



Funding Research Memo: CEQA and NEPA Funding for Restoration Projects

Last updated: August 2018

THIS MEMO WILL BE UPDATED PERIODICALLY. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING RESOURCES, PLEASE CONTACT THE SNC FUND DEVELOPMENT TEAM: sncfundingteam@sierranevada.ca.gov.

CAVEAT – Grant guidelines and deadlines are subject to periodic change. Please check the program web sites for new information. The deadlines listed are projected from the last funding round and can be unreliable. Check the program’s web site!

These grant programs allow funds to be spent for CEQA and NEPA analysis and document preparation. Some programs will only fund these costs as part of a larger application for project implementation, others will fund just the planning phase.

FUNDING SUMMARY TABLE

(*Hyperlinks to more complete information later in memo, including links to program web sites.)

Grant*	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline <i>(most recent deadline)</i>	Types of Funding
<p>Note: The passage of Prop 68 in June 2018 and the potential passage of Prop 3 in November 2018 will add funding resources to some of these grant programs and may also result in additional funding opportunities. At the time of publication these opportunities have not yet been released. Please check the websites of relevant California state agencies for updates. The SNC funding opportunities newsletter will also have the latest information. You can subscribe by adding yourself to the funding listserv here.</p>				
USFWS Tribal Wildlife Grant Program	Grants up to \$200,000. Match is not required but improves score.	Programs that benefit wildlife and habitat, including species of Native American cultural or traditional importance and species that are not hunted or fished.	September <i>(September 29, 2018)</i>	Planning, implementation, monitoring, public education, and conservation easements. Funds may be used for salaries, equipment, consultant services, subcontracts, acquisitions, and travel. Funds may be used to conduct environmental reviews, habitat evaluations, permit reviews related to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and other environmental compliance activities when they are directly related to the proposed project.

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National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Bring Back the Natives/More Fish	\$50,000 - \$100,000 1:1 non-federal match required, 2:1 preferred.	Protect and maintain intact and healthy aquatic systems; reverse declines in the quality and quantity of aquatic habitats to improve overall health of native fish and other aquatic organisms.	June (June 28, 2018)	Awards have been made for assessment, planning, design, implementation, and monitoring. Focus is on water conservation infrastructure, watershed protection, and invasive species management.
NFWF Northern California Forests and Watersheds	\$50,000 - \$250,000. 50% match required, 1:1 match will be more competitive.	Recovery of lands degraded from wildfires and restoration of meadows throughout the Sierra Nevada.	March (March 22, 2018)	There are several categories of projects. Watershed Restoration and Management projects can: -Improve hydrologic connectivity and aquatic organism passage; -Remove invasive species threatening aquatic habitat or sensitive species; -Restore and/or enhance instream flow; -Create, maintain and/or improve existing watersheds, meadows, fens, riparian corridors, and instream habitats.
Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program	Up to \$100,000 for planning grants. Match not required but adds to score.	Projects that will promote healthy forests and watersheds in the Sierra Nevada region. Includes both implementation (Category 1) and planning (Category 2) grants.	Varies (July 25, 2018 for pre-applications)	Category 2 grants can be used for pre-project activities necessary for a specific future on-the-ground project that meets the Category 1 grant requirements. Eligible costs include CEQA and NEPA.
Wildlife Conservation Board CA Streamflow Enhancement Program	Planning projects limited to \$2.5 million. Match not required but adds to score.	Projects that protect and enhance stream flows, especially in those streams that support anadromous fish, special status, threatened, endangered or at-risk species, or provide resilience to climate change.	September (September 4, 2018)	Applicants can apply for funding from one or more of the following project types: planning, implementation, acquisition, monitoring, assessment, and scientific studies. Planning funding can include CEQA/NEPA.

