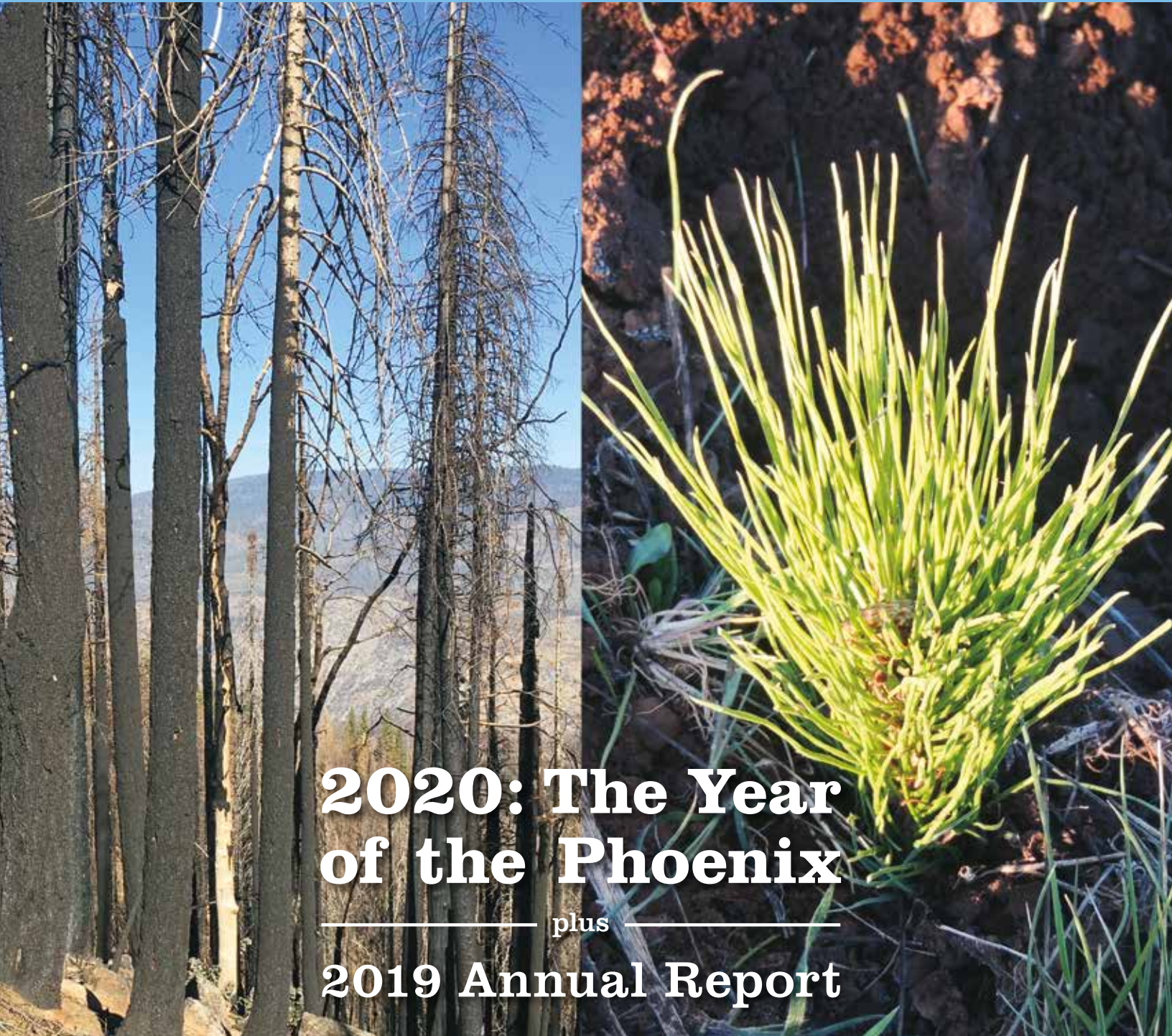


# FORESTLIFE

NEWS & INSIGHT FROM THE PACIFIC FOREST TRUST



**2020: The Year  
of the Phoenix**

plus

**2019 Annual Report**

SPRING 2020



# Our mission

Pacific Forest Trust's mission is to sustain America's forests for all their benefits of wood, water, wildlife, and people's well being, in cooperation with private landowners and communities. Find out more at [pacificforest.org](http://pacificforest.org).

