

Daley, Matthew@SNC

From: Marty Coleman-Hunt <marty@sierracascadelandtrustcouncil.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 19, 2018 2:46 PM
To: Avery, Angela@SNC; Parsley, Theresa@SNC
Subject: SNC Strategic Plan: Input

Here are some written comments. I think most speak to Strategy 5 (Policy) but also to the general tone of the draft being really focused on forest health -- very important but over five years we may see other priorities that we wished were accommodated.

The land trust community across the Sierra and Cascade region has reviewed the Strategic Plan draft that was discussed at the BOD meeting in Bishop. We are grateful for another opportunity to provide comments. We understand that these are broad strategies and that there will be a future opportunity to comment on more specific actions.

1. We agree that addressing catastrophic wildfire risk in conifer forests should be a significant focus of the plan. However we further believe oak woodlands are at the most risk. Oak woodlands tend to be where most of the larger Sierra urban areas are located. As a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) oak woodlands represent a greater risk for ignition sources, a higher loss from infrastructure assets, and potentially the loss of human lives. We encourage a reference in the plan to the critical nature of oak woodlands.
2. Agricultural conservation, specifically large ranches, have traditionally been a priority for SNC. We would like that to be called out in the new plan. Ranches remain some of the largest private land holdings. Revenues from conservation easement purchases tend to be recycled into local economies in the form of the growth of agricultural operations (e.g. jobs and an enhanced tax base). Finally ranches tend to be some of the best-managed landscapes, and deliver a number of valuable ecosystem services.
3. Conservation of wildlife corridors and refugia, especially to support climate adaptation processes should be recognized. In general, references to wildlife as are not found in the plan, and while our conservation focus is on habitat, we believe that climate change pressures on wildlife to move up slope, for example, require new planning informed by the latest science. Protection of future wildlife habitat and corridors for successful species relocation is critical.
4. The plan in general doesn't address landscape fragmentation (especially the checkerboard). This is a significant barrier to landscape scale protection, management and restoration. Fragmentation of land ownership by various federal and state agencies, water and utility companies and private landowners, whose management practices are inconsistent across a landscape can be resolved through either consolidation of ownership (acquisition) or the use of conservation easements that enforce consistent land management plans.

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Marty Coleman-Hunt

Executive Director

Sierra Cascade Land Trust Council

530-913-9246

www.sierracascadelandtrustcouncil.org