

News Release

United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources
Conservation Service
Wyoming

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USDA Investing Millions in Wildfire Mitigation and Water Quality Projects through Joint Chiefs' Partnership

Wyoming - Sublette County Forest Collaborative: Working Together for Forest Health (Bridger Teton National Forest)

CASPER, Jan. 11, 2018 - The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will invest nearly \$32 million this year to mitigate wildfire risk, improve water quality and restore healthy forest ecosystems in 24 states and Puerto Rico. More than \$711,500 of that funding will support one forestry project in Wyoming.

Since 2013, USDA has invested \$176 million in 56 Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership projects, which focus on areas where public forests and grasslands intersect with privately-owned lands.

"Through Joint Chiefs, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) works with agricultural producers and forest landowners to improve forest health using available Farm Bill conservation programs, and the Forest Service enhances forest health on public lands -- stitching together a larger footprint of healthy ecosystems in priority areas," said Wyoming State Conservationist Astrid Martinez.

Along with mitigating fire risk, Joint Chiefs' projects work to improve water quality by restoring healthy forests and grasslands. Wyoming's project specifically addresses protecting the sole drinking water source of Pinedale, near the Bridger Teton National Forest.

The Sublette County Forest Collaborative: Working Together for Forest Health (Bridger Teton National Forest), aligns with the following Joint Chiefs' Partnership goals: Wildland Urban Interface/fuel reduction/defensible space to two rural subdivisions and a small community. It will help improve water quality and quantity within two watersheds (one of which encompasses the sole source of drinking water supply for the town of Pinedale); Aspen restoration; habitat improvements benefitting mule deer, pronghorn and the Greater Sage-grouse. The project area includes U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, State of Wyoming and private lands in Sublette County.

Partners include Wyoming Game and Fish Divisions of State Forestry, as well as Sublette County Agencies of Sublette Fire, Sublette Weed and Pest; Sublette Conservation District and County Commissioners.

Private landowners in/around/near migration corridors of project area may be eligible for financial assistance from the NRCS to help them perform forest conservation practices on their land. Contact a local [USDA Service Center](#) to learn more.

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