



Wildfire Resilience Partnerships Newsletter - External

July 2025

Welcome!

Welcome to the first PG&E Wildfire Resilience Partnership (WRP) program newsletter! PG&E has been piloting this new program partnering alongside our hometowns. This newsletter will provide updates on highlighted partnerships, projects and wildfire resilience outcomes.

We hope the information is valuable and informative, and gives you a better sense of PG&E's emerging engagement with wildfire resilience beyond utility rights of way. If you have feedback or there's something you'd like to hear more about please don't hesitate to reach out.

Interested in learning more?
Contact us at wildfireresiliencepartnerships@pge.com.

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Partnership Spotlights



Fuel Break Improves Wildfire Safety at Foothill Horizons School

PG&E awarded the [American Forest Foundation \(AFF\)](#) with a \$500K grant to demonstrate scalable models to reduce wildfire risk in the wildland urban interface in Tuolumne County, complementing a \$5M CAL FIRE grant that AFF had already received in the area.

The grants were used for a fuel break project surrounding the Foothill Horizons School which involved addressing 20 acres near its singular access road. The project reduced potential fire intensity, removed ladder fuels and created better first responder defense lines while improving ecological health. During the project, the AFF researched and implemented low-tech wood waste management techniques, demonstrating that these strategies dramatically reduced smoke emissions by 50% vs. traditional pile burns, and sequestered 1.82 tons of carbon in the process of improving wildfire safety.



A thank you note for PG&E from the Foothill Horizons community



There is clear local support for continued involvement. While our partnership work was conducted, community members assembled to treat 400 additional nearby acres, demonstrating a partnership capacity to generate more action. The school confirmed plans to maintain forest treatments moving forward.



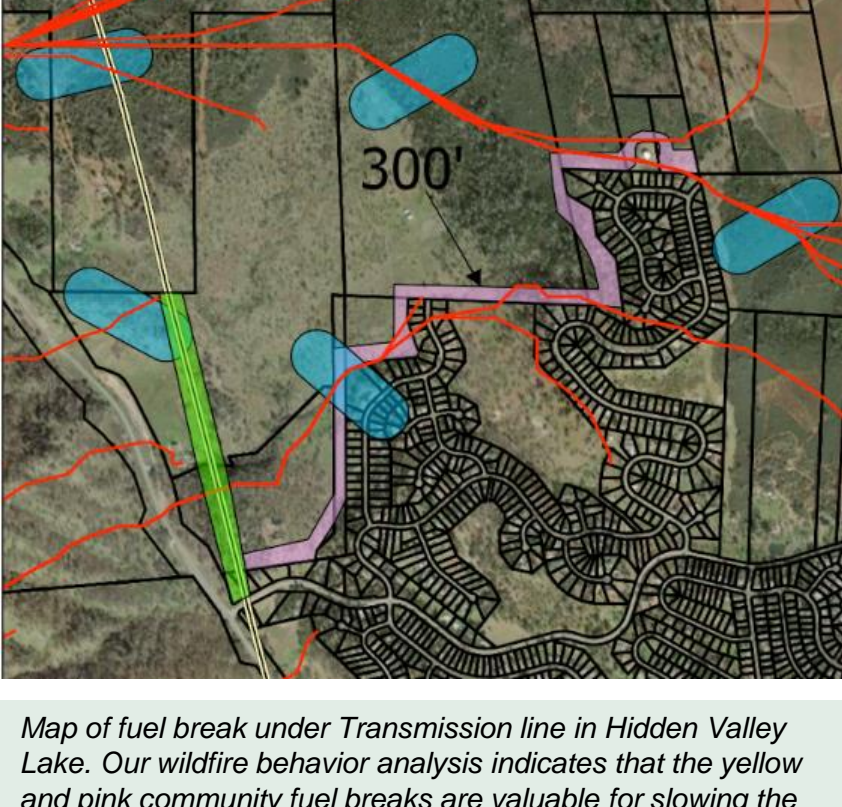
PG&E Comms created video on the partnership for hometown school benefit
Stanislaus County Office of Education created their own video on the project



Capacity Building Grant Doubles Fire Crew Size and Enables Transmission Resilience Corridor Helping to Protect Community

PG&E provided a \$500K capacity building grant to Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (CLERC) to build the Hogback Fire and Fuel Crew's capacity. Through the grant the crew doubled their staff, executed wildfire resilience projects designed to reduce both community and PG&E risk, and since secured additional longer-term funding.