## Meet Pacific Forest Trust's valuable volunteers

It's been said that Pacific Forest Trust "punches above our weight class"—our impact belies our size. One reason for that is the *pro bono* help we are fortunate to receive from legal, regulatory, and scientific experts. In this issue, we profile two of the many people who help boost PFT's strength.

### FRANCES SPIVY-WEBER



PFT is privileged to have the advice and expertise of Frances Spivy-Weber, who was Vice Chair of the California State Water Resources Control Board for most of the ten years she served. Before joining the Board as its public member, Fran led the National Audubon Society's International Program and

served as Executive Director of the Mono Lake Committee.

Fran shares her expertise in navigating the state's complex water regulatory environment with PFT in our work to advance landscape-level restoration of the state's natural water infrastructure, our Healthy Watersheds California (HWC) project (learn more at [pacificforest.org/hwc](http://pacificforest.org/hwc)).

"The watershed-based approach for ensuring the state's water security is going to become the dominant model, because it pays off so much more than other approaches," Fran predicts.

"Getting an agreement and funding is the first step, but it's not the last step," she adds. "There's a need to reach a lot of different types of people – not simply across party lines, but people local to each region of the state with various interests. That's why this is the perfect work for PFT."

"PFT is very lucky to have a visionary like Laurie Wayburn, and if the state is smart, it will tap into her vision for its own future," Fran notes. "Forests and water will benefit, as will the people of California."

### BILL CURTISS

In his 37 years at Earthjustice, Bill Curtiss litigated a variety of environmental cases and held a number of positions before retiring as General Counsel in 2016. At that time, he was looking for a way to return to the substantive conservation work he most enjoyed, but in a more flexible setting without management responsibilities.



Enter Pacific Forest Trust. Bill has generously donated his legal expertise to find ways to use existing law, and to shape proposed laws, to accomplish PFT's mission. Among his pursuits is helping PFT and our legislative partners craft and refine proposals for funding watershed restoration work, specifically PFT's HWC project.

"Having typically worked at the federal level, I didn't know much about California's existing water law. One of the things I've always liked about being a lawyer is the opportunity to learn about a lot of new things," notes Bill. "I also like to be close to the action and make a difference, which is one reason collaborating with PFT has been so rewarding."

PFT's position in the "radical middle" is a powerful antidote to the adversarial model we see more and more today.

"The great thing about PFT is that we don't depend on a world divided," Bill says. "Our work doesn't happen except by agreement."

"In the federal system," says Bill, "it's triage at best, if not an ongoing catastrophe. In California, though, you can come to work with optimism."

"We need to use and change federal and state law to do the right thing for watersheds," he adds. "It won't get finished in my lifetime, but it's critical for the future of this state."

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# President's Letter

From the world's hottest decade on record in 2010-2019, to California's driest February on record in 2020, our lives and forests have been subject to the continuing extremes of climate change. Fires, floods, droughts, downpours: these disruptions and disasters are now becoming the norm—and that places ever-increasing stress on the forests that sustain us.



We rely on nature to provide us with the very air we breathe and water we drink. Forests are the key engine for both, the source of 65% of our drinking water, the lungs of our planet, and the critical sector for stabilizing our climate. We could not be here without them. So, amongst all the crises we face, it is essential for us to turn our care and attention to stewarding these systems, returning the favors and benefits they provide us.

2020 is the start of a new decade in which we can clearly see this path forward. Rebuilding our common ground—literally—is crucial to our survival and *thrival* going forward. And, there are enormous benefits culturally (bringing us together) and economically (regrounding our rural economies) that flow from this.

This issue of *ForestLife* highlights a number of examples of how we can do this together: working landowner to landowner to conserve well-managed forests; building the base of a new economy to support watersheds; restoring devastated forests; and pioneering partnerships between the rural communities that steward forests and the urban communities that benefit from them.

The Phoenix is our symbol for 2020, representing the rebirth and persistence needed to turn disaster into a robust, resilient new start. Join with us to invest in the forests we rely on!

P.S. In this issue you'll find a brief sampling of our accomplishments in 2019. Please visit [pacificforest.org/2019-annual-report](https://pacificforest.org/2019-annual-report) to learn more.





