



CALIFORNIA  
LICENSED  
FORESTERS  
ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 1516 · Pioneer, CA 95666  
phone · 209.293.7323 fax · 209.293.7544  
email · clfa@volcano.net web · www.clfa.org

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**NEWS FROM THE  
CALIFORNIA LICENSED FORESTERS ASSOCIATION (CLFA)**

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Contact: Bill Keye, CLFA Government Affairs, 530/355-0670

**Budget Woes at CDF Tree Nurseries Harming State's Environment,  
Biodiversity**

California foresters are reeling from the news of drastic cutbacks at two state tree seedling nurseries. The nurseries, which have been in continuous operation for decades, are crucial to the maintenance of the state's exceptional forest and wildland biological diversity. The Lewis A. Moran Reforestation Center (LAMRC) near Davis and the Magalia Reforestation Center in Butte County have stopped planting seedlings or procuring new seed supplies for storage and future use. CDF Director Andrea Tuttle has described the nurseries' current status as "mothballed."

The nursery program operates as sort of a 'biodiversity safety net'. It does not directly compete with private nurseries providing tree seedlings to commercial users such as landscaping or timber companies. Instead, under the policies of the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, the program operates a seed bank and procures native seed stocks from conifer, brush and herbaceous species in 84 distinct seed zones sprinkled across the state.

The seed bank, located at LAMRC, stores 36,000 pounds of seed genetically adapted to all zones and to different elevations within each zone. Together, the two nurseries are capable of producing nearly 3 million seedlings annually, much of it grown

on a speculative basis to ensure that seedlings are always available for purchase by landowners in the event of an unforeseen emergency such as a wildfire.

Ironically, the funding crunch is directly tied to the actions of environmental activists. Lawsuits over the management of Jackson Demonstration State Forest, located near Fort Bragg in Mendocino County, have halted timber sales which annually contribute approximately \$13 million to state natural resource coffers. The timber receipts support a range of CDF programs such as recreation and forestry assistance, including the nursery program.

“What is happening with the nurseries is only reflective of the larger crisis affecting forest management in this state,” said CLFA President Gary F. Howard. “There’s such a thing as environmental overkill, and that’s what the forestry profession in California is dealing with. Despite our vast forest resources, the Golden State now imports 80% of the wood that we use from other states and nations. We’re regulating and litigating ourselves right out of the ability to sustainably manage our native forest ecosystems. It’s hurting people and the environment, too. The nursery crisis really drives that home.”

CLFA is committed to working to save the seed bank and the state’s ability to provide a ‘biodiversity safety net’ for fire-ravaged regions such as those scorched by last fall’s Southern California wildfires. The seed bank, first created in 1887 with the purpose of providing “the rarer varieties of trees not grown in quantity by nurseries,” is a priceless conservation legacy that must be preserved.

*The California Licensed Foresters Association, with approximately 750 members, represents the common interests of California Registered Professional Foresters. The Association provides opportunities for continuing education and public outreach to its membership, which includes diverse professionals affiliated with government agencies, private timber companies, consultants and the academic community. Governed by an elected Board of Directors, CLFA was established in 1980 after the passage of the landmark California Professional Foresters Law.*