

Forestry Project



Big River/Salmon Creek Forests Project

This project uses conservation-based forest management to reduce carbon emissions. The emission reductions have been verified to the Climate Action Reserve of which 20,000 Climate Reserve Tonnes are available.

Project partner

The Conservation Fund

Country

USA

About your project

Known as the Big River/Salmon Creek Forests, this project comprises two regions of redwood/douglas fir forestland totaling 16,300 acres. Located in Mendocino County, California, both are high priority refugia watersheds, identified in the Californian Fish and Game's 2004 'Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon' as areas of important forestland and fish habitat. The project reduces carbon emissions and ensures that the area will be permanently protected from fragmentation, development and conversion to non-forest uses.

Many of California's forest-based communities are at a critical point. Coastal forests in the north have long supported abundant wildlife and a thriving economy with nearly 40% of all timber harvested in California coming from privately owned forests in Humboldt and Mendocino counties. However, the short term investment model of commercial timber companies tends to be incompatible with sustainable long term management of these forests. These companies have been divesting their forestlands, with some divided into smaller holdings while the rest have been sold to timber or real estate investment companies.

With these competing land use interests, conservationists are struggling to finance forestland acquisitions to protect the most sensitive natural areas. Help for the Big River/Salmon Creek Forests has come from: a 20-year low interest loan from the State Revolving Fund (SRF), a program traditionally used to support construction of waste water treatment facilities; a perpetual easement under Climate Action Reserve that requires the project land area to be used for forest purposes permanently; and emission reduction sales.

The project uses conservation-based forest management to reduce carbon emissions. This involves the long-term management of the forests that helps rebuild inventory and store carbon, whilst protecting water quality and restoring wildlife habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species.



These images have been provided by individuals working with the project partners

About conservation-based forest management

Forests provide climate benefits by absorbing carbon dioxide (CO₂) and storing it as carbon in trees for hundreds of years. Conservation-based forest management is long-term planned intervention using natural forest management practices to remove CO₂ from the atmosphere. This enables sustainable management of carbon stocks - the stored carbon in the forest biomass at a particular point in time. The intervention includes tending, thinning out, felling, regeneration/planting and fertilization, resulting in groups of desired species, age and size composition, without impairing the sustainability and productivity of these forests. Forests managed to enhance carbon stocks also improve wildlife habitat, biodiversity, water quality and sustainable economies. These forests are usually covered by a conservation easement on the property, which is a legal guarantee that the project's existing and additional carbon stocks remain protected through the project's life and beyond, by stipulating sustainable forest practices. In the unlikely event that a natural disturbance results in the loss of forest carbon, the easement terms facilitates the restoration of the forest and as a result, carbon stocks.



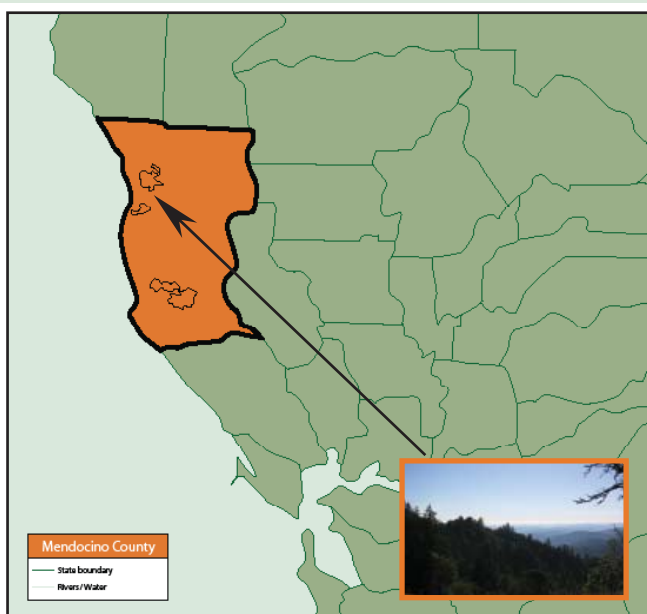
How carbon offsetting helps the project

It is expensive to conserve and manage forestry projects and that is where carbon finance can play an important role. Conservation-based forestry management projects like this one are not required by law and often have to overcome financial, geographical and biological barriers to realize implementation. Carbon finance provides an additional revenue stream helping to make these projects an attractive and viable option. In this case, the incentives from carbon finance are enabling the rapid recovery and regeneration of these forests and their habitat.

The reductions in CO₂ emissions achieved by this project are incremental to 'business as usual' and measured by an independent verifier to internationally recognized standards. These are bought as 'carbon credits' by clients of The CarbonNeutral Company to 'neutralize' their own emissions.

Verification:

This project is verified to Climate Action Reserve - Forestry Protocol and registered on the Reserve. A copy of documents related to this project can be found within the project registry of CarbonNeutral.com



Project area coordinates:

Big River/Salmon Creek Forests are in Mendocino County, CA Southeast of Fort Bragg. The approximate center point of these forests is latitude 39° 16' 12" North and longitude 123° 39' 0" West.