



# SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

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## **PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

**Approved on  
July 26, 2007**

*The Sierra Nevada Conservancy initiates, encourages, and supports efforts that improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region, its communities, and the citizens of California.*

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## **I. PROGRAM STATEMENT**

### **A. Introduction**

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Sections 33300 et seq., the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has been created, in part, to promote strategic direction for the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada. SNC reflects a broad mission to be accomplished through a variety of activities in collaboration and cooperation with a wide array of partners. The following Program Guidelines support the SNC's mandate and mission.

The SNC Program is intended to integrate seven specific areas defined in Section F of these guidelines. The Program recognizes the interdependence of all areas and the need to ensure the success of each to achieve the overall mission of the Conservancy.

### **B. Program Guidance**

SNC subscribes to a number of key objectives in guiding its program implementation, including:

- Facilitating a wide variety of complementary projects and activities throughout the Region to advance environmental improvement and the economic and social well-being of Sierra Nevada residents;
- Making every effort to ensure that, over time, Conservancy funding and other efforts are spread equitably across each of the various Sub-Regions and among the program areas, with adequate allowance for the variability of costs associated with individual Regions and types of projects;
- Maintaining a strong local presence and active public input and participation;
- Coordinating, cooperating, and consulting with governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, tribal organizations, and other interested parties in integrated project design, implementation, and management;
- Educating Californians of the benefits they receive from the Sierra Nevada and of the general importance of the Region; and
- Keeping accurate and open financial records.

Per statute, the Conservancy shall cooperate with and consult with the city or county where a grant is proposed or an interest in real property is proposed to be acquired; and shall, as necessary or appropriate, coordinate its efforts with other state agencies, non-profit organizations, or other interested parties. The Conservancy shall, as necessary and appropriate, cooperate and consult with a public water system that owns or operates facilities, including lands appurtenant thereto, where a grant is proposed or an interest in land is proposed to be acquired.

For all grants less than \$50,000 for projects other than acquisition or site improvement/restoration, the SNC will notify the affected county, city, and/or water agency of the proposed project and request comment within 10 business days of receipt of such notification. The SNC shall provide such notification at the point at which a project is deemed eligible and is being considered for funding.

For all other grants, the SNC will notify the affected county and/or city and public water agency (where appropriate), and request comments within 15 business days following notification. In addition, the SNC will attempt to make personal contact with the affected entity to ensure that the local government is aware of the proposed project and provided an opportunity to comment or raise any concerns. The Sub-Regional representative will also be notified at this time and may wish to communicate with the affected entity as well. The SNC shall provide notification at the point at which a project is deemed eligible and is being considered for funding.

For projects that provide information indicating support (in the form of a resolution) from the affected city and/or county and, if appropriate, water agency, such information will be deemed adequate for meeting the statutory requirement.

### C. Availability of Funds

Funding for the Conservancy is appropriated through the State budget process on an annual basis. Proposition 84 passed by California voters in 2006 allocates \$54 million to the SNC, although these funds still need to be appropriated in the State budget. The Governor's 2007-08 budget proposes a total of \$21 million for the SNC, including \$17.5 million from the Proposition 84 funds, \$17 million of which are proposed for grants.

The Conservancy will continue to seek funding in future fiscal years to allow continued implementation of the program. Project sponsors are encouraged to contact Conservancy staff for confirmation of funding amounts currently available under the program.

The authorizing statute for the Conservancy specifies seven program areas. Funds will be made available in an equitable and integrated fashion, over time, across program areas and Sub-Regions. The SNC is committed to maximizing funding in

support of projects and activities that meet the goals of the enabling statute and the SNC Strategic Plan, and to minimizing administrative costs.

#### D. Administration

The Conservancy is governed by a 16-member Board, including 13 voting and three nonvoting liaison members. The Board sets policies for the organization and adopts program and grant guidelines. It determines Sub-Regional and Regional priorities and program emphasis. The Board oversees decisions on grants and loans as well as SNC's support of other efforts that help achieve SNC purposes. The Board may delegate certain decision-making authority to the Executive Officer.