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California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Watershed Restoration Grant Program (Proposition 1)	Not stated. Match not required, but leverage is a scoring criterion.	Watershed restoration and protection projects of statewide importance outside of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.	June (June 13, 2018)	Project administration, pre-acquisition costs, interests in land (fee purchase, conservation easements), and water acquisitions. Planning grants can include CEQA/NEPA funding.
CAL FIRE Greenhouse Gas Reduction-funded grants	Multiple – see individual grant programs listed at: http://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/grants.php . Currently these include Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Health, and Fire Prevention grants. Funding amounts and deadlines vary.			Grant funds may be used for CEQA/NEPA compliance, but the project must include implementation as well as planning and the implementation portion of the grant funding will not be released until the CEQA/NEPA is complete.
Department of Water Resources Urban Stream Restoration Program	No current solicitations but Prop. 68 included funding for this program so new RFPs are likely soon.	Reduce flooding and erosion, restore or protect the natural ecological values of streams, and promote community involvement and stewardship.	No current solicitations but Prop. 68 included funding for this program so new RFPs are likely soon.	Previous grant programs have funded environmental documentation.
CA Dept. of Parks and Recreation off-highway vehicle (OHV) grants	Depends on program category. 25% match required	Planning, development, maintenance, operation, enforcement, programs, restoration, and conservation of trails, trailheads, areas, and other facilities associated with the use of OHVs.	March or April (March 5, 2018)	CEQA/NEPA funding is allowed. When a project request is for funding both CEQA/NEPA requirements and project implementation, funding is provided in two phases.

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State Water Resources Control Board 319 (h) Nonpoint Source grants	\$250K – \$750K. 25% match required but may be waived for disadvantaged communities or post-fire recovery projects.	The Timber Fund will fund projects that implement forest management measures on forest lands to improve water quality. Examples of projects include erosion control, road management, riparian restoration, groundwater dependent ecosystems, nutrient management, riparian fuel management, and/or post fire rehabilitation.	Varies <i>(February 8, 2018)</i>	The only planning funding remaining in this program for the next few years is for Timber Fund projects. Applications must be for planning <u>and</u> implementation of projects. The planning work can include CEQA/NEPA documentation.
USFS Wood Innovations grant	Up to \$250,000, 50% non-federal match required	Expand and accelerate wood energy and wood products markets to support forest management needs on National Forest System and other forest lands.	January <i>(January 22, 2018)</i>	Pre-project development funding category can pay for environmental documentation and other planning tasks.
State Water Resources Control Board Proposition 1 Technical Assistance Funding Program	Technical assistance program	Promote permanent and sustainable drinking water and wastewater treatment solutions to ensure effective and efficient provision of safe, clean, affordable, and reliable drinking water and wastewater treatment services, particularly for small disadvantaged communities.	Rolling	Technical assistance available in project coordination, finance, legal assistance, engineering, and environmental analysis.



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USFWS Tribal Wildlife Grants

<http://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/grants.html>

The goal of the Tribal Wildlife Grant Program is to develop and implement programs for the benefit of wildlife and their habitat, including species of Native American cultural or traditional importance and species that are not hunted or fished.

Tribal Wildlife Grants are used to provide technical and financial assistance to federally-recognized tribes for the development and implementation of programs that benefit fish and wildlife resources and habitat. Activities may include, but are not limited to, planning for wildlife and habitat conservation, fish and wildlife conservation and management actions, fish and wildlife-related laboratory and field research, natural history studies, management of invasive species, habitat mapping, field surveys and population monitoring, habitat preservation, conservation easements, and public education that is relevant to the project. The funds may be used for salaries, equipment, consultant services, subcontracts, acquisitions, and travel. Funds may also be used to conduct environmental reviews, habitat evaluations, permit reviews related to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and other environmental compliance activities directly related to the proposed project.

