

Background

As discussed under Agenda Item IX, the Board adopted a new Strategic Plan in September 2011, which establishes objectives for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) and lays out the strategies the organization will employ in meeting those objectives. Each year the Board approves an annual Action Plan that outlines the specific activities the SNC will undertake during the upcoming fiscal year in support of the strategies included in the Plan. Under Agenda Item X, staff reported progress on completing the actions included in the 2013-14 Action Plan.

Current Status

Staff has completed the development of the Draft 2014-15 Action Plan ([Attachment A](#)). The primary challenge faced in developing the draft Action Plan continues to be developing a realistic scope in terms of what we can accomplish over the next twelve months. The breadth of the SNC's mission, the varied needs of the Region, and the enthusiasm of stakeholders and staff in terms of all the ways the SNC can contribute to meeting those needs, continues to require some discipline on the part of staff in setting forth a set of activities we can reasonably accomplish. In addition, this draft Action Plan once again emphasizes the importance of working with partners to accomplish all of the objectives that are so important to the Sierra Nevada.

The Draft 2014-15 Action Plan includes the same overarching projects and initiatives as were included in the 2013-14 Action Plan with one exception: the Sierra Nevada System Indicators Project. It does not appear in the new Action Plan, because the project phase of this effort has been completed. Updating and using the System Indicators will now become an ongoing activity for the SNC.

New actions have been identified under the projects and initiatives in the Draft Plan, as well as the continuation of some actions from the 2013-14 Action Plan, either because the actions were begun, but have not yet been completed, or because the actions are more ongoing in nature.

Resource Needs

Staff has developed a high level workload and resource analysis related to the twelve projects and initiatives included in the Draft Action Plan (see [Table 1](#) on following page). The analysis is based on our best estimates of the needs of each project or initiative given the current scope and may change as more detailed project plans are developed. Nevertheless, it serves a valuable purpose in helping us to perform a "reality check" on the level of activity we've outlined in the Draft Action Plan and also helps us to develop initial staffing and budget plans for the coming year.

In looking at external resource needs for each project, it's especially important to note that what's listed in the table reflects only potential allocations to these projects. These figures are currently based on internal budget requests that have been submitted by each project and initiative lead, but these requests have not gone through the full internal budget decision process, which will continue into next year.

These estimates only include resources that would be allocated directly to a project or initiative and do not include baseline activities that support all projects such as contracting, information technology, etc. They also do not include time spent by the Executive Office to provide oversight on the projects or fund development activities undertaken on behalf of the projects, e.g., staff time that may be spent identifying and seeking additional, outside funding to support project activities. Finally, the estimates of potential external resources do not include external resources that will be used to support a project in 2014-15 that were acquired through a multi-year contract funded in a prior year.

Table 1
Estimates of Staffing and Resource Needs by Project/Initiative
Fiscal Year 2014-15

Project/Initiative	Estimated Staff Resources*	Estimated Potential External Resources
Grant Program	3.0 - 3.5	--
SNFCI	1.8 - 4.0	\$70,000
Biomass Utilization	1.9 - 3.0	--
Abandoned Mine Lands	0.7 - 1.0	\$50,000
Regional Agriculture and Ranching	1.4 - 1.7	\$10,000
Regional Tourism and Recreation	2.2 - 2.5	\$50,000
Ecosystem Services	0.3 - 0.4	\$40,000
Education and Communication	6.5	\$40,600 - \$49,000
Great Sierra River Cleanup	1.2 - 2.7	\$20,500 - \$23,500
Stewardship Council	0.2	--
Mount Whitney Fish Hatchery	0.1	--
Internal Operations	1.8	--
Totals	20.5 - 26.1	\$276,100 - \$287,500
* Reported in personnel years (PYs); may not add to total, due to rounding		

Next Steps

Working with partners, staff will move forward in implementing the 2014-15 Action Plan once approved by the Board. Staff will update the Board at future Board meetings on the progress of, or significant changes in, the projects included in the Action Plan.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board approve the proposed Sierra Nevada Conservancy 2014-15 Action Plan after reviewing and providing any modifications and/or comments.