The SNC staff implements programs under the direction of the Board, consistent with SNC policies and procedures. Using a full array of tools, the staff provides assistance to public agencies and eligible non-profit and tribal organizations. It monitors the ongoing status and success (benefits) of projects and provides reports to the SNC Board and the public.

#### E. SNC Sub-Regions Defined

As defined by statute, the SNC has six Sub-Regions. They consist of the following (bold indicates where all of the county is within the SNC boundaries):

- North Sierra consists of the Counties of **Lassen**, and portions of Modoc and Shasta;
- North Central Sierra is comprised of the Counties of **Plumas, Sierra**, and portions of Butte and Tehama;
- Central Sierra consists of the Counties of **El Dorado, Nevada**, and portions of Placer and Yuba;
- South Central Sierra is comprised of the Counties of **Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa**, and **Tuolumne**;
- East Sierra consists of the Counties of **Alpine, Mono**, and portions of Inyo;
- South Sierra is comprised of portions of the Counties of Fresno, Kern, Madera, and Tulare.

Specific jurisdictional boundaries are available on the SNC's Web site at [http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/docs/snc\\_map\\_w.pdf](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/docs/snc_map_w.pdf) and as Attachment A of this document. Staff may also be consulted relative to boundary questions.

## F. Program Areas Defined

While the SNC has seven statutorily mandated program areas, a primary objective for the organization is the integration and harmonization between and among the program areas. The statute requires the SNC to, over time, equitably distribute funding and resources across program areas and Sub-Regions. The Strategic Plan emphasizes the importance of understanding the interrelationship between the various program areas.

Given this focus, projects and activities that address numerous program areas in an integrated manner will be given priority. The SNC will work with a wide array of stakeholders to identify opportunities for collaboration and cooperation to achieve multiple benefits. It is recognized, however, that projects that address a single program area may be beneficial and may be supported in certain instances.

The seven program areas are as follows:

- *Provide Increased Opportunities for Tourism and Recreation*

The program area for Tourism and Recreation may involve related opportunities and experiences for residents and visitors, both traditional and non-traditional (so-called “place-based” or “heritage tourism”) forms. It may address existing activities, including shoulder (periods adjacent to peak seasons) and off-season, or developing new opportunities. Illustrative examples may include assistance in:

- Development and promotion of tourism related to agriculture;
- Development and promotion of tourism related to history and culture;
- Development and promotion of tribal tourism;
- Development and promotion of ecotourism;
- Development and promotion of tourism related to the arts;
- Identification, enhancement, and promotion of scenic byways;
- Identification of opportunities for, and promotion of, shoulder and off-season activities;
- Development and enhancement of visitor centers and interpretative opportunities;
- Creation of information and educational efforts aimed at reducing the adverse impacts of recreational activities on the community and environment;
- Creation of web-based information on opportunities for tourism and recreation throughout the Region;
- Development and distribution of materials, signage, and other promotional tools.

The program area also applies to support for related infrastructure. Possible examples are:

- Increased public access, including ADA compliance assistance;

- Assistance with trails, including “rails to trails” projects;
  - Conversion of older infrastructure for recreational opportunities;
  - Development of new recreational facilities/opportunities;
  - Improvements to existing recreational facilities/opportunities.
- *Protect, Conserve and Restore the Region’s Physical, Cultural, Archaeological, Historical and Living Resources*

This program area deals with protecting, conserving, and restoring a broad array of resources. It is recognized that many other program areas also address these important resources. Some project examples under this program area may include assistance in:

- Improving watershed health;
- Protecting and enhancing wildlife habitat;
- Improving forest health;
- Protecting and enhancing open space;
- Conducting environmental and natural resource education;
- Preserving cultural resources, historical buildings and settings, and Sierra Nevada heritage;
- Preserving Native American archaeological and cultural resources;
- Supporting projects reducing the impacts of climate change on watersheds and natural resources.

