



Wildfire Awareness Week: Separate Funding Needed for Fighting Wildfires and Managing Forests

Patricia Megason in *The Sacramento Bee*

May 4, 2016 – The first week of May has traditionally represented the beginning of wildfire season in California, with events such as Wildfire Awareness Week aimed at raising awareness of dangers poised to come. However, the ongoing drought, continued mismanagement of forest lands, and a nonsensical funding formula for prevention and suppression have resulted in a year-round wildfire season in California. Add that to this year's bark beetle infestation and tree mortality issue, and the results greatly compound the risk of catastrophic wildfires this season.

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Senators Urge Reauthorization of Secure Rural Schools

Last Friday, a bipartisan coalition of Senators, led by Senators Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Jon Tester (D-Montana), and Ron Wyden (D-Oregon), sent a letter to Senate leadership urging for the reauthorization of the Federal Secure Rural Schools and Self-Determination Act (SRS) for Fiscal Year 2016. The SRS program is authorized by Congress to mitigate the impact to county governments and schools from the reduction of timber harvesting production on federal forest lands.

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Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3 Approves Budget Language to Expand 2-1-1 Network to all 58 Counties

On Wednesday, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #3 on Resources and Transportation considered several Budget issues including Budget Bill language provisions, as requested by Assembly Member Frank Bigelow, which would permit the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to expand the 2-1-1 telephone referral service to counties that currently lack access to the service.

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Rural Volunteers Sought for California's Road Charge Pilot

The California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) Road Charge Pilot Program is in full swing with more than 6,000 volunteers signed up, but Caltrans is still seeking potential participants to ensure the study best represents the geographic, demographic and socioeconomic diversity of California. In particular, volunteers from rural areas are sought to participate in the study and help determine if a road charge is an equitable and sustainable way to replace the deteriorating gas tax and better fund transportation infrastructure.

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Delta Flood Emergency Response Grant Program Second Round Draft Guidelines

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has announced a 30-day public comment period for the Delta Flood Emergency Response Grant Program Second Round

Draft Guidelines. This grant is designed to provide funding for local emergency responders within the Delta to improve their capacity to respond to flood emergencies.

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Announcements regarding hearings, grants, and public comment notices of importance to California's rural counties.

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Legislative Update

RCRC members are encouraged to share letters addressed to state and federal representatives and regulatory bodies with RCRC's Government Affairs staff. Click "Read More" to access information related to the current status of legislation impacting California's rural counties.

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Regulatory Update

RCRC members are encouraged to submit comments on regulatory matters to state and federal regulatory bodies, and to provide a copy to RCRC's Government Affairs staff. Click "Read More" to access information related to the current status of regulations impacting California's rural counties.

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