



Board Meeting Agenda
December 2-3, 2009
Veterans Hall, Senior Center
6409 Lake Isabella Blvd.
Lake Isabella, CA 93240

December 2, 2009

1:00 – 5:00 PM (*End time of the meeting is approximate*)

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Roll Call**
- III. Approval of September 23, 2009 Meeting Minutes**
- IV. Public Comments**
Provide an opportunity for the public to comment on non-agenda items.
- V. Chairman's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**
 - a. Water bond update
 - b. Subregion Representatives for 2010-2011
- VI. Election of Vice Chair**
The Board will elect a Vice Chair for 2010.
- VII. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**
 - a. Budget and Staffing
 - b. Grants Update
 - c. System Indicator Project
 - d. Other Funding Update
 - e. Stewardship Council Update
 - f. Sustainable Sierra Initiative Overview
- VIII. Deputy Attorney General's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**
- IX. Strategic Opportunity Grants (ACTION)**
The Board will consider the current outlook for future bond funding and may act on the sunset date for pending SOG applications (currently set for December 31, 2009).
- X. Conditional Approval of Competitive Grants (ACTION)**
The Board may act to approve Competitive Grant grants for projects identified on Attachments A and B.
- XI. Discussion of Subregional Assessments (INFORMATIONAL)**
The Board will be provided an overview by staff of Subregional assessments of each of the six Subregions.

XII. Climate Change Action Plan (ACTION)

The Board may act to approve the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan and direct staff to take necessary actions to begin implementing the plan, dependent upon securing sufficient staffing and financial resources.

XIII. Future Funding for the SNC (INFORMATIONAL)

The Board will review the future funding opportunities for SNC and may reconstitute the Board's Funding Committee.

XIV. Boardmembers' Comments

XV. Public Comments

XVI. Adjournment

December 2, 2009

5:00 – 7:00 PM

Reception

Following the Board meeting the Boardmembers and staff will participate in a reception being held at the Kernville Chamber of Commerce Community Room - 11447 Kernville Road, Kernville Road. The public is invited.

December 3, 2009

8:30AM - 12:30PM

Field Trip

Members of the Board and Staff will participate in a field trip focusing on issues and activities relevant to the Conservancy's mission in the South Subregion. The field trip will begin at 8:30 AM at the Kernville Chamber of Commerce located at 11447 Kernville Road and will conclude at approximate 12:30PM. Members of the public are invited to participate in the field trip but are responsible for their own lunch and transportation. Limited space on the bus may be available, please call (209) 742-0480 to determine availability.

Meeting Materials are available on the SNC Web site at www.sierranevada.ca.gov. For additional information or to submit written comment on any agenda item, please contact Mrs. Burgess at (530) 823-4672 or tburgess@sierranevada.ca.gov. or 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205, Auburn CA 95603. If you need reasonable accommodations please contact Mrs. Burgess at least *five* working days in advance, including documents in alternative formats.

Closed Session: Following, or at any time during the meeting, the Conservancy may recess or adjourn to closed session to consider pending or potential litigation; property negotiations; or personnel-related matters. Authority: Government Code Section 11126(a), (c) (7), or (e).

Board Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2009
PlumpJack Squaw Valley Inn, Valley Room
1920 Squaw Valley Road
Olympic Valley, CA 96146



I. Call to Order

Board Chairman Mike Chrisman, called the meeting to order at 12:45PM. Chrisman asked each of the Boardmembers to introduce themselves. He thanked Bill Haigh, Bureau of Land Management representative to the Board, for his service to the Board.

II. Oath of Office for New Boardmembers

Chairman Chrisman administered the oath of office to new Boardmembers Bob Johnston, Senate Rules Committee Appointee, Kathy Hardy Bureau of Land Management representative, and Tom Contreras U.S. Forest Servicen representing Beth Pendleton.

III. Roll Call

Present: John Brissenden, Mike Chrisman, Tom Contreras, Brian Dahle, David Graber, Kathy Hardy, Don Jardine, Bob Johnston, Bob Kirkwood, B.J. Kirwan, John McQuiston, Steve Wilensky, and Kim Yamaguchi.

Absent: Hal Stocker and Tom Sheehy.

IV. Approval of March 5, 2009 Meeting Minutes

There were no changes to the meeting minutes.

Action: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Brissenden seconded a motion to approve the March 5 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

VI. Chairman's Report (INFORMATIONAL)

a. State Budget Update

Chairman Chrisman, said the Department of Finance will do a significant "revenue check" in the coming months, and recommend any adjustments to the budget. Raising taxes does not appear to be an option, but new fees may be. State parks have been under a significant decline in revenue over the past 15 years and this year some may be closed due to lack of funding. Chrisman said that a reliance on capital gains taxes has had a negative impact when the economy is in a downturn.

Chrisman gave an overview of the possibility of a state water bond. Discussion started in September of 2006 with Governor Schwarzenegger's Executive Order, which created Delta Vision Blue Ribbon task force focused on the Delta and the water delivery system. Chrisman explained he appointed a stakeholder

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coordinating group with residents around the Delta, which culminated in a plan for ecosystem restoration and water system reliability. Noting there have been a series of bills which have come forward since this strategic planning effort began. He stated the water bond currently being negotiated will include new storage, conveyance, ecosystem development, and funding for the SNC. He added the package did not pass before the Legislature closed its last session but there is hope the Governor and the Legislature will work out a compromise this fall. The last number being talked about was a \$12 billion bond, some of which will be paid for by the users and direct beneficiaries.

VII. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL)

SNC Executive Officer Jim Branham began his report by introducing and congratulating former SNC staffer John Knott on his recent cross-country bicycle trip.

a. SNC Budget/Staffing Update

Branham stated one of the biggest challenges is determining how to maintain service in these difficult fiscal times. Noting furloughs and the bond freeze both occurred since the Board meeting in December of 2008. He stated grantees have been remarkable in both their patience and understanding regarding the delays in paying invoices and restarting programs.

Branham said, for the recently concluded fiscal year, the SNC was on target to spend nearly all its budget, but between the furloughs and the freeze on contracting, some funds reverted back to their funding source. He added, for current fiscal year, the SNC is in sufficiently good shape to carry out its mission.

b. Grants Program Status Update

Branham reported the Governor announced on Earth Day that the bond freeze was over, but it took months for the grant program to be restarted. Branham introduced Program Manager Kerri Timmer and Grants Administrator Angela Avery, and thanked them both for their hard work.

Timmer also thanked Barbara Harriman, Marji Feliz, and Lynn Campbell of the SNC staff for their work to get the funding flowing. She thanked the grantees for their support and understanding during these difficult times, and noted the appreciation the SNC has received from grantees for the communication that has been provided throughout the freeze.

Timmer said the SNC has received \$9.1 million in two bond sales, and has been able to reimburse grantees for \$1 million in work done prior to the December 2008 freeze. She reported, another \$400,000 had been processed to grantees for work performed since the freeze was lifted. Staff continues to research and publicize additional funding sources, especially for people affected by the freeze. Timmer said to date more than 160 different funding opportunities have been publicized in the SNC's twice-monthly alerts that go out to a list of more than 1,000 individuals and organizations.

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Timmer defined for the Board the nuances of the two recent bond sales. In March a General Obligation Bond sale generated unrestricted funds. The second bond sale was Build America Bonds (BAB), subsidized by federal dollars, so there were external limitations placed on the disbursement of these funds. The Department of Finance (DFO) and State Treasurer's Office (STO) ultimately determined which of our projects were eligible for which funds; once we knew that, it was our goal to decide how best to categorize and maximize the dollars in each category before they could be released.

Timmer noted, taking these restrictions into account, projects were prioritized to fully fund all remaining grant amounts for the BAB eligible projects and fund up to 50 percent of the remaining grant amounts for non-BAB eligible projects with the understanding that the remaining 50 percent would be generated by future bond sales. Staff has had to go through the project budgets and individual invoices line by line to determine the best and proper fit for payment based on the categorizations provided to us by DOF and STO.

Timmer reported there is a system for prioritizing the distribution of current and future funds was developed as follows:

- The first priority was to focus on the first round of projects that had already started work, which were authorized by the Board in FY 2007-08. Within that group there were enough dollars to fully fund BAB eligible projects and partially fund up to 50 percent of remaining balances for non-BAB eligible projects.
- The second priority is to fund the remainder of the non-BAB eligible FY 2007-08 projects. The hope is that the next bond sale, scheduled for the week of October 5, will cover those remaining projects.
- The third priority is to fund "project starts" for those grantees whose projects were approved at the December 2008 Board meeting.
- Fourth priority will be for the remaining 2008-09 applications, including Competitive applications and the 2nd round of Strategic Opportunity Grant (SOG) applications.
- The fifth priority would be a new grant program for the current 2009-2010 fiscal year.

Boardmember Kirwan asked if there is funding available from federal stimulus dollars. Timmer said the SNC is always looking for additional funding sources that could be of interest to our stakeholders and is contacting grantees and others directly to let them know if they might be eligible as opportunities arise.

The SNC conducted a survey to which roughly half of the 142 frozen projects responded, to determine the impacts of the freeze on grantees. Respondents reported significant impacts with a majority forced to reduce staffing during this period.

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On the second round of SOG's, Timmer said that due to the freeze the SNC has not been able to evaluate these 150 applications, because of the expenditures needed for the outside work that is required prior to funding becoming available. She indicated that because we have no word on new bond sale for new authorizations, there is not much we can do at this time. The understanding of the anticipated October 5 bond sale is that it will not be enough to cover new projects. She reminded the Board that these applications are due to sunset on December 31.

Boardmember Brissenden suggested the Board put the disposition of such applications on the December Board meeting, should the situation with the bond sale change.

c. **The Climate Change Action**

Branham reminded the Board that based on previous direction the SNC had hired Theresa Parsley who has done a great job to produce a draft plan, a work in progress, and that many of the tasks in the plan will have to be carried out by outside partners.

Timmer outlined the history of this item for benefit of new Boardmembers. She reported that the idea started as an outgrowth of the symposium in December of 2007, when Steve Eubanks, former Tahoe National Forest Supervisor, produced a report on the potential role for the SNC, courtesy of the Resources Legacy Foundation.

The SNC was also directed by the Governor, through Chairman Chrisman, to create a Sierra-based action plan in conjunction with the US Forest Services (USFS) and California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) and other entities throughout the Region, to identify potential actions for addressing, mitigating and adapting to climate change in the Sierra region. Timmer indicated that Theresa Parsley had been hired to oversee the preparation of such a plan and had done an outstanding job.

Parsley said the intent of the plan is not to meet the goal of AB 32 but is rather to harmonize and support that effort with Sierra appropriate actions.

Boardmember Johnston said he will comment in writing but feels that SB 375 applies to several SNC counties and is one of the strategies that should be moved up. He also stated that rural areas not served by transit will be endangered by negative growth in the years ahead. He further recommended emphasizing habitat protection as its own category.

Boardmember Kirkwood asked whether the Sierra Nevada Alliance's (SNA) comments would be taken into consideration. Both Timmer and Parsley assured the Board that the SNA's comments as a stakeholder in the process would be

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considered. Timmer noted that the public comment period would continue for 37 days.

Chairman Chrisman suggested the Board invite Tony Brunello, Deputy Secretary for Climate Change and Energy, to the next Board meeting, to make a presentation regarding the State's Adaptation strategy. He wants to have it ready for the United Nations conference in Copenhagen in November. The final report is being put together and that it represents a unique effort.

Boardmember Hardy commented that she felt that the education component should include teachers and children. Parsley said that would be a major part of the plan.

d. **Update on Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council**

Branham provided some background and offered comment on the SNC's work with the Stewardship Council to date. He indicated that the question has been what role the SNC might have in the future; noting that SNC's position has been that being a fee-title owner is not consistent with SNC's operating style and that others in the Region are better positioned for that role. A well-defined role for the SNC is what is needed now, and for some time in the future. Branham introduced Allene Zanger, the Executive Director of Pacific Forest & Watersheds Lands Stewardship Council.

Zanger provided background on the Council's work so far. Initially, four planning units were identified, but 11 more have been selected as potential fee-title holders, and the Council is looking for conservation easement holders in another 20 planning units, with 46 public or non-profit organizations identified as possible easement holders or conservation partners.

Zanger stated, as part of the PUC/PG&E settlement, \$30 million was approved for a youth education program. The Council has been making grants for infrastructure projects within the PGE service area from Bakersfield to the Shasta/Burney area, connecting kids to the outdoors. Urban youth are getting a chance to come up to these lands through this project too.

Boardmember Yamaguchi asked that the Conservancy be considered for this funding, when the Council sunsets.

Boardmember Kirkwood asked that the SNC should not take on a mediator role without resources (funding) being provided, and Branham responded that the SNC would not proceed without that issue being addressed. He also urged the SNC to move deliberately on the matter and expressed concern that the SNC not put itself in a position of potential liability. Chairman Chrisman said that this concept is brand new and there would be more good questions raised as it progresses. Chrisman appointed Boardmembers Brissenden and McQuiston to represent the Board on a committee and work with the SNC staff and the Stewardship Council.

e. **SNC License Plate Update**

Mt. Lassen Area Manager Bob Kingman announced the launch of the Sierra Nevada License plate campaign on this day and also announced the license plate Web site: www.sierralicenseplate.org; and a dedicated phone line, (530) 823-4680.

Kingman thanked a dedicated group of organizations working on the campaign, including The Sierra Fund, the Sierra Nevada Alliance (SNA), the Sierra Cascade Land Trust Council (SCLTC), the Sierra Business Council, Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access, and Mammoth Lakes Tourism and Recreation.

Kingman reported that about \$25,000 has been raised thus far to continue the outreach efforts and credited the Trust for Public Land (TPL), The Nature Conservancy, the SNA, the Mono Lake Committee, the SCLTC, the Sierra Foothills Conservancy, and PG&E, as well as all those who have supported the legislation to establish the plate. Kingman said the coordination team will continue to work on the marketing efforts and will track the registrations as they come in. He said that there is now a one-year time period to collect 7,500 pledges to purchase the plates. Random-numbered plates are \$50, personalized plates are \$98.

Vice Chair Wilensky said he would purchase five, one for each County Supervisor in his county, and challenged other Boardmembers to do the same. Chairman Chrisman said the license plate effort is very important and expressed his thanks to staff. Branham also thanked Kingman, Izzy Martin and The Sierra Fund for their dedication to this project.

f. **National Geographic Geotourism Project Update**

Mt. Whitney Area Manager Kim Carr introduced the Board to the concept of "Geotourism" as branded by National Geographic, which has conducted 12 of these projects around the world. Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographic character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

Carr reported the goal of the project is to create an interactive website and maps highlighting places, events, groups, etc. that make our Sierra communities unique. This project represents the largest of its kind ever undertaken by National Geographic. Carr thanked SNC staff, including Shana Avalos Knott and Bob Kingman, along with area office staff and Sierra Business Council, for their work getting this project off the ground.

Carr said National Geographic's approach is "bottom-up," asking community members to come forward and offer up places to be nominated for the map. This project, conducted in partnership with the Sierra Business Council, the SNC and National Geographic, is creating a bridge out to the business community,

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Chambers of Commerce and Visitors Bureaus through several community forums. Because the area being covered is so large, the project is rolling out in phases, with the first phase launched in the Greater Yosemite area. Citizens can go to this Web site and nominate their favorite site: www.Sierranevadageotourism.org.

Public Comment

Steve Frisch, Sierra Business Council thanked all the partners and stated that the Council is a big supporter of the project, adding that it has a big vision and needs everyone's support. He added that the team is planning on conducting up to 50 outreach forums over the next couple of years to let people know how they can nominate their favorite places for inclusion.