In one project, the Hogback crew placed a fuel break under a 60kV Transmission line in Hidden Valley Lake as a powerline-anchored community fuel break. This project was part of a wildfire behavior fuels treatment optimization pilot, leveraging a data-driven community resilience analytics tool named [XyloPlan](#). Such a utility resilience corridor aligns with a new [goal by the Governor's wildfire task force to create a utility wildfire resilience partnership strategy](#).



Map of fuel break under Transmission line in Hidden Valley Lake. Our wildfire behavior analysis indicates that the yellow and pink community fuel breaks are valuable for slowing the speed of potential fire spread into Hidden Valley Lake.

CLERC secured landowner approval for the Hogback crew to create a 100-120 feet wide fuel break along the Transmission line corridor on private land. This treatment aims to reduce fire spread speed and utility ignition risk. With PG&E's grant, the Hogback crew doubled in size and received additional federal and Department of Conservation grants. When their chipper broke before the Hidden Valley project, PG&E's flexible grant allowed them to quickly procure a new chipper and continue their work without delay.



Print news coverage of the locally-organized press conference announcing the innovative "Hometown Wildfire Safety Collaborative"



Upper Mokelumne Financing Grant Accelerates Landscape-Scale Forest Treatment

PG&E has given \$100K in grants to the conservation nonprofit Blue Forest for fuels treatment in the [Upper Mokelumne](#) watershed upstream from PG&E's Tiger Creek powerhouse. This grant has provided flexible financing capacity designed to accelerate forest treatment and draw in additional resources to the whole Upper Mokelumne watershed.



Grey areas represent the scoped treatment while the thick black line represents PG&E transmission and generation assets. The dotted line is an important access road.



(Forest near transmission lines which have not been treated, photo courtesy of Blue Forest)

As of March 2025, 2,400 total acres have been treated in Upper Mokelumne, helping to protect both nearby communities, a critical evacuation highway, and PG&E's generation equipment. 1,355 of those acres used PG&E's Forest Resilience Bond funding, helping to protect nearby communities, a critical evacuation highway, and an important PG&E electric generation and transmission corridor. Beyond wildfire risk reduction, the project also yields downstream benefits including projected revenue increase for PG&E hydropower, and preserving water availability and quality for approximately 1.4 million people in Oakland. Additional funding partners include the local watershed authority, El Dorado National Forest, CALFIRE, and PepsiCo. PepsiCo Beverage North America added \$440K in grant funding, in alignment with Pepsi's goal to be net water positive by 2030. The Upper Mokelumne project was recently announced as having just been awarded an additional \$4.29M in 2025 CAL FIRE Forest Health grant funding. This CAL FIRE grant funding will again be accelerated by PG&E's grant.

Upper Mokelumne is a great example of how partnerships can help communities, non-benefits agencies, and PG&E to achieve collective goals at a meaningful landscape-scale.

