



El Dorado Water Agency Leads Post-Caldor Fire Watershed Restoration Efforts to Ensure Grizzly Flats Community Has a Reliable Water Supply

July 11, 2022, Placerville, CA -- El Dorado Water Agency (EDWA), in partnership with the El Dorado and Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation Districts (RCD), was awarded a \$1,875,000 [WaterSMART grant](#) from the U.S. Department of the Interior to ensure the Grizzly Flats community, which was decimated in the Caldor Fire, has a safe and reliable water supply.

In fall 2021, the Caldor Fire demolished two-thirds of homes and structures in Grizzly Flats and destroyed two intakes and the surrounding watersheds which provide their sole water supply. Through this grant funding, EDWA and RCD will work to provide near- and long-term support by reversing the ecological, economic, environmental, aesthetic and social impacts of this federally-declared disaster.

“The Caldor Fire had a disproportionate impact on the economically disadvantaged community of Grizzly Flats, and we are working hard to ensure they have access to safe and reliable water so they can recover and rebuild from this devastating fire,” said Ken Payne, General Manager of EDWA.

The WaterSMART grant funding will support EDWA and RCD’s recovery efforts to re-establish a healthy forest, improve water quality, support wildlife habitat, lower water supply system maintenance costs, and reduce long-term levels of hazardous fuels. This strategic watershed restoration project will involve extensive collaboration with a variety of agencies including the Grizzly Flats Community Services District, U.S. Forest Service, El Dorado County Fire Recovery Team, American River Conservancy, and more.

“Without actions to recover these watersheds, water supply reliability for the Grizzly Flats community would remain at risk,” said George Turnboo, EDWA Board Member and County Board of Supervisor-District 2, where the Caldor Fire occurred. “We’re thrilled that the federal government has invested in these restoration efforts, and we can help the struggling Grizzly Flats community recover from the Caldor Fire.”

The post-Caldor Fire watershed restoration project includes:

- Restoring portions of the watersheds to provide water supply to the Grizzly Flats community that were affected by the Caldor Fire. This will protect the to-be restored water intakes from further damages from fallen trees, debris, and erosion;
- Conducting site preparation and planting to re-establish forest cover;
- Increasing potential carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emissions reduction through the reforestation of the burned area; and
- Identifying additional measures that may be required to improve watershed health and water quality protection for important domestic water supply sources.

The WaterSMART grant EDWA/RCD received is part of the Department of the Interior's \$36.1 million investment, which includes \$26.7 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds, to restore aquatic habitats and watersheds and support disaster recovery efforts. The Caldor Fire watershed restoration project is one of 27 projects in 12 states and Puerto Rico that received grant funding.

About the El Dorado Water Agency

The El Dorado Water Agency celebrates more than 60 years of water resource planning and management, dedicated to ensuring that El Dorado County has adequate and affordable water to maintain economic prosperity, protect the environment, and support the rural-agriculture way of life for today and in the future. El Dorado Water Agency is a public agency created under the 1959 El Dorado County Water Agency Act.

About the Resource Conservation Districts

The El Dorado County Resource Conservation District and the Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District are local, independent, non-enforcement, non-regulatory, self-governed districts organized under Division 9 of the Public Resources Code. Each RCD advises and assists individual landowners and public agencies in planning and implementation of conservation practices for the protection, restoration, or development of land, water, and related natural resources.

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