Boardmember Graber asked for clarification about how to upload photos or other graphics, and Boardmember Brissenden asked for more information on how the project started. Carr explained that we were approached by a local writer who had been in contact with National Geographic about launching an effort in the Sierra.

g. **Great Sierra River Cleanup Report**

Kingman reported on the success of the first annual Great Sierra River Cleanup. He said the idea came to the Conservancy from the South Yuba River Citizens League and that the SNC is looking forward to making this an annual event. Kingman reported that final totals from the cleanup included 96 tons of trash and recyclables. He further reported that volunteers from all ages and demographics participated on 17 major rivers, coordinated by 43 groups or organizations. He said this was by far the biggest splash of press the SNC has enjoyed to date with TV, radio, and print all covering the event. Kingman thanked SNC staffer Brittany Juergenson and contractor Janet Cohen for their hard work on the event.

Boardmember Brissenden noted that the Great Sierra River Cleanup coincided with other cleanup events. Kingman agreed that this day is becoming "Cleanup" day in California, as several organizations have already had cleanup programs in place for many years and that the SNC had worked closely with the Coastal Commission, which has sponsored California Coastal Cleanup Day on this day for 25 years. Boardmember Wilensky noted that the Conservancy's efforts doubled the turnout at the annual event held in Calaveras County.

h. **Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council Overview**

Dick McCleery, Central Sierra Resource Conservation & Development, gave a presentation on their strategy for accelerating riparian restoration and management. He stressed that on site work and training sessions with stakeholders are important to helping them gain an understanding of the issues. He said that key principles of the strategy are: more roots equals more stabilization of the stream bank, which leads to higher volume of water, more grazing land, more fish and habitat for ecosystems.

VIII. Deputy Attorney General's Report (INFORMATIONAL)

Deputy Attorney General Christine Sprout reported on AB 1364, which was passed by the Legislature and is on the Governor's desk. She explained that the bill allows state agencies that issue grants with bond dollars that have been frozen may renegotiate some elements of the grant agreements. She said that SNC staff was already taking steps to amend grant agreements as appropriate

IX. 2010 Board Meeting Schedule (ACTION)

The Board reviewed and approved the Board's schedule of meetings for 2010 as follows:

March 3 - 4
June 2 - 3
September 1- 2
December 1 - 2

ACTION: Boardmember Dahle moved and Vice Chair Wilensky seconded the motion to approve the 2010 Board meeting schedule. The motion passed unanimously.

X. 2009-10 Grant Guidelines (ACTION)

The Board reviewed the proposed Grant Guidelines for 2009-10. Branham reported it is not known when SNC will be authorized to issue grants again, but felt these guidelines are consistent with the Board's direction for funding "on-the-ground" projects.

Program Manager Timmer outlined three key decisions prior to this meeting.

1. More funds to Category 1 projects with an on-the-ground projects focus.
2. Single grant cycle for all our grant applicants, for a one-year trial, to see how this will work for us and our grantees.
3. Certain modifications to the fund allocations.

Timmer stated that distribution of funds was complicated, noting that due to bond freeze there might be rollover depending on how the balance of this year plays out. Timmer outlined key elements in the Guidelines:

- Proposed increases in funds designated for the six Subregion from \$1 to \$1.25 million and a pot of funds that is not specified geographically to be distributed more similar to the existing competitive grant funds. The general intent is to allocate approximately 75 percent to on-the-ground (Category 1) projects, based on direction from the Board and the Attorney General's Office.
- Block Grants: SNC has removed block grants as a possibility and did not see the need at this point, adding there was not much interest shown in trying to pursue that type of application.
- SNC strongly urges the pre-application process to ensure the highest number of successful applications, but does not require this.

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- Scoring Process: SNC is changing the scoring and evaluation process. All applications will receive a numerical score categorized as high, medium, or low benefit.
- CEQA: Heard from some applicants that the CEQA requirements should be better explained.

Boardmember Kirkwood commented on the funding formula for Subregion and Region-wide projects, stating that this formula was arrived at when we thought we would have a higher total of funding to work with. Kirkwood added, we may have gone too far, allocating \$1.25 million to each Subregion, at a time when some have not been drawing a full \$1 million during a cycle. Kirkwood also asked if applicants have to specify if they are a Subregion or Regional application, or if staff could do some mixing and matching to make those determinations.

Timmer replied the intent is that we would be funding the best possible projects with the greatest benefit / high value projects. . She noted the rationale behind the single funding cycle and pre-application consultation if to allow staff more time to develop a stronger suite of applications.

Branham added that one of the factors leading to the staff recommendation of fund distribution is that previously SOG's were awarded by Subregion, with a separate pot for competitive, but this is no longer the case. He indicated that the highest priority projects will be awarded in each subregion, regardless of project type.

Boardmember Kirwan said allocations should be based on the best projects and not as much on the area distribution. Boardmember Dahle said if there are Subregions that are not qualifying for the funds, then the money should be rolled into the general pot.

Branham said when we look at the Subregional pots, we'll score projects as high, medium and low, and our intent is to award only the high benefit projects. He added the focus will be on the on-the-ground projects.

Boardmember Yamaguchi suggested a cap for Subregion, and any funds beyond that would rollover.

Vice Chair Wilensky noted that there is an inequity in his Subregion to gear up to meet requirements and get organized to be competitive for grant dollars. He cautioned that if funding goes mostly to those entities who are geared up for the work, and not those who are not, then the Sierra will be poorer for it.

Chairman Chrisman recommended the SNC save the rollover funds, given the uncertainty of the bond measures. Boardmember Johnston suggested dispersing funding to the Subregions on a percentage basis.

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Timmer explained that one of the reasons the Subregional allocation was proposed to be raised from \$1 million to \$1.25 million was because the maximum amount of funds that can be requested for one project is \$1 million and if the Subregional amounts remain at \$1 million one large project, such as an acquisition project could use all the funds for that Subregion.

Boardmember Graber asked if there was a way to allocate funding based on a measured benefit, while adding that the federal government has not figured out how to measure benefit yet.

Boardmember Brissenden requested that we open up the funding to education projects, to the extent feasible

ACTION: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Kirwan seconded a motion to approve the 2009-10 Grant Guidelines with the change that guarantees 60% distribution of the overall amount available to the Subregions and the potential to have the unused portion rolled up to the general allocation.

Chairman Chrisman and Boardmember McQuiston indicated that they would oppose such a motion. Further discussion occurred, with Chairman Chrisman asking for a clarification of the motion.

Boardmember Dahle reiterated his understanding of the motion as a use it or lose it in that grant cycle, with any unused amount becoming available in the general pot. Kirkwood confirmed that a percentage would roll up to general allocation adding the option of rolling over to the next year as a whole, if there are not enough high quality projects submitted, being an option available to the Board

Timmer noted that funding for the next cycle might be \$13 million rather than the \$10 million originally planned. Branham clarified based on the actual awarded monies there may be flexibility in what is rolled from this current year, but recommended that the Board refer to the currently allocated \$10 million.

The motion passed, with Boardmembers Wilensky and McQuiston voting no and all other members voting yes.

XI. Consideration of Future Conditional Approval of 2008-09 Competitive Grants (ACTION)

Timmer presented the Board with the issues behind the question of potential Conditional Approval of 2008-09 Competitive Grants. The concept is that projects would be approved, conditioned on availability of funding in the future. Such action would allow proponent to secure non-State funding through other sources including private placement bonds and would position the SNC to move quickly once funding is

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available. She indicated that the SNC was consulting with other agencies and the Department of Finance in determining whether this was a viable option. She stated that staff recommends that these projects be brought forward for possible approval at the December Board meeting, assuming that such action is deemed appropriate.

There was general Board discussion regarding this matter with the Board indicating support for bringing Competitive projects forward at the December 2009 Board meeting.

Boardmember Kirkwood asked whether such action might raise legal questions relative to an Attorney General's advice letter holding that repayment of loans is not allowed with grant funds. DAG Sproul indicated that she believed the conditional approval of grants would not be a problem, but would follow up with her colleagues.

Public Comment:

Dave Sutton, Trust for Public Lands stated he supports having the tool of conditional approval of 2008-09 competitive grants to help mitigate some of the impacts of the bond fund freeze.

Izzy Martin, The Sierra Fund offered her support in the Board approving conditional approvals at the December Board meeting.

ACTION: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Wilensky seconded a motion to bring Competitive Grants to the December 2009 Board meeting for Conditional Approval, based on a finding by staff that such action is appropriate.

Boardmember Kirwan requested that the motion be amended to add "subject to confirmation with Bond counsel."

The motion, as amended passed unanimously.

XII. 2008-09 Annual Report (ACTION)

Assistant Executive Officer Joan Keegan previewed the Annual Report for the Board and asked that it be approved. She noted the theme of this year's report is Serving the Sierra Nevada Serves California and that Water, Fire, Habitat, and Recreation & Tourism were the highlights of this year's report. Keegan thanked SNC Outreach Coordinator Shana Avalos Knott and her student assistant Kaitlyn Miller for their work.

ACTION: Boardmember Dahle moved and Boardmember Brissenden seconded a motion to approve the 2008-09 Annual Report. The motion passed unanimously.

XIII. Discussion of Subregional Assessments (INFORMATIONAL)

This item was held over for discussion at the December Board meeting.

XIV. Boardmember Comments

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Boardmember Wilensky complimented Keegan on the report, and also complimented the entire staff of the SNC for their ability to move with flexibility and efficiency, more so than any other agency he's been involved with. He cited the Amador Calaveras Consensus Group, where the SNC assisted with the convening of 32 different agencies and stakeholders to come together during a very difficult year as an example that the mission of the SNC has inspired people, that its staff is inspired, and that the leadership is inspiring.

The federal agency members, Tom Contreras, Kathy Hardy, and David Graber presented the Sierra Nevada Conservancy with a resolution honoring the SNC on its fifth anniversary.

XV. Public Comment

There were none.

XVI. Adjournment

Chairman Chrisman adjourned the meeting at 4:48 PM.

Budget

California's fiscal crisis continues to impact the current year budget, and will likely impact efforts to craft the Governor's budget for FY 2010-11. November revenue projections are lower than anticipated, which means the potential exists for additional budget reduction measures to be taken before the end of the fiscal year. Despite the fact that the SNC is not funded through the State's General Fund, past actions (such as the contract freeze, furloughs, etc.) have included special funded departments such as the SNC. Therefore, it is possible that additional budget related actions may be taken.

In addition, it is unclear at this time as to how well actual revenue is meeting projections for the Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF). Given the SNC's reliance on ELPF for base operations, impacts could result as well if revenues are lower than projected.

Current Year (2008-09)

As mentioned above, the SNC's base operations are supported by the ELPF. The SNC is appropriated \$4,463,245 for State operations in 2009-10 and at this point in the fiscal year expenditures are generally as anticipated.

Our current grant program is supported by the sale of bonds from Proposition 84—the *Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006*. In the current year, \$15,448,000 was appropriated from the SNC's Proposition 84 allotment for grants. While these funds have been appropriated to the SNC, availability of these funds is subject to the results of future general obligation bond sales.

Staffing

The SNC is fully staffed at this time. The SNC relies heavily on retired annuitants, part-time employees and student assistants to assist in carrying out our mission.

SNC staff continues to be on furlough the first three Fridays of each month, consistent with the Governor's direction. This results in an approximate 15% pay reduction for all employees.

SNC also continues to operate without the use of overtime, except for rare and unforeseen emergencies.

2009-10 SNC EXPENDITURES AND ENCUMBRANCES
As of December 1, 2009

State Operations				
<i>Personal Services</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Expended</i>	<i>Balance</i>	<i>% Spent</i>
SALARIES AND WAGES	1,641,967	651,276	990,691	40%
SALARY SAVINGS (3%)	(39,729)		(39,961)	
STAFF BENEFITS	436,749	186,679	250,070	43%
Personal Services, Totals <i>As of 09/21/09 this figure reflects a reduction for 3 furlough days</i>	2,038,988	837,955	1,201,033	41%

<i>Operating Expenses & Equipment</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Expended</i>	<i>Balance</i>	<i>% Spent</i>
GENERAL EXPENSE	271,771	58,975	212,796	22%
TRAVEL - IS	100,000	8,294	91,706	8%
TRAVEL - OS	2,612	0	2,612	0%
TRAINING	30,000	3,684	26,316	12%
FACILITIES	257,181	219,596	37,585	85%
UTILITIES	10,411	4,034	6,377	39%
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	67,265	4,301	62,964	6%
CONTRACTS- EXTERNAL	428,046	250,853	177,193	59%
CONTRACTS- INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT	875,270	150,290	724,980	17%
CONSOLIDATED DATA CENTER	-	0	0	0%
EQUIPMENT	-	0	0	0%
OTHER ITEMS OF EXPENSE	25,904	6,933	18,971	27%
PRO RATA (control agency costs)	182,562	45,641	136,922	25%
PROP 84 ADMIN SUPPORT	169,145	0	169,145	0%
Operating Expenses & Equipment, Totals	2,420,167	752,600	1,667,567	31%
State Operations, Totals	4,459,155	1,590,555	2,868,600	36%
Local Assistance, Totals	15,448,000	0	15,448,000	0%
SNC EXPENDITURES, TOTALS	19,907,155	1,590,555	18,316,600	8%

Background

Almost one year ago, on December 17, 2008, the State froze thousands of grant projects supported by General Obligation Bond measures (Proposition 84 and others) and stopped authorization of new bond-funded grants as a means of preserving cash flow during the State's fiscal crisis. The freeze affected all of the SNC's awarded grants and pending grant applications.

Two bond sales completed in March and April, 2009, resulted in enough funding for approximately two-thirds of the SNC's frozen bond-funded grant projects to be restarted. The funding for restart came from two distinct sources: California General Obligation Bonds and Build America Bonds (BAB).

BAB bonds were subsidized by the federal government, so the dollars resulting from their sale have constraints that General obligation bond sale proceeds do not have. BAB funding is restricted to use for on-the-ground "capital" projects (basically the equivalent of our **Competitive** or **SOG Category 1** projects) and reimbursement of direct capital costs only. General Obligation Bond funding can be used for a wider variety of activities and working capital projects, such as pre-project environmental work, outreach/education, monitoring, research, and most kinds of planning projects (primarily our **SOG Category 2** projects).

The SNC received approximately \$9 million between the two earlier bond sales, which, unfortunately, was not enough to fully fund the \$13 million remaining commitment to our existing authorized projects. At the September 23rd Board meeting staff outlined the process used to restart frozen projects. To be as fair as possible, we focused first on existing FY 2007-08 projects that were already in progress when the freeze was enacted. Projects authorized in December 2008 were told they could start work with non-State funding if they were able, but with no promise as to when the State would be able to reimburse them for eligible costs (although they would be next in line once FY 07-08 projects were fully funded).

The situation was a little more uncertain for the remaining Competitive and second round of Strategic Opportunity Grant applications from FY 2008-09. To preserve as much flexibility as possible in the hopes that new money would become available later in the year, the Board acted in March to extend the life of all remaining applications – Competitive and SOG – to December 31, 2009. Those applications normally would have expired on June 30, 2009, the end of the fiscal year.

At the September meeting, the Board directed staff to bring this issue back again in December to be sure we had all available information in hand, including the outcome of the October bond sale. Staff has included two separate action items on this issue for discussion later in the meeting: Agenda Item IX Strategic Opportunity Grants and Agenda Item X Conditional Approval of Competitive Grants.

Current Status

On Monday, November 2, the SNC received information that although the October bond sale did not go as well as initially anticipated, it did generate enough unrestricted funds to cover the remaining balances on the working capital projects that were restarted at 50 percent, as well as the total needs of the first round of SOG projects authorized in December. This means that all of the FY 2007-08 grant projects can restart with the knowledge that we have funds available for their completion, and the December 2008 authorized grants can now officially start. Grantees in both categories have been notified of the good news.

