



# Monthly Newsletter December 2019

The Tulare County RCD Board meetings are open to the public and typically held on the second Wednesday of each month at noon in the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Conference Room inside the USDA building:  
3530 W Orchard Ct, Visalia, CA.

## **\*CHANGE OF DATE FOR FEBRUARY MEETING\***

Due to the World Ag Expo the Board of Directors meeting for February is scheduled for Wednesday the 19th at noon.

[Visit our Website](#)

## **RCPP Tree Mortality Crisis**

**Technical Assistance for Forest Health and EQIP Funding**

## RCPP CRISIS TO OPPORTUNITY: SIERRA NEVADA TREE MORTALITY



*Working  
together for  
you...*



*Financial assistance is available for dead tree removal and other forest health practices through NRCS.*

*RCPP program allows for EQIP funds to be used within the 100 foot defensible space zone and has no acreage minimum for applicants.*

Tulare County Resource Conservation District  
3530 W. Orchard Ct.  
Visalia, CA 93277  
Direct Line for RCPP: (559) 754-3155  
Email: [info@tularecountyrcd.com](mailto:info@tularecountyrcd.com)  
Website: [www.tularecountyrcd.com](http://www.tularecountyrcd.com)

The RCD is currently providing technical assistance to private non-industrial forest landowners in the form of site visits, creation of forest management plans, and promoting participation in the NRCS EQIP funding through the RCPP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program).

Call (559) 754-3155 for more information regarding the program.

## RCPP Crisis to Opportunity: Tree Mortality in the Central Sierra

### A New Opportunity for Private Non-Industrial Forest Landowners

The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are partnering to bring a new assistance program to forest land owners in the Central Sierra dealing with bark beetle tree mortality. The tree mortality crisis has created an undue burden on land owners and communities in the Central Sierra. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program Crisis to Opportunity: Tree mortality in the Central Sierra is a response to this crisis.

Local Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) in partnership with NRCS field offices, can provide technical assistance to forest landowners with beetle kill trees on their land. This assistance will produce forest management/conservation plans at no or low cost to landowners. The conservation plans will include practices aimed at hazard tree removal, fuel reduction, forest stand improvement, and reforestation where appropriate. Eligible forest conservation plans will be submitted to the RCPP Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for ranking by NRCS. Selected plans will have the option to enter into a contract with NRCS for conservation practice incentive payments. These payments average about 50% of the cost of each conservation practice. The program is designed to encourage forest management and provide some support for landowners acting to protect their forest resource.

#### Work Within the 100-foot Defensible Space

This program recognizes that the high cost of removing hazard trees and the overwhelming need to take action on private lands can prevent necessary management from occurring. Allowing work to be performed within the defensible space on non-industrial private forest land is a key piece of supporting the health and safety of the Central Sierra's forested communities. It is crucial to note, the high cost of tree removal and treatment near structures. While the EQIP payments cover a portion of the cost, the total removal cost per tree within the 100-foot zone may be more than \$1000 per tree

Non-industrial private forest landowners in the 10 county High Hazard Tree Mortality Zone (Placer, El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kern) with at least one beetle-kill conifer on their property are eligible for RCPP services.



#### RCPP Crisis to Opportunity: Central Sierra Tree Mortality

- For technical assistance to private forest landowners contact your local Resource Conservation District and NRCS field office
- Technical assistance provided by the RCD will help you understand the condition of your forested lands, assess your management goals, present options, and culminate in a Forest Management or Forest Conservation Plans
- Landowners may be eligible for incentive payments through the NRCS EQIP Sierra Tree Mortality RCPP fund pool
- Payments are intended to incentivize management, and are not designed to cover the entire cost of work
- Find the RCD near you at CARCD.org

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## Forest Health & Fire Prevention

### Tulare County Chipper Days

*The Tulare County RCD was awarded nine projects by Cal-Fire for various types of fuel management. The "Tulare County Chipper Days" is one of those nine...*



The "Chipper Days" project will encourage landowners to reduce fuel in the communities of Tulare County, some of the communities which can be offered chipping days include Ponderosa, Sequoia Crest, Three rivers, Johnsondale, California Hot Springs, Posey, Badger, Silver City, Doyle Springs, and three additional communities once we establish community support. A total of 60 chipper days will be offered to 10 communities, as well as creating a 4-acre demonstration property with signage. We estimate there are 10,000 structures in the potential project area with a total project area of 5,000 acres and an approximate area of 100 acres of chipping material during the 2-year grant period. The importance of this work was plainly illustrated in the 2017 Pier Fire near Springville. Homes with good clearance survived, which other homes without defensible space were destroyed.



## Farm Bill Assistance Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

Tulare County RCD employees worked on over 145 2003 EQIP contracts and other Farm Bill Programs including administration assistance. The employees assisted the Visalia NRCS Field Office by meeting with clients doing contract evaluations, providing technical support, assisting in practice requirement sheet write-up, and developing contract documents for the client and NRCS case files.



### *Some info about our local NRCS...*

Natural Resources Conservation Service, formerly known as the Soil Conservation Service, is an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture that provides technical assistance to farmers and other private landowners and managers.

Our local NRCS is located in the USDA office at 3530 W Orchard Court, Visalia, CA 93277 and their phone number is (559) 734-8732.

[Click here to visit the NRCS Website!](#)