



# Annual Report 2011-12

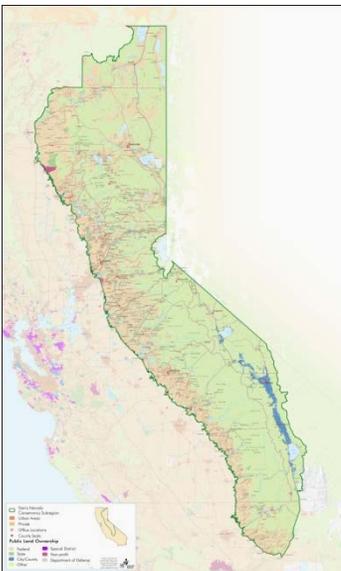




**State of California Edmund G. Brown Jr., Governor**

**Natural Resources Agency John Laird, Secretary**

- B.J. Kirwan.....Board Chair
- Jim Branham.....Executive Officer
- Joan Keegan.....Assistant Executive Officer



**Serra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Region**

The SNC Region is formed by all or part of 22 counties and is organized into six Subregions:

- North Sierra: Modoc, Shasta, Lassen Counties
- North Central Sierra: Tehama, Butte, Plumas, Sierra Counties
- Central Sierra: Yuba, Nevada, Placer, El Dorado Counties
- South Central Sierra: Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa Counties
- South Sierra: Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kern Counties
- East Sierra: Alpine, Mono, Inyo Counties

*Mission*

*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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The SNC Governing Board is made up of 16 members; 13 voting and 3 non-voting members.

Listed below are members representing the Board for 2011 through June 2012.

### Governor's Appointments

- B.J. Kirwan..... Chair, Public Member
- Pedro Reyes..... Designated Representative, Chief Deputy Director, Policy, Department of Finance
- Bob Kirkwood..... Public Member
- Todd Ferrara..... Designated Representative, Deputy Secretary for External Affairs, Natural Resources Agency
- Vacant..... Public Member

### Legislative Appointments

- John Brissenden..... Speaker of the Assembly's Appointment
- Bob Johnston..... Senate Rules Committee's Appointment

**Local Government Representatives:** Each of six Subregions is represented by a member of the Board of Supervisors from a county within the Subregion (as selected by the counties), and each representative serves a two-year term.

### North Sierra Subregion

- Brian Dahle..... Supervisor, Lassen County

### North Central Sierra Subregion

- Bill Nunes..... Supervisor, Sierra County

### Central Sierra Subregion

- Ted Owens..... Supervisor, Nevada County

### East Sierra Subregion

- Linda Arcularius..... Supervisor, Inyo County

### South Central Sierra Subregion

- Lee Stetson..... Supervisor, Mariposa County
- Dick Pland (2011) ..... Supervisor, Tuolumne County

### South Sierra Subregion

- Tom Wheeler..... Supervisor, Madera County

### Non-Voting Liaison Advisors:

- Daniel Jiron..... U.S. Forest Service
- Kathy Hardy..... Bureau of Land Management
- David Graber, Ph.D. .... National Park Service



# Sierra Nevada Conservancy Initiatives and Activities



## Overview

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) was created by bi-partisan legislation in 2004 to provide a mechanism to bring recognition and State investment to a very important Region within California. The Sierra Nevada Region encompasses 25 million acres (about 25%) of the state. The resources found within these 25 million acres sustain the health and livelihood of millions of Californians. Of particular importance are the critical roles the Region plays in ensuring a clean, reliable supply of water for California, including the Delta, and in reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the state's atmosphere:

- Over two-thirds of the state's water originates in the Sierra, and actions undertaken in these watersheds affect the quality, quantity, and reliability of California's water supply;
- Sierra forests remove carbon from the air, and proper forest management can further increase their ability to store carbon; but improperly managed forests are more susceptible to large, damaging wildfires which turn these carbon sinks into huge sources of GHGs.

In addition, the Sierra provides 15% of California's energy needs from hydroelectric power, as well as myriad other measurable and immeasurable benefits, including agricultural products, recreational resources, and biologically diverse habitats for important plant and animal species.

Since its creation the SNC has focused on initiatives and activities addressing key issues of the Region. The following summaries highlight some of the initiatives and activities undertaken by the SNC over the past year that specifically address the issues of forests, water and a changing climate.

## Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI)

The SNC continues to foster collaboration locally and regionally through SNFCI, bringing diverse groups together in support of a cohesive, economically viable and sustainable approach to reducing fire risk, creating jobs and protecting the vital watersheds within the Region. The SNC contributes fiscal, logistical and administrative support to collaboratives working on forest health and biomass utilization issues in the Region. For example, the SNC assisted the Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group in a successful application for funding in the amount of \$7.3 million, over a 10-year cycle from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) Program. The purpose of the CFLR Program is to encourage the collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes. Project selection is predicated on a diverse group of landowners demonstrating a complete commitment to forest restoration through close coordination and collaborative solution-building on landscape-scale operations.