As a reminder, based on the two earlier bond sales, SNC Program Staff began working with grantees in September to inform them of their restart options and to amend deliverable schedules, budget and project end dates to reflect changes brought about by freeze delays. The restarted project totals broke down as follows:

- 57 are BAB-eligible capital projects from FY 2007-08, which have been restarted with 100 percent of their remaining balance in hand;
- 85 from FY 2007-08 are not eligible for BAB funds, so they were given the option to restart project work with up to 50 percent of the remaining balance available to them at this time, with the remainder to come from a future bond sale; and
- 31 authorized in the first round of FY 2008-09 (December 2008) remain frozen until the State sells additional unrestricted bonds and releases the proceeds for our use.

SNC Grants Administration Staff is expediting invoices so that grantees receive their funding as quickly as possible. As of the end of October, Grants Administrative Staff had processed 245 invoices for approximately \$2.9 million.

We are very pleased that the October sale generated the funds we needed to fully fund our existing authorized projects. Unfortunately, the news is not very good regarding future bond sales for potential new authorizations. There is speculation that there will not be another bond sale to generate funds for new resource-based projects until sometime next year, although no official word has been received on this matter.

Next Steps

Separate agenda items for this meeting address the final disposition of the remaining applications from FY 2008-09: Agenda Item IX Strategic Opportunity Grants and Agenda Item X Conditional Approval of Competitive Grants.

The Board has approved Grant Guidelines for FY 2009-10, which we will post on our Web site and use in a solicitation for new applications as soon as we receive word that new funding will be made available. We do not have an anticipated roll out date for future rounds of grant applications at this time. We will inform the Board immediately should we receive any information that indicates that new funds are available.

Recommendation

No action is needed by the Board on this item.

Background

At its meeting in October 2008, the Board approved a set of “core” system indicators for the Sierra Nevada (those that have a direct relationship with the SNC mission) with the understanding that the SNC would take the lead on developing them, in consultation with key stakeholders and partners. The [staff report](#) provided at that meeting describes how the SNC will use the system indicators as well as other project information. The nineteen indicators approved by the Board are:

- Human Population
- Median Income
- Change in Habitat—Wildlife Habitat Relationship
- Air Quality (PM 10,PM 2.5)
- Public/Private Lands Forest Health
- Carbon Storage and Net Annual Sequestration on forests
- Acres Treated for Fuels Reduction by Risk Category
- Demographics of Residents
- Employment and Income by Sector
- Acres of Working Landscapes
- Air Quality (Ozone)
- Water Quality—Impaired Water Bodies
- MWH for Energy Produced by Renewable and Distributed Energy Sources
- Gross Domestic Product
- Access to High Speed Internet
- Travel and Tourism Spending
- Acres of Land Conserved
- Quantity and Value of Water Exports
- Percent Change in Temperature, Precipitation and Snow Pack

The Board also directed staff to proceed with exploring interest in and feasibility of implementing a “comprehensive” set of system indicators for the Region (primarily those that are not directly related to the SNC mission), which would require resources well beyond the means of the SNC.

Current Status

Awarding of the contract for development of the Core System Indicators and further exploration of the Comprehensive System Indicators was delayed by the Executive Order issued in May of 2009, which barred state agencies from entering into any new contracts for the remainder of the 2008-09 fiscal year and put new requirements on contracts entered into in the current fiscal year.

The contract was awarded to Collaborative Economics, a company based out of Mountain View, which has been successful with other large indicator efforts. An advisory committee was established for the project with representatives from Regional stakeholder groups, other government entities, and foundations. The Advisory Committee is scheduled to have its first meeting on November 30th. Staff will update the Board on key developments from that meeting at the December Board meeting.

Next Steps

Completion of a draft system indicators report is expected in May 2010, with Board discussion anticipated for the June Board meeting. The report will include data collected for each indicator and an analysis of what the data tell us about how the Sierra Nevada Region is faring with regard to issues that are important to the SNC's mission. It will also discuss the prospects for developing a more comprehensive system indicators program for the Region.

Recommendation

No action is needed from the Board at this time. However, staff welcomes any thoughts or suggestions from the Board related to the System Indicator project.

Background

At the September Board meeting staff briefly touched on our efforts to provide funding-related assistance to our partners in the Region, particularly during the unfortunate bond freeze. This staff report offers the Board a bit more detail about our efforts to attract more investment and resources to the Sierra, as these efforts form a very important part of our program and provide us an opportunity to add value to our partners in the Region beyond just our grants program.

Our other funding activities link directly to two key areas in the SNC Strategic Plan: Organizational Goal 3 – Increase knowledge and capacity in the Region, and Organizational Goal 5 – Identify funding needs in the Region. Strategy 3.2, for example, calls for the SNC to work with communities to meet their technological, communication and technical assistance needs, while Strategy 5.2 calls for us to identify and communicate potential funding sources to those engaged in project activities consistent with the SNC's mission.

Current Status

Earlier this year the SNC Funding and Resource Development Coordinator, Marji Feliz began regularly providing information on our Web site and directly to interested individuals and organizations regarding outside funding opportunities, workshops, and resources (primarily from other State agencies, federal agencies, and some private foundations, emerging technology funds and other groups). Feliz uses a variety of sources to identify potential funding opportunities and conducts necessary analysis to determine applicability to the SNC and its stakeholders. Chosen opportunities reflect either the SNC's mission statement and/or one of its seven program areas. Opportunities meeting these and certain other criteria related to timing and deadlines are posted on the SNC's [Current Funding Opportunities](#) (CFO) web page twice a month. A week-long announcement of the update is posted on the home page at the same time so that any new visitors to our site can have easy access to the information.

Email notification is subsequently sent out to more than 1,000 organizations and other interested parties, including 140 people who have signed up over the past six months to be on a funding specific SNC mailing list. At the same time, Feliz emails all SNC staff with more detailed information on each opportunity so they can use that information as they make contacts throughout the Region and interact with grant recipients and applicants. Since January the SNC has publicized over 180 funding resources through these mechanisms. Feedback on this service, primarily in the form of email and verbal comments, has been consistently positive.

SNC staff has also recently expanded its efforts to seek potential funding streams and additional resources to expand and sustain the SNC's own work throughout the Region. For example, staff researched funding opportunities tailored to specific efforts, such as the Amador Calaveras Consensus group and the Geotourism project; they developed

and distributed a list of funding sources pertinent to participants in the SNC's recent "Connect the Dots" symposium; and they are currently looking for potential funding sources to begin implementing portions of the SNC's Climate Action Plan once it is approved.

Certain funding opportunities may be appropriate for the SNC to apply for itself to advance its own mission, or as a way to distribute additional funding throughout the Region through the use of sub-grants or other means. Some opportunities may lend themselves to SNC partnership with other organizations. For opportunities showing promise for these purposes, Program Staff develop a funding opportunity report and present recommendations and information intended to facilitate the management team's arrival at a pursue/don't pursue decision.

Next Steps

In an effort to be as strategic as possible, and in recognition of the fact that we have limited staff resources to support the Funding and Resource Development Program at the moment, we are focusing our immediate efforts on seeking funds for SNC's Sustainability and Climate Change initiatives, as well as for specific SNC project needs, such as System Indicators. In terms of external funding activities, Marji Feliz will continue researching and providing funding and technical assistance information to interested stakeholders through the Current Funding Opportunities outreach.

SNC staff is also securing services to assist our government and NGO partners in the Region compete more successfully for available funding, including providing grant writing assistance and training.

Recommendation

This is an informational item only; no action is needed by the Board at this time. However, staff would welcome any comments or direction for further action.

Background

At previous meetings, including the September Board meeting, the Board has been provided an overview of the Pacific Forest and Watersheds Land Stewardship Council (Stewardship Council). The staff report for that meeting provided additional details.

At that meeting, staff discussed efforts to date in exploring the potential with the Council of the SNC serving as a “third party” to the land conveyance agreements. The third party could generally serve to oversee the long term implementation or agreements and address issues and unforeseen circumstances that may arise. This role seems to be consistent with the SNC’s purpose and capability. Attachment A to this item provides an overview of that potential role (this is the same information provided at the September meeting). At that time staff anticipated a more thorough discussion at this meeting, however for a number of reasons, little additional progress has been made on this matter.

At the September meeting, the Chair appointed Boardmembers McQuiston and Brissenden to serve as a Board committee to guide staff on this matter. The committee members have been apprised of the current situation.

Current Status

Staff continues to discuss this matter with the Stewardship Council to further identify issues of concern. Currently, it appears as if the Stewardship Council Board continues to contemplate this matter, including the following questions:

- 1) Is a third party needed for these agreements?
- 2) If so, what are the duties and responsibilities for such a third party?
- 3) Is the Sierra Nevada Conservancy the right entity to play such a role?

As pointed out previously, should such a role be more seriously considered, the SNC has made it clear that the following must be in place:

- A secure funding source to adequately cover SNC costs associated with this role for perpetuity.
- A clearly defined role for the SNC, to avoid future confusion and misunderstandings.

Next Steps

Staff will continue to communication with Stewardship Council staff on this matter and coordinate any response with the Board committee. It is possible that a more specific proposal will be brought to the Board at the March meeting.

Recommendation

No action is needed by the Board at this time, however comments and suggestions from the Board are welcome.

DRAFT SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

**Potential Role for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy in
Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council's
Lands Transactions**

The following proposal outlines potential roles the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) could fulfill as a third party organization with regard to land transactions approved pursuant to the Settlement Agreement and Stipulation that created the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council (Stewardship Council). *It is important to note neither the SNC nor the Stewardship Council has made any commitment to action at this time.*

Background

As a result of the PG&E bankruptcy settlement, over the course of the next few years, approximately 70,000 acres of PG&E watershed lands will be donated by PG&E in fee title to eligible "donees." All of these lands will also have a conservation easement holder, as will an additional 70,000 retained by PG&E. The donated lands are to be preserved and enhanced, in perpetuity, to protect six beneficial public values: habitat protection, open space, outdoor recreation, sustainable forestry, agriculture, and protection of cultural and historic resources.

The watershed lands are primarily located in the Sierra Nevada mountain range. Only public entities, non-profit organizations, or recognized Native American tribes are eligible to hold fee title or a conservation easement. This effort will be guided by the Stewardship Council in coordination with a wide variety of stakeholders. Following the completion of the land transaction work, it is intended that the Stewardship Council's land conservation program will be terminated. This proposal addresses how the SNC could help to ensure that the public benefits from these watershed lands are preserved and enhanced in perpetuity.

Proposed Roles of SNC

Third Party Beneficiary

The SNC, as a third party beneficiary to the land transfer agreements, would monitor recipients' adherence to long-term management plans and easement terms and conditions to ensure that public benefits are being protected. The SNC would have specific duties and responsibilities described in the agreements, including the following:

1. Facilitate to Resolve Disputes or Disagreements

The SNC would be available to facilitate resolution of disputes or disagreements between the fee title owner and the conservation easement holders. The SNC

would not be a decision maker in these situations, but serve to help resolve differences before other dispute resolution mechanisms are used by the parties. The SNC could also serve to receive public comment and concerns relative to compliance with the terms and conditions of the land transfer agreement and easement.

2. Oversight of Monitoring and Reporting Requirements

The SNC would ensure that required monitoring and reporting is occurring consistent with the terms of the land transfer agreement. The SNC would make all information public and be available to assist easement holders and fee title owners with development of appropriate responses to monitoring outcomes.

3. Assignment of Property Interests

In the event that a conservation easement holder or fee owner is unwilling or unable to fulfill its rights and obligations under a previously agreed upon assignment, the SNC would be responsible for selecting a successor easement or fee owner. This process would include a public review process and consultation with the remaining party in the agreement and PG&E.

4. Long Term Management Plans

It is anticipated that in many instances, long term management plans will be fully developed following the transfer of the property. In many cases monitoring, surveys and assessments may be necessary prior to a final plan being developed. The SNC would serve to ensure a public review process for all management plans and future revisions and would provide concurrence to the consistency of the management plan with the transfer agreement.

5. Responding to Unforeseen Circumstances

As with any process that is intended to last in perpetuity, the likelihood of unforeseen events or conditions occurring is significant. The SNC would be responsible for overseeing a process to amend the long term management plan, and if necessary the conservation easement, in order to address the situation. An example would be catastrophic fire or other natural disasters that substantially change the conditions on the land and may require a different management approach.

6. Administration of Enhancement Fund

The SNC could administer an Enhancement Fund to support physical enhancements on the watershed lands consistent with stipulation intent and

beneficial public uses. These funds would be available for activities beyond those funded in the initial transaction to eligible easement or fee holders.

7. Monitoring of Lands Transferred to US Forest Service

The SNC could be designated to monitor activities of the US Forest Service (USFS) on any watershed lands conveyed to that entity. The USFS is prohibited by policy from accepting ownership of lands encumbered with a conservation easement. In lieu of a conservation easement, the USFS has proposed a donation agreement or covenant to ensure protection of the beneficial public values on the property.

8. Opportunities for Research and Study Programs

The SNC would like to develop a formal process for consideration and recommendation of research and study projects or programs on transferred PG&E lands for the purposes of gathering data relative to climate change, and or innovative land management techniques consistent with beneficial public values.

Estimate of Resources Needed to Permanently Sustain Role of SNC

In order to carry out the duties described above, the SNC would require access to adequate funding on an ongoing basis. At this time the SNC believes a full time Stewardship Lands Coordinator would be necessary as a permanent position. State classifications that could fulfill these duties would require a Conservancy Analyst II or Public Land Manager I position with annual salary and benefit costs in the range of \$75,000 - \$100,000 based on current figures. It is also anticipated that the SNC would need access to consultants and contract employees to fulfill its obligations. While this need will vary considerably over time (for example, it is anticipated that substantial support will be needed in the first few years to review and process long term management plans), current estimates are that up to an equivalent of an additional full time employee would be needed on an annual basis over the first decade. Contracted annual labor costs are estimated to be about \$80,000 per year. A small discretionary fund (\$10,000) is suggested to accommodate unexpected expenses during the year. An initial estimated annual total for long term third party beneficiary responsibilities would require a range of \$125,000 to \$200,000 annually. Provisions for adjustments tied to a commonly used index would also need to be included.

Background

At the March 2009 Board meeting, staff reported to the Board that a group of Regional partners had begun meeting to discuss efforts to organize businesses, community organizations, government agencies and other partners to discuss a Sierra-wide initiative. The effort to that point had identified goals related to protecting and restoring the natural resources of the Sierra Nevada Region, transforming and diversifying the economic prospects for the Region, and strengthening the social fabric of small, rural communities throughout the Sierra. This would be accomplished, in part, by aligning the efforts of participating entities to attract more investment to the Region and working collaboratively to identify and support projects. This effort was initially referred to as the Sierra Nevada Environmental and Economic Improvement Initiative (SNEEII).

Current Status

Over the past few months, staff has continued to discuss the concept behind SNEEII, including meetings with our federal partners. A number of activities have been occurring that are consistent with the goals identified in SNEEII, although progress to develop a specific initiative has been slow.

Based on these discussions and further consideration by staff, we determined that a more focused effort would be appropriate and most likely to achieve success. Specifically, SNC staff had decided to focus time and expertise to support community-based collaborative efforts to address forest/community health issues by facilitating “on-the-ground” projects throughout the Sierra. This initiative will convene a diversity of interests including experts, project proponents, environmental organizations, industry representatives, community members and other interested parties in targeted locations. The focus of these projects will be to protect the watersheds/forests/ecosystems of the Sierra from catastrophic wildfire while using the biomass (fire fuels) removed to create clean green jobs and sustainable economic development.

On October 29th the SNC held a “webposium” across nine locations in the Region focused on this subject matter. Over 110 participants attended the webposium, titled Connecting the Dots, Wildfire, Forest Health and Sustainable Rural Economies. The event brought together the wide range of stakeholders, policy-makers and researchers described above to discuss ways in which sustainable economic and environmental outcomes can be achieved. Participants met in the various locations following the three panel sessions to discuss local needs and opportunities.