# For love of the land and heritage: Phillips Family Tree Farm

## SIX GENERATIONS OF CREATIVE, CONSCIENTIOUS STEWARDSHIP— PROTECTED IN PERPETUITY

*Gary Hendrix and his family own and operate the 900-acre Phillips Family Tree Farm, located east of Redding, California. The Phillips Family Tree Farm was one of Pacific Forest Trust's first conservation projects, with a Working Forest Conservation Easement (WFCE) established in 1998. PFT pioneered this innovative method of giving landowners the means to permanently conserve their forests for a variety of public benefits while keeping them in private ownership and productive forestry—allowing both economic production and resource protection. (Find out more at [pacificforest.org/wfce](https://pacificforest.org/wfce).) Gary is a member of our Klamath-Cascade Advisory Council and a past President of Forest Landowners of California, and was once California Tree Farmer of the Year. We asked him about the impact the easement has had on his family and their land, more than 20 years later.*

**Gary Hendrix:** My generation grew up thinking that all we did to get this land was to be lucky enough to be born into this family! In the late 1990s, we were looking for a way to protect our property in perpetuity. We knew some family member—or more than just one—would be born someday who didn't care about the land.

We read in the paper that PFT was coming up to the area to talk about what conservation easements were. It sounded good to us, and we worked with Laurie and Connie to design an easement specifically for our tree farm.

There are seven family members with ownership shares that deserve credit for getting this easement put in place. It wasn't a foregone conclusion: our lawyer said "You'll never get seven people to agree on anything!" But we did. Ultimately, we all





agreed that we wanted a biodiverse, multi-aged forest in perpetuity, no matter who owns it. That is what the easement does for us.

There are now six generations that have been stewarding this land, including my grandchildren's generation. My son Gregg and his daughter Sarah are the ones who manage the land and the mill now. Sarah is a marvelous young lady who graduated from UC Santa Cruz, went to Nepal with the Peace Corps, and returned to become her dad's apprentice. She's learning all the ways of running the mill, and she recently bought out one of the seven original family members and is taking his place on the board.

We have a sawmill, a planing mill, a machine shop, and a box factory. We make wooden boxes for whatever you can imagine. Our number one product is high-quality lumber for the building industry. We only cut dead timber, which has a blue stain that is unique and in high demand.

We have the only commercial steam mill left in the United States. We're on the National Registry of Historic Places. We're also completely off the grid. We have a 50 KW generator for some of the more modern equipment and cloudier days, but mostly it's solar.

We humans are here for less than the blink of an eyelash, geologically speaking, and yet as human beings we have the potential to change the entire world—in fact, we are changing it. With land ownership comes responsibility for stewardship: We all need to take care of the gifts we've been given.

I'm not going to be around forever. But thanks in part to our work with PFT, I feel good about what I'm leaving behind.

Opposite: Mature pine at the Phillips Family Tree Farm in 2006 (note Gary in the center!). Above middle: PFT Outside-the-Box Award boxes made by Gary Hendrix with the distinctive blue stain. Above right: Gary Hendrix shovels sawdust and scrap wood into the steam engine that powers the mill (circa 2004). Below left: Six generations and counting! Below: logs in the mill pond.



COURTESY GARY HENDRIX



COURTESY GARY HENDRIX

# Governor's historic Executive Order moves Oregon forward on climate

Oregonians are already experiencing the effects of climate change. This year's historic flooding closed freeways, collapsed bridges, and destroyed vehicles and other property. Recent droughts and intense wildfires have caused immeasurable damage. The large majority of Oregonians want action to address climate change; in response, the Legislature, with the Governor's support, has proposed climate policy for several years to limit CO<sub>2</sub> emissions while investing in rural lands to help meet those goals.

In the 2020 Oregon legislative session, PFT strongly supported SB 1530, which would have reduced climate emissions while also generating new investments in Oregon's forests, rivers, lands and the people who work that land. However, a group of extreme legislators left the Capitol for the second straight year, stopping all legislation in its tracks. In response, Governor Kate Brown issued Executive Order 20-04, taking forceful and thoughtful action to mitigate the threats and causes of climate change.

Many thanks to our legislative leaders and the broad coalition of activists, organizations, and companies who continue to support protecting and restoring the state's natural and working lands for our climate and other benefits.