## Ecosystem Services Initiative

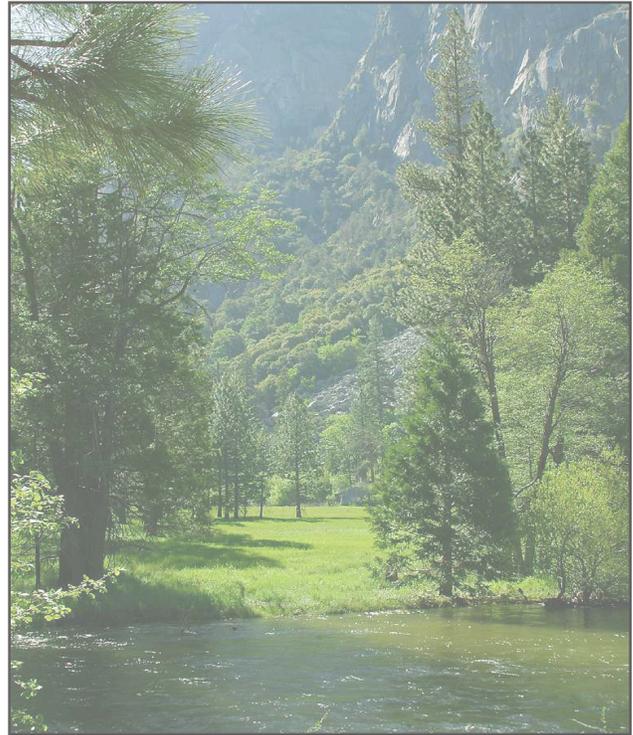
The purpose of this project is to conduct an avoided cost analysis to quantify the potential savings of investing in forest restoration and catastrophic fire prevention practices as opposed to paying for the suppression, restoration, clean up, and maintenance work following a wildfire. Like many Sierra Nevada watersheds, the Mokelumne Watershed delivers a significant amount of benefits to downstream users. Today, there is a high risk of catastrophic fire in the watershed, and if such a fire were to occur, there would be significant adverse consequences to the watershed and quality of services it provides. The first phase of the project is analyzing how upper watershed restoration treatments, primarily fuel hazard reduction and forest health management, benefit downstream users and reduce operational costs for energy and water delivery agencies. The project is also analyzing how these treatments can benefit socioeconomic and environmental conditions for people living within the watershed. The avoided cost analysis is

scheduled to be completed in Spring 2013. This project is being coordinated with the watershed-wide project referred to as the Environmental Benefits Program, which is developing metrics, agreements and platforms necessary to facilitate actual investments in restoration throughout the Mokelumne Watershed.

On September 17, 2011, more than 3,600 volunteers joined together to remove over 251 tons of trash and recyclables from 287 miles of rivers throughout the Sierra Nevada as part of the Third Annual Great Sierra River Cleanup.

### **California State Water Plan: Mountain Counties Overlay Regional Report and Delta Plan**

The SNC is taking the lead in preparing the Mountain Counties Overlay regional report for the California Water Plan Update 2013. The California Water Plan (CWP), is a valuable reference and planning document for all regions within the state. It provides information for decision-makers, water managers and other interested stakeholders to use in administering the state's considerable water-related resources. The state is divided into 10 hydrologic regions plus two "overlay" areas (Mountain Counties and The Delta), which are designed to address issues that cross over individual hydrologic region boundaries. Each region and overlay area creates a separate region-specific report that accompanies the Water Plan. The purpose of the Mountain Counties Overlay regional report, which covers 15 of the 22 counties comprising the SNC, is to collect and provide information that will enable planners and decision-makers to better integrate water management in this area of statewide significance. The SNC is also representing Sierra issues as part of the Delta Plan, as a reminder that most of the water coming through the Delta originates in the Sierra.



### **Great Sierra River Cleanup**

The Great Sierra River Cleanup is an annual event focused on removing trash and restoring the health of waterways throughout the Sierra Nevada Region. This



event is coordinated by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy in conjunction with Coastal Cleanup Day and connects local organizations' existing cleanups with brand new efforts in the Sierra

Nevada to promote stewardship of California's water from the source to the sea.