The SNC has a variety of tools that can be used to achieve the desired outcomes in this area. The SNC may provide this assistance through grants or direct provision of services. Examples may include but are not limited to:

- Support for less than fee title acquisition of critical lands;
  - Support for fee title acquisition of critical lands (by entities other than the SNC);
  - Facilitation of land or resource swap opportunities with state and federal agencies and private landowners;
  - Provision of technical assistance and scientific research/data;
  - Support for environmental, cultural, and archaeological education;
  - Provision of technical assistance for grant writing;
  - Creation of grant research libraries.
- *Aid in the Preservation of Working Landscapes*

The program area for working landscapes involves those lands producing goods and commodities from the natural environment (most commonly farms, ranches, and forests). These lands are an important part of the Sierra’s local economy, culture, and social fabric, and can provide substantial ecosystem services and environmental benefits. Examples of projects may include:

- Conservation easements or other mechanisms to help landowners maintain the economic viability of their working landscape-dependent businesses and provide environmental benefits;
- Efforts to preserve communities and events built around working landscapes, such as rodeos, fairs, and festivals;
- Support of research and development of infrastructure to process and sell local products from working landscapes;
- Efforts to improve natural water storage and recharge capacities;
- Support for incentive-based programs to achieve natural resource protection, including development and implementation of sustainable best management practices;
- Assistance in developing compatible activities, such as “agri-tourism” and “eco-tourism”;
- Support of efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change (such as carbon sequestration, management practices, etc);
- Support of monitoring activities and provision of technical assistance and data not otherwise legally required by permits or regulatory entities;
- Educational efforts relative to the contributions of working landscapes;
- Support for efforts to utilize biomass.

Projects in this program area must also balance interests of communities, resource development, and other opportunities. Some examples may include:

- Retaining community/historic character;
  - Preserving rural communities;
  - Researching and promoting sustainable forestry or range management;
  - Creating resource-oriented activities and jobs;
  - Creating opportunities for working landscape tourism;
  - Providing neutral forums for policy discussion.
- *Reduce the Risk of Natural Disasters, such as Wildfire*

This program area is related to natural disaster risk, such as from wildfire, floods, landslides, avalanches, and volcanic events. Climate change is an additional concern. Hence, projects in this program area deal with these kinds of risks. Some examples include:

- Identification and planning to reduce risk of disasters;
- Provision of data relative to natural disaster risks and tools to use such information;
- Fuels reduction and related fire safe activities;
- Coordination and facilitation of work with federal partners to increase fuels reduction activities;
- Procurement of equipment necessary to reduce risk of disaster;
- Reduction of wildland urban interface (WUI) conflicts and exposure to risk, including efforts to reduce the length of the WUI;

- Assistance in other projects that reduce natural disaster risk;
- Monitoring of effectiveness of risk reduction efforts;
- Educational efforts relating to risk reduction.

The program may also assist in land use planning efforts of local governments or organizations. Illustrative projects may include such things as:

- Provision of information and technical assistance in General Plan analysis and amendments and other local planning efforts;
- Assistance to local organizations dealing with issues of natural disaster risk;
- Development of community plans for reduction of fire risk, flood risk, and other natural disasters.

- *Protect and Improve Water and Air Quality*

The program area relates to water and air quality within SNC boundaries or interest.

In the case of water, concerns relate to historic and ongoing land use changes, the impact of catastrophic fire and climate change, and the effects of development on the demand for quality water and the ability to treat wastewater. SNC activities will be consistent with, but in no way supplant, regulatory efforts or requirements. Some examples of potential projects in the water quality program area may include:

- Water quality monitoring efforts;
- Water conservation efforts and programs;
- Integrated projects to enhance natural water storage capacity;
- Projects to enhance resiliency of natural water storage resources;
- Wetland and meadow restoration;
- Erosion control projects;
- Integrated watershed management planning efforts;
- Watershed restoration and enhancement resulting in improved water quality;
- Incentive-based programs to achieve improved water quality;
- Infrastructure needs for wastewater systems.