Governor Kate Brown signs Executive Order 20-04, which sets new climate goals and directs state agencies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Governor Brown's Executive Order is an important and courageous step, limiting emissions and recognizing that forests and other lands—and their landowners and stewards—are critical assets in fighting climate change. We will continue to work with stakeholders across the spectrum to leverage forests to be climate champions. For updates, visit our website at [pacificforest.org/climateaction](https://pacificforest.org/climateaction).

## Growing our alliance for forests & water

We are pleased to announce a new partner in our Springs for Life ForestWater Alliance. Affinity Creative Group and PackagingARTS are Vallejo, California-based companies that provide packaging, digital, and retail solutions to clients based in northern California and beyond. For 25 years, these affiliated companies have been building brands and giving back to the community through a variety of important causes; we deeply appreciate their support.

Our inaugural partner in the Alliance, Crystal Geyser Sparkling Water, has recently launched new products that feature Springs for Life on the label. Thanks to Crystal Geyser, Affinity Creative, and PackagingARTS for increasing public awareness of the important role protecting forests plays in ensuring our supplies of cool, clean water!



We're on the bottle! Thanks to Crystal Geyser for promoting our work to protect forest watersheds on their bottles of sparkling water. Look for these refreshing drinks in regional stores, food service outlets and many work cafes.





PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

**2019 ANNUAL REPORT**

PFT is pioneering new and effective approaches to managing and conserving forests for their climate services, amongst other values. In 2019, myriad reports on climate change reinforced our approach advancing the forest sector as an essential near-term, cost-effective climate solution. From young activists like Kelsey Juliana (speaker at PFT's Forest Fete), to experienced elders like Gary Phillips (see Spring 2020 *ForestLife*, p. 4), people are joining the fight for a livable planet. We believe forests—and the people who manage them—can help turn the tide on climate change while there is still time to act.

**“Pacific Forest Trust does an amazing job bringing people together to preserve irreplaceable forest landscapes... around solid science and forest management in a way that really works.”**  
—Congressman Jared Huffman



## REDWOODS AND HABITAT FOR SALMON PROTECTED AT GREEN GORGE

Green Gorge Working Forest, located in Mendocino County, California, along the Garcia River just inland from the coast, has now been permanently protected. This picturesque 341-acre forest is called “Green Gorge” in honor of the canyon with its deep redwood forest rising steeply from the beautiful floodplain. PFT has now conserved more than 285,000 acres, including more than 110,000 acres in 33 easements in Oregon and California. Our voluntary agreements with landowners such as Hugh Brady (pictured above) permanently connect more than 3 million acres of habitat across public and private lands.

**“I homesteaded here more than 50 years ago to live in this priceless spot. Salmon spawn in the Garcia a few steps from my house and the redwoods are growing taller by the day. I am so glad to have partnered with Pacific Forest Trust to place a permanent conservation easement on Green Gorge.”** —Hugh Brady, landowner

**2019 ANNUAL REPORT**





## MODELING CLIMATE IMPACT ON WILDLIFE IN KEY WATERSHED AREAS

The California Wildlife Conservation Board awarded PFT a \$400,000 grant in 2019 to work with both the University of California and Duke University to model the impacts of climate change on the five key source watersheds in northern California, those that provide the vast majority of drinking and irrigated agricultural water in the state. This region is also critically important for wildlife adaptation and fresh water for San Francisco Bay. Building on PFT's *Risk Assessment* ([pacificforest.org/risk](https://pacificforest.org/risk)) for the region, this analysis will identify priorities and strategies for promoting wildlife adaptation through restoration and conservation in the region.



## WE'VE BEEN (ALMOST) EVERYWHERE

In 2019, Pacific Forest Trust took our show on the road. Among many events, we testified in the California Legislature, participated in the California Wildfires panel held by *Capitol Weekly* in Sacramento and a "Science on Tap" lecture in Portland; we presented at the Natural Climate Solutions Symposium for California, Oregon, and Washington; the Northwest Business & The Environment Conference in Portland; and the Carbon-Friendly Forestry Conference, which we co-hosted with the Washington Environmental Council (WEC) in Seattle. We also hosted several tours of our conserved properties, including McCloud Soda Springs, pictured above. For video of a number of our appearances, visit our YouTube page at [pacificforest.org/youtube](https://pacificforest.org/youtube).



