

### **Background**

California voters passed Proposition 1, The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Bond Act of 2014, on November 4, 2014. Proposition 1 authorizes the state to issue bonds, and the legislature to appropriate the proceeds, for multi-benefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects for the watersheds of the state.

Proposition 1 allocates \$25 million of these funds for grant making to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC). The SNC has developed a plan to award grants in three separate rounds over a six-year period beginning with a \$10 million appropriation in the 2015-16 Fiscal Year. At its June meeting, the SNC Board adopted Grant Guidelines that support the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) and multiple other state plans, and authorized staff to implement the grant program.

SNC Proposition 1 Grant Guidelines and Grant Application Packet were reviewed and approved for posting by California Natural Resources Agency at the end of June and released to the public on July 1, 2015, announcing the start of the 2015-16, 2016-17 grant cycle.

### **Current Status**

Area staff have been interacting with prospective applicants and partners throughout the region to identify projects and answer questions about grant requirements. Initial interest has been very strong and more than 20 conceptual projects have already been identified. The first application deadline for the 2015-16, 2016-17 grant cycle is September 1, and a verbal update will be provided at the September Board meeting.

Staff also continues to coordinate with other State agencies who are receiving Proposition 1 funds to facilitate funding for activities consistent with the SNC mission, but on which we are not currently focused. This will result in a more strategic and coordinated approach to investing Proposition 1 funds across the Region.

### **Next Steps**

SNC staff will continue to provide technical assistance to prospective applicants until the submittal deadline. All submittals will be evaluated and analyzed by staff and subject-matter experts with the intent of bringing grant recommendations to the Board for consideration at the December 2015 and March 2016 Board meetings. In addition, SNC staff will begin working with project proponents planning to submit proposals for the March 1, 2016, application deadline.

### **Recommendation**

**This is an informational item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments.**