



Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation
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Six Rivers National Forest
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation *in partnership* with the Six Rivers National Forest *through the Smith River Collaborative (SRC)*, has received Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL-Fire), California Climate Investment-Fire Prevention Funding and will work together to help prevent wildfires around the Community of Gasquet.

The Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation (Nation) was recently awarded California Climate Investments (CCI), Fire Prevention Funding (Funding), for the *Smith River Collaborative Gasquet Community Protection Project* (Project). The Nation, a stakeholder in the Smith River Collaborative (SRC) a joint venture between Del Norte County elected officials, local and regional environmental groups, local Tribes, the Del Norte Fire Safe Council, the American Forest Resource Council, and the Six Rivers National Forest, will administer the Project. The Project is a hazardous fuels reduction project designed to reduce fuel loading in high-risk areas within the Smith River National Recreation Area of the Six Rivers National Forest and aboriginal territory of the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation, around the community of Mvs-ye (Gasquet).

The Project will construct 1,613 acres of new fuelbreaks and re-treat 225 acres of existing fuelbreaks using methods intended to minimize greenhouse gas emissions during the Project. Hazardous fuels reduction activities conducted within the federally managed 1,838-acre treatment area will enhance the defensibility of these communities at high risk to wildland fire and help reduce fire hazard to approximately 1,000 structures, community, and utility assets, and other highly valued historical, cultural, subsistence, and recreational resources. 200 acres of this treatment will be accomplished using the Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation Tribal Resources Field Crew. All treatment locations are identified in the Del Norte Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) and Cal Fire 2020 Unit Plan as high-priority locations and essential to help protect the Wildland-Urban Interfaces of this community at high risk to wildland fire.

Del Norte County's location, at the top Northwestern point of California, is a great place to call home. The area is renowned for our wild rivers, towering redwood trees, pristine coastline, and rich wildlife habitats. Every year the threat of wildfires in our community increases for residents, visitors, infrastructures, and natural landscapes. The wildfires over the last few years have been the largest, deadliest, and most destructive wildfires in California history.

Project goals include:

- Reduce wildfire hazards to people and infrastructure in the low-income community of Mvs-ye (Gasquet) and nearby communities of Tes-t'vm-dvn (Rock Creek) and 'En-chwa (Big Flat).

- Improve emergency ingress/egress and firefighter safety in the event of future wildfires.
- Improve the long-term resilience of forests within the project area.
- Reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions by maintaining forest carbon stocks and reducing wildfire size and severity.
- Increase fire prevention awareness, knowledge, and actions within the above referenced priority communities.

Cynthia Ford, the Nation's Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, shared “This is an incredible achievement for the Nation and residents of Del Norte County. Six Rivers National Forest and the Nation feel we have a collective responsibility to reduce the potential catastrophic impacts of wildfire on our communities, natural and cultural resources. The more we work together to make our communities resilient to wildfire, the more we can accomplish toward protecting the things we all care so much about. Efforts to become fire safe, and resilient to wildfires benefit not only you and your family, but the entire community as a whole.”

Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation

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The Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation is a federally recognized Indian Nation of Tolowa Dee-ni' People. The Nation is located 3 miles south of the Oregon-California border in Northwest California. The Nation's general membership consists of over 1,800 citizens.