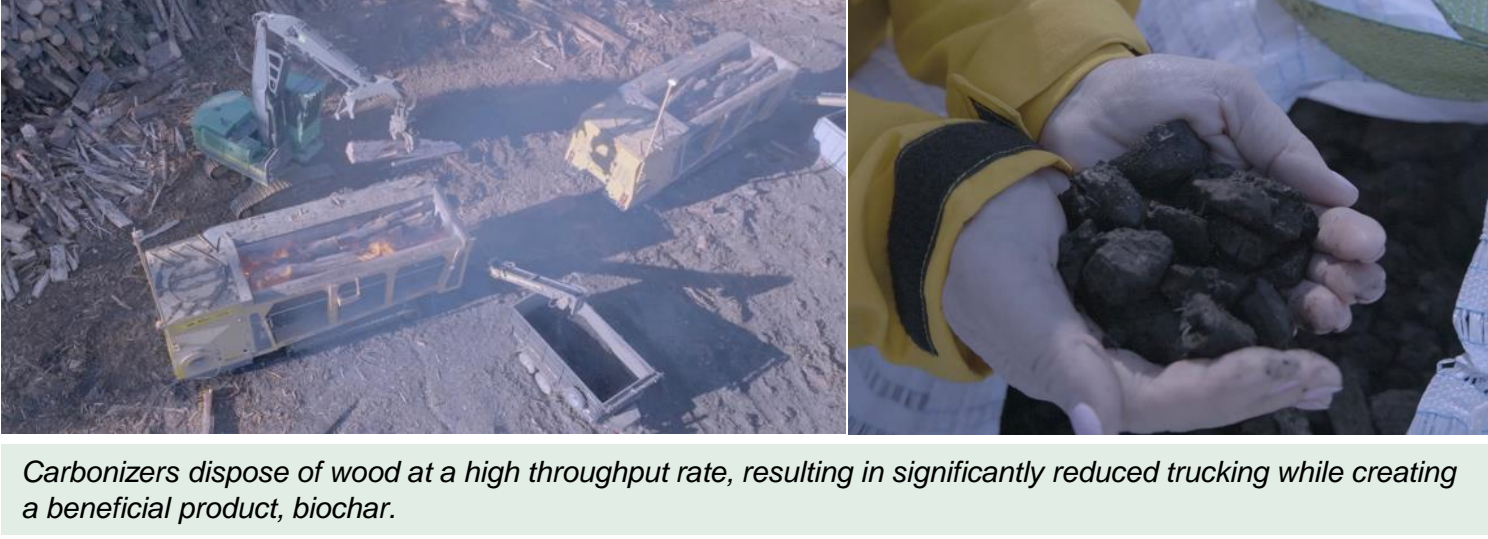


Interested in learning more?
Blue Forest published [a press release](#) with additional project details.



Community Carbonizer Biomass Partnerships Yield Shared Waste Wood Disposal Cost and Safety Benefits

As part of an EPIC technology demonstration project, **PG&E supported two Carbonizer biomass partnerships in Nevada and Lake Counties** to reduce net disposal costs of waste wood, decrease truck miles and associated risk, and capture carbon. Carbonizers transform wood waste into biochar, a high carbon resource with agricultural and environmental applications. Through this partnership, biochar has been distributed back to members of the local communities. The estimated outcomes and savings from these carbonizers are promising.



Carbonizers dispose of wood at a high throughput rate, resulting in significantly reduced trucking while creating a beneficial product, biochar.

According to the Clear Lake Environmental Research Center, the community has responded quite favorably to both the project and PG&E's role. Stakeholders in Nevada and Lake Counties have expressed interest in continuing Carbonizer projects, whether or not PG&E is positioned to anchor the project itself. PG&E has also provided an EPIC R&D contract to qualify Carbonizer operations for voluntary carbon removal market protocols, potentially improving PG&E's unit economics by a further 20-30%



Nevada County created a publicity video about the partnership project in Grass Valley and highlighted the project on their website
Lake County CalFire unit created their own video publicizing the project.



Winners of PG&E-Sponsored EPIC Project Conduct Successful Autonomous Fire Suppression Helicopter Demo

Aligned with PG&E's company stand to end catastrophic wildfire, PG&E established a helicopter partnership program allowing first responder agencies access to PG&E helicopters for fire response, and also co-sponsor "[XPRIZE Wildfire](#)", a global innovation challenge accelerating rapid autonomous response technology development.

In support of both of those initiative, in 2024 PG&E released an RFP to XPRIZE semifinalists to **showcase emerging solutions for potential utility benefit**.

The first awardee from the EPIC RFP was Rain Industries, who collaborated with Sikorsky to demonstrate technology for a Blackhawk helicopter to **automatically receive an ignition signal and rapidly create a flight plan to guide the helicopter to water pickup and nascent fire response**. Rain Industries and Sikorsky, co-sponsored by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and an anonymous donor, demonstrated this emerging technology stack in San Bernardino in April.

The demonstration created many firsts, including the first autonomous wildfire response deployment in California, first demonstration of communication interoperability with autonomous and manned aircraft in the same traffic area, and first end-to-end rapid initial attack in a real-world environment. The demonstration was attended by US Fire, CAL FIRE, Southern California fire agencies, and utilities.

Winners from XPRIZE Wildfire will be announced in late 2026. Demonstrations such as this one will hopefully help smooth the path for winners and this wildfire solution category.



Autonomous water fill under windy conditions.



PG&E published a 1-minute video and press release about the event
Rain and Sikorsky produced a video and press release.