## OREGON ON THE VERGE OF HISTORY

Building on its work over the past several years to enact climate policy that leverages the power of forests, PFT worked hard to help shape and pass Oregon's HB 2020. While it did not pass, it laid critical groundwork for future efforts. We engaged a broad coalition of groups to integrate rural and urban climate concerns by making natural and working lands—and their owners and managers—a key part of that policy. We were pleased to work with companies such as Green Diamond Resource Company, GreenWood Resources, Hancock Timber Resource Group, and Port Blakely, who publicly supported the bill. At year end, the legislature was again seeking to pass such legislation that would help Oregon's rural communities on the front lines of climate change and invest in more climate-resilient landscapes.

## LEADING THE WAY FOR THE COUNTRY

PFT's work developing practical climate policies established a national model—over 7 million acres across 28 states are now engaged in developing forest carbon offsets—and has advanced collaboration and cooperation between states on how forest and other lands can be integrated into climate action on the ground. Oregon recently joined an agreement between California, Washington, and British Columbia to collaborate on advancing the use of forests to help climate that had its roots at PFT's 2018 Global Climate Action Summit event. PFT also worked with the Land Trust Alliance to help develop a national strategy for land trusts and others to engage in advancing the twinned goals of a healthy climate and land conservation.

**"The impacts of climate change don't stop at state or national boundaries, and neither can our work."**

**—Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz**





## CLIMATE-SMART WATER SECURITY

The healthy, resilient function of California's key source watersheds is critical to the state's water security in a radically changing climate. In 2019, PFT led the way for major advances in landscape-level protection and restoration for these five watersheds (the Feather, Pit, McCloud, Upper Sacramento, and Upper Trinity). Leveraging Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order to build a Water Resilience Portfolio, PFT developed a plan to restore these watersheds over the next 15 years and built support among stakeholders for this suite of actions (find out more at [pacificforest.org/wrp](https://pacificforest.org/wrp)). We testified in the Legislature; met with County Supervisors, planners, and federal and private landowners and land managers; and worked with multiple partners, from the Sierra Meadows Partnership to our Klamath Cascade Advisory Council. We also established an office in the region to increase community engagement. Our work to promote a new "infrastructure approach" to watersheds was also recognized nationally by its inclusion in the December special issue on Conservation Finance of *IMPACT*, the journal of the American Water Resources Association, as well as in western region convenings. This work was supported in part by a \$225,000 grant from the Healthy Watersheds Consortium (funded by the U.S. Endowment for Healthy Forests and Communities, US EPA, and NRCS). Read more about our Healthy Watersheds California program at [pacificforest.org/hwc](https://pacificforest.org/hwc).

## EXPANDING CAPACITY IN OREGON

PFT's conservation projects are often large-scale and complex, and involve collaboration with multiple public and private partners. Thanks to a three-year grant from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, PFT has expanded our conservation capacity by adding a new position based in Portland. Wendy Gerlach, an attorney with deep experience and strong passion for conservation, joined us as Senior Conservation Project Manager. Through engaging with landowners, agencies, stakeholders and other partners, she will leverage our 27 years of experience to expand forest conservation in Oregon and regionally.



## PFT ON OREGON GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON WILDFIRE RESPONSE

PFT was an active member of Oregon Governor Kate Brown's Council on Wildfire Response, specifically on its Suppression and Mitigation committees. PFT advocated for strategic, climate-smart fire management, incorporating both prescribed burning and managed natural fires where these can be done safely. The Council delivered its final recommendations in November, noting that 13 million acres of land in Oregon is at high risk of wildfire. The Council's roadmap will help develop support for funding the needed work of community adaptation and landscape restoration, including the re-establishment of a more natural fire regime.



## RESTORING A CRITICAL LANDSCAPE FOR YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Forests deserve lots of TLC—time, labor and creativity—especially after the impacts of a devastating fire. PFT's Henness Ridge forests adjacent to Yosemite National Park were heavily impacted by 2018's deadly Ferguson Fire. In 2019, we began preparing for restoration, removing hazard trees and reducing the high density of brush to restore the magnificent conifer forest. For more of the story, see the Spring 2020 issue of *Forest Life* (p. 12).