The SNC will be following up on the various ideas and proposed next steps. This may include providing these collaborative efforts needed resources to succeed in developing a common vision and trust among groups that historically have had conflict around forest management issues. The type of assistance will depend on the local issues and the group’s needs, as defined by the local participants.

Next Steps

SNC staff will continue to identify opportunities to assist with local efforts and development of a broader regional initiative. A “Sustainable Sierra” regional initiative would provide an opportunity for additional strategic investment and, if appropriate, identification of key policy changes needed.

Recommendation

No action is needed by the Board at this time; however comments and direction are welcome.

Background

As discussed under Agenda Item VIIb, the State stopped authorization of new bond-funded grants back in December 2008 as a means of preserving cash flow during the State's fiscal crisis. The freeze affected not only payments to projects already underway, but also authorization of new grants.

To preserve as much flexibility as possible in the hopes that new money would become available later in the year, the Board acted in March to extend the life of all remaining applications – Competitive and Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs) – to December 31, 2009. These applications normally would have expired at the end of the fiscal year (June 30).

At the September meeting, the Board directed staff to bring the issue back in December to consider whether the SOG applications should be allowed to sunset, based on the current information on future bond sales.

Current Status

The SNC received notification in early November that the October bond sale generated enough funds to fully fund all our remaining FY 2007-08 projects as well as the projects authorized in the first round of FY 2008-09. However, with that news came the warning that it was unlikely the State Treasurer's Office would conduct another bond sale for new resource-oriented projects until sometime next year. As a result, it looks highly unlikely that the SNC will be able to authorize new projects in the near future.

Many applicants will be able to submit a new application for their project when the SNC initiates a new round of grant funding, once funding becomes available. It should be noted, that because of changes in the Guidelines, some projects may not be eligible for resubmission.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board maintain the sunset date of December 31, 2009 for the remaining Strategic Opportunity Grant applications from FY 2008-09, consistent with the decision from the March Board meeting; and further direct staff to communicate this decision to all affected applicants.

Background

At its meeting in September, 2009, the Board directed staff to bring FY 2008-09 Competitive application recommendations forward for action in December if new bond funds were available at that time. If no new funds were available by December, the Board directed staff to consider bringing forward a set of recommendations for “conditional” approval of Competitive applications, pending confirmation from our “control agencies” that this was a viable approach. Various applicants have asked the SNC, both at the September Board meeting and since, to pursue conditional approvals as a means of providing an indication of priority once new funding is made available and as a tool to strengthen applicants’ position with other potential funding sources.

As discussed at the last meeting, we would not view conditional approvals as an ongoing tool. Conditional approvals actually constitute an “exemption” from the Governor’s Executive Order of December 17, 2008, which instructed agencies to stop authorizing any new grants; so they are not to be entered into lightly. The Natural Resources Agency and the Department of Finance, in a letter to the Wildlife Conservation Board and the State Coastal Conservancy dated September 15, 2009, have both indicated that conditional approvals are intended for high priority projects that offer significant public benefits and provide an opportunity for third-party matching funds (e.g. federal dollars, private foundation funding, etc.) or private placement bond sale funds.

Current Status

SNC staff has consulted extensively with the Natural Resources Agency (Resources), Wildlife Conservancy Board (WCB), State Coastal Conservancy and the California Tahoe Conservancy on questions regarding the use of conditional approvals as a tool. As a result of those conversations, we have verbal confirmation from the Resources that:

- a) conditional approvals are a viable tool – the September 15th Department of Finance letter to WCB and the Coastal Conservancy applies to all conservancies;
- b) if a grantee receives a conditional approval and chooses to use non-State bridge funding to begin or complete project work, that grantee can seek reimbursement once bonds are sold for new projects – a request for reimbursement under these circumstances will not be viewed as a “loan repayment,” which was formerly deemed by the Attorney General as an inappropriate use of bond funds; and
- c) acquisition appraisal values supported by Department of General Services (DGS) at the time of a conditional approval remain in effect – so even if the State does not have funding to reimburse conditionally approved projects for a year or more, the properties will not have to be re-appraised and the appraisals will not need to be updated or re-reviewed by DGS for reimbursement.

As a reminder, the SNC evaluated 27 Competitive Grant applications, totaling more than \$20 million. We went through most of the evaluation process with our outside experts in the Fall and early Winter of 2008, prior to the bond freeze. That evaluation resulted in two projects being disqualified, leaving a total of 25 active applications.

Of those 25 active applications, 16 totaling almost \$11 million achieved a high ranking in the evaluation process, although two of those have since withdrawn because the applicants were able to complete their projects with other funds. We normally would have brought recommendations to the Board in March of this year, but we were unable to do so because of the bond freeze and moratorium on new authorizations.

Next Steps

As a result of our consultations with other agencies and the exemption granted by the Department of Finance, SNC staff is recommending conditional approvals for high public value projects. If we were to base our recommendation on the \$7 million total previously allocated by the Board for the FY 2008-09 Competitive program, we would propose 11 projects for a total of \$7,461,500. The projects and recommended amounts for each are included in Exhibit A.

We realize that the recommended amount goes slightly beyond the \$7,000,000 previously allocated by the Board to the Competitive program for FY 2008-09. However, our Evaluation Panel felt very strongly about this suite of projects and urged us to consider allocating the additional \$461,500 needed to cover this group of projects.

Private Placement Bond Sale

There is an alternative approach to the recommendation above. Staff learned just recently of the potential for a private placement bond sale that could generate enough funds to cover all or a portion of the 14 highest-ranked Competitive grant applications we have before us. Given the fact that we are not anticipating a regular General Obligation Bond sale to generate funds for new authorizations anytime soon, the Board may want to consider doing as much as we can with the applications we have in hand, as this might be the only grants impact we can have in the Region for this year and much of next year.

If the Board were to conditionally approve all 14 highest-ranked applications, the funded amount would total \$10,344,700. This amount, in combination with the approximately \$2.8 million authorized last December for first-round SOGs, would almost equal the \$14 million total that the Board allocated for FY 2008-09.

If the Board chooses to consider conditionally approving an amount that exceeds the original Competitive Grants allocation of \$7 million, the additional funds would be drawn from (a) the \$3 million unallocated in FY 2008-09 and/or (b) the +/- \$4.3 million remainder of the unawarded FY 2008-09 SOG allocation. If this were to occur, any rollover of Subregional funds into future grant cycles would be reduced.

To help facilitate discussion on this item, we have broken down potential recommended and not recommended applications into three lists: *Exhibit A* is comprised of the 11 highest-ranked projects recommended by staff for conditional approval, totaling \$7,461,500. *Exhibit B* includes the remaining highest-ranked projects and additional funds for two projects on List A for which the Evaluation Panel recommended less than the requested amount; List B, in combination with List A, would total \$10,344,700. *Exhibit C* includes the projects that are not recommended for funding.

CEQA Compliance

Ten of the 11 projects being recommended from Exhibit A require the SNC to complete a Notice of Exemption, to be filed with the State Clearinghouse. Notices of Exemption have been prepared for review and will be filed upon Board approval. One project being recommended from Exhibit A requires the SNC to file a Notice of Determination.

The projects on Exhibit B would require the SNC to complete a Notice of Exemption, to be filed with the State Clearinghouse. Notices of Exemption have been prepared for review and would be filed if the Board chooses to conditionally approve these as well.

Copies of all documents mentioned above have been distributed to the Board for review and will remain available for review at the SNC's main office in Auburn, California.

Conditional Grant Agreements

SNC staff is continuing to consult with other agencies that are making use of conditional approvals to develop standard language for inclusion in grant agreements for conditionally approved projects. The additional language is intended to clarify that the conditional approval is subject to availability of future bond funds and that the SNC makes no guarantee that such funds will become available. In order to limit both our exposure and that of our grantees over time, we also intend to include language indicating that acquisition projects must be complete by and site improvement projects begun within two years from the date of conditional approval.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board conditionally approve the 14 Competitive Grants included in Exhibit A and Exhibit B under Agenda Item X, subject to the availability of future bond funds, for a total of \$10,344,700.

It is also recommended that the Board direct staff to enter into all necessary conditional agreements and file the appropriate CEQA documentation with the State Clearinghouse for all conditionally authorized projects.

Agenda Item X Exhibit A

LIST A: CONDITIONALLY RECOMMENDED COMPETITIVE GRANT APPLICATIONS TOTALLING \$7.5 Million

December 2, 2009

Rank	*Reference #	County	**Title Of Project	Applicant Organization	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
1	SNC 080001	Nevada, Sierra	Independence Lake Watershed Acquisition	The Nature Conservancy	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
2	SNC 080154	Plumas	Pearce Family Ranch Conservation Easement Acquisition	Feather River Land Trust	\$300,000	\$300,000
3	SNC 080146	El Dorado	Purchase of the of Gold Hill Ranch and Wakamatsu Colony Site	American River Conservancy	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
4	SNC 080126	Plumas	CRT Conservation Easement Grant Request- Goodwin Ranch	California Rangeland Trust	\$1,000,000	\$460,000
5	SNC 080132	Sierra	Lemon Canyon Ranch Acquisition	The Pacific Forest Trust	\$500,000	\$500,000
6	SNC 080143	Sierra	Cold Stream Canyon Acquisition	The Trust for Public Land	\$1,000,000	\$500,000
7	SNC 080139	El Dorado	Finnon Lake Restoration and Habitat Improvement Project	Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District	\$610,000	\$610,000
8	SNC 080127	Sierra	CRT Conservation Easement Grant Request- Maddalena Ranch	California Rangeland Trust	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
9	SNC 080230	Sierra	Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Appraisal and Acquisition Program (Volcano Property)	Sierra County Land Trust	\$777,200	\$777,200
10	SNC 080171	Fresno	Atkinson-Piasecki Ranch Conservation Easement	Sierra Foothill Conservancy	\$314,300	\$314,300
11	SNC 080145	Butte	Iron Canyon Fish Passage Project	City of Chico	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
Grand Total						\$7,501,500

* If you click on the Reference #, the link will open the Staff Project Summary

** If you click on the Title of Project, the link will open the Evaluation Criteria from the Project Application

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
Project Title: INDEPENDENCE LAKE ACQUISITION
Application Number: SNC 080001

PROJECT SCOPE

The Independence Lake acquisition project is the first step in a large restoration and long term management plan for its watershed. The alpine lake, located near the town of Truckee in Nevada and Sierra Counties, is 2.5 miles long, 0.5 miles wide, and has a surface area of 625 acres. It is a rare fish refuge, the only lake in the Lahontan drainage still having a full complement of native fishes. It is also the only lake in California that supports a wild and self-sustaining population of federally threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout. Located on the project land, 0.75 miles of Independence Creek flows into the lake and provides critical trout spawning habitat. Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) funds will be combined with over \$14 million dollars in other private and public funding to purchase the property. The Nature Conservancy will hold and manage the land for a minimum of five years, eventually making a determination whether to hold the land in perpetuity or to transfer the land to an appropriate agency. The project will protect the Independence Lake watershed and the Independence Creek ecosystems from future impacts from development or mismanagement.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of 2,325 acres [(Nevada County) APN 16-010-02,16-010-03, 16-010-05, 16-010-07,16-020-01; (Sierra County) APN 19-050-07, 19-060-05,19-060-06]

Additional Project Benefits:

- Development of restoration and management plans for native fish, forest and recreation
- Reduction of risk of catastrophic fire and subsequent erosion of sediments into the lake and creek
- Managed public access to the property

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Deposit SNC funds into escrow	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Close of escrow	
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
Project close out	
Final report	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
SNC portion of land acquisition cost	\$ 1,00,000
SNC GRANT TOTAL	\$ 1,000,000

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Nevada Desert Terminal Lake Fund	\$ 7,200,000
Morgan Family	100,000
CA Resources Agency River Parkways	1,320,294
The Nature Conservancy	155,000
Wildlife Conservation Board	5,500,000
TOTAL ADDITIONAL FUNDS	\$ 14,275,294

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- Ted Owens, Nevada County Supervisor
- Alex Mas, Executive Director, The Northern Sierra Partnership
- Sandra Morey, Region 2 Manager, CA Dept. of Fish and Game,
- James Kirchner, Director, Central Sierra Field Stations, UC Berkeley
- Gary Scopettone, Section Chief, US Geological Survey

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected
- Acres of Land Conserved

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: FEATHER RIVER LAND TRUST
Project Title: PEARCE FAMILY RANCH CONSERVATION EASEMENT ACQUISITION
Application Number: SNC 080154

PROJECT SCOPE

The 318 acre Pearce Family Ranch is located in Indian Valley in Plumas County near the town of Taylorsville. While nearly all of the surrounding ranches and farms have been laser-leveled and heavily cultivated, Pearce Ranch largely retains its unique unaltered topography and a diversity of naturally occurring habitat types, including montane meadow, grassland, cottonwood-willow riparian and riverine, emergent wetland, and mixed conifer. It includes approximately 1.5 miles of Indian Creek and 1.5 miles of remnant creek channel, both of which contain extensive riparian habitat interspersed with sloughs and emergent wetlands. The property's significant water rights help support and maintain the riparian and wetland habitats, as well as the working cattle ranch landscape. This project will acquire a conservation easement on the ranch which will protect the existing watershed features and working landscape by preventing development and by requiring management for conservation goals.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of a conservation easement on 318 acres (Plumas County APNs 004-200-020, 004-200-021, 004-200-025, 004-200-026 0) providing permanent protection of the natural resources within its boundaries.

Additional project benefits:

- Protection of water quality in Indian Creek
- Educational use via FRTL "Learning Landscapes Project" with interpretive signs
- Enhanced opportunities for riparian restoration and protection of streambank

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Authorize payment of \$300,000 towards conservation easement acquisition on the Pearce Family Ranch	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
6 month progress report	
Close escrow on Pearce Family Ranch	
Final report	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
SNC portion of conservation easement purchase	\$ 300,000
SNC GRANT TOTAL	\$ 300,000

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Feather River Land Trust	\$ 26,500
Northern Sierra Partnership	125,000
NRSC Farm & Ranch Protection Program	125,000
TOTAL	\$ 326,500

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- Northern Sierra Partnership

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Linear feet of Stream Bank Protected
- Acres of Land Conserved

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: AMERICAN RIVER CONSERVANCY

Project Title: PURCHASE OF GOLD HILL RANCH AND
WAKAMATSU TEA AND SILK FARM COLONY SITE

Application Number: SNC 080146

PROJECT SCOPE

The project is located in El Dorado County near the town of Coloma. The 271 acre ranch contains a small lake, six undeveloped springs, and unique low elevation large wet meadow areas that feed two major tributary streams of the American River. The acquisition will protect and improve the water quality in the American River watershed by allowing for appropriate management. The project will also preserve two historic sites of national and international value – the first Japanese settlement in North America, the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony (1869) and the gravesite of Okie Ito, the first Japanese person to pass away on American soil. The Gold Hill ranch is a working ranch in an area of active residential development. This project will preserve the open landscape and allow for the development of a range of educational and recreational activities

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of 271 acres (El Dorado County APN 089-010-06)

Additional Project Benefits:

- Protection of streams and wet meadows in the American River watershed
- Protection of native fish species and species of special concern
- Protection of blue oak woodlands and associated wildlife
- Protection of and future public access to historically significant cultural resources
- Increased recreational access / opportunities
- Development of a public park facility

PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Include specific tasks identified in scope and all reports, etc.	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
Close of Escrow	
Final Report	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
SNC portion of purchase price .	\$ 1,000,000
SNC GRAND TOTAL	\$ 1,000,000

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Private Donations	\$ 433,000
Bureau of Land Management appropriation	1,857,000
TOTAL	\$ 2,290,000