In the case of air, interests relate to addressing factors that impair air quality and reconciling land management activities with air quality standards. It is recognized that there are factors outside the SNC Region that adversely affect the area's air quality. Illustrative projects may include:

- Air quality monitoring;
- Support for incentive-based programs to achieve improved air quality;
- Support of activities to reduce air emissions in the Region (including land management and transportation);
- Efforts that reduce the adverse impacts of climate change to the Region, including carbon sequestration as a part of climate change mitigation.

- *Assist the Regional Economy through the Operation of the Conservancy's Program*

The economy of the Sierra Nevada has its roots in the natural environment via tourism, recreation, resource extraction, and the production of agricultural products. Increasingly, the Regional economy includes more diverse economic activities that come from different goods and services. In general, actions and projects deal with maintaining and improving the economy of the Region. Some examples may include:

- Purchasing and contracting for goods and services from within the Region whenever possible and feasible;
- Conducting needs assessment, planning, and other aspects of sustainable economic development;
- Investing in advanced information technology, communications, and other infrastructure that facilitates sustainable economic activity;
- Identifying economic impacts (positive and negative) of the SNC's actions.

The program area involves creation of activities and infrastructure that support the workforce and local communities. Illustrative examples may include providing assistance for:

- Job fairs and job training;
- Sustainable business development;
- Promoting Sierra-based economies by using goods and services of the Region.

- *Undertake Efforts to Enhance Public Use and Enjoyment of Lands Owned by the Public*

The program area deals with public lands and relates to the fact that approximately two-thirds of the Sierra Nevada Region is owned by the public and managed by public agencies. This program area supports projects to increase access to and enjoyment of public lands, and to enhance opportunities for restoration and improvement projects. Illustrative examples of projects might include:

- Development of additional points of access to public lands;
- Improvement and enhancement of existing access and recreational facilities;
- Improvement of management practices on voluntary easements over private lands to access public lands;
- Correction or reduction of adverse impacts of public access;
- Needs assessments and planning for restoration and improvement projects;
- Protection of public viewsheds;
- Assistance with land management issues that affect public enjoyment;
- Support of educational efforts that contribute to public use and enjoyment.

Projects may also reflect the need to work cooperatively with land management agencies and others to address a variety of issues, including the need for management or reduction of user conflicts. Some examples of projects are:

- Support for forums to discuss public land management issues and for public involvement;
- Support of planning and assessment efforts affecting public use and enjoyment of public lands;
- Support for community efforts to identify specific opportunities for sustainable public use and enjoyment of public lands;
- Support for efforts to promote enhanced management of public lands through management agreements and special use permits.

#### G. Consistency with Strategic Plan

The SNC is charged with a broad mission to be accomplished by a variety of activities in collaboration and cooperation with various partners. Consistent with statute, the SNC has adopted a Strategic Plan that is intended to guide its operations over the next five years. The Strategic Plan underscores the integrated interrelationship between the various program areas. The SNC emphasizes that activities that address multiple program areas in an integrated manner will be given priority. To this end, unless indicated otherwise by the SNC Board, programs and projects should reflect the goals and actions identified in the SNC Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is meant to provide direction on the implementation of SNC programs and should not be viewed as providing detailed information relative to specific projects and activities that may be initiated or supported. Therefore, there are specific activities identified as potential projects in Section F of these Guidelines that may not be referenced directly in the SNC Strategic Plan, but that are consistent with the mission and goals of the SNC.

#### H. Flexible Approach to Assessment of Opportunities

SNC seeks to foster opportunities that are creative and flexible, take advantage of other available funds, promote multiple benefits or a single benefit of substantial public interest, and produce results that are clear and measurable. It is desirable that, to the extent feasible, programs and projects achieve maximum benefits for the funds expended and in the shortest necessary amount of time. SNC may consider projects that border on SNC boundaries if they also involve lands or significantly affect lands within the SNC Region and would have substantial Sub-Regional or Regional benefit.

Concurrent with the development of program guidelines, the SNC is developing a set of performance measures and indices of environmental, economic, and social well-being for the Sierra Nevada Region. Performance measures will be used to determine the extent to which the SNC is implementing its program as described in

the Strategic Plan and these guidelines. The indices will be used to evaluate the effect that the SNC's efforts are having on the overall well-being of the Region.

