

# *Caring* for COLORADO'S FORESTS

## An Overview of the Colorado State Forest Service

The Colorado State Forest Service provides technical forestry assistance, wildfire mitigation expertise and outreach and education to help landowners and communities achieve their forest management goals.



# Who We Are

*The mission of the Colorado State Forest Service is to achieve stewardship of Colorado's diverse forest environments for the benefit of present and future generations.*

Established in 1955, the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) is a service and outreach agency of the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University. Headquartered in Fort Collins, the agency provides staffing for the Division of Forestry within the Colorado Department of Natural Resources. We have approximately 105 full-time and 30 seasonal employees, and 19 field offices throughout the state.

The CSFS is committed to providing timely, relevant forestry information

and education to the citizens of Colorado to achieve resilient forests and communities. Using applied science, we have adapted our focus and approach throughout the decades in response to emerging forestry issues.

CSFS funding is obtained from the USDA Forest Service (43 percent), the state general fund and state service-based revenues (31 percent), severance taxes (7 percent) and self-funded operations and other revenues (19 percent).



## Why Care About Colorado's Forests?

Colorado's forests provide benefits that contribute to our quality of life and are vital to our state's economy. However, without careful management of forest resources, these assets and community safety are at risk.

Long-term wildfire suppression policies and prolonged periods of drought and warmer temperatures have stressed the state's forests. This has led to catastrophic wildfires and unprecedented bark beetle epidemics in forests that:

- provide drinking water to 19 states
- serve as a home to more than 2 million Coloradans that live in the wildland-urban interface, the area where human development meets or intermingles with wildland vegetation
- sequester carbon dioxide and clean the air of pollutants
- offer world-class recreational opportunities and unparalleled scenery
- create wildlife habitat
- yield forest products

Forest management is one of the most effective ways to reduce threats to our forests.



# What We Do

Every year, the CSFS helps treat more than 20,000 acres of forestland, and assists approximately 6,400 landowners and hundreds of communities to help improve forest health. As the lead state agency for providing forest stewardship and management, fuels reduction and wildfire mitigation assistance, we offer a variety of programs and services, such as:

- Forest and timber management for forest health and restoration
- Fuels mitigation resources and fuels reduction projects to reduce wildfire risk
- Insect and disease surveys and detection
- Urban and community forestry assistance for homeowners and municipalities
- Guidance in obtaining grants and grant administration
- Trees and shrubs for conservation, tree planting plans and seedling tree advice
- Workshops for forest landowners, communities and homeowner associations
- Outreach and education for adults and youth

## Forest Management

Many forest types in Colorado regenerate through large-scale disturbance – primarily insects, disease and wildfire. However, the proximity of people, homes and communities to many of these forests means a catastrophic wildfire or pest epidemic could put the public at greater risk, making forest management even more critical.

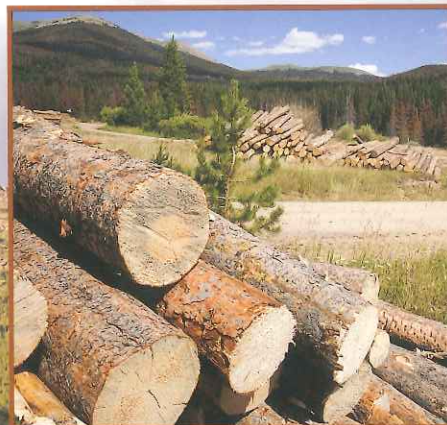
Forest management can improve the resiliency of our forests and help protect our water supplies. The CSFS collaborates with communities,

landowners, recreational organizations and other agencies to improve forest health, reduce insect impacts, and promote healthy and diverse forests for present and future generations.

We work closely with state and federal land managers and private landowners to plan and implement forestry projects across ownership boundaries to achieve landscape-scale benefits. One way we collaborate with the USDA Forest Service is by conducting annual aerial surveys to map insect and disease activity in forested areas of Colorado, and help land managers identify and address forest health concerns. The CSFS and USDA Forest Service also work together to collect essential data about forest health conditions in Colorado through the national Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program – the principal source of information used to assess the status of America's forests.