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- State Office of Historic Preservation (National Register Eligibility Letter)
- Congressman Doris Matsui
- Makoto Tamanaka – Consul General of Japan
- Assemblyman Alan Nakanishi
- County Supervisor Ron Briggs
- Japanese American Citizens League (National Chapter)
- National Japanese Historical Society
- Dr. John Van Sant (Wakamatsu Colony Historian)
- Gold Hill Wakamatsu Colony Foundation (Board Resolution of Support)
- Mary Jean Eisenhower – President of People-to-People International
- Robert Wisell – President High Serra Resource Conservation and Development Area
- El Dorado Chamber of Commerce
- Gold Trail Union School District
- Dr. Susan Lindstrom and Jean Starns – Archaeologists and Historians

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Linear feet of Stream Bank Protected
- Acres of Land Conserved
- Number of Special Significant Sites Protected or Preserved

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: CALIFORNIA RANGELAND TRUST
Project Title: CRT CONSERVATION EASEMENT GRANT REQUEST –
GOODWIN RANCHES
Application Number: SNC 080126

PROJECT SCOPE

This project will acquire a conservation easement on 6,862 acre of the Goodwin Ranch. The ranch consists of two working portions known as Red Clover Valley Ranch and Sierra Valley Ranch. Red Clover Valley, located in Plumas County in the north end of the Sierra Valley, is surrounded by the Plumas National Forest. It includes diversified habitat types: alpine meadows, riparian areas, sage brush steppe, and east-side pine forests. The presence of four significant species has been confirmed by CA Department of Fish & Game. In 2006, the Red Clover Ranch was part of a major creek restoration project that improved the water and sediment retention functions of the watershed, with objectives focusing on reduced bank erosion, improved water quality, improved fish and wildlife habitat, reduced flood flows, and increased base flows. The acquisition of a conservation easement will facilitate future similar projects, one of which is in the planning stage. The Sierra Valley Ranch houses the Goodwin Ranch headquarters and is located on the valley floor. Along with extensive wetlands, this portion of the ranch is located on a major flyway for migratory birds. It is also exposed to considerable subdivision pressures from nearby Reno. This acquisition will protect the existing habitat along with three perennial streams in the Feather River watershed, an important source of water for the Sacramento – San Joaquin Delta region.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of a conservation easement on 3,903 acres – Red Clover Valley (Plumas County APN 008-260-01, 008-260-03, 009-140-02, 009-140-03, 009-140-04, 009-160-01, 009-170-01, 009-170-03, 009-170-04, 009-170-05) providing permanent protection of the natural resources within its boundaries.
- Acquisition of a conservation easement on 2,958 acres – Sierra Valley Ranch (Plumas County APN 010-030-09, 010-030-10, 010-030-11 por, 010-030-15, 010-030-16 por, 010-030-18, 010-030-19, 010-030-21, 010-030-23, 030-040-31, 010-040-32, 010-040-33, 010-40-34, 010-040-35, 010-040-25, 010-040-26, 010-040-28, 010-040-30, 010-040-43, 010-040-44, 010-04052, 010-040-53, 010-040-54, 010-050-06) providing permanent protection of the natural resources within its boundaries.

Additional project benefits:

- Protection and improvement of water quality in the Feather River watershed
- Opportunities for future stream restoration
- Increase in continuity of wildlife corridors
- Protection and enhancement of the economic viability of working landscapes in the Sierra Valley

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
SNC Grant Authorization	Mar 2009
Start: Escrow Instructions & Preliminary Title Report	May 2009
Complete Baseline Conditions Report	Sep 2009
Complete Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Report	Sep 2009
Complete Conservation Easement Document & Monitoring Protocol	Oct 2009
Submit Progress Report to SNC	Nov 2009
Secure Funding from SNC	Dec 2009
Secure Funding from WCB	Dec 2009
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	Dec 2010
Close Escrow and Record Conservation Easement	Dec 2009
Erect Signage and Send out Press Release	Jan 2010
Final Report / Final Payment Request	Feb 2010
Conduct First Annual Monitoring Visit	Jun 2010

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Conservation Easement Acquisition Funds	\$ 873,000
Escrow Fees, Title Insurance, Closing Costs	6,000
Rangeland Trust Directly Related Administrative Costs	35,000
Rangeland Trust Performance Measures and Reporting	5,000
Rangeland Trust Hard Costs	1,000
SNC GRANT TOTAL	\$ 920,000

ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Sierra Business Council	\$ 13,200
Sierra Business Council	15,000
Wildlife Conservation Board	
Sierra Valley Ranch	2,280,000
Red Clover Valley Ranch	2,347,000
TOTAL	\$ 4,655,200

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- California Cattlemen's Association
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Plumas Corporation

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Acres of Land Conserved: 6,862
- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected: 3+/- miles

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: THE PACIFIC FOREST TRUST
Project Title: LEMON CANYON RANCH
Application Number: SNC 080132

PROJECT SCOPE

This project is located in the Sierra Valley in Sierra County near the town of Sierraville and is adjacent to both the Tahoe National Forest and a conservation easement on a neighboring ranch. Acquisition of the 1400 acre conservation easement for Lemon Canyon Ranch will result in 5,800 contiguous acres of protected working landscapes, and wildlife habitat and further protection for the headwaters of the Middle Fork of the Feather River. Approximately 3.5 miles of Lemon Creek and its tributaries flow through the ranch, which also offers an elevation gradient corridor from the valley floor to upland forests for various species. The ranch will continue to actively graze cattle and manage timber production within the easement boundaries. The easement acquisition will permanently conserve 1400 acres, protecting streams other watershed features, natural resources from the adverse impacts of loss of a working landscape or development.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of a conservation easement on 1400 acres (Sierra County APNs 018-030-002, 018-030-005, 018-030-006) providing permanent protection of the natural resources on the property.

Additional project benefits:

- Protection of water quality of the Feather River Watershed
- Protect important wildlife habitat
- Promote the use of sustainable grazing and timber practices

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
SNC Grant Authorization	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Start: Escrow Instructions & Preliminary Title Report	
Complete Baseline Conditions Report	
Complete Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Report	
Complete Conservation Easement Document & Monitoring	

Protocol	
Submit Progress Report to SNC	
Secure Funding from SNC	
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
Secure Funding from WCB	
Close Escrow and Record Conservation Easement	
Erect Signage and Send out Press Release	
Final Report / Final Payment Request	
Conduct First Annual Monitoring Visit	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
SNC portion of conservation easement purchase price	\$ 500,000
Total SNC Funding	\$ 500,000

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
United Independent Title Company	\$ 2,000
Wildlife Conservation Board / Private Foundations/ Seller	1, 450,000
TOTAL	\$ 1,452,000

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- None

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Acres of land conserved
- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND
Project Title: COLD STREAM CREEK ACQUISITION
Application Number: SNC 080143

PROJECT SCOPE

The Cold Stream Creek project is located within the Tahoe National Forest in Sierra County north of Donner Lake and partially within the proposed boundaries of the Castle Peak Wilderness Area. The 1,174 acre property contains 2 miles of aquatic and riparian habitat along Cold Stream Creek from its headwaters on Mt. Lola to its terminus at the Little Truckee River. The creek currently supports rainbow trout and is an ideal location for the reintroduction of the federally threatened Lahontan Cutthroat Trout. The acquisition project will compliment and support restoration activities taking place along the Little Truckee River resulting in water quality protection benefits throughout the Truckee River watershed. This acquisition will augment past and current conservation efforts that have resulted in contiguous public ownership of nearly 7,000 previously privately held acres.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of 1,174 acres (Sierra County APNs 014-160-004-0 & 019-050-001-0)

Additional project benefits:

- Preserves opportunity for future modifications to Mt. Lola Trail for safety and increased public access
- Make possible the reintroduction of Lahontan cutthroat trout in Cold Stream Creek
- Protects unique wildlife habitat and scenic views
- Protection from residential development

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Signed purchase agreement with current landowners	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
Close Escrow	
Final Report	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
SNC Portion of Fee Title Acquisition	\$ 500,000
Total SNC Funding	\$ 500,000

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Resources Legacy Fund, Land & Water Conservation Fund, and/or CA Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation Program	\$ 1,935,000
Trust for Public Land and Feather River Land Trust	49,900
TOTAL	\$ 1,984,000

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- California Wilderness Coalition
- Truckee Donner Land Trust
- U.S. Forest Service Tahoe National Forest Sierraville Ranger Station
- Truckee River Watershed Council
- Northern Sierra Partnership

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected
- Acres of Land Conserved

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: **GEORGETOWN DIVIDE RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Project Title: **FINNON LAKE RESTORATION AND
HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Application Number: **SNC 080139**

PROJECT SCOPE

The project is located in El Dorado County in Mosquito, northeast of the city of Placerville and close to the South Fork of the American River. The 350 acre-foot lake is surrounded by 55 forested acres. It is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places and is also designated as a wild game preserve. Fed by intermittent flows from Jay Bird Creek, it was originally used as a stock pond by ranchers in the 1800's. The lake's capacity was increased in 1905 by a hydraulic fill placement method. In 1990, the lake was drawn down to 50 acre-feet due to a finding of seismic stability deficiency. Virtually all of the associated watershed values of the lake have been lost or severely degraded. Locally, response to wildfire is significantly impaired by poor access roads. At capacity, Finnon Lake has been used by helicopter buckets to fight past wildfires in the American River watershed. At current lake levels, this is not longer possible and there is no other local place for helicopters to fill. The Finnon Lake project will restore an economic and natural watershed resource back to its former operating capacity of 350 acre-feet while enhancing fishery and aquatic habitats, improving wetland habitat, improving upland forested habitats, and securing a sustainable water supply to combat wildfires.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Restoration of an economic and natural watershed resource back to its former operating capacity of 350 acre-feet while enhancing fishery and aquatic habitats, improving wetland habitat, improving upland forested habitats, and securing a sustainable water supply to combat wildfires.

Additional project benefits:

- Increase in local water supply and quality
- Development of monitoring plans for wetlands, aquatic habitat, and fisheries
- Development of Healthy Forest and Restoration Conservation Plan
- Development of recreational use monitoring plan
- Fishing Derby to public awareness of restoration project
- Job Corp heavy equipment training program

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Administration	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Environmental Monitoring	
Fish Rescue and Relocation	
Removal of Existing Embankment	
Foundation & Core Treatment	
Fishery Habitat Improvements	
Reconstruction of Embankment	
Healthy Forest Restoration	
Supply 350 acre feet of water to Finnon Lake	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Task 1: Project Administration. Six month progress reports, draft & final reports, 500 quarterly newsletters, media articles, community meetings, project site tours	\$ 54,000
Task 2: Environmental Monitoring	30,000
Task 3: Fish Rescue and Relocation. Fishing Derby and seine netting	20,000
Tasks 4,5,6,7,8: Construction Implementation: Labor (International Union of Operating Engineers Job Corps Training Project)	100,000
Tasks 4,5,6,7,8: Construction Implementation: Materials	275,000
Tasks 4,5,6,7: Onsite Construction Engineering	125,000
Total SNC Funding	\$ 604,000

ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
International Union of Operating Engineers	\$ 751,680
Georgetown Divide RCD	26,000
Georgetown RCD	43,200
Trout International	48,800
TOTAL	\$ 869, 680

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- CA Senator Dave Cox, First District
- CA Assemblyman Ted Gains, Assembly District 4;

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: CALIFORNIA RANGELAND TRUST
Project Title: CRT CONSERVATION EASEMENT GRANT REQUEST –
MADDALENA RANCH
Application Number: SNC 080127

PROJECT SCOPE

The Maddalena Ranch Conservation Easement project is located near the town of Sierraville in Sierra County. The 1200 acre working cattle ranch is situated at the southwestern part of the Sierra Valley, an important part of the Feather River watershed. It includes portions of three perennial streams and provides habitat for three species of concern. It also provides habitat connectivity from the Valley floor to forested uplands. Development pressure from the Reno/Sparks and the Tahoe/Truckee/area represents the potential for loss of working landscapes in the area. The project will put 743 acres of the ranch under the protection of a conservation easement, resulting in the protection of habitat, wetlands, streams, and other watershed features.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of a conservation easement on 743 acres (Sierra County APN 013-090-010, 013-110-122, 013-110-123) providing permanent protection of the natural resources within its boundaries.

Additional Project benefits:

- Protection of watershed resources, including wildlife habitat
- Preserves a working cattle ranch landscape, thereby strengthening the economic base for cattle ranching in the Sierra Valley

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
SNC Grant Authorization	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Start: Escrow Instructions & Preliminary Title Report	
Complete Baseline Conditions Report	
Complete Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Report	
Complete Conservation Easement Document & Monitoring Protocol	
Submit Progress Report to SNC	

Secure Funding from SNC	
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
Secure Funding from WCB or alternative funding source	
Close Escrow and Record Conservation Easement	
Erect Signage and Send out Press Release	
Final Report / Final Payment Request	
Conduct First Annual Monitoring Visit	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
SNC portion of Conservation Easement Acquisition Funds	\$ 873,000
Escrow Fees, Title Insurance, Closing Costs	6,000
Rangeland Trust Directly Related Administrative Costs	35,000.00
Rangeland Trust Performance Measures & Reporting	1,000
Rangeland Trust Hard Costs	1,000
SNC GRANT TOTAL	\$ 924,000

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Sierra Business Council (SBC)	\$ 7,200
SBC or other funding source	15,000
Wildlife Conservation Board or other	327,000
TOTAL	\$ 349,200

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- California Cattlemen's Association
- Paul Hardy, Feather River Land Trust
- California Department of Fish and Game

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Acres of Land Conserved
- Linear feet of Stream Bank Protected

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: SIERRA COUNTY LAND TRUST

Project Title: SIERRA BUTTES/LAKES BASIN APPRAISAL AND ACQUISITION PROGRAM (VOLCANO PROPERTY)

Application Number: SNC 080230

PROJECT SCOPE

The subject property is located in Sierra County near Sierra City and within the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Special Treatment Area (SPT). The designation of an SPT indicates that Sierra County recognizes that the area contains significant natural and other resources that require specialized management in order to protect those resources. The property touches Volcano Lake at its southwestern corner and encompasses 2/3 mile of frontage on the North Fork of the Yuba River and Salmon Creek at their confluence. This project is part of an ongoing, larger project that is in the process of acquiring the remaining privately held lands within the Sierra Buttes / Lakes Basin Area, the largest tourist draw in Sierra County. The project will acquire 298 acres and protect it from future development.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of 298 acres (Sierra County APN 08-110-019) providing permanent protection of the natural resources within its boundaries.

Additional project benefits

- Protection of Yuba River water quality
- Protection of veiwshed assets of highly used recreational area
- Enhanced recreational opportunities

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
State approval of appraisal	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Sign SNC grant contract	
Order acknowledgement signs	
THP lease agreement completed	
Open escrow, bill SNC for acquisition cost	
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
Post signage	
Close escrow	

6 month progress report	
Project closeout and final report including Performance Measure accounting	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Fee title acquisition	\$ 750,000
Title report / insurance, escrow fees, transfer fees	3,100
Administration and consultant costs	17,900
Project performance measures	2,400
Signs	1,800
SNC Grant Total	\$ 777,200

ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Sierra County Land Trust	\$ 16,800
TOTAL	\$ 16,800

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- Sierra County Board of Supervisors
- High Sierra Rural Alliance

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Linear feet of Stream Bank Protected
- Acres of Land Conserved
- New Recreation Access Points

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: SIERRA FOOTHILL CONSERVANCY
Project Title: ATKINSON – PIASECKI RANCH CONSERVATION EASEMENT
Application Number: SNC 080171

PROJECT SCOPE

The 680 acre Atkinson-Piasecki Ranch is located on Black Mountain in Fresno County east of the city of Clovis and is currently used for winter grazing of a cow-calf cattle operation. It has relatively steep slopes ranging from 1,800 – 3,200 feet in elevation, many large granite outcroppings, 2.5 miles of intermittent stream, a spring, and two ponds. Blue Oak woodland dominates the landscape along with more than 200 native plant species, including a rare and endemic flowering shrub. This project shares a 3.5 mile boundary with the Black Mountain Preserve. The project will protect the Dry Creek watershed, a tributary of the San Joaquin River, and increase contiguous protected habitat for a rare and diverse plant and animal population.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of a conservation easement on 680 acres (Fresno County APN 138-050-01, 138-050-53, 138-050-55), providing permanent protection of the natural resources within its boundaries.

