

News Release

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Agreement signed to protect wildlife, reduce wildfire risk

VALLEJO, California, August 16, 2017 - In a ceremony today, the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Southwest Region, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining their agreement to work together to conserve California spotted owls and other wildlife while coordinating wildfire risk reduction measures on federal, state and SPI lands in California.

"The Forest Service is committed to working with our state agency partners and the timber industry in California to conserve wildlife, and reduce the risk of wildfire," said Randy Moore, Regional Forester for the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Southwest Region. "We would like to thank the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for their work and encouragement in this area, and we look forward to our continued collaboration. We believe this MOU is an excellent example of how government and the private sector can work together to address important safety and environmental issues."

"This agreement is an important step for the future of California spotted owls," said Jennifer Norris, supervisor of the Sacramento office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Collaboration and partnership is essential for the management of these sensitive wildlife habitats."

"This MOU furthers vital efforts to mitigate the impacts of damaging wildfire and protect sensitive wildlife habitat," said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE director and California's state forester. "The agreement leverages our combined resources to establish a strategic conservation framework to help protect over two million acres of forestland in areas where our respective land ownership and responsibilities align."

Under the MOU, the U.S. Forest Service, CAL FIRE, and SPI will coordinate their respective fire management strategies, and share technical information regarding the location of sensitive wildlife habitats. This coordination will increase the effectiveness of

these efforts on over 2 million acres of federal, state and private land in California.

Joining in the MOU is NFWF, an independent, non-profit organization created by Congress in 1984. The Foundation is the nation's largest conservation grant-maker, and works with both the public and private sectors to protect and restore wildlife, plants and habitats. Under the MOU, the Foundation will work with the government agencies and SPI to identify high priority conservation projects on federal, state and private lands that can help support the conservation objectives of the MOU.

"The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is pleased to join with the U.S. Forest Service, CAL FIRE, and SPI to implement conservation opportunities in California that will benefit California spotted owl and other species," said Jonathan Birdsong, Director of NFWF's Western Regional Office. "We look forward to implementing conservation projects in California that will benefit people and wildlife for years to come."

"We thank the U.S. Forest Service, CAL FIRE and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for coming together with our company to implement a coordinated strategy for conserving California spotted owls and other wildlife while reducing wildfire risks in California," said Mark Emmerson, SPI's Chairman and Chief Financial Officer. "We believe this approach to wildfire risk reduction and wildlife management in California is a win-win for the public and private sectors, and will result in greater protection for communities and wildlife."

For more information about these agencies and organizations, visit our websites at:

- U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region: www.fs.usda.gov/r5
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: www.fws.gov
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE): www.fire.ca.gov
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF): www.nfwf.org
- Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI): www.spi-ind.com

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A Memorandum Of Understanding was signed Aug. 16, 2017, agreeing to protect wildlife and reduce wildfire risk on federal, state and Sierra Pacific Industries land in California. (L to R) Jonathan Birdsong, Director of National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's (NFWF) Western Regional Office, Matthew Reischman, Asst. Deputy Director of Resource Protection for California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), Mark Emmerson, Sierra Pacific Industries' (SPI) Chairman and Chief Financial Officer and Randy Moore, Regional Forester for the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Southwest Region. (USDA photo by Paul Wade)