

FOREST FIRST



Forest First is a collaborative partnership between the San Bernardino National Forest, Cleveland National Forest and downstream stakeholders that focuses on developing methods to ensure the resiliency of the forests and headwaters within the Santa Ana River Watershed.

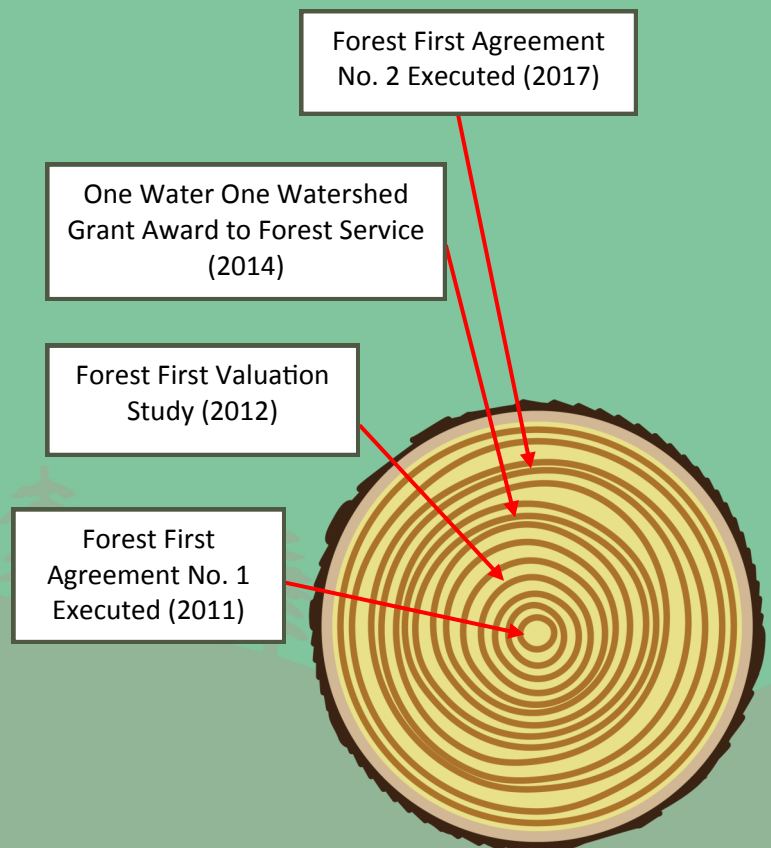
The Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) has executed two agreements with the San Bernardino and Cleveland National Forests to proactively improve the health of the Santa Ana River Watershed.

BENEFITS OF FOREST PARTNERSHIP

- Brings water agencies and other stakeholders to the table with forest managers.
- Facilitates projects that assist water agencies, benefit the environment, and aid flood control agencies in meeting their mission.
- Allows the National Forests to apply for grant funding to implement projects with a water nexus.

FOREST FIRST TIMELINE

Forest First began when SAWPA and the two upstream National Forests executed an agreement in 2011. Since then the parties have gone on to accomplish several projects and joint planning efforts described in this document.



A Focus on the Headwaters of the Santa Ana River Watershed



If you are a water resource agency that relies on local precipitation, a non-governmental organizations, or any other entity interested in water and forest land management issues please join our effort by:

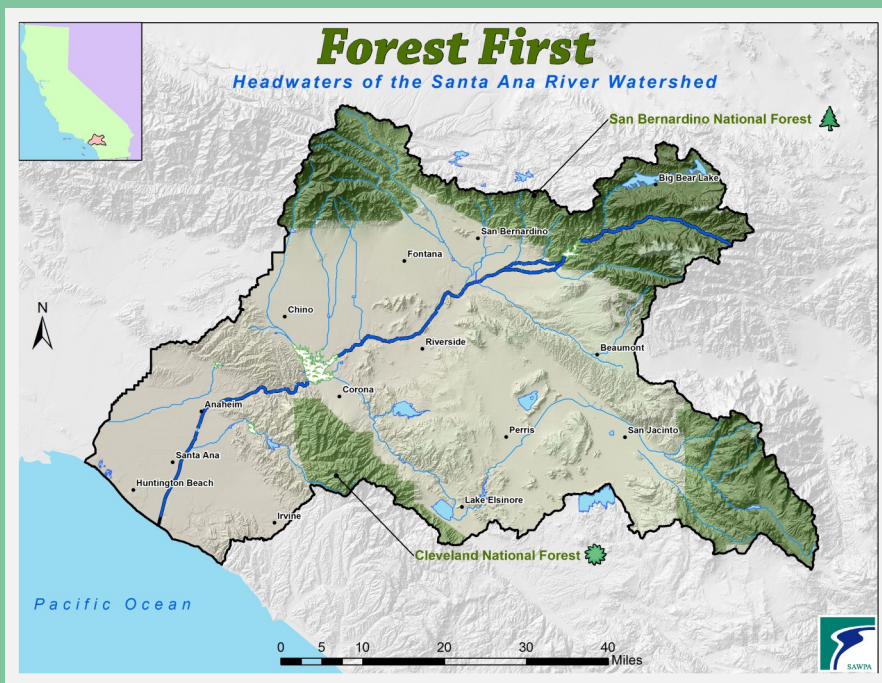


- Contacting the SAWPA Forest First Project Manager Ian Achimore at iachimore@sawpa.org;
- Proposing project ideas to the Forest First team such as meadow restoration, stream crossing restoration, etc.;
- Propose funding sources to assist in the implementation of project ideas.

As home to the headwaters of the Santa Ana River, the San Bernardino and Cleveland National Forests encompass approximately 30% of the watershed's land mass.

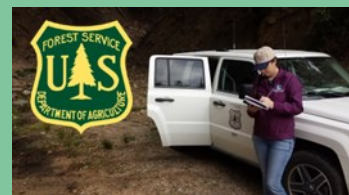
It's estimated that these forest areas also receive approximately 90% of annual precipitation due to greater amounts falling at higher elevations.

Runoff on that land directly affects the amount and quality of water downstream.



MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FOREST FIRST

- Release of the Valuation of Benefits of Forest Management Practices in the Santa Ana Watershed (2012) which quantified economic benefits from forest management actions;
- San Bernardino National Forest's success in acquiring a \$1M One Water One Watershed grant (2014) and leveraging \$4.5M in federal funds to implement the Forest First Project, which includes stream-road crossing improvements and fuels management;
- Acquiring the assistance of U.C. Irvine professor Dr. Michael Goulden to evaluate the water supply benefit of forest fuels treatment in Bluff Mesa on the San Bernardino National Forest (2014).



New Partnership Efforts for Forest First

NEW PROGRAM AND PROJECTS

As SAWPA executed its 2017 agreement with the Cleveland and San Bernardino National Forests, several projects were identified that downstream parties could partner on. These include:

- Riparian invasive plant removal including wild grape (projects planned for the Cleveland National Forest);
- North and South Main Divide fuelbreak maintenance (currently implemented on the Cleveland National Forest);
- Water quality monitoring on water bodies listed by the Regional Water Quality Control Board for impairments (projects ongoing on the San Bernardino National Forest);
- Partnership studies and removal programs for the Shot Hole Borer invasive beetle (studies ongoing; removal programs to be determined);
- Public-private funded forest management projects with downstream utilities funding forest management after downstream benefits are realized through monitoring.



FOREST FIRST



A headwaters partnership between SAWPA and
the Cleveland and San Bernardino National Forests.
Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority
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