Grants are for up to \$200,000. No match is required, though leveraging of funds improves scoring.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Bring Back the Natives/More Fish

<http://www.nfwf.org/bbn/Pages/home.aspx>

The Bring Back the Natives/More Fish program invests in conservation activities that restore, protect, and enhance native populations of sensitive or listed fish species across the United States, especially in areas on or adjacent to federal agency lands. The program emphasizes coordination between private landowners and federal agencies, tribes, corporations, and states to improve the ecosystem functions and health of watersheds. Recent Sierra Nevada priorities included Lahontan cutthroat trout recovery. Priority activities include restoring connectivity, restoring riparian and instream habitat, water quality improvements, invasive species management, innovation, and 'game changing' research.

Grant awards generally range in size from \$50,000 to \$100,000, although grants greater than \$100,000 will be considered. Applicants must provide at least a 1:1 non-federal match, though 2:1 is preferred. Eligible non-federal matching sources can include cash, in-kind donations, and/or volunteer labor.

NFWF Northern California Forests

<http://www.nfwf.org/norcal/Pages/home.aspx>

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Beginning in 2018, NFWF's Sierra Nevada meadows funding is being awarded through the Northern California Forests and Watersheds landscape RFP. Grant funding will continue to be awarded to planning, implementation, or other projects designed to advance meadow restoration or resilience within the Sierra Nevada meadows range. The Sierra Nevada meadows priority is to restore and protect mountain meadow ecosystems which serve as key habitat for fish and wildlife and provide hydrological benefits for people, such as increased groundwater storage, flow reliability, and reduced sedimentation. The goal of the Sierra Nevada meadows funding is to restore habitat and validate restoration benefits.

To be eligible for funding, projects must occur within California's Sierra Nevada meadows region, on public or private lands. While a mixed portfolio of projects is possible, preference will be given to projects that will advance recovery of key focal species, specifically, California spotted owl, willow flycatcher, Yosemite toad, and native trout including Lahontan cutthroat trout. In addition, projects located in watersheds with the potential to amplify benefits associated with restoration of fire-scarred areas on California's National Forests or are adjacent to or contiguous with previously restored meadows are of particular interest. Eligible activities include planning, technical design, and permitting to deliver NEPA-ready projects.

Grants range from \$50,000 to \$250,000 and are expected to provide at least a 50% non-federal match. However, the strongest applications must have at least a 1:1 match.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Program Grants

<http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/prop1-grantprog>

The focus of this Proposition 1-funded grant program is forest health projects that result in multiple watershed benefits, consistent with the following purposes:

- Implement fuel treatment projects to reduce wildfire risks, protect watersheds tributary to water storage facilities, and promote watershed health.
- Protect and restore rural and urban watershed health to improve watershed storage capacity, forest health, protection of life and property, and greenhouse gas reduction.
- Implement watershed adaptation projects to reduce the impacts of climate changes on California's communities and ecosystems.

The program has two funding categories: Category 1 for implementation projects and Category 2 for project planning. Category 2 grants may include funding for completion of CEQA and NEPA requirements related to a specific future on-the-ground project. The maximum grant under Category 2 is \$100,000. Match is not required but leverage will add to point scores. Eligible applications include public agencies, qualifying nonprofit organizations and certain tribal organizations.

To be eligible to receive a grant award from the SNC under this program, projects must meet **all** the following criteria:

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- Be located within a conifer or mixed-conifer forested area of the Sierra Nevada Region, or have a direct impact on forest lands and waters within the Region.
- Be consistent with the SNC mission and program areas as defined in the SNC Strategic Plan and the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) as they relate to forest health.
- Meet the requirements of Propositions 1 or 68.
- Result in a clear and demonstrable public benefit.

Applicants are encouraged to meet with SNC Area Representatives (listed in the Grant Guidelines) to discuss their projects prior to submitting an application. The process is two-phase, with mandatory pre-applications.

