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Agreement bringing \$1.13 million will help plan for forest health, resiliency

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The North Yuba Forest Partnership has entered into an agreement to receive \$1.13 million to plan future forest health and wildfire resilience treatments within the North Yuba River watershed.

“We are absolutely thrilled,” said Melinda Booth, executive director for the South Yuba River Citizens League, in a news release.

SYRCL is one of the partnership’s leading organizations for restoration planning and project management.

The funding originated from the U.S. Forest Service’s Fireshed Program.

“This funding couldn’t be better timed or more appreciated,” Booth added. “It will enable us to develop the restoration plan to restore the North Yuba River watershed – 275,000 acres. In light of the extreme fire season Californians are experiencing this year, we recognize more than ever the importance of restoring health and resiliency to our forests, for nature and people alike.”

The Fireshed funds will support the partnership’s landscape-level planning, design, and prioritization efforts. These efforts include assessments for wildlife, botany, cultural resources and hydrology throughout the North Yuba River watershed, as well as upcoming environmental review and analysis. Additionally, funds will cover staff support for project management, meeting facilitation, public outreach, communication and collaborative management needs.

“The U.S. Forest Service’s Fireshed Program funds build on existing capacity of staff specialists with the Tahoe National Forest, bringing us close to fully funding the first phase of the planning process – an important and timely goal,” said Booth. “This allows the North Yuba Forest Partnership to focus on the task at hand – to protect communities and restore forest health and wildfire resilience within the North Yuba watershed.”

“The Fireshed model and associated funding are relatively new,” said Eli Ilano, Tahoe National Forest supervisor. “In recent years, researchers in the U.S. Forest Service’s Rocky Mountain Research station created a framework for assessing cross-boundary wildfire risk on National Forests. The areas within this framework that have a higher wildfire risk can be identified and prioritized for fuel management and forest resilience treatments. The North Yuba River watershed was identified as a top priority in California based upon this model and an ideal candidate for Fireshed funding. The strong commitment and collaboration of the North Yuba Forest Partnership will help implement improvements to reduce wildfire risks in this fireshed.”

The North Yuba Forest Partnership is a diverse group of nine organizations committed to using the best available science in planning and implementing landscape-level forest restoration within the North Yuba River watershed.

To learn more about the North Yuba Forest Partnership and the North Yuba River watershed, visit the new online interactive story map highlighting the ecological and human values within the watershed, the risks posed by high-severity wildfire, and the treatments that can be used to restore forest health and resilience and protect communities within this 275,000-acre landscape.

To sign up for updates from the North Yuba Forest Partnership, visit <http://www.yubaforests.org>.

Source: Yuba Water Agency

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