## ADVANCING A FOREST AND LAND SECTOR APPROACH IN CALIFORNIA

PFT has been working closely with the California Air Resources Board (CARB) since 2006 to advance how forests are managed to reduce net CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Last year, in response to CARB Chair Mary Nichols' direction to significantly increase investments in forest and land to mitigate climate change, PFT provided recommendations for how the state can ramp up actions to manage for climate-resilient and carbon-rich landscapes through market and regulatory mechanisms. Read PFT's recommendations at [pacificforest.org/carb](https://pacificforest.org/carb).

**"PFT has been a great partner... working actively to manage our forests in ways that make them good stewards of carbon." —CARB Chair Mary Nichols**



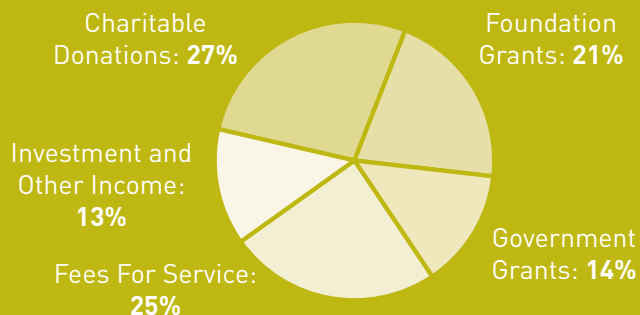
FRANCIS EATHERINGTON VIA FLICKR

## CONSERVING THE ELLIOTT STATE FOREST IN A NEW (BUT PROVEN) WAY

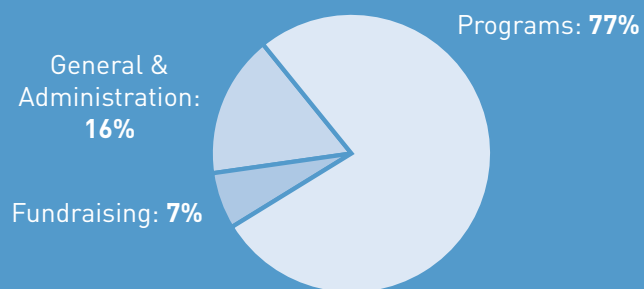
Oregon's Elliott State Forest has been the focus of major public debate and concern. In 2019, the state sold \$100M in bonds (approved in 2017) to protect the remarkable conservation values of this forest, including its almost 40,000 acres of old forest, while still maintaining sustainable management. PFT worked with many advocates, scientists, and others to urge the Oregon State Land Board to use the public's \$100 million investment to protect this precious resource in perpetuity under a Working Forest Conservation Easement (WFCE).

PFT's work relies on the generous support of individuals, foundations, and corporations. To help Pacific Forest Trust ensure water security, provide homes for wildlife, boost rural economies, and conserve carbon-rich, climate-resilient forests, please visit [pacificforest.org/support-pft](https://pacificforest.org/support-pft).

### SOURCES OF FUNDS



### USES OF FUNDS







# Forest carbon offsets: making a difference now and in the long run

California is renowned for its leading role in fighting climate change. Conserving and managing forests to be carbon rich and climate resilient are indispensable elements of the solutions the state is implementing, along with reducing carbon emissions from the energy and transportation sectors. Forest carbon offsets, pioneered as a compliance tool under AB 32 and perhaps the best-known forest emissions reductions tool, are an important part of the forest climate solutions portfolio.

The California Air Resources Board (CARB), the lead agency tasked with ensuring the state meets its climate goals, recently convened the Compliance Offset Protocol Task Force (Task Force) to provide guidance in establishing new offset protocols for the Cap-and-Trade Program and recommend improvements to existing protocols. PFT's Co-CEO Constance Best and PFT Board Member Andrea Tuttle, PhD (former Director of the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, CAL FIRE), are on this Task Force established by AB 398 in 2017. Scientists, tribal representatives, environmental advocates, industry experts, and other stakeholder groups also have members serving on the Task Force. It will consider new potential offset protocols that result in direct environmental benefits to California and specifically prioritize disadvantaged communities, Native American lands, and rural and agricultural regions. The options being considered include new potential protocols for grasslands or wetlands.

