



Forestry Challenge Championship

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The Crisis



Causes:

- Climate: droughts, winds, lighting
- Little active prevention (government/individual), idea of putting fires out as soon as possible

Effects:

- Decreased moisture (positive feedback loop with negative outcome)
- Huge acreage burned
- Property, life, biodiversity loss

Statistics from Historic and Recent Fire Seasons

- Normal fire season, firefighters expect 10% of embers to create new ignitions
- Recently, firefighters expect 90% of embers to create new ignitions
 - Embers were thrown up to 1.7 miles ahead of the front of the fire



Statistics from Historic and Recent Fire Seasons: How did we get to this point?

- Vegetation is six to sevenfold denser than 100 years ago
- 7 of the 10 past years have been severe droughts
- A beetle epidemic killed 147M trees in CA, making them more susceptible to fire
- Lower moisture content in the vegetation (3%) during dry winters
- Lightning events - lightning caused 582 fires in CA in 2021



Forestland Ownership in California

Fire knows no boundaries

Federal: 57%

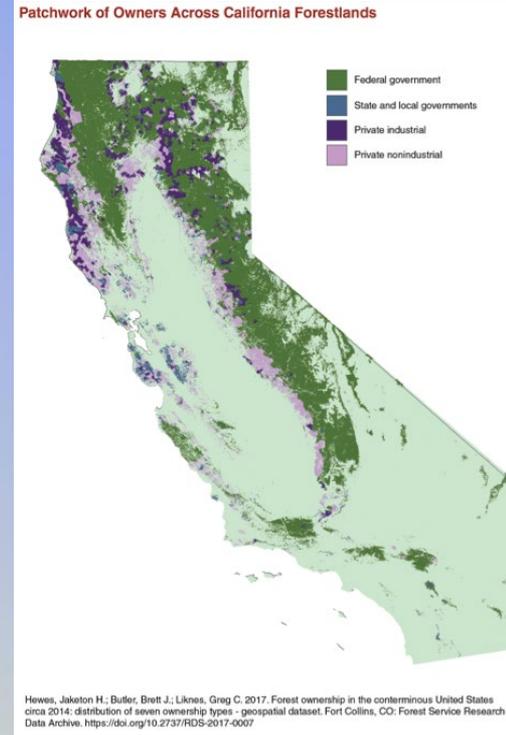
Private Nonindustrial: 25%

Private Industrial: 14%

State: 2%

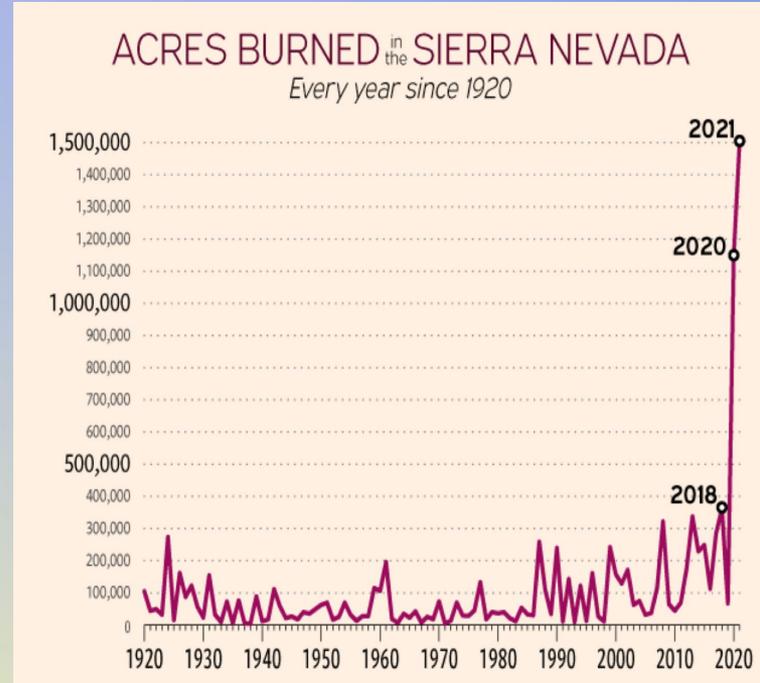
Local Governments: 1%

These private nonindustrial owners are typically the most uneducated in terms of forest and fire management on their land.



Statistics from Historic and Recent Fire Seasons

- From 1990-2020, two fires burned more than 200,000 acres each
- In 2020 and 2021, four fires burned more than 200,000 acres each



Stakeholders: What Are They?

