



**Contacts:**

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Paul Mason, PFT, 916-214-1382, pmason@pacificforest.org

Rico Mastrodonato, TPL, 415-572-3107, rico.mastrodonato@tpl.org

Amelia Oliver, CA Releaf, 916-497-0034, aoliver@californiareleaf.org

Haley Stewart, Defenders of Wildlife, 916-313-5800, ext. 108, hstewart@defenders.org

## **Budget Deal Invests in Natural and Working Lands to Tackle Climate Change**

Members of the Natural and Working Lands Coalition commended the final state budget deal reached by the Legislature and Administration on cap-and-trade investments as a promising start to advancing natural resource solutions to climate change. The final budget deal includes nearly \$100 million<sup>1</sup> in investments in natural resources, including forests, agriculture, wetlands and urban forestry, to remove carbon pollution from the air and reduce potent greenhouse gases like nitrous oxide and methane.

“Our forests, wetlands, urban forests and farmlands are a critical part of the climate change solution in California,” said Amelia Oliver, Executive Director with California ReLeaf. “How we manage and protect these precious resources will determine whether they are a part of the climate solution now and into the future’

The FY 2014-2015 budget package supports important investments in natural and working lands strategies that include:

- \$130 million for Sustainable Communities Strategies and affordable housing, which includes land preservation strategies to support in-fill development
- \$40 million for water energy efficiency, including \$10 million for agriculture-related water use efficiency (already appropriated under SB 103)
- \$25 million for wetlands and watershed restoration that also advance the State’s water action plan
- \$25 million for sustainable forest activities
- \$17 million for urban forestry
- \$15 million for agricultural energy and operational efficiency

“In the final budget deal, the Governor and legislative leaders recognized that we cannot achieve our long-term climate change goals without investing in our natural and working lands,” noted Paul Mason, Vice President for Policy with the Pacific Forest Trust.

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<sup>1</sup> This includes \$6.5 million of the SCS funding for land preservation and \$10 million for ag-water use efficiency.

The budget agreement also includes a framework for future investments in natural resources, with emphasis on agriculture, forest health, wetlands, and urban forestry. These projects will compete for 40% of all cap-and-trade auction proceeds beginning in Fiscal Year 2015-16, alongside other programs in waste reduction, energy efficiency, and low carbon transportation.

“The budget deal’s investments in our natural and working lands are a good first step toward meeting the state’s climate change goals,” said Haley Stewart, CA Program Associate with Defenders of Wildlife. “We look forward to working with Governor and legislative leaders to support on-going investments in natural resources solutions to climate change.”