PFT has a long history of leadership in showing how the climate benefits of forests can, and must, play a key role in solving the climate crisis. We were instrumental in establishing forest offsets in California, sponsoring SB 812 (Sher, 2005) which created state-backed forest carbon offsets, later

Growing and maintaining older forests with bigger trees sequesters enormous amounts of carbon. Offset projects such as the van Eck Forest in California contribute to reducing emissions worldwide.

included as part of California's cap and trade system. In 2006, PFT's van Eck Forest in California became the first carbon offset project developed under these rigorous crediting rules. Now, in a few short years, more than 7,000,000 acres of forest are engaged in offset projects in 28 states, demonstrating for the world how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a credible, durable, and enforceable way. Of the 172.7 million carbon offsets issued by the ARB so far, independently-verified forest projects, primarily improved forest management projects which grow and maintain older, natural managed forests, account for about 80%. This reflects not only the importance of forests as climate solutions, but also the practicality of the approach.

Carbon prices at auction have reached all-time highs in recent months, indicating growing demand. This is expected to further increase as California moves to meet its goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030. In addition to considering new offset project types, the task force will be recommending refinements to the existing protocols based on lessons learned to date and a wider understanding of offset standards for forests. This will encourage more forest owners to provide these real, additional, and rigorously quantified forest offsets. The enormity of the climate crisis and the need to make a difference in the next decade means forest conservation and climate stewardship are crucial to expand. The Task Force will deliver its advice for CARB by the end of 2020.





# Rising from the ashes: restoration at Yosemite

PFT'S HOLDINGS ON THE BORDER OF YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, BURNED BY THE FERGUSON FIRE, WILL SOON BE TEEMING WITH NEW GROWTH—READ ABOUT OUR WORK TO RESTORE THIS LANDSCAPE

Did you know that PFT owns almost 1,000 acres adjacent to Yosemite National Park? These lands were part of John Muir's original conception of the Park, but lobbying interests of the time—namely, the Yosemite Timber Company—prevented them from being added to the Park itself. Lying just west of state Highway 41 at Yosemite West on the Henness Ridge, these lands have commanding views south to the Wild and Scenic Merced River, west to the Central Valley, and north into the main Yosemite Valley. The ridge itself is a key deer migration corridor and the site of a traditional native American trail.

Dotted with springs and meadows as well as magnificent forests, PFT acquired this land sixteen years ago in order to prevent more development and protect and buffer Yosemite National Park.

Fast forward to the summer of 2018 and the deadly Ferguson Fire. Henness Ridge was chosen as a key fire line to stop the fire from entering Yosemite West (see the President's Letter in the Summer 2018 issue of *Forest Life*). A significant portion of our property burned; we are now in the process of restoring almost 500 acres.

With funding from the California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), a unit of the US Department of Agriculture, we began this work in 2019, removing dangerous snags, thinning in overstocked areas, and improving access and other conditions for reforestation. Thanks to the support of One Tree Planted, we have 125,000 seedlings that are ready to be planted in the upcoming months. 2020 is the year we will help this forest rise from the ashes by reforesting and restoring it to a well-spaced, diverse, and resilient natural forest.





PHIL SCHERMEISTER

Opposite page: PFT's properties near Yosemite overlook the Wild and Scenic south fork of the Merced River.

Above: The Ferguson Fire burned through almost half of our properties on Henness Ridge. In the spring of 2020, we will plant a diverse mix of 125,000 native seedlings.

Left: Fire is a natural feature of these landscapes, and is essential for renewal and regrowth.

Below: Larger, well-spaced trees on PFT's Yosemite property.

Keep up to date on this project at  
[pacificforest.org/yosemite2020](https://pacificforest.org/yosemite2020)



PHIL SCHERMEISTER



# Safeguarding California's water supply, the natural way

**CALIFORNIA IS IN DROUGHT, AGAIN. RESTORING OUR WATERSHED INFRASTRUCTURE TO IMPROVE WATER SECURITY IS COST-EFFECTIVE AND HAS MANY CO-BENEFITS—HERE'S HOW WE CAN DO IT**

California's water security is deeply threatened by the uncertainties of climate change. While water seems to come from a dam, it comes to the dam from the encircling forested watersheds. In fact, five watersheds in northern California supply the very large majority of the state's drinking and irrigated agricultural water, as well as more than 80% of the fresh water for San Francisco Bay. More than 28 million people in California and millions of acres of agriculture receive water from these sources; it originates as water and snowmelt flowing from the volcanoes of the Southern Cascade, the Northern Sierra, and the Trinity Mountains.