- Stakeholders are groups that each have interests in the happenings of the fire crisis
 - For example, Gary Whitson states that CalFire is there “to serve and safeguard the people from CA and protect the property and resources of CA.”
- Stakeholders differ in the span of their interests
 - Interests can be either private, industrial, or public
 - Interests can also have either federal, state, or local jurisdiction
- Stakeholders can be both... rate with one another



Federal, State, and Local Stakeholders

- Federal: Forest Service, Congress, Tribes, Federal interest groups
- State: CalFire, CA legislature, CA Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, State Research Groups, State prescribed fire groups
- Local: Private forestland owners and assisting groups, county boards of supervisors, Fire Safe councils, collaborative groups, local advocacy groups



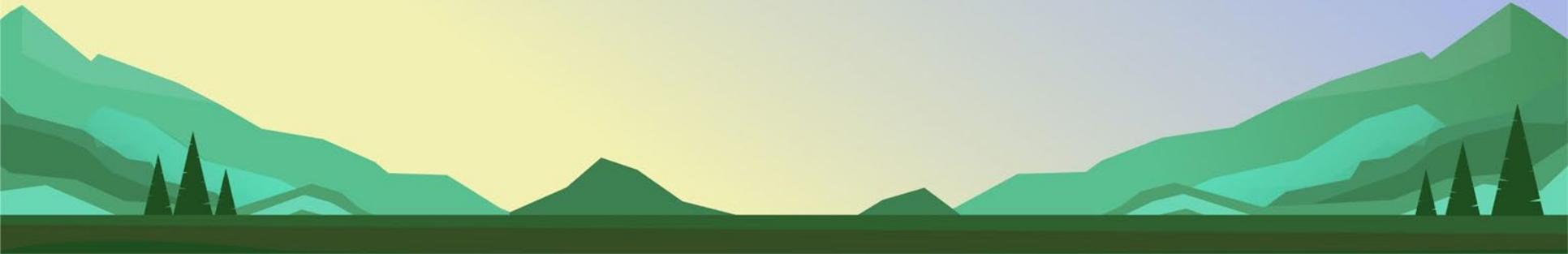
Private Stakeholders

- Private Landowners
- Organizations/clubs: CA Licensed Foresters Association, Associated CA Loggers, Society of American Foresters, Environmental Community
- Industry: timber companies, biomass companies, utility companies



CALIFORNIA
LICENSED
FORESTERS
ASSOCIATION

Relationships Between Stakeholders



Sierra Pacific Industries and small private landowners



- Local community
- Personal relationships
- Educational opportunities (foresters, loggers, etc)
- Change over time: consistent because both benefit

CalFire and Foresters

- CalFire acts as a regulatory government agency upon independent, licensed foresters
- CalFire must approve any harvesting plan that foresters hope to advance
- CalFire has plans to enforce the documentation of each forest management plan by foresters and the removal of commercial trees by loggers
 - Proves regulation
- CalFire does not only regulate foresters but also supports them
- CalFire hires foresters to carry out and organize fuel-reduction projects
- CalFire hires foresters to initiate logging for safe fire maintenance
- Change over time: the relationship has increased because CalFire wants so specialize and work with experts
 - The fire crisis has worsened



Loggers and Environmental Communities

Be a Champion for the Environment

Remind Me Later

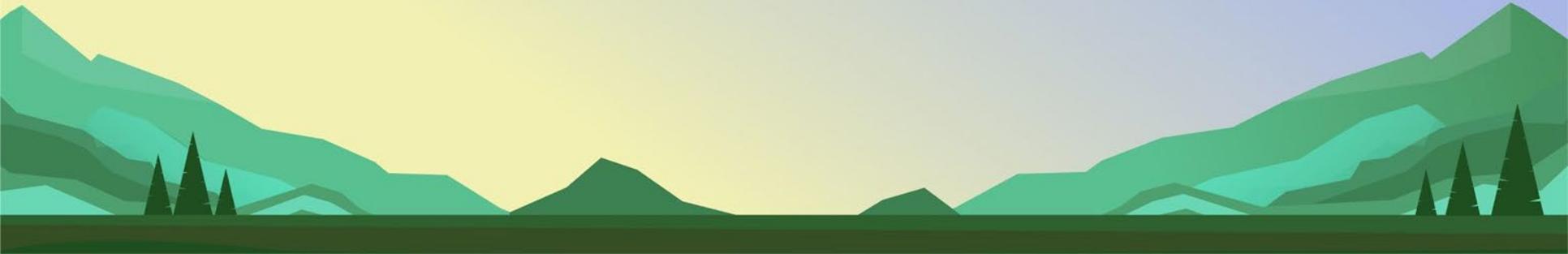
We must work tirelessly to protect wildlife and wild places, ensure clean air and water for all, and fight for environmental justice.

