



**National Park Service**  
**U.S. Department of the Interior**

Division of Fire and Aviation

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## Fire and Aviation News Release

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### National Parks Collaborate for Resilient Landscapes

BOISE – The Department of the Interior has announced funding for the [Wildland Fire Resilient Landscapes Program](#). The National Park Service is either the lead agency or a collaborator on five of the ten projects that have been awarded \$10 million in funding. National Park Service units that were awarded funding include [Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks](#), [Saguaro National Park](#), [Valles Caldera National Preserve](#), [Cumberland Island National Seashore](#), [Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park](#), and [Curecanti National Recreation Area](#).

The Resilient Landscapes Program is a new approach to achieve fire resiliency goals across landscapes. It is planned to restore and maintain landscapes across jurisdictions, so they are resilient to fire-related disturbances in accordance with management objectives.

“It’s just as important to be a collaborator as being lead agency on these resilient landscape projects. It’s about the landscapes and how we can work together to make them more resilient in the future. We greatly appreciated the efforts of all these parks to participate in the pilot program,” stated, Nate Benson, NPS National Fire Science and Ecology Program Lead.

He also notes that the collaboration between agencies and other partners that will be gained through the Resilient Landscapes Program is a goal and a benefit in itself.

A summary list of the projects and collaborators that include the National Park Service may be found on the following pages. The original announcement about the program, including amounts awarded for each project may be found on the [Department of the Interior’s website](#).

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## **Resilient Landscapes Funded Projects – NPS Lead Agency**

### **Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks**

**Other Partners:** *Sequoia National Forest, CalFire, UC Berkeley*

The collaborative will build on a long history of partnerships and a strong foundation of active research and fire management to increase the resiliency of the Grant Grove Peninsula's (GGP) ecosystem with its large sequoia groves and abundant social values. The GGP, situated along the west side of the southern Sierra Nevada, lies above the ponderosa pine forest within a mixture of National Park Service (NPS), US Forest Service (USFS), State, and private land ownership. These lower elevation dense pine stands are experiencing substantial tree mortality after four years of drought and pine beetle infestation. To increase the resiliency of the GGP, the project funds will fill critical gaps in un-funded prescribed fire and mechanical thinning treatments. To better assess the effects of treatments, the partners will increase ground monitoring efforts, integrate remotely sensed data into monitoring protocols, and expand air quality monitoring.

### **Saguaro National Park**

**Other Partners:** *Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, United States Geological Survey, Coronado National Forest, Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, Southern Arizona Buffelgrass Coordination Center*

The project will protect native plant and animal communities from being displaced by buffelgrass, an aggressive invader. It will prevent large, intense wildfires from converting biologically rich, fire-sensitive habitat into a near-monoculture and highly flammable grassland. Project funds will help prevent damage to private property, utility corridors, and to the area's tourism-based economy. In addition, this project will aid managers of fire-adapted and fire-dependent ecosystems at higher elevations in managing wildfires to benefit those ecosystems, maintaining their ecological integrity and resilience.



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## **Valles Caldera National Preserve**

***Other Partners: Valles Caldera Trust, Bureau of Indian Education, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - New Mexico Ecological Services Field Office, Bandelier National Monument, U.S. Geological Survey, USDA Agricultural Research Service Systematic Entomology Laboratory, Santa Fe National Forest, Los Alamos National Laboratory, Santa Clara Pueblo, Pueblo of Jemez, State of New Mexico Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, City of Santa Fe Fire Department, New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute, Forest Guild, Hawks Aloft, Inc., Los Amigos de Valles Caldera, The Nature Conservancy, WildEarth Guardians, Texas Tech University – College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources, University of Arizona, University of Maryland – Center for Environmental Science – Appalachian Laboratory, University of New Mexico - Department of Civil Engineering, New Mexico State University, Amy Biehl High School, Los Alamos Public Schools***

Valles Caldera National Preserve (VALL) is located in northern New Mexico and was added to the National Park System in 2015. The Resilient Landscape project is a 10-year strategy aimed at improving the resilience and adaptive capacity of the VALL's natural systems, protecting people and resources from destructive wildfire, and reintroducing fire as a beneficial process. The strategy integrates forest thinning, wildland fire management - planned and unplanned ignitions, wetland and riparian restoration, road repair -closure and decommissioning, noxious weed prevention, control and eradication, and burned area stabilization in integrated, landscape scale treatments across the 89,000 acres of the Preserve. The project is intended to treat 49,824 acres over the next ten years to decrease the likelihood of severe burning, increase resiliency following fires, and increase opportunities to use natural and planned fire as a beneficial process. In addition, forest thinning and prescribed fire will be used at various intensities to create a mosaic of forests of different age classes across the landscape.



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## **Resilient Landscapes Funded Projects – NPS as a Partner**

### **Cumberland Island National Seashore**

**Lead Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Region 4 (Southeast Region)**

**Other Partners: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Northeast Region, Bureau of Land Management – Eastern States, US Forest Service – Southern Region, The Conservation Fund, The Longleaf Alliance, Sandhills Longleaf Pine Conservation Partnership, Apalachicola Regional Stewardship Alliance, South Lowcountry – ACE Basin Longleaf Partnership**

The Resilient Landscape project will improve the fire resiliency of the longleaf ecosystems of the South by returning and maintaining historic fire intervals, restoring ecosystem integrity and reducing dangerous fuel loads. Efforts will be closely coordinated with the USFWS Ecological Services (ES) program and the numerous local, private, nonprofit, state, and federal partners working through the South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) and ALRI. The South Atlantic LCC's geography extends from Southeast Virginia to North Florida and encompasses the majority of longleaf pine's historic range. Projects will focus on the Refuges and cooperatives that fall within these boundaries and overlap with priority areas identified in the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy and ALRI's Range-wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine.

### **Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park**

#### **Curecanti National Recreation Area**

**Lead Agency – Bureau of Land Management – Colorado State Office**

**Other Partners: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Region 6 (Mountain-Prairie Region)**

The Southwest Colorado Resilient Landscape (RL) project will increase resiliency and adaptability in native ecosystems; improve habitat linkages in terrestrial uplands; and improve ecological function along river corridors. This would be accomplished by a variety of actions designed to mitigate fire severity within critical riparian habitats, terrestrial habitats, and watersheds. Management actions would be targeted further to mitigate habitat fragmentation and improve habitat quality. The BLM Colorado has designed this RL project to leverage implementation actions currently underway with the Gunnison sage-grouse Healthy Lands Focal Area, the Dolores River Healthy Lands Focal Area and numerous other fuels, wildlife and vegetation treatment efforts planned in partnership with federal and non-federal groups. The Southwest Colorado RL project area would also include riparian vegetation restoration along multiple river corridors including the Gunnison, Uncompahgre, San Miguel and the Dolores Rivers. The riparian areas of these river systems are dominated by tamarisk and other invasive species which pose a high risk of wildfire. The RL project funds would leverage efforts currently underway in the Dolores River Healthy Lands Focal Area by the Dolores River



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Riparian Partnership (DRRP). Additional RL project funds would allow for treatments that restore desired fire regime condition classes and reduce the threat of severe wildfire damage to important habitats and adjacent areas of wildland urban interface and provide for similar efforts on the Gunnison and Uncompahgre Rivers.

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