These key source watersheds are increasingly vulnerable to uncharacteristically intense and tragic fire, extreme rain events, drought, fragmentation, and pests. The impacts of all of these are exacerbated by the effects of climate change. As California becomes warmer and drier overall, and its population is projected to hit 50 million by 2050, demand for this water will only increase.

Neither new dams nor improving other built infrastructure alone can solve this problem. The state must invest in its natural water infrastructure. Multiple studies have shown that restoring and conserving these key source watersheds will not only improve the security and reliability of the state's water supply; it will also restore forests to reduce intense fire risk, increase resilient carbon storage, buffer the climate impacts of more extreme storms and droughts, and promote adaptation and rural economic sustainability. However, investments in our watersheds have been sporadic at best. A more comprehensive, integrated, and large scale effort will have major benefits for the state.





PFT's Healthy Watersheds California program is working to ensure California adopts a new landscape-scale, watershed-wide approach to allow for the efficient and cost-effective assembling of resources: human, institutional, and financial. To implement this, Assemblymember Richard Bloom has introduced AB 2693 to identify and coordinate investments in this vital watershed region. It would, through a new Watershed Restoration Administration (WRA):

- Establish a comprehensive implementation plan for restoration and conservation to simultaneously benefit watershed function, wildlife habitat, and climate resilience.
- Create a Steering Committee of regulatory agencies responsible for implementing the plan, as well as an Advisory and Coordination Group comprised of federal and state partners, landowners, tribes, local governments, and experts.
- Administer, aggregate, and coordinate funds from multiple sources (state and federal programs) and make directed grants consistent with the implementation plan.
- Provide an accessible public platform for transparency around progress completing the plan.

This framework builds on and accelerates efforts already underway from AB 2551 (Wood, 2018) and AB 2480 (Bloom, 2016). The WRA can serve as a pilot project for coordinating and leveraging other state efforts, and also demonstrate how to work at the scale needed, moving beyond a reactive, project-by-project approach to one that is comprehensive, strategic and synergistic.

The WRA would be a pioneering and innovative way to use the proven approach typical of large-scale infrastructure projects, but applied here to the restoration and maintenance of the state's "green infrastructure." This focused initiative would support thousands of family-wage jobs, promoting rural economic development in a region suffering from some of the highest unemployment rates and greatest income inequality in California and nationwide. It would also deliver more water results (in terms of inflow, storage, and flood reduction) and co-benefits (from fire risk reduction to improved water timing to wildlife adaptation) than any other single water infrastructure project currently proposed in the state, and would do so more cost-effectively.

"Ensuring that California has reliable sources of agricultural and drinking water is of critical importance statewide," notes bill author Assemblymember Richard Bloom. "AB 2693 will facilitate the conservation and restoration of our natural infrastructure, which is the most cost-effective approach to protecting our water supply." We must act now to protect California's water, forests, and communities.



Watershed restoration projects have lasting benefits for water security. This series of photos shows the result of restoration work done by Plumas Corporation, a key partner for PFT, at Clarks Creek in the Plumas National Forest. Clarks Creek is in the Feather River watershed, which supplies the Oroville Dam and is key to California's water security. AB 2693 would facilitate and expand such work. Opposite: the five key source watersheds.





**PACIFIC FOREST TRUST**

[www.pacificforest.org](http://www.pacificforest.org)

**THE PRESIDIO**

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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California and Oregon are showing increasing symptoms of climate change in 2020, including recurring drought and historic flooding.

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**Six generations of stewardship at the historic Phillips Family Tree Farm**

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**A step forward for climate in Oregon**

In March, Oregon Governor Kate Brown signed an Executive Order establishing new climate goals and setting targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

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**Assessing improvements to California's offset protocols**

The California Air Resources Board recently convened a Task Force to improve forest offset protocols; PFT's Co-CEO Constance Best and Board member Andrea Tuttle, PhD, serve on the Task Force.

2019 capped the warmest decade on record and was just 0.04° C cooler than the warmest year ever (2016). Global temperatures are on pace to rise as much as 3.2° C (5.8° F) by the year 2100, far exceeding the 2° C agreed on in the 2015 Paris Accords.

**p. 12**  
**Reforestation and restoration on the edge of Yosemite**

More than 65% of our water comes from forested watersheds; 85% of our threatened, endangered, and vulnerable species are forest-dependent.

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**A naturally cost-effective solution for water security**