Wildlife Conservation Board CA Streamflow Enhancement Program

<https://www.wcb.ca.gov/Programs/Stream-Flow-Enhancement>

This program allocates funds to projects that protect and enhance stream flows, especially in those streams that support anadromous fish; special status, threatened, endangered or at-risk species; or provide resilience to climate change. Projects must measurably enhance stream flows at a time and location necessary to provide fisheries or ecosystem benefits or improvements that improve upon existing flow conditions and are greater than required by applicable environmental mitigation measures or compliance obligations. Proposals must identify the stream(s), reaches of those stream(s), and watershed(s) in which they are found.

Examples of relevant project types include (see guidelines for full list):

- Habitat restoration projects (e.g., weed eradication, wet meadow restoration, restoration of entrenched streams, upper watershed restoration, or forest thinning) that reshape stream hydrograph
- Streamflow gauging
- Water efficiency generally – Irrigation efficiency and water infrastructure improvements (e.g., diversion, conveyance, and on-farm projects) that save water and enable reshaping of the stream hydrograph
- Reconnecting flood flows with restored flood plains

Funding categories are 'planning', 'implementation', 'acquisition', and 'studies, monitoring and assessments'. Applications can include one or more of these funding categories. Planning, scientific studies, monitoring and assessment grants fund specific activities necessary for the successful design, selection, and implementation of projects, including preliminary design and environmental review (CEQA/NEPA).

Eligible grantees are limited to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, public utilities, federally recognized Indian tribes, state Indian tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, and mutual water companies.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife Watershed Restoration Grant Program

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Watersheds/Restoration-Grants>

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The Watershed Restoration Grant Program has \$285 million in funding focused on watershed restoration and protection projects of statewide importance outside of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta). Projects that support state-wide and regional plans get extra points in evaluation. Priorities of the 2018 solicitation for the Watershed Restoration Grant Program included:

- Central Valley Salmon Resilience and Recovery
- Large-Scale Wildfire Recovery Response
- Restoration Project Implementation (includes headwaters and mountain meadows)

Funding is available for planning, implementation, and scientific studies (Delta projects only). In 2018, planning funding was only available under the Watershed Restoration Grant Program for projects focused on large scale wildfire recovery. This category of funding includes CEQA/NEPA work.

Eligible applicants are limited to public agencies (state agencies or departments, special districts, joint powers authorities, counties, cities, or other political subdivisions of the state), nonprofit organizations, public utilities, federally recognized tribes, state tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, and mutual water companies. Federal agencies may not be applicants, but there does not appear to be a limitation against doing project work on federal lands. The applicant, however, must have site control of the property for at least 25 years.

CAL FIRE Grants funded with Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds

<http://www.fire.ca.gov/grants/grants.php>

CAL FIRE administers various programs called 'Climate Change Investment' grants funded by California's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds. Currently, these include Forest Health, Urban & Community Forestry, and Fire Prevention grant programs. Generally, funding can include costs for CEQA and NEPA, though these need to be associated with proposed implementation projects. The environmental work must be completed prior to starting implementation work on the project, and sometimes within one year of the application being funded.

Department of Water Resources Urban Streams Restoration Program.

<http://www.water.ca.gov/urbanstreams/>

This Department of Water Resources (DWR) grant provides funding to reduce flooding and erosion, restore or protect the natural ecological values of streams, and promote community involvement and stewardship. For a stream to be classified as 'urban' it must cross built-up residential, commercial, or industrial property, or cross land where, in the near future, the land use will be residential, commercial, or industrial. The last round of grants was in 2014, however Proposition 68 included funding for this program, so new solicitations should be coming up soon. Contact the program staff for more information.

CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Off Highway Vehicle Program

http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1164

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<http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/>

This program supports the planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, administration, operation, enforcement, restoration, and conservation of trails, trailheads, areas, and other facilities associated with the use of off-highway motor vehicles, and programs involving off-highway motor vehicle safety or education. The application materials do not state specifically that funding can be used for CEQA/NEPA, however the 'Planning' funding category will allow studies on potential impacts that could be used to complete the CEQA/NEPA processes.

