



11521 Blocker Drive, Ste. 205
Auburn, CA 95603
phone: (530) 823-4670
sierranevada.ca.gov

December 31, 2023

Secretary Wade Crowfoot
California Natural Resources Agency
715 P Street, 20th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Secretary Crowfoot:

I am pleased to send you this letter as the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) fiscal year (FY) 2022-23 Annual Report. This report meets the requirement pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 33350.

Since its inception in 2004, the SNC has worked to improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the 24-county Sierra-Cascade region and its communities. The SNC addresses regional challenges to reduce wildfire risk, improve climate resilience, and support economic health. Our efforts are organized within the SNC's primary initiative, the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP). With forest health as the foundation, the WIP weaves together four priorities: restoring healthy ecosystems, improving community resilience, promoting sustainable recreation and tourism, and conserving natural and working lands. To date, the SNC has awarded more than \$200 million to projects throughout the region and partnered with other government entities to distribute almost \$30 million more.

This report reflects SNC's funding activity for FY 2022-23. We will be sharing a more comprehensive report on SNC's accomplishments when we celebrate our 20-year anniversary at our annual WIP Summit March 8, 2024, in Sacramento, CA.

SNC Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget Activity

The SNC receives baseline funding from the Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF). Additionally, the SNC utilizes the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Fund (SNC Fund) and the Federal Trust Fund (FTF) for reimbursed work. The SNC has also received General Fund (GF) appropriations through the wildfire and forest resilience and nature-based solutions budget packages.



Pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 33350, I am pleased to report on the following expenditures for FY 2022-23.

Support Funding	Budget	Expenditures
ELPF – 0140	\$5,587,000	\$5,581,000
GF – 0001	\$4,991,000	\$1,182,000

Reimbursement Funding	Authority	Reimbursements
ELPF – 0140	\$1,000	\$735
SNC Fund – 8120	\$5,111,000	\$4,595,000
FTF – 0890	\$3,082,000	\$994,000

Local Assistance Funding	Budget	Expenditures
GF – 0001	\$82,686,000	\$60,133,000

Grant Program Delivery & Outcomes

In FY 2022-23, the SNC opened new rounds of the Wildfire Recovery and Forest Health, Strategic Land Conservation, and Vibrant Recreation and Tourism grant programs, making \$58.8 million from the GF available to partners across the Sierra-Cascade region. During FY 2022-23, the SNC administered five separate grant cycles that resulted in funding for 64 projects:

- In the FY 2022-23 wildfire budget package, the SNC was appropriated \$12,350,000 for local assistance. This appropriation was combined with remaining FY 2021-22 dollars to fund the 2022 Wildfire Recovery & Forest Resilience grant cycle. The cycle received more than \$70.6 million in requests, and the full \$36,100,000 available was awarded to 23 projects in March and June of 2023.
- In the FY 2022-23 nature-based solutions budget package, the SNC was appropriated \$12,302,500 for local assistance. This funding was combined with local-assistance funding from FY 2021-22 to fund two rounds apiece of the SNC's Vibrant Recreation & Tourism and Strategic Land Conservation grant programs. The SNC received about \$35.5 million in requests across these grant cycles. From December 2022 to June 2023, the SNC's Board awarded the full \$22,847,500 available to 21 recreation & tourism projects and 20 land-conservation projects.
- With the signing of SB 208 (Dahle) in FY 2021-22, the SNC's service area grew to include portions of Trinity and Siskiyou counties and additional acreage in Shasta County. The SNC staff worked quickly to establish relationships and develop projects in the new service area. To date, SNC has awarded just under \$11 million in grants to 11 projects fully or partially in the expanded service area.



Throughout the year, the staff continued to manage nearly 150 active grants, and worked with grantees to ensure deliverables were met and agreements remained in good standing. The staff also worked with partners to identify new challenges and solutions that may lead to new project ideas. Looking ahead, the SNC is eager to support the momentum built in recent years to protect the region's progress in forest and community resilience and meet the state's goal of treating one million acres each year by 2025.

Funds Leveraged Through the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program

Since March of 2019, the SNC has been the recipient of three block grants from the Department of Conservation's Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP). Funds distributed through this program helped Sierra-Cascade collaborative groups successfully identify and prioritize wildfire-risk reduction work needed within their areas and leveraged millions of dollars in funding for environmental permitting and implementation. As of FY 2022-23, the \$9.6 million in RFFCP funding invested so far across the region leveraged more than \$106 million in state, private, and federal funding for projects and project planning, demonstrating an incredible return on investment in the Sierra-Cascade Region.

Getting to Scale: SNC's First Landscape Grant Pilot Program Award

In September 2022, the SNC developed the Landscape Investment Strategy, an approach to reducing administrative barriers and aligning funding sources from various state and federal agencies to allow partnerships in the Sierra-Cascade to implement vital forest-health projects at the landscape scale. In support of the Landscape Investment Strategy, the SNC and partners made the first Landscape Grant Pilot Program award in FY 2022-23, pooling \$10 million of SNC, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), and United States Forest Service (USFS) funds to make a transformative, long-term investment in a partnership to work at the scale necessary to address wildfire and forest-resilience threats facing communities and forests.

One award was made, but through the pilot program, the SNC identified a total of six partnerships that are ready for large landscape-level investment now and another seven that are likely to be ready in the next one to two years.

Looking Ahead

In the coming year, the SNC will continue work to advance state goals in the Sierra-Cascade Region by funding and managing critical forest and watershed health, recreation and tourism, and strategic land conservation projects. The SNC will also offer capacity building support, provide robust technical assistance, inform policy to support partners working on the ground, and continue to communicate the outcomes and impact of the work being accomplished. The SNC remains committed to protecting, restoring,

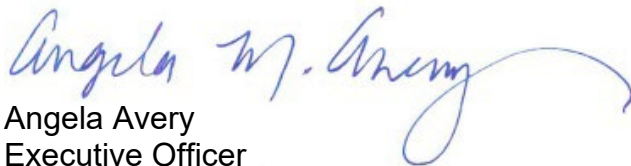


Secretary Crowfoot
December 31, 2023
Page 4 of 4

and revitalizing California's Sierra-Cascade Region through the coming year and beyond.

If you would like additional information about SNC projects or programs, or to discuss matters identified in the report, please feel free to contact me at (530) 823-4670 or angela.avery@sierranevada.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Angela Avery
Executive Officer

cc: Sue Parker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly
Amy Leach, Minute Clerk of the Assembly
Erika Contreras, Secretary of the Senate
Office of Legislative Counsel