## Wildfire Mitigation Resources

As the state lead for the Fire Adapted Communities® and Firewise Communities/USA® programs, the CSFS provides a variety of resources to proactively address risks in the wildland-urban interface. These resources include guidance in developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans; assistance in becoming a Firewise community; and publications offering science-based guidelines on home construction and fuels reduction to help landowners prioritize fire mitigation actions and reduce the risk of losing their homes during a wildfire.



To help landowners and communities assess wildfire risk, the CSFS developed the Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (CO-WRAP). CO-WRAP is a web-mapping tool that provides access to statewide wildfire risk assessment information. Through CO-WRAP, wildfire mitigation/prevention planners and interested citizens can generate maps and download data and reports highlighting areas that may benefit from focused mitigation efforts. Visit the portal at [www.coloradowildfirerisk.com](http://www.coloradowildfirerisk.com).

## Urban and Community Forestry

The CSFS is available to help communities with their tree planting and care needs. Specific community forestry programs

### *CSFS Services for Homeowners and Landowners*

The CSFS provides private landowners with technical assistance and wildfire mitigation expertise through workshops, publications, consultations and site visits. Services include:

- Forest Ag Program planning and inspections
- Forest Legacy Program assistance
- Tree farm planning and inspections
- Forest Stewardship Program planning
- Timber sale administration
- Tree selection, planting and care advice
- Sick tree guidance
- Invasive species planning and response
- Wildfire defensible space assessments
- Fuels reduction and wood utilization assistance

Fees are associated with some of these services; others are free of charge.



## Utilization of Colorado Wood

Merchantable wood generated from forest management activities helps drive down treatment costs and makes us less reliant on imported wood. Yet more than 90 percent of wood products purchased in Colorado are imported from out of state. The CSFS-administered Colorado Wood Utilization and Marketing Program (CoWood) benefits from the expertise of forest products professionals, Colorado State University research scientists and a diverse collection of natural resource stakeholders throughout the West to promote the use of local forest products and provide business support.

Many Coloradans are familiar with CoWood's Colorado Forest Products™ program, which educates consumers about the importance of buying local wood products.

## Education and Outreach

Education and outreach efforts, including experiential learning opportunities for students and Project Learning Tree workshops for teachers, are intrinsic to the services we offer. Informing policymakers and the public through publications, media relations and online resources exemplifies our dedication to an education-based approach.

include coordinating Tree City USA®, Tree Campus USA® and Arbor Day events. The CSFS also addresses invasive species planning and response, and tree inventories and management plans.

## Trees for Conservation

Low-cost conservation seedling trees, shrubs and plants available to landowners from the CSFS Nursery are vital to the state's conservation goals, including reforestation burned areas, enhancing wildlife habitat, reducing soil erosion and planting living snow fences that provide protection from wind and snow.

Our nursery grows approximately 850,000 seedlings each year, distributing trees directly and through our network of cooperators.

# How You Can Make a Difference

- **Volunteer** to assist with invasive species removal, planting seedling trees, CSFS Nursery projects and engaging the public at outreach events.
- **Promote awareness** through conversations with neighbors and communities, social media and sharing your forest management and wildfire mitigation efforts with us.
- **Make your voice heard** by letting friends, colleagues, policymakers and others know that Colorado's forest health is important to you.
- **Help other natural resource organizations** achieve their objectives by introducing them to funding opportunities available through the CSFS Natural Resources Grants Database.
- **Donate** online to help with forest management efforts, such as reforestation of burned land, tree planting or bark beetle mitigation at [csfs.colostate.edu](http://csfs.colostate.edu).

## Colorado State FOREST SERVICE

To learn more about how the Colorado State Forest Service can help you, visit your local CSFS district office or contact us at:

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(970) 491-6303 | [www.csfs.colostate.edu](http://www.csfs.colostate.edu)



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