



# Press Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**WHO:** Mother Lode Greater Sierra Forestry Corps  
**WHAT:** 1<sup>st</sup> Cohort Graduation  
**WHERE:** Columbia College Dogwood Theatre

## **The Mother Lode's Greater Sierra Forestry Corps Graduates its first Cohort at Columbia College**

The Greater Sierra Forestry Corps, a WIOA Title-1 financially assisted program, is excited to announce the graduation of its inaugural cohort, which will occur Thursday, December 14th at 11 am in the Dogwood Theatre at Columbia College.

Over the course of 16-weeks, Corps participants received extensive training in Wildland Fire Fuels Management (6 weeks) and Foundations in Wildland Firefighting (10 weeks). This training included classroom instruction, demonstration, hands-on field application, and work experience in forest conservation, basic wildland firefighting, standards for survival, engine and pump operations, backfiring methods and equipment use, chainsaw operations, map and compass use, air operations, basic hand tool sharpening and use, fire line construction, and more.

Columbia College Forestry and Natural Resource Faculty Lara McNicol described the types of training Corps members received stating "Students were trained in fuel reduction in the mix of the conifer forest with attention to species diversity and spacing of trees, meeting re stocking requirements according to the California Forest Practice Rules as well as how to create fire lines". Furthermore, she stated that due to the additional training that students received from Wildland Firefighting Instructors, Kevin Anderson and Chris Shore on safe fire behavior, communication during an active burn, and how to use a drip torch and backup pump. "The students were able to see first-hand how the fuels they treated earlier in the semester burned and how the fuel reduction work they did affected fire behavior."

Industry recognized certificates are awarded to Corps participants upon successful completion of academic and practical field training related to Integrated Fuels Management, and Wildland Fuels Management. Certification training included FEMA ICS-100 Introduction to the Incident Command System, FEMA ICS-200 Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response, FEMA-NIMS-ICS-700 Introduction to the National Incident Management System, FEMA-NIMS-800 National Response Framework, Basic CPR & First Aid, National Wildfire Coordinating Group Certificates (NWCG); S-130 Firefighter Training, S-190 Introduction to Wildland Behavior, L-180 Human Factors in Wildland Fire Service, S-211 Portable Pumps and Water Use, S-212 Wildland Fire Chainsaws, OSHA-10 Occupational Safety and Health Administration, HAZWOPER-40 Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response.

Special thanks are owed to the Greater Sierra Forestry Corps, Fresno Area Workforce Investment Corporation, Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board, Cal Fire, and Mother Lode Job Training. A WIOA Title-I financially assisted program. This program is 56% supported by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor as part of the awards totaling \$2,500,000, and \$1,973,615 or 44% financed from non-federal sources.