Additional project benefits:

- Protection of water quality for Dry Creek, a tributary of the San Joaquin River
- Protection of wildlife and rare plant habitat
- Increase the continuum of land protection on Black Mountain

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Black Mountain Atkinson-Piasecki Celebration	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Complete Baseline Report	
Close Escrow and Record Conservation Easement	
Send Out Press Release	
Erect Sign on Property Recognizing Project	
Submit 6 month report progress report SNC	
SFC Presentation to SJVWLF: Atkinson Piasecki Model	
Annual Monitoring Visit	

Submit 6 month progress report to SNC	
Annual Monitoring Visit and Report	
Submit 6 month progress report	
Submit 6 month progress report	
California Fish and Game conduct bio survey on property	
Submit Final Report to SNC	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Fair Market Value Purchase of Conservation Easement	\$ 270,000
Escrow Fees, Title Insurance, Closing Costs	5,000
Direct Administrative Costs, Consultant and Professional Fees	38,300
Performance Measure Fulfillment and Reporting	1,000
SNC Grant Total	\$ 314,300

ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Sierra Foothill Conservancy	\$ 31,500
TOTAL	\$ 31,500

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- Fresno Resource Conservation District (RCD)
- California Native Plant Society (CNPS)
- San Joaquin Valley Water Leadership Forum (SJVWLF)
- California Department of Fish and Game (DFG)

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Acres of Land Conserved
- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: CITY OF CHICO
Project Title: IRON CANYON FISH PASSAGE PROJECT
Application Number: SNC 080145

PROJECT SCOPE

This project will facilitate the rehabilitation of a fish passage on Big Chico Creek in the City of Chico in Butte County. Big Chico Creek is identified as extant habitat for spring run Chinook and Steelhead, both listed as threatened species. A ladder built in 1958 to reopen a passage through a rock slide area is no longer functional. The project will result in a new fish passage allowing access to holding and spawning habitat within the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve and other privately stewarded large parcels upstream. The construction will provide for a ladder system that reduces the current maximum jump height of over 4 feet down to 1.5 feet. This project will spatially separate recreational swimming and spawning habitat by allowing the salmon and steelhead to move further upstream.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Contract documents
- As built documents
- Outreach program and materials
- Construction of a fish passage on Big Chico Creek

Additional project benefits:

- Protection and improvement of threatened spring run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead populations
- Protection of the ecological integrity of Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve
- Relief from adverse impacts of recreational swimming on fisheries

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Outreach materials (newsletters, website pages, etc.)	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Draft request for bids for SNC review December	
Final request for bids	
Executed construction subcontract and Notice to Proceed	

Mobilization	
As built documents	
Final report	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES*	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Personnel	\$ 6,000
Professional services – grant management	22,000
Professional services – engineering	93,500
Professional services – outreach	12,500
Construction	866,000
SNC Grant Total	\$ 1,000,000

*Each dollar amount is a portion of the budget category – other funders contribute as well.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
CALFED Watershed Program, Resources Legacy Fund Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	\$ 900,000
Carryover from existing USFWS Grant	104,000
TOTAL	\$ 1,004,000

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance
- CSU, Chico Research Foundation
- CA Department of Fish and Game
- Butte County Supervisor Maureen Kirk
- Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Stream Miles Opened to Migratory Fish

- El Dorado County Supervisors:
Helen Baumann, Supervisor District II; Ron Briggs, Supervisor District IV; James R. "Jack" Sweeney, Supervisor District III; Rusty Dupray, Supervisor District I
- El Dorado County Water Agency
- El Dorado Irrigation District
- Mosquito Volunteer Fire Association
- El Dorado County CAO-Economic Development Department
- International Union of Operating Engineers: Job Corps Training Program
- CABY (Consumes, American, Bear & Yuba Integrated Regional Water Mgmt.)
- El Dorado County Fish & Game Commission
- CA Wildlife Conservation Board
- El Dorado County Resource Conservation District
- Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD)
- Department of Water Resources Assessment Branch
- California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CALFIRE)
- Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection
- Sierra Economic Development Corporation (SEDCorp)
- High Sierra Resource Conservation & Development Area (HSRC&D)
- USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Eldorado National Forest (USFS)
- Trout Unlimited, SAC-Sierra Chapter

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Number of New Recreational Access Points
- Number of Special Significant Sites Protected
- Acre Feet of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced
- Acres of Land Improved or Restored

Agenda Item X Exhibit B

LIST B: CONDITIONALLY RECOMMENDED COMPETITIVE GRANT APPLICATIONS TOTALLING \$2.9 Million

December 2, 2009

Rank	**Reference #	County	***Title Of Project	Applicant Organization	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
12	SNC 080231	Sierra	Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Appraisal and Acquisition Program (Packer Saddle Property)	Sierra County Land Trust	\$423,200	\$423,200
13	SNC 080234	Mariposa	Oakvale Ranch Easement Acquisition	American Land Conservancy	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
14	SNC 080133	Sierra	Meadow Ranch	The Pacific Forest Trust	\$1,000,000	\$500,000
*15	SNC 080126	Plumas	CRT Conservation Easement Grant Request- Goodwin Ranch	California Rangeland Trust	\$1,000,000	\$460,000
*16	SNC 080143	Sierra	Cold Stream Canyon Acquisition	The Trust for Public Land	\$1,000,000	\$500,000
Grand Total						\$2,923,200

* The amount recommended for these projects is the remainder of the total funding request from the grantee in their original application.

** If you click on the Reference #, the link will open the Staff Project Summary

*** If you click on the Title of Project, the link will open the Evaluation Criteria from the Project Application

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: SIERRA COUNTY LAND TRUST

Project Title: SIERRA BUTTES/LAKES BASIN APPRAISAL AND
LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM (PACKER SADDLE PROPERTY)

Application Number: SNC 080231

PROJECT SCOPE

The property is located in Sierra County near the town of Sierra City. It lies within the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Special Treatment Area (STA), a key recreational and economic resource for Sierra County. The designation of an SPA indicates that Sierra County recognizes that the area contains significant natural and other resources that require specialized management in order to protect those resources. The project site has the highest recreational use of any properties in the Treatment Area, and includes a crucial staging area for the internationally renowned Downieville Downhill Trail. The Pacific Crest Trail also passes through the site. Development pressures are significant due to the easy access, good soils, moderate topography, and ridge top building sites. This acquisition project will protect the headwaters of Upper Ladies Canyon Creek, a tributary of the North Fork of the Yuba River as well as the water quality of sub alpine lakes Tamarack and Packer. The acquisition will allow for the development and implementation for a trails maintenance plan that will address increased sediment loads caused by recreational activities into the surrounding water features.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of 204 acres (Sierra County APN 08-007-027) providing permanent protection of the natural resources within its boundaries.

Additional Project Benefits:

- Enhanced protection of water quality of the Yuba River
- Management for erosion control associated with trail use
- Secured public recreational access
- Continued economic activity through Christmas tree harvesting

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Sign SNC grant contract	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.

Order acknowledgement signs	
THP lease agreement completed	
Open escrow, bill SNC for acquisition cost	
Post signage	
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
Close escrow	
6 month progress report	
Project closeout and final report including Performance Measure accounting	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Fee title acquisition	\$ 403,200
Title report / insurance, escrow fees, transfer fees	3,000
Administration and consultant costs	12,000
Project performance measures	3,600
Signs	1,800
SNC Grant Total	\$ 423,600

ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Sierra County Land Trust	\$ 6,000
TOTAL	\$ 6,000

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- Sierra County Board of Supervisors
- High Sierra Rural Alliance

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Linear Feet of Stream Protected
- Acres of Land Conserved
- Number of New Recreation Access Points

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: AMERICAN LAND CONSERVANCY
Project Title: OAKVALE RANCH EASEMENT ACQUISITION
Application Number: SNC 080234

PROJECT SCOPE

The Oakvale Ranch is situated in Mariposa County in the Yosemite foothills south of the town of Mariposa, an area classified by the County as oak woodlands at highest risk of development due to its proximity to major roads leading to Yosemite National Park. The land has been used as a working cattle ranch for over 150 years by the same family and contains a cemetery in which four generations are interred. The property also has miles of stone wall constructed by Chinese laborers in the mid-19th century. This project will protect these historically significant sites. This project will also protect a total of 3,941 acres dominated by oak woodland and oak savannah habitat that supports many species, including several species of concern. Additionally, over 10,000 linear feet of streambank will be protected by the presence of the conservation easement.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant::

- Acquisition of a conservation easement on 3,941 acres (Mariposa County APN 018-230-015, 018-250-002, 018-250-003, 018-210-002, 018 -210-004, 018-210-008, 018-210-009, 018-190-007, 018-220-001, 018-220-002, 018-220-006, 018-220-012, 018-340-001, 018-240-001) providing permanent protection of the natural and cultural resources within its boundaries.

Additional project benefits:

- Increases protection of water quality the Chowchilla River watershed
- Protects cultural and archeological resources
- Preserves a working landscape and enhances its economic viability
- Serves as a model program for greater ranching community in area

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Easement acquisition	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement

	is finalized.
Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
Final Reports to SNC	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
SNC portion of easement acquisition price	\$ 1,000,000
SNC Grant Total	\$ 1,000,000

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Sierra Nevada Conservancy	\$ 7,500
Property Owner	8,000
American Land Conservancy	20,000
Unknown	1,715,000
TOTAL	\$ 1,750,500

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- Supervisor Janet Bibby, Mariposa County Board of Supervisors, District III
- California State Senator Dave Cogdill
- U.S. Representative George Radanovich, House of Representatives, California 19th District
- William Loudermilk, Regional Manager (Region 4), California Department of Fish and Game

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Linear Feet of Stream Back Protected
- Number of Special Significant Sites Protected or Preserved
- Acres of Land Conserved

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: THE PACIFIC FOREST TRUST
Project Title: MEADOW RANCH
Application Number: SNC 080133

PROJECT SCOPE

The project is located in Sierra County near the town of Calpine in the Sierra Valley, and consists of 237 acres with 2.5 miles of Fletcher Creek and Spring Channel, part of the Feather River watershed. There are 168 acres of wet meadows and two ponds that provide habitat for a number of special animal and plant species. Its current use is for cattle grazing and will continue as such with the protection of the conservation easement. A draft EIR has been developed for the property in preparation for a potential 30 lot subdivision. The acquisition of a conservation easement on Meadow Ranch will protect the natural resources present as well as protect the landscape from immediate development pressures.

Outcomes delivered through the SNC grant:

- Acquisition of a conservation easement on 237 acres (Sierra County APN 012-090-108, 012-180-012, 012-180-042) providing permanent protection of the natural resources within its boundaries.

Additional project benefits:

- Protection and improvement of water quality in streams, wet meadows and ponds in the Feather River watershed
- Conservation of wildlife habitat
- Curtailment of development spreading toward other working landscapes in the Sierra Valley

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Sign Grant Agreement with SNC	The Project Schedule will be set at the time the agreement is finalized.
Secure Acquisition Funding from Additional Sources	
Submit 6-month progress report to SNC	
Write Escrow Instructions for Closing	
Ensure all Funding is in Escrow in Preparation for Closing	
Close and Record Conservation Easement	

Review of Transaction Documents by SNC	
Submit Final Report and Copy of Recorded Conservation Easement to SNC	

SNC PORTION OF PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
SNC portion of conservation easement purchase	\$ 500,000
SNC Grant Total	\$ 500,000

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT
Wildlife Conservation Board, Landowner, Private Foundations	\$ 2,500,000
TOTAL	\$ 2,500,000

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- Bruce D. Barnett, Ph.D.- Environmental Consulting & Regulatory Compliance Services
- Melinda Peak- Peak & Associates, Consulting Archeology

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Acres of land conserved
- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected

Agenda Item X Exhibit C

LIST C: NOT RECOMMENDED COMPETITIVE GRANT APPLICATIONS

December 2, 2009

Rank	Reference #	County	Title Of Project	Applicant Organization	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
17	SNC 080142	Yuba	Yuba River: Blue Point Property Acquisition	The Trust for Public Land	\$1,000,000	\$0
18	SNC 080141	Nevada, Yuba	Yuba River: Excelsior Acquisition Project	The Trust for Public Land	\$1,000,000	\$0
19	SNC 080008	Shasta	JS Ranch Easement Acquisition	American Land Conservancy	\$1,000,000	\$0
20	SNC 080233	Mono	Cinnamon Ranch Easement Acquisition	American Land Conservancy	\$700,000	\$0
21	SNC 080173	Tulare	Craig Ranch Acquisition	Sequoia Riverlands Trust	\$944,144	\$0
22	SNC 080236	Amador	Knight Foundry Acquisition	City of Sutter Creek	\$674,900	\$0
23	SNC 080237	Amador	Knight Foundry Site Improvement Project	City of Sutter Creek	\$889,000	\$0
24	SNC 080085	Plumas	Solar Powered Ultraviolet Disinfection System	Quincy Community Services District	\$500,000	\$0
25	SNC 080020	Nevada, Placer	Truckee River Watershed Monitoring Project	Town of Truckee	\$955,100	\$0
Grand Total						\$0

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Independence Lake Acquisition (SNC 080001)

Project Location – Specific:

Independence Lake Rd - 15 Miles North of Truckee on Highway 89 and Hennes Pass Road (Lat. 39.452, Long. 120.290)

Project Location – City: _____

Project Location – County: Nevada and Sierra Counties

Description of Project:

The Nature Conservancy is seeking \$1,000,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to acquire a large portion of the Independence Creek watershed including Independence Lake. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy funds will be combined with of \$14 million in other private and public funding to purchase the property. The Nature Conservancy and its partners will purchase fee title ownership of 2,325 acres of forestland around and Independence Lake and Creek from Sierra Pacific Power Company. The land under the lake is a public trust asset. The 2,325 acre forest acquisition will protect the full extent of the lake's shoreline and approximately three quarters of a mile of Independence Creek. The goal of the project is to protect the pristine lake and creek ecosystem from potential future impacts of development and/or mismanagement. In addition, this purchase is the first step in a large restoration and management effort. Independence Lake is a rare fish refuge and the only lake in the Lahontan drainage that still has a full compliment of native fishes. It is also the only lake in the Sierra Nevada which supports a wild and self-sustaining population of the federally threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: The Nature Conservancy

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
- Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15313, "Acquisition of Lands for Wildlife Conservation Purposes"
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15313 in that it consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes. The acquisition, for the purposes of restoration and conservation, of Independence Lake and the surrounding forestland will protect a rare fish and wildlife habitat and ecosystem. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Pearce Family Ranch Conservation Easement Acquisition (SNC 080154)

Project Location – Specific:
4838 North Nelson Street, Taylorsville, CA 95983

Project Location – City: Taylorsville

Project Location – County: Plumas

Description of Project:

The Feather River Land Trust is seeking \$300,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to acquire a conservation easement on the 318-acre Pearce Family Ranch. All the funds from Sierra Nevada Conservancy will be used towards the purchase of the easement. Funds from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy will be matched in part by the Feather River Land Trust, Northern Sierra Partnership and the NRCS Farm and Ranch Protection Program. The Pearce Family Ranch is a 4th generation working ranch still owned and managed by the Pearce Family. The easement will protect a multi-generational working family ranch while providing scenic open space very important to Indian Valley and Plumas County. This includes protecting water quality and public use by conserving 1.5 miles of Indian Creek, providing educational opportunities via access to the conservation easement, protecting and enhancing local working landscapes and local ranching heritage, and assisting the local economy by maintaining local agricultural (ranching) jobs.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Feather River Land Trust

