



# SIERRA PACIFIC INDUSTRIES

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Sierra Pacific Industries, USDA Secretary and Forest Service Chief Announce Wildfire Prevention and Hazardous Fuel Reduction Projects**

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Last night, U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins, USDA Forest Service Chief Randy Moore, and Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) CEO Mark Emmerson announced a \$75 million Stewardship Agreement for the construction and maintenance of strategically placed fuel breaks on national forests in California and Oregon. This investment significantly expands upon unprecedented efforts to create a network of fuel breaks across private and federal land to protect communities and reduce wildfire risk.

“This private-public partnership represents a major step forward in wildfire prevention, creating an interconnected network of fuel breaks that will slow fire progression, improve firefighter safety, and better protect communities, watersheds and critical infrastructure,” **said Sierra Pacific Industries CEO Mark Emmerson.** “We are grateful to Secretary Rollins, USFS Chief Moore, and the Administration for their leadership in this effort. By strategically linking fuel breaks across both public and private lands, we can maximize their effectiveness in reducing wildfire risk. We are grateful for this partnership with USDA and the Forest Service to expand this fuel break network, demonstrating our shared commitment to protecting the people of California from catastrophic wildfires.”

“Protecting the people and communities we serve is one of our most sacred trusts, and this partnership with Sierra Pacific Industries stands as a testament to that commitment,” **said Department of Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins.** “Our team estimates this groundbreaking public-private partnership will slash the time in half compared to the standard timeframe to complete this critical wildfire mitigation.”

“Sierra Pacific Industries is well-versed in what must be done to tackle the ongoing threats facing forests and towns in California and Oregon,” **said Forest Service Chief Randy Moore.** “This partnership will leverage our collective expertise to do strategically focused work and add to our broader collaboration on both prevention and post-fire restoration aimed at keeping our forests productive and healthy.”

The agreement will initiate the process to develop, construct and maintain shaded fuel break projects over a three-year period in California, adding about 400 miles to the existing 2,200-mile network of interconnected fuel breaks across private and federal land. The agreement also provides for construction and maintenance of fuel breaks in Oregon.

State and community leaders have praised this historic partnership as a vital step in strengthening wildfire resilience and protecting California’s most vulnerable communities. Here’s what they’re saying:

“The Palisades Fire in early January and Park Fire last July remind us precisely why we need effective wildfire prevention,” **said U.S. Congressman Doug LaMalfa (CA-01).** “California has

experienced wildfires that have devastated homes, businesses, and entire regions in one year's time. It can take decades to rebuild. Residents of California deserve leaders who are implementing a comprehensive strategy to combat wildfires. Today's announcement is a big step forward to treat our forests and ensure we have the tools in place to slow down wildfires. Implementing a coordinated fuel break network will slow and stop fires, protecting our watersheds, infrastructure, residents and give our firefighters a chance to put these fires out."

"Establishing strong private-public partnerships is critical to how we approach wildfire mitigation and prevention, and I'm grateful for the quick work of the U.S. Forest Service to finalize these plans and put them into motion," said **Matt Dias, president and CEO of the California Forestry Association**. "The cost of implementing and maintaining fuel breaks is a fraction of post-fire recovery. The comprehensive fuel break network that will be created over the next three years will make it significantly easier to execute suppression activities, ensuring the protection of our communities, forests, and firefighters is the highest priority."

"My town of Paradise knows first-hand the value of fuel breaks," said **Butte County Supervisor Doug Teeter**. "The fuel breaks placed near Highway 32 by Sierra Pacific Industries helped slow down the Park Fire last summer, protecting neighboring communities from devastation. We can attest to the good work this will do for our communities, and we are grateful that this agreement includes maintenance of fuel breaks."

Fuel break project locations were selected in partnership with the Forest Service and CAL FIRE to protect lives, property, critical water infrastructure, and the environment.

Fuel breaks have a 68% [success rate](#) in containing fires when coupled with the proper suppression resources. In California, the communities of Butte Meadows and Forest Ranch were protected in the 2024 Park Fire due to the [Highway 32 Fuel Break](#) established by SPI. San Diego County benefitted from a federally managed [fuel break](#), slowing down the progression of the 2024 Grove 2 Fire. [Studies](#) show that for every \$1 spent on wildfire prevention, \$4 is saved in suppression costs.

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*Photos can be found on the [SPI's Flickr account](#).*

## **BACKGROUND:**

- Congress passed the [American Relief Act of 2024](#) in December, which included \$75 million to construct and maintain shaded fuel breaks on USFS lands in the Pacific Region. Elected officials in California supported the legislation.
- In 2024, Sierra Pacific Industries began working with National Forests in Northern California to identify areas where strategic fuel breaks could be constructed on Forest Service land.

*Sierra Pacific Industries is a third-generation, family-owned forest products company based in Anderson, California. The company is the largest private landowner in the U.S., owning and managing over 2.4 million acres of timberland in California, Washington, and Oregon. SPI is one of the largest U.S. lumber and millwork producers, as well as a manufacturer of windows, doors and biomass energy. The company is committed to sustainable forest management and manufacturing innovation along with a commitment to their people and operating communities.*