next generation of forestry professionals committed to ecological stewardship, community engagement, and science-driven forest management. Through the scholarship, Calforests continues to invest directly in the future workforce, reinforcing its long-term commitment to cultivating skilled professionals who will help address California's forest health challenges and advance sustainable forestry practices statewide.

For more information, click [here](#).

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