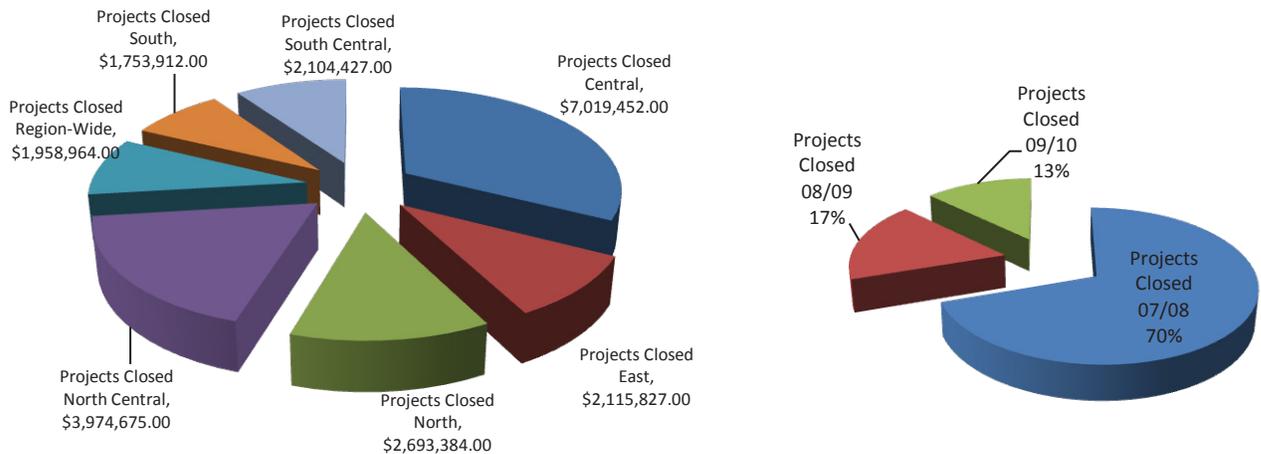
## SNC Grants

In June 2012, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Governing Board authorized Phase 1 of Healthy Forests projects for over \$4.4 million, bringing the total awarded dollars from the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84) to over \$44.4 million.

Fund Fiscal Year (FFY)	Awarded Dollars
07/08	\$16,964,568.00
08/09	\$13,010,921.00
09/10	\$10,000,000.00
11/12	\$4,483,507.76
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$44,458,996.76</b>

In addition to the Healthy Forests grant program of 2011-12, the SNC initiated the 2012-13 Preservation of Ranches and Agricultural Lands grant round with the release of the Grant Guidelines and Grant Application Packet on June 18, 2012. The purpose of this grant round is to award approximately \$5 million in grants to aid in the preservation of working landscapes, while providing clear public benefits. Eligible projects include those that support the long-term ecological values and economic viability of working ranches and other agricultural lands and the health of their associated watersheds.

## Projects Completed



Also in 2011-12 the SNC completed the closeout of 151 grants out of the total 243 grants that have been awarded to date. Of that total, 133 (70%) were from the SNC's first year of grant awards, with 30% of closeouts from subsequent year awards. Over \$23.8 million spent for these completed projects was distributed throughout the six Subregions and Region-wide. Together these projects helped to directly protect or restore 20 miles of river and almost 10,000 acres of forest, grasslands, meadow and riparian areas, as well as leveraging protection of another 32,000 acres in the Region. SNC funds also created jobs and job training within the Region in ecology, fire and watershed restoration activities: at least 10,000 person-hours generated directly from restoration work and 26,000 students and volunteers trained.

BUDGET AND FISCAL ACTIVITY

Fiscal Year 2011-12 Budgeted and Actual Expenditures

STATE OPERATIONS:

		EXPENDITURES BY FUNDING SOURCE			
Personal Services	Budgeted	Actual	State Operations	Budgeted	Actual
Salaries and Wages	\$ 1,837,236	\$ 1,777,387	Environmental License Plate Fund	\$ 4,125,000	\$ 4,054,432
Staff Benefits	\$ 613,598	\$ 612,653	Proposition 84	\$ 496,000	\$ 397,468
<b>Personal Services, Totals</b>	<b>\$ 2,450,834</b>	<b>\$ 2,390,040</b>	<b>State Operations, Totals</b>	<b>\$ 4,621,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,451,900</b>
Operating Expenses & Equipment	Budgeted	Actual	Local Assistance Grants	Budgeted	Actual
General Expense	\$ 160,517	\$ 150,673	Proposition 84 (See Note 2)	\$ 12,990,601	\$ -
Travel - In State	\$ 42,170	\$ 41,954	<b>Local Assistance Grants, Totals</b>	<b>\$ 12,990,601</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
Travel - Out of State	\$ -	\$ -			
Training	\$ 24,757	\$ 24,757			
Facilities	\$ 248,893	\$ 248,893			
Utilities	\$ 11,637	\$ 11,637			
Information Technology	\$ 78,005	\$ 77,865			
Contracts - External	\$ 504,470	\$ 504,470			
Contracts - Interagency Agreement	\$ 920,690	\$ 822,584			
Other Items of Expense	\$ 19,370	\$ 19,370			
Pro Rata (Control Agency Costs)	\$ 159,658	\$ 159,658			
<b>Operating Expenses &amp; Equipment, Totals</b>	<b>\$ 2,170,166</b>	<b>\$ 2,061,860</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 4,621,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,451,900</b>
<b>State Operations, Totals</b>	<b>\$ 4,621,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,451,900</b>	State Operations, Totals	\$ 4,621,000	\$ 4,451,900
			Local Assistance Grants, Totals	\$ 12,990,601	\$ -
			<b>Expenditures, Totals</b>	<b>\$ 17,611,601</b>	<b>\$ 4,451,900</b>

Note 1: May not calculate properly due to rounding

Note 2: Expenditures for the Proposition 84 local assistance authority are absent because grant awards made during the 2011/12 fiscal year in the amount of \$5m were not encumbered or expended during this reporting period. Expenditure details for the \$5m appropriation will be displayed in the 2012-13 annual report.

# SNC Projects and Activities