Donate Today!

- Loggers execute foresters' plans and have built a better relationship with the general public in recent years due to an increase in fires
- “Number one thing in people’s minds in California is the wildfire crisis” Mike Albrecht, professional logger
- Strongly opinionated environmentalist groups like Sierra Club publicize their opposing point of view (including a zero cut policy)
- They use powerful words to strike fear into the general public, in part to inspire action but also to monetize this opportunity
- Change over time: worsened relationship because of the climate crisis and the Sierra Club’s capitalization on fear



Our Focus: CalFire



What is CalFire?

- A state government program
- mainly grant funded- not enough CalFire workers but they have money
- CalFire: the ones you see responding to forest fires
- Goals: to protect the people of California and their property while also safeguarding resources
- CalFire is expanding because fire prevention is becoming more of a focus than fighting the fires
- Closest allies: Forest service to manage and suppress, private industrial timber companies, local Fire Safe councils, county boards of supervisors
- Authority over state jurisdiction, non-federal forests
- Skill set in relation to extinguishing fires and preventing fires



What obstacles stand in CalFire's way?

- Red tape of the state bureaucracy
- Responsibility to citizens more so than private companies
- Time:
 - a. Funds/grants
 - b. Get biologists, hydrologists, wildlife experts to agree and hatch a plan

Manpower

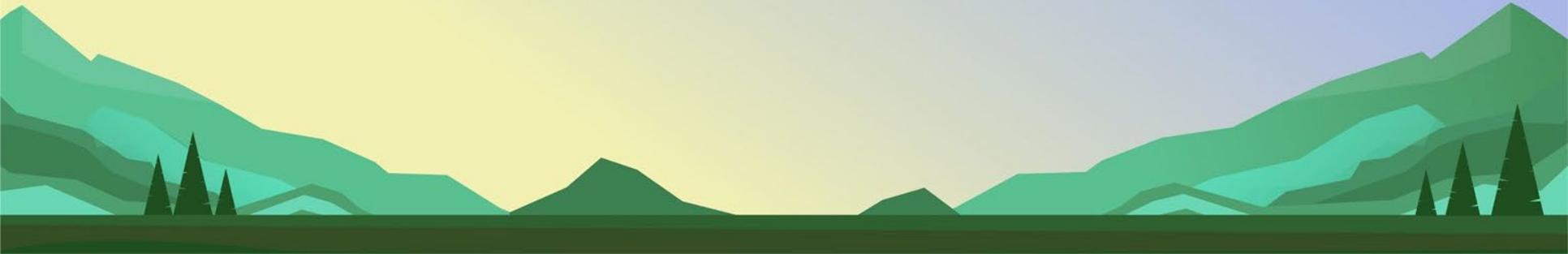
- Megafires focus energy and funds on other events less availability for prevention
- Lack of employers, lack of interest, incentive, awareness
- Less manpower means not enough acreage that can be treated

Small forestland owners

- Lack of awareness, it is hard for people to comprehend the importance, although bundling is really important.



Solutions for CalFire



Solutions

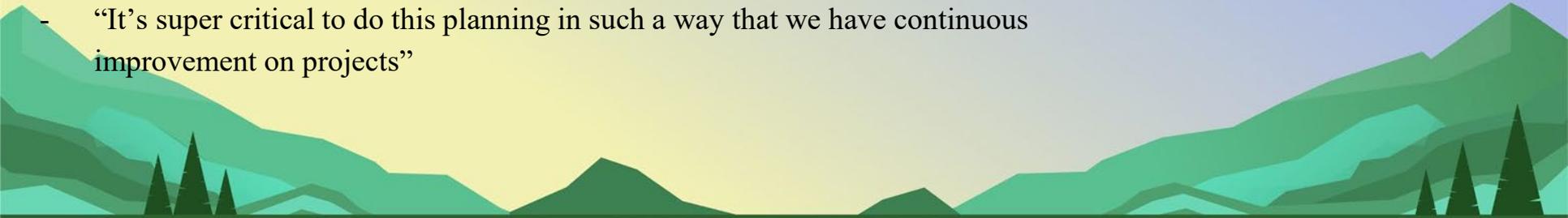
1. Make Projects more continuous to create a multiplier effect