#### I. Available Tools, Methods and Resources

SNC has a wide variety of available tools, methods, and resources to accomplish its program goals. These tools include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Issuance of grants
  - Competitive Grants: These grants are awarded on a set cycle with a financial review and evaluation process. Specific guidelines will be developed defining the types of activities that are eligible for project funding.
  - Strategic Opportunity Grants: These are grants that may be funded through a number of possible sources to help recipients respond to time-sensitive opportunities for initial project planning and development, environmental review, appraisal services, or project implementation. They may also be used to build capacity and develop grant administration skills for small organizations throughout the Region.
- Provision of loans. Specific guidelines for the provision of loans will be developed when funding sources for loan-making become available.
- Funding or facilitating collaborative planning efforts which involve interested entities and groups within the Region.
- Serving as a neutral convener for parties wishing to make progress in discussing controversial issues.
- Provision of technical assistance to eligible entities to support program and project development and implementation.
- Conducting research in connection with the development and implementation of the SNC program.
- Conducting monitoring in connection with the development and implementation of the SNC program.
- Support of educational efforts consistent with the SNC mission.

#### J. Acquisitions

The Conservancy may acquire, or assist eligible partners to acquire, from willing sellers or transferors, an interest in real property. However, the Conservancy may not purchase any real property in fee simple and shall not exercise the power of eminent domain.

The Conservancy may make grants or loans to public agencies and eligible nonprofit and tribal organizations to acquire an interest in real property, including a fee interest in that property. Grants for acquisition of real property may include funds to pay down or retire real property debt previously incurred by an eligible applicant in connection with the applicant's acquisition of a real property interest that satisfies grant requirements. Grant or loan funds shall be disbursed to a recipient entity only after the entity has entered into an agreement with the Conservancy, on the terms and conditions specified by the Conservancy. After approving a grant, the Conservancy may assist the grantee in carrying out the purposes of the grant.

An entity applying for a grant from the Conservancy to acquire an interest in real property shall specify all of the following in the grant application:

- (1) The intended use of the property.
- (2) The manner in which the land will be managed.
- (3) How the cost of ongoing management will be funded.

In the case of a grant of funds to acquire an interest in real property, including, but not limited to, a fee interest, the agreement between the Conservancy and the recipient shall require all of the following:

- (a) The purchase price of an interest in real property acquired by the nonprofit organization shall not exceed fair market value as established by an appraisal approved by a State appraiser.
- (b) The terms under which the interest in real property is acquired shall be subject to Conservancy staff review and approval prior to submittal of a grant application to the Board for authorization. This includes a legal review to ensure that the proposed terms do not include any deed restrictions or covenants that are not consistent with the purpose of the intended acquisition, and also that the overall goals and mission of the Conservancy and the State are being adequately addressed by the proposed transaction.
- (c) An interest in real property to be acquired under the grant shall not be used as security for a debt unless the Conservancy approves the transaction.
- (d) The transfer of an interest in the real property shall be subject to approval of the Conservancy, and a new agreement sufficient to protect the public interest shall be entered into between the Conservancy and the transferee.

#### K. Receipt of Gifts

The Conservancy may receive gifts, donations, grants, rents, royalties, and other assistance and funds from public and private sources.

Except as specified in statute, the Conservancy may receive an interest in real or personal property through transfer, succession, or other mode of acquisition generally recognized by law.

Subject to stipulations or other legal considerations, the Conservancy will use gifts in a manner consistent with accomplishing the goals of the Strategic Plan.

L. Land Management

The SNC does not anticipate permanent or long-term ownership of lands (either in fee title or less than fee title), or the management of lands. The SNC will engage in such efforts to the extent that they are necessary to achieve program objectives and facilitate long-term solutions with partners in the Region.