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15317, "Open Space Contracts or Easements"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15317 in that it consists of the establishment of an agricultural preserve and the acceptance of easements in order to maintain the open space character of the area. The acquisition of a conservation easement on the Pearce Family Ranch will preserve open space and local ranching heritage. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

- Signed by Lead Agency
 Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Purchase of the Gold Hill Ranch and Wakamatsu Colony Site (SNC 080146)

Project Location – Specific:

941 Cold Springs Road, Placerville, CA 95667

Project Location – City: _____

Project Location – County: El Dorado

Description of Project:

The American River Conservancy is seeking \$1,000,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to acquire 272 acres of the Gold Hill Ranch to conserve both natural and cultural resources. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy funds will be matched by \$2.29 million from private donors and other Federal grant money towards the purchase of the land. The purchase would protect approximately 0.97 mile of tributary stream, 40 acres of wetlands and 120 acres of valley and blue oak woodlands. The purchase of the property will also protect two internationally significant and unique cultural resources including the site of the first Japanese colony in North America, the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony established in 1869, and the gravesite of the celebrated Okei Ito, the first Japanese person to be buried on American soil in 1871. This site has been determined by the State Historic Preservation Office to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at a national level of significance.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: American River Conservancy

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15325, "Transfers of Ownership of Interest in Land to Preserve Existing Natural Conditions and Historic Resources"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15325 in that it consists of the acquisition of an area to preserve the existing natural conditions, including plant and animal habitat and to preserve historical resources. The acquisition will contribute to the preservation, interpretation, and understanding of California's cultural diversity and protect critical habitat and major tributaries to the American River. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: CRT Conservation Easement Grant Request – Goodwin Ranch (SNC 080126)

Project Location – Specific:

Goodwin Ranch – 85190 Highway 70, Beckwourth, CA 96129

Project Location – City: Beckwourth

Project Location – County: Plumas

Description of Project:

The California Rangeland Trust is seeking \$1,000,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 to partially fund the acquisition of a conservation easement on the Goodwin Ranch. The Goodwin Ranch is a 7,004-acre working cattle ranch and this funding will preserve 6,862 acres of the ranch property. The purpose of the conservation easement is to maintain the wetland and wildlife habitat values, maintain the scenic qualities of the lands adjacent to the National Forests as well as the lands in Sierra Valley, maintain the cultural and historic values, and keep the ranch free of subdivisions and ranchettes. The easement will add to lands already held in easement in the Sierra Valley thereby furthering the preservation of open space, wildlife habitat and local ranching heritage.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Rangeland Trust

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15317, "Open Space Contracts or Easements"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15317 in that it consists of the establishment of an agricultural preserve and the acceptance of easements in order to maintain the open space character of the area. The acquisition of a conservation easement on the Goodwin Ranch will preserve open space and local ranching heritage. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Lemon Canyon Ranch Acquisition (SNC 080132)

Project Location – Specific:

Lemon Canyon Road, Sierraville, CA 96118 (APNs 018-030-002, -005, -006 and Sections 16, 17, 18 of T20N, R15E of the MDBM)

Project Location – City: Sierraville

Project Location – County: Sierra

Description of Project:

The Pacific Forest Trust is seeking \$500,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to acquire a conservation easement on the 1400-acre Lemon Canyon Ranch. All the funds from Sierra Nevada Conservancy will be used towards the purchase of the easement. The easement will protect the working forests, wet meadows, and approximately 3.5 miles of Lemon Creek and its tributaries. The Lemon Canyon Ranch is located in a focal area that the Pacific Forest Trust has named the "Southwestern Corridor of Working Forests." This corridor plays a critical role in the Sierra Valley's ecological and economic health by providing approximately half of the Valley's water supply in addition to important wildlife habitat connectivity between the open meadows and upland forests. Additional easements have been purchased in the area and the conservation of Lemon Valley Ranch will result in 5,800 contiguous acres of protected working landscapes, wildlife habitat, and protection to the headwaters of the Middle Fork of the Feather River.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Pacific Forest Trust

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15317, "Open Space Contracts or Easements"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15317 in that it consists of the establishment of an agricultural preserve and the acceptance of easements in order to maintain the open space character of the area. The acquisition of a conservation easement on the Lemon Canyon Ranch will preserve open space and local ranching heritage. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Cold Stream Creek Acquisition (SNC 080143)

Project Location – Specific:

South of Henness Pass Road, West the Jackson Meadows Road turnoff on Hwy 89, between Sierraville and Truckee

Project Location – City: _____

Project Location – County: Sierra

Description of Project:

The Trust for Public Land is seeking \$1,000,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to acquire a 1,174-acre property to preserve its unique wildlife habitat, water quality benefits and scenic views. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy funds will be combined with of \$1,984,900 in other funding to purchase the property. The property is an in-holding within the Tahoe National Forest and is partially located within the boundaries of the proposed Castle Peak Wilderness Area. The purpose of this acquisition is to permanently protect the property from the threat of development or timber harvest and preserves the opportunity to improve the Mt. Lola Trail which traverses the property. Acquisition also allows potential for the future reintroduction of the Lahontan cutthroat trout within Cold Stream Creek which flows on the property for approximately 2 miles. The goal is to purchase this property from the current land owner and convey the fee title to the United States Forest Service or another steward to protect the property in perpetuity.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: The Trust for Public Land

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
- Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15313, "Acquisition of Lands for Wildlife Conservation Purposes"
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15313 in that it consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes. The purpose of the acquisition is to conserve Cold Stream Creek and surrounding forestland habitat which serve as habitat for native wildlife. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Marji Feliz Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 823-4679

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

- Signed by Lead Agency
 - Signed by Applicant
- Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Finnon Lake Restoration and Habitat Improvement Project (SNC 080139)

Project Location – Specific:

9100 Rock Creek Road, Placerville, CA 95667 (Section 16, T11N, R11E MDBM)

Project Location – City: Placerville

Project Location – County: El Dorado

Description of Project:

The Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District on behalf of the Mosquito Volunteer Fire Association is seeking \$610,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to remove and replace the existing dam with a new embankment of substantially the same location, same size, and purpose to bring Finnion Lake back to its original capacity of 350 acre feet. Finnion Lake is presently operating under a storage restriction of 50 acre feet or less due to seismic stability deficiency. The project will create 5.5 acres of additional wetland habitat and enhance 5.9 acres of forest habitat. The project will enhance fisheries, aquatic habitats, improve wetland habitat, improve upland forest habitats, and will secure a sustainable water supply to combat wildfires.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15302 (c), "Replacement or Reconstruction"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15302 in that it consists of replacing or reconstructing an existing structure or facility of substantially the same size, purpose and capacity. The existing embankment material will be used to reconstruct a new embankment at the same location, same size and capacity of the original embankment. The purpose of the reconstruction is to restore Finnion Lake to its original capacity of 350 acre feet of water. Applicant has performed all necessary environmental assessments and obtained all required permits from CVRWQCB, CDFG, USFWS Section 7 consultation, and DSOD. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

- Signed by Lead Agency
 Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: CRT Conservation Easement Grant Request – Maddalena Ranch (SNC 080127)

Project Location – Specific:

Maddalena Ranch – 936 West Willow Street, Sierraville, CA 96126

Project Location – City: Sierraville

Project Location – County: Sierra

Description of Project:

The California Rangeland Trust is seeking \$1,000,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 to partially fund the acquisition of a conservation easement on the Maddalena Ranch. The Maddalena Ranch is a 1,200-acre working cattle ranch and this funding will preserve 743 acres of the ranch property. The purpose of the conservation easement is to maintain the substantial wildlife and habitat values as well as the riparian and wetland values, maintain the abundant water supply which serves the ranch and downstream users, maintain the scenic qualities of the land, maintain the open space and historic values, and protect the ranch from threatening residential growth in the Truckee/Tahoe area. The easement will add to lands already held in easement in the Sierra Valley thereby furthering the preservation of open space, wildlife habitat and local ranching heritage.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: California Rangeland Trust

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15317, "Open Space Contracts or Easements"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15317 in that it consists of the establishment of an agricultural preserve and the acceptance of easements in order to maintain the open space character of the area. The acquisition of a conservation easement on the Maddalena Ranch will preserve open space and local ranching heritage. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Appraisal and Acquisition Program – Volcano Lake Parcel (SNC 080230)

Project Location – Specific:

Volcano Lake, Sierra City, CA 96125 (APN 08-110-019)

Project Location – City: Sierra City-unincorporated

Project Location – County: Sierra

Description of Project:

The Sierra County Land Trust is seeking \$777,200 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to acquire the 298-acre Hayes Property. The property overlooks Volcano Lake and will preserve frontage on the North Fork of the Yuba River and Salmon Creek at their confluence. The property is also part of the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Special Treatment Area which indicates that it is a key recreational and economic resource for the County. The purpose of the acquisition is to protect the water quality of Volcano Lake, Salmon Creek and the North Fork of the Yuba River as well as the recreational and scenic assets of the site as an important piece of the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin. A lease will be established with the current property owner to include the potential for one timber harvest within the next 10 years subject to restrictions imposed to maintain the key goals of water quality, recreation and scenic protection.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: The Sierra County Land Trust

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15313, "Acquisition of Lands for Wildlife Conservation Purposes"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15313 in that it consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes. The purpose of the acquisition is for the purpose of protecting water quality in Volcano Lake and surrounding streams which serve as important wildlife resources. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Atkinson-Piasecki Ranch Conservation Easement (SNC 080171)

Project Location – Specific:

Highway 168, 4 miles west of Tollhouse Road, near Prather (APNs 138-050-01, -53, -55)

Project Location – City: Prather

Project Location – County: Fresno

Description of Project:

The Sierra Foothill Conservancy is seeking \$588,300 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 to fund the acquisition of a conservation easement on the Atkinson-Piasecki Ranch. The Atkinson-Piasecki Ranch is a 680-acre family ranch used for cattle grazing and is located on the south side of Black Mountain within the Dry Creek watershed. The purpose of the conservation easement is to preserve the water resources, diverse flora and historic and viable working landscape on the property. Conservation of this property will protect 2.5 miles of stream habitat and water resources in the Dry Creek watershed, a tributary to the San Joaquin River and add to the Black Mountain Conservation Area by creating a continuum of land protection on the south slope of Black Mountain.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15317, "Open Space Contracts or Easements"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15317 in that it consists of the establishment of an agricultural preserve and the acceptance of easements in order to maintain the open space character of the area. The acquisition of a conservation easement on the Atkinson-Piasecki Ranch will preserve open space and local ranching heritage. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

To: Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Subject: **FILING OF NOTICE OF DETERMINATION IN COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 21108 OR 21152 OF THE PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE**

Project Title: Iron Canyon Fish Ladder Rehabilitation Project (SNC 080145)

State Clearinghouse No.: SCH# 2008082017

Project Location:

The project is located on Big Chico Creek in Bidwell Park in the City of Chico, Butte County. The site is located near the Salmon Hole and Parking Lot P areas of Upper Bidwell Park, accessible from Upper Park Road, a gravel road that roughly parallels the creek, in T22N, R2E, an undesignated section of Arroyo Chico Land Grant.

County: Butte

Project Description:

The project will rehabilitate an existing set of concrete weirs constructed in the 1950's to provide spring run salmon and steelhead passage on Big Chico Creek. The fish ladder is situated in approximately 350 feet of stream channel and is comprised of 18 existing weirs. The project will include partial demolition and encasement of existing weirs and the installation of 6 new weirs. All new concrete will be integrally colored and textured to match adjacent basalt boulders. Upstream pools and downstream bed will receive permeation grouting to stabilize the bed and maintain water. Passage slots will be stainless steel, with aluminum flashboards to manage pool depths. Project also includes an extensive outreach component that addresses, among other things, existing fishery, historic declines, and habitat needs.

As Lead Agency a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Sierra Nevada Conservancy approved the above-described project on [date] and has made the following determinations:

1. The project will will not have a significant effect on the environment.
2. A Negative Declaration Mitigated Negative Declaration Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures were were not made a condition of project approval.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan was was not adopted for this project.
5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations was was not adopted for this project.
6. Findings were were not made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final environmental document, comments and responses, and the record of project approval are available to the public at the following location:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Jim Branham

Executive Officer

(530) 823-4670
Phone #

TO BE COMPLETED BY OPR ONLY

Date Received For Filing and Posting at OPR:

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

RESPONSIBLE AGENCY

STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

Project Title: Iron Canyon Fish Passage Project (SNC 080145)

State Clearinghouse Number: SCH# 2008082017

Project Location: The project is located on Big Chico Creek in Bidwell Park in the City of Chico, Butte County. The site is located near the Salmon Hole and Parking Lot P areas of Upper Bidwell Park, accessible from Upper Park Road, a gravel road that roughly parallels the creek, in T22N, R2E, undesignated section of Arroyo Chico Land Grant.

Description of Project:

The project will repair existing weirs, expand and modify existing weirs, and install 6 new weirs at the Iron Canyon Fish Ladder (Fish Ladder) on Big Chico Creek in Bidwell Park, Chico, California. The Fish Ladder was constructed in the mid 1950s to provide spring run salmon passage during low to moderate flows, so that the fish can reach holding and spawning habitat upstream. The ladder has suffered damage and now does not function as designed. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) developed final designs and specifications and has provided funding to the CSU, Chico Research Foundation (Foundation) to complete environmental review, obtain permits and develop construction funding. The Foundation is working with the City of Chico, the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance, the CA Department of Fish and Game and the CA Department of Water Resources to complete these tasks.

The project will involve the following:

Construction Staging and Site Preparation

- Mowing of an existing access road from Parking Lot "P" to a staging area and installing construction fencing along the road and chain link fencing around the staging area, which will be 400 feet by 100 feet.
- Mowing of the staging area.
- Scraping and leveling within the staging area for the installation of some or all of the following:
 - Crane pads 2 each x 6 @ 3'x3' = 108 square feet
 - Trailer pads 6 @ 2'x2' = 24 square feet
 - Concrete washout (portable) 12x20 = 240 square feet
 - Generator pad and fire safe area 10x20 = 200 square feet
 - Water Tank pads 4 @ 2x2 = 16 square feet
 - Construction box 15x40 = 600 square feet

- Installation of wire extensometers and/or survey pins across selected joints along canyon wall and/or rim.
- Scaling of the western canyon wall (use of hand tools similar to pry bars) to remove loose blocks and debris from above the planned work zone.
- Removal of Lovejoy Basalt block identified as Block 2 (estimated volume of 30 cubic yards) by mechanical scaling (e.g., excavator with rock breaker).
- Provision for emergency access/egress by installing a construction elevator (hoist) or scaffolding tower anchored to the western canyon wall at several locations along its height (120-140 feet). A bridge will be necessary to span from the setback (30 feet) on the canyon rim to the distance the elevator or tower is set back from the canyon wall (approximately 40 to 50 feet). The canyon wall set back is necessary to check the emergency access/egress is sufficiently sited away from overhanging blocks and/or blocks with open joints on the western canyon wall that are judged to have potential static and/or seismic instability.
- Install a single platform of approximately 1,200 square feet in area, to be constructed near Weir 8 from light steel beams with a wooden deck. A second platform could be constructed near Weirs 9 through 17 providing additional staging, although it would be more difficult to construct.

Flow Containment and Diversion

- Install aqua-dams, sandbags and plastic sheets, and piping to temporarily redirect the creek flow. Potentially use naturally occurring pool to create a temporary sump and pump some or all of the flow rather than damming the creek to a height great enough to redirect it. A combination of methods will likely be required to dewater. The dewatering and construction may also be done in sections.