2. Seek more limited partial Suspensions of ceqa

3. Use cci funding for workforce development

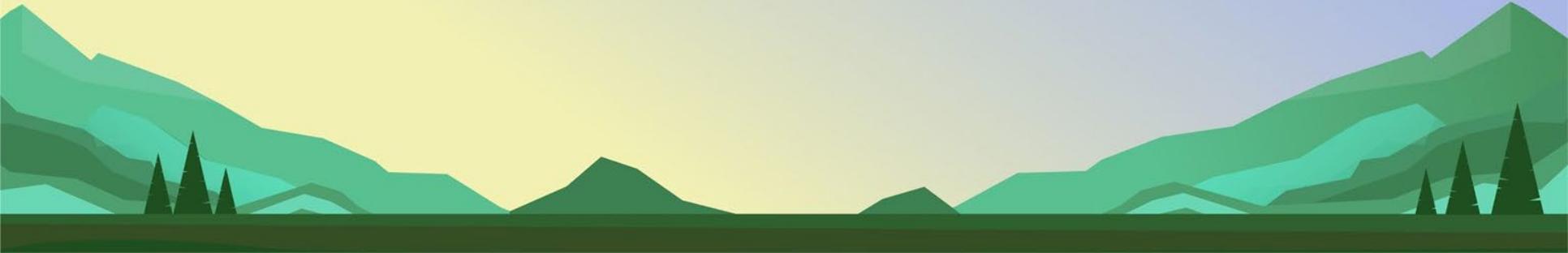
1. Make Projects more continuous to create a multiplier effect

- According to licensed professional forester Ryan Wimmer 1,000 acres of treated land is often just “a drop in the bucket” but he said that, “I can take a thousand acres for ten miles across the ridge as a means to protect the community”
- Encourage grantees to strategically locate acre treatments so that they can have a multiplier effect and then we build off of them and build deeper into the forests
- Example: Add onto a ridge top fuel break to extend it
- “As far as lasting impact and experiencing a multiplicative effect instead of making a square make a 600 ft swath that followed the ridge top so they have somewhere to dig their heels in to stop a fire or slow a fire down”
- “It’s super critical to do this planning in such a way that we have continuous improvement on projects”



2. Seek more limited partial suspensions of CEQA

- CEQA - The California Environmental Quality Act requires public agencies and local governments to evaluate and disclose the environmental impacts of development projects or other major land use decisions, and to limit or avoid those impacts to the extent feasible. (Defined by the city of Newport beach)
- Appendix G of CEQA requires that all of these areas are surveyed to ensure that there are no adverse effects to:



Appendix G of CEQA

Agriculture and Forestry

Resources

Aesthetics

Land Use / Planning

Population / Housing

Mineral Resources Public

Services

Tribal Cultural Resources

Air Quality

Noise

Biological Resources

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Cultural Resources

Hazards & Hazardous Materials

Geology /Soils

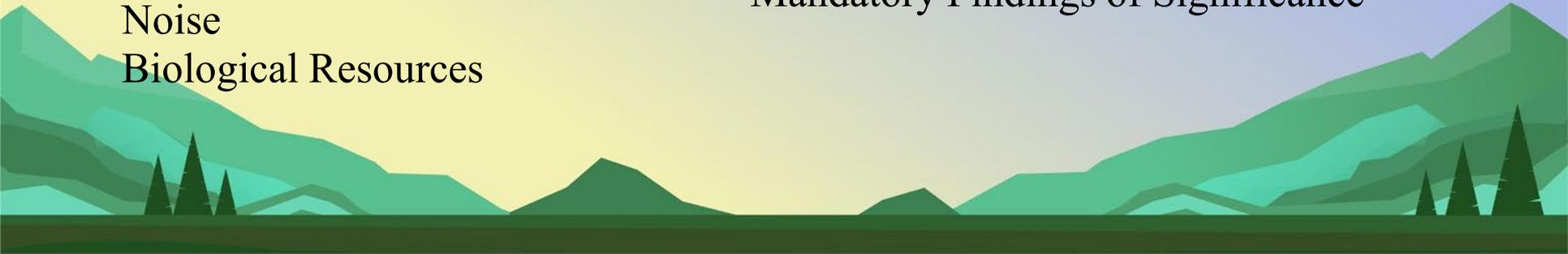
Hydrology / Water Quality

Recreation

Utilities / Service Systems

Transportation/Traffic

Mandatory Findings of Significance



2. Seek more limited partial Suspensions of ceqa

- Developed a process to which Cal Fire could get environmental approval from the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA)
- If you avoid all of the known sites of listed plants and animals and all the known archeological resources, CEQA can be suspended for the project
- Took 3 months to get clearances instead of a year
- 6-7 months to get 1,000 acres done



3. Use CCI funding for workforce development

- California Climate Investment auctions where polluters buy carbon credits
- “We are lacking severely in licensed timber operators or vegetation management contractors, people with equipment”- Ryan Wimmer
- Critically lacking the workforce
- Pour CCI dollars to into local community colleges that had a heavy equipment operator class



Thank You!

