

How Conservation Programs Work Together: Tulare County RCD, CAL FIRE Fuel Reduction Grants, and NRCS Crisis to Opportunity (RCPP)

This document provides a programmatic explanation of how the Tulare County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) collaborates with CAL FIRE on wildfire fuel-reduction grants, and how the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) implements the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) initiative known as *Crisis to Opportunity: Sierra Nevada Recovery and Resilience*.

1. Tulare County RCD & CAL FIRE Fuel Reduction Grants

CAL FIRE administers statewide grant programs focused on wildfire prevention, forest health, and community resilience. These programs fund hazardous fuels reduction, fuel breaks, defensible space planning, and forest health treatments.

The Tulare County Resource Conservation District acts as a local implementation and coordination partner, helping translate state grant funding into on-the-ground projects.

Typical TCRCD roles include:

- Serving as a grant applicant or co-applicant
- Coordinating with CAL FIRE, landowners, and contractors
- Managing contracts, reporting, and compliance
- Supporting fuels reduction on private and community lands

2. NRCS & RCPP: Crisis to Opportunity

The Crisis to Opportunity initiative is an RCPP project addressing tree mortality, wildfire risk, and watershed resilience in the Sierra Nevada.

NRCS implements the program using existing USDA conservation programs while working with regional partners such as RCDs.

NRCS implementation includes:

- Delivering EQIP and CSP contracts under RCPP authority
- Applying NRCS technical standards and payment rules
- Coordinating with partners for outreach and prioritization

3. How These Programs Interconnect

Aspect	Tulare County RCD	CAL FIRE	NRCS (Crisis to Opportunity)
Primary role	Local planning and project delivery	State funding and wildfire oversight	Federal conservation contracts
Funding source	State/federal grants	State wildfire grants	USDA programs via RCPP
Landowner interaction	Local intake and support	Indirect	Direct NRCS contracts

Big Picture: CAL FIRE funds wildfire prevention, NRCS delivers standardized conservation assistance through RCPP, and the Tulare County RCD connects these programs to landowners and communities for real-world implementation.