The project must comply with CEQA before receiving implementation funding, however funding can be awarded for CEQA costs associated with the project. When a project request is for funding both CEQA and/or NEPA requirements and for implementation, the grant is funded in two phases:

- (1) The first phase funds the CEQA and/or NEPA activities, and
- (2) The second phase will fund the deliverables, as approved and conditioned by the outcome of the CEQA and/or NEPA document, once the CEQA and/or NEPA conclusions result in a decision to proceed with the implementation project.

A 25 percent match (cash or in-kind) is required. This can include volunteer services. Higher match brings in higher scores in the evaluation criteria.

State Water Resources Control Board 319 (h) Nonpoint Source Grant Program

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/nps/solicitation_notice.shtml

The California Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program allocates funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to support implementation and planning projects that address water quality problems in surface and ground water resulting from NPS pollution¹. The goal of these projects is to ultimately lead to restoring the impacted beneficial uses in these water bodies. Projects are required to be in a watershed that has an adopted/nearly adopted Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the constituent of concern and has been identified in the NPS Program Preferences. These priority watersheds and problems are listed in the grant guidelines.

In addition, California appropriated the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund (Timber Fund) for projects that implement forest management measures on forest lands to improve water quality. Examples of projects include ownership-wide erosion control, road management, riparian restoration, groundwater dependent ecosystems, nutrient management, riparian fuel management, and/or post fire rehabilitation.

The program used to include both planning and implementation grants, but for the general NPS grants the planning funding has been used up and the Water Board is only funding implementation projects. The new Timber Fund grants can be used for planning

¹ Unlike pollution from industrial and sewage treatment plants (point sources), nonpoint source (NPS) pollution comes from many diffuse sources. NPS pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters and ground waters. See <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/whatis.cfm>.

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as long as the project also includes implementation, and the entire project can be completed within three years.

Eligible applicants include local public agencies, public agencies, nonprofit organizations (501[c][3]), federally recognized Native American tribes, state agencies, public colleges, and federal agencies. Applicants must work with the appropriate Regional Water Board Grant Contact when developing their proposals. Grant contacts are identified in the Grant Program Guidelines.

USFS Wood Innovations Grants

<https://www.fs.fed.us/science-technology/energy-forest-products/wood-innovations-grants>

The Forest Service seeks proposals that significantly increase or stimulate markets for wood energy and wood products in a manner that has a measurable and meaningful long-term impact on National Forest System and other forest lands that need robust wood supply markets for low value wood. Priorities include:

- Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health on National Forest System and other forest lands.
- Reduce costs of forest management on all land types.
- Promote economic and environmental health of communities.

Funding priorities are grouped into categories. In the past, categories have included pre-development funding for wood energy projects such as bioenergy facilities, which could include CEQA/NEPA and permitting costs.

State Water Resources Control Board Proposition 1 Technical Assistance Funding Program

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/sustainable_water_solutions/index.shtml

The purpose of this program is to help develop, fund, and implement capital improvement projects by addressing the technical assistance needs of small disadvantaged communities (DACs) with populations of fewer than 10,000 people and a median household income (MHI) of less than 80 percent of the statewide MHI. This program promotes permanent and sustainable drinking water and wastewater treatment solutions to ensure effective and efficient provision of safe, clean, affordable, and reliable drinking water and wastewater treatment services.

Technical assistance is available to develop projects for the following Proposition 1 funding initiatives:

- Drinking water: infrastructure improvements to correct system deficiencies and improve drinking water quality
- Wastewater: infrastructure improvements to correct system deficiencies and prevent pollution
- Groundwater: projects that prevent or clean up the contamination of groundwater that serves or has served as a source of drinking water

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- Stormwater: multiple-benefit projects designed to infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, treat, or retain stormwater or dry weather runoff

Potential technical assistance includes engineering and environmental analysis, including preparing CEQA documents.