Fish Ladder Construction

- Pool deepening, at minimum of 0.1 feet to 2.1 feet. Excavation of pool sidewalls will be necessary, with large boulder-sized blocks potentially requiring partial or complete removal. Jack-hammer and/or drilling may be necessary for the large block removal. Excavated material does not require removal from the site and may be disposed of in adjacent, non-fishway pools.
- Drilling into existing rocks for reinforcing and dowel attachments (sampled compressive strengths for Lovejoy Basalt ranged from 7,000 psi to 64,000 psi).
- Placing of concrete buttresses, cut-off slabs/walls or concrete foundations may be necessary to stabilize individual blocks that will support concrete ladder structures.
- Partial demolition of 18 existing weirs (Weirs 1 through 6, 6B, and 7 through 17) with removal and legal disposal of concrete debris. These weirs will then be encased in new integrally colored (dark gray to mimic adjacent Lovejoy Basalt) reinforced concrete (either cast-in-place concrete or shotcrete).
- At the contractors discretion, existing weirs may also be entirely demolished and replaced with new weir design, rather than encased.

- Installation of 6 new weirs (Weirs 1B, 5B, 7B, 8B, 8C,11B) constructed with integrally colored (dark gray to mimic adjacent Lovejoy Basalt) reinforced concrete (either cast-inplace concrete or shotcrete).
- Installation of fabricated stainless steel fish passage slots and bypass slots cast into new and modified/expanded weirs.
- Encasement of existing reinforced concrete basalt block strut at Weir 12 with 36-inch diameter reinforced concrete column.
- Permeation grouting of loose materials (sand/gravel/cobble bottoms) immediately upstream and downstream of most new and modified weirs.
- Installation of fabricated aluminum flashboards into finished weir slots.

Demobilization

- Removal of demolished concrete and concrete washout from site and dispose of at appropriate recycling or disposal location.
- Removal of temporary anchorages used for securing or attaching equipment to canyon cliffs or basalt blocks.
- Removal of scaffolding, work platforms or rigging for such.
- Removal of off water diversion structures and equipment.
- Removal of equipment and fencing.
- Seeding of site with appropriate native grassland species.

Findings: Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21002.1(d) and CEQA Guidelines Section 15096(g) and (h), the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), as a Responsible Agency, has reviewed and considered the following documents prepared by the Lead Agencies:

- ▶ CSU, Chico Research Foundation, *Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration – Iron Canyon Fish Ladder Rehabilitation*, September 2008 (SCH#2008082017).

Using its independent judgment, the SNC makes the following finding:

The above listed documents a) adequately address the potential impacts of the project and b) are adequate for use by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for assessing the potential impacts of funding the grant request, now before the SNC for approval..

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy hereby makes the following findings pursuant to Public Resources Code 21081 and Section 15091 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

1. AESTHETICS

The Iron Canyon section of Big Chico Creek is located within Bidwell Park in the City of Chico, at an elevation of roughly 400 feet above mean sea level (msl). Scenic vistas in the park, and near Iron Canyon, abound. A number of rock outcroppings as well as views up and down the canyon dominate the scenic vistas within the project area. The only anticipated long term visible change will be the replacement of existing light grey colored concrete with dark concrete colored and textured to match the Lovejoy Basalt boulders between which it is set. The coloring of the concrete will create an overall better aesthetic than the current conditions as this will blend the fish ladder into the existing creek bed, improving the visual quality of the creek in Iron Canyon.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the mitigation measure A.1 listed below will reduce the environmental effects to a “less-than-significant” level.

A.1: New concrete shall be color and texture matched to reflect the Lovejoy Basalt in which the concrete will sit. This would be a dark grey color instead of the current light grey.

2. AIR QUALITY

The proposed project site lies within the Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin (NSVAB), which extends from Sacramento and Solano Counties in the south to Shasta County in the north. Currently, all of the counties in the NVSAB, including Butte, have been designated as nonattainment for State PM 10, and is expected to be designated nonattainment for federal PM 2.5 in the future. It is noted that for a County to be classified as non-attainment for air quality goals, it must only have exceeded the state’s air quality standards for a minimum of one hour at any point during the year. Ozone is considered more of a seasonal problem in the Northern Sacramento Valley Air Basin, with peak concern normally occurring April through October.

The proposed project would result in short-term pollutant emissions generated by construction-related activities and long-term emissions generated by indirect and direct sources. Indirect sources are land uses that attract vehicular activity, and subsequently, increased emissions. Direct sources are land uses or facilities that emit pollutants.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the mitigation measure B.1 listed below will reduce the environmental effects to a “less-than-significant” level.

B.1: To minimize fugitive dust and exhaust emissions during construction activities and ensure enforcement of General Plan policies pertaining to air quality, the following mitigation measures shall be included in construction plans and documents for the project:

- a. All grading operations shall be suspended when winds exceed 20 miles per hour as directed by the BCAQMD.
- b. Provide temporary traffic control during all phases of construction to improve traffic flow (e.g. flag persons) as determined appropriate by the Department of Public Works.
- c. Water active construction sites that expose areas of dirt to erosion and wind drift at least twice daily as directed by the Department of Public Works. Frequency should be based on the type of operation, soil, and wind exposure.
- d. All trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials should be covered or should maintain at least two feet of freeboard (i.e., minimum vertical distance between top of the load and the trailer in accordance with the requirements of CVC Section 23114). This provision is enforced by local law enforcement agencies.
- e. Cover inactive storage piles.
- f. Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 24 hours. The telephone number of the BCAQMD shall also be visible to for compliance with BCAQMD Rule 201 & 207 (Nuisance and Fugitive Dust Emissions).
- g. If necessary, apply chemical soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas (disturbed areas that are unused for at least four consecutive days) to control dust emissions. Dust emissions should be controlled at the site for both active and inactive construction areas throughout the entire construction period (including holidays).
- h. Limit vehicle speeds to 15 mph on unpaved roads.
- i. Exhaust emissions will be minimized by maintaining equipment in good repair and proper tune according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- j. If construction activities occur during smog season (May-October), equipment will not be allowed to idle for long periods of time.

3. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

A Biological Resource Assessment (BRA) was conducted in July 2008 which reports the results of onsite inspections, reviews relevant literature and summarizes the potential for special status species occurrence within the project area. Special status species which may potentially occur in the project area include the California Red-Legged Frog, Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog, Northwestern Pond Turtle, California Horned Lizard, Chinook Salmon, Central Valley Steelhead, River Lamprey, Coopers Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, American Peregrine Falcon, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Yellow-breasted chat, Yellow Warbler, Ringtail and Pallid Bat. Construction activities could have a potentially significant effect on the biology in the project area. Construction activities do not include the removal of any species except spot removal of grasses for staging and fire safe areas, and moving of an access road. Because many and some large vehicles will be entering and exiting the project area, the potential for the spread of noxious weeds is high, resulting in a potentially significant impact.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the mitigation measures C.1 and C.2 listed below will reduce the environmental effects to a “less-than-significant” level.

C.1: To prevent adverse affects to special status species, the following policies must be followed:

- a. Occurrence of red-legged frog is unlikely due to the bedrock nature of the stream, limited backwaters and sparse riparian habitat. Therefore, no mitigation measures are proposed for red-legged frog.
- b. Foothill yellow-legged frogs are known to inhabit Big Chico Creek upstream of the project site. However, preferred substrate for the Foothill Yellow-legged Frog is very limited within the in-stream area of the project footprint. If the frog is present, it could be impacted by flow containment and diversion. Therefore, before flow is contained or diverted from the project site, or a segment of the project site if flow management is segmented, surveys will be conducted for foothill yellow-legged frogs and their tadpoles. If frogs are found, a concerted effort will be made to capture as many individuals as possible. These individuals will be relocated to suitable habitat elsewhere on Big Chico Creek.
- c. The Northwestern Pond Turtle is known from other locations in Big Chico Creek (City of Chico, 2005). Suitable habitat at the project location is limited. However, if the turtle is present, it could be impacted by flow containment and diversion. Therefore, before flow is contained or diverted from the project site, or a segment of the project site if flow management is segmented, surveys will be conducted for northwestern pond turtles. If the turtles are found, a concerted effort will be made to capture as many

individuals as possible. These individuals will be relocated to suitable habitat elsewhere on Big Chico Creek.

- d. Although the California Horned Lizard has potential to occur within the project area, the staging area and in-stream project area lack substantial or suitable habitat for burrowing, foraging and nesting. Therefore, no mitigation measures are proposed.
- e. To protect spring run Chinook salmon from impact during construction, work within the stream channel will be prohibited during April – June, to avoid interference with migration. Mobilization, equipment installation in the staging area, construction of emergency egress scaffolding and construction of the platform in the canyon bottom can proceed, as long as no equipment or structure is allowed to enter the active flowing channel. To protect migrating fish from abrasion from the concrete weirs, the finish will be smoothed on the upstream faces of the weirs and adjacent to the notches. To avoid pH changes from concrete curing in the aquatic environment, the specifications for the concrete mixes will include mixes that do not produce pH changes in an aquatic environment.
- f. Central Valley Steelhead are known to occur in the project reach of Big Chico Creek. Potential impacts to Central Valley steelhead are the same as those to spring run Chinook salmon and mitigation measures to protect the salmon will also protect steelhead.
- g. Spawning and rearing habitat occurs within Big Chico Creek; however, conditions are marginal for river lamprey habitat within the in-stream project area. Therefore, there no mitigation measures proposed for river lamprey.
- h. For special status birds that nest between June 1 and August 30 (Cooper's Hawk, American Peregrine Falcon, Yellow-breasted Chat, Yellow Warbler), a survey shall be conducted within the project area and 500 feet of the project area boundaries no less than 14 and no more than 30 days prior to mobilization, which is estimated to commence June 1. If an occupied nest is located, a qualified biologist will evaluate the nest and establish a buffer area around the nest where special measures will be taken to protect the nest. DFG guidelines recommend implementation of 500 foot buffers, but the size of the buffer may be adjusted if a qualified biologist determines it would not be likely to adversely affect the nest. Considerations for reducing the buffer include: whether the nest and construction activity are located on the bluff or in the riparian vegetation of the canyon (e.g. an active nest in the canyon would be less likely to be disturbed by mobilization activities on the bluff); the noise level of the phase of the project (e.g. mowing staging area vs. jackhammering basalt boulders). DFG will be consulted if a modification to the buffer is

proposed. Within this buffer, construction activities may be allowed only under the following conditions:

- A qualified biologist is on-site to monitor the nest to assess that normal feeding and care of the young are not disrupted;
- Sound barriers are installed to reduce noise impacts to the nest; and
- Work within the buffer will be ceased if deviations from normal feeding and care of the young are detected.

Work may be resumed within the buffer area once a qualified biologist has determined that the nest is no longer active.

- i. The Ringtail is known to occur in Bidwell Park (City of Chico, 2005). The in-stream project area may provide suitable habitat for foraging and nesting. However, young should be mobile during the July – October construction period, so no mitigation measures are proposed. During the first month of the project, the ringtail young may still be in the nest. Therefore, a survey will be conducted not more than 30 nor less than 14 days prior to mobilization for ringtail nests. If an occupied nest is located, a buffer area will be implemented in consultation with DFG until the young leave the nest.
- j. The Pallid Bat is known to occur in Bidwell Park (City of Chico, 2005). The vertical basalt walls of Iron Canyon may provide suitable roosting habitat for the Pallid Bat. Construction activities have potential to disturb roosting activities for Pallid Bats roosting in locations in and in close proximity to the project area. Scaling of the canyon walls has the potential to disturb nesting females, and so this activity will be conducted in February, to avoid this disturbance. If females subsequently roost on the canyon walls, they could be disturbed by construction activities. Therefore, a survey of the canyon walls will be conducted after scaling. If roosts are identified, exclusions will be constructed, (e.g. place orange construction fencing over the roosts). The exclusions will be removed after construction.
- k. The concrete installed for the modified and new weirs will include special smoothing to reduce abrasion to fish that are pushed back against the weirs. Also, concrete specifications will include pH controls to avoid impact to water quality in Big Chico Creek.
- l. Equipment and materials entering the project area shall be washed and dried outside of Bidwell Park so that they are “weed-free” and free of aquatic species especially New Zealand Mud Snails. If erosion control materials are used (e.g., coconut fiber, rice straw), contractors shall check it is “weed-free” and “snail free”. After ground-soil disturbances, soil shall be recontoured by hand and the site shall be monitored for two years

during the late spring season to check that native annual grassland is reestablishing and no new noxious weeds have been introduced as a result of the project.

- m. To the extent possible, the project will avoid direct and indirect impacts to woody riparian species that are scattered along the water's edge through this reach of the canyon. Whenever possible, when workers scale rocks from the canyon walls, they shall avoid pushing rocks onto canopies, limbs and trunks of the Western Sycamores present. Crane operators shall avoid riparian trees as well. Large and heavy equipment passing onto the access road from Parking Area "P" shall avoid impacts to Blue Oak crowns and trunks located on the northwest or southeast edges of the road. Temporary orange plastic barrier fencing shall be placed around the driplines of the oak stand for protection.

C.2: To prevent the establishment or spread of noxious weeds, the following policies must be followed:

- a. Equipment and materials entering the project area shall be washed outside of Bidwell Park so that they are "weed-free". If erosion control materials are used (e.g., coconut fiber, rice straw), contractors shall ensure it is "weed-free", and "snail-free".
- b. After ground-soil disturbances, soil shall be recontoured by hand and the site shall be monitored for two years during the late spring season to ensure that native annual grasslands is reestablishing and no new noxious weeds have been introduced as a result of the project.
- c. To the extent possible, the project will avoid direct and indirect impacts to woody riparian species that are scattered along the water's edge through this reach of the canyon. Whenever possible, when workers scale rocks from the canyon walls, they shall avoid pushing rocks onto canopies, limbs and trunks of the Western Sycamores present. Crane operators shall avoid riparian trees as well.
- d. Large and heavy equipment passing onto the access road from Parking Area "P" shall avoid impacts to Blue Oak crowns and trunks located on the northwest or southeast edges of the road. Temporary orange plastic barrier fencing shall be placed around the driplines of the oak stand for protection.
- e. During pre-project vegetation-fuels treatment, the low-growing perennial Hansen's Spike-Moss inhabiting the mostly exposed basalt shall be left intact.

4. CULTURAL RESOURCES

A Determination of Eligibility and Effect for the Iron Canyon Ladder Rehabilitation Project was conducted in July 2008. There are no previously identified prehistoric or historic period cultural resources within, or directly adjacent to, the project area. No evidence of prehistoric period activity was observed within the Project. The concrete weirs constructed in 1958, as well as construction support elements located near the edge of the cliff face were identified and recorded. A temporary field number, PA-08-38, was assigned to the resource. PA-08-38 does not appear to qualify as an historical resource under the California Register of Historical Resources criteria for evaluation.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the mitigation measure D.1 listed below will reduce the environmental effects to a “less-than-significant” level.

D.1: A note shall be placed on construction plans informing the construction contractor that if any potential archaeological, cultural or paleontological resources are encountered during construction, work shall cease within the area of the find pending an examination of the site and materials by a professional archaeologist. The archaeologist will assess the significance of the find and prepare appropriate measures for review.

5. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Topography in the staging area of the project is relatively flat, with elevations approximately 500-550 feet above mean sea level. The fish ladder is at the base of a cliff slightly over 100 feet high. The confined creek channel is full of large basalt boulders derived from the surrounding Lovejoy Basalt.

In terms of seismic shaking, the different geologic materials that underlie the region have different shaking characteristics. Landslides in the area are a possibility as the slope and topography in Upper Bidwell Park range from moderate to high, but the recurrence interval of these events is unknown. Within Iron Canyon, rockfalls are the main concern. Fractured blocks of columnar Lovejoy Basalt have fallen into the creek channel in the past, but no major falls have occurred since the construction of the original fish ladder in the 1950's. The project areas also carry a slight risk of erosion hazards.

The proposed project would expose areas of dirt and loose soil to erosional forces. In the staging area and along the access road from Parking lot P, the removal of vegetation and scraping of equipment pads would increase