M. Reversion

A deed or instrument by which the grantee acquires an interest in real property under the grant shall include a power of termination on the part of the state. The deed or instrument shall provide that the state may exercise the power of termination by notice in the event of the grantee's violation of the purpose of the grant through breach of a material term or condition thereof, and that, upon recordation of the notice, full title to the interest in real property identified in the notice shall immediately vest in the state, or in another public agency or a nonprofit organization designated by the Conservancy to which the state conveys or has conveyed its interest.

**II. PROJECT INITIATION**

It is desirable for potential requesters of project support to contact the Conservancy staff to discuss their proposed projects and to submit preliminary project proposals for review. This preliminary submittal process is intended to assist in the identification and design of qualifying proposals.

Conservancy staff are available to assist applicants in developing proposals which will meet program objectives, guidelines, and criteria. Staff may be contacted by phone or in person at the following locations:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Headquarters: for projects serving the entire Sierra Nevada Region  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603  
530-823-4670

Mariposa Office (Mt. Whitney Area)  
5039 Fairgrounds Road  
Mariposa, California 95338 (Phone # TBD)

Susanville Office (Mt. Lassen Area):  
2950 Riverside Drive  
Susanville, CA 96130 (Phone # TBD)

Bishop Office: (Mt. Whitney Area)  
351 Pacu Lane, Suite 300  
Bishop, CA 93514 (Phone # TBD)

#### A. Eligible Applicants

The Conservancy may make grants or loans to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and tribal organizations as defined below:

“Public agency” - means a city, county, district, joint powers authority, State agency, or Federal agency.

“Nonprofit organization” - means a private, nonprofit organization that qualifies for exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of Title 26 of the United States Code, and that has among its principal charitable purposes preservation of land for scientific, educational, recreational, scenic, or open-space opportunities; or protection of the natural environment, preservation or enhancement of wildlife; or preservation of cultural and historical resources; or efforts to provide for the enjoyment of public lands.

“Tribal organization” – means an Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, or a tribal agency authorized by a tribe, which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians, and is identified on pages 52829 to 52835, inclusive, of Number 250 of Volume 53 (December 29, 1988) of the Federal Register, as that list may be updated or amended from time to time.

#### B. Application Process

Competitive Grants for project implementation are awarded by the Conservancy on an annual basis. Specific guidelines will be developed for each grant program that will identify the process, timeline, and eligibility.

Applications for Strategic Opportunity Grants may be accepted at any time during the year. Following review by staff, grants may be authorized by the Board at any noticed Board Meeting, or by the Executive Officer for grants under \$50,000 as delegated by the Board. The Executive Officer may authorize a total not to exceed \$150,000 between Board Meetings.

Specific Grant Guidelines and Application Instructions for Competitive and Strategic Opportunity Grants will be available to review and download from the Conservancy’s Web site at [www.sierranevada.ca.gov](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov).

### III. PROJECT EVALUATION

#### A. Project Submission

Upon receipt of preliminary submittals, staff will initially assess consistency with eligibility criteria and objectives of the program. In cases where the staff finds that a project proposal is either incomplete or does not meet eligibility criteria, staff will work with the project applicant to complete or modify it for further consideration. Staff will next begin to consult with the project applicants, SNC Sub-Regional representatives, state and local agencies, interested non-profits, and other organizations with expertise or interest in the program area in order to gain input and help refine the proposals. This may include the identification of other funding sources for consideration by project applicants.

Project submittals will be reviewed by staff for completeness and consistency with Agency and program requirements. Eligible submittals will be further evaluated based on criteria associated with each grant program. Grant award authorization will be made by the Board at a publicly noticed meeting. Projects approved under the Executive Officer's delegated authority will be presented to the Board at the first regularly scheduled meeting following approval.

#### B. SNC Sub-Regional Priorities

The statute governing the SNC charges the organization with identifying Sub-Regional priorities. The SNC relies heavily on public input and the input of other governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations to determine priorities consistent with the requirement of "equitable distribution." In addition to this input, Sub-Regional priorities shall be established in coordination with an advisory committee formed to provide guidance on project funding for each Sub-Region. Each advisory committee will be composed of the appropriate Sub-Regional representative and one statewide Board member.

#### C. SNC Regional Priorities

As part of its ongoing process, the SNC will also identify Regional priorities, considering Sub-Regional priorities and other Region-wide information. The Board will determine the appropriate manner to address priorities.

#### D. Project Evaluation Criteria

Criteria for projects are based on program requirements; institutional capabilities; integration of program goals; funding needs throughout the Region; and federal, state, and local plans, including, but not limited to: general plans, recreation plans, community wildfire protection plans, urban water management plans, and groundwater management plans.

Projects or portions of projects undertaken must comply with all applicable laws, including the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (where appropriate), and SNC guidelines.

The following criteria will be utilized to evaluate and prioritize projects either directly undertaken or funded through grants, loans, or other actions by the Conservancy (not listed in order of importance).

- Significant contribution to meeting multiple program goals in the SNC Strategic Plan - The project directly addresses multiple program action items in the SNC Strategic Plan. In most cases, preference will be given to projects that directly meet Sub-Regional needs and priorities.
- Significant contribution to meeting a single program goal – Although it may not be possible to achieve multiple objectives, the project would provide a substantial benefit within a single program area.
- Federal, state, and local plans – Consideration of the effect the project may have upon various plans, including general plans, recreation plans, urban water management plans, and groundwater management plans. Consideration will also be given to the potential impact these plans may have on the long-term sustainability of the project.
- Consideration of what is occurring on surrounding lands –Consider the sustainability of the project in the context of the surrounding land uses, including the potential impacts to surrounding lands and the potential impact that future activities on surrounding lands may have on the project area.
- Cooperation and community support - The project has been formulated and developed in conjunction with other agencies and organizations that have an interest in the outcome of the project. The applicant demonstrates support of the project by other public agencies, landowners, non-profit organizations, tribal organizations, or other parties necessary for the successful implementation and long-term viability of the project. Community support and consensus are also key factors. Projects for which certain aspects may require confidentiality during the evaluation phase will not be penalized.
- Leveraging of funds – The degree to which the project includes other funding partners to allow for maximum benefit accruing from expenditure of SNC funds.
- Adequacy of design – If the project calls for construction of infrastructure, facilities and related items, the project should have an appropriate design. The project design should be appropriate to the type and level of use anticipated, and include measures, if necessary, to protect natural resources. Preference will be

given to projects which provide facilities for a wide range of users, including the disabled.

- Cost-effectiveness - The project provides significant public benefit at the lowest necessary cost. Preference will be given to projects which can be made more cost-effective through the use of resources of other agencies or organizations, and/or inclusion of matching funds or in-lieu contributions by the applicants.
- Implementability - The project can be implemented in a timely manner. If a project depends on other funding sources, the portion of the project to be funded by the Conservancy must be able to be implemented by itself in a manner consistent with the objectives of the SNC program area.
- Sustainability - If applicable, the project involves an activity that can be repeated over a long period of time without causing damage to the environment and community.
- Management and maintenance – The recipient of a grant or loan provided by the Conservancy for the acquisition of real property shall provide for the management of the real property to be acquired as specified in the grant agreement. Management or maintenance plans for projects, programs, or other forms of Conservancy assistance will be developed with recipients and included in formal agreements.
- Model - The project is useful as a model project in the program area or in other Sub-Regions. Projects incorporating effective and innovative approaches or partnerships will be encouraged.

#### **IV. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

- Monitoring – For ground-based projects, SNC staff may visit project sites during implementation, consistent with agreements, to monitor progress and offer assistance if necessary.
- Documentation – SNC staff and project partners will document project implementation as specified in grant contract documents. Project photographs will be taken during implementation and archived with project files, and may be used for additional SNC purposes.
- Performance Standards – Performance standards will be identified in project plan documents and specifications and will be consistent with goals identified in the SNC Strategic Plan. Standards will be developed based on best available knowledge and updated as necessary. Analysis of standards will help identify indices to measure effectiveness of SNC program implementation.

## Attachment A - Jurisdictional Map

# The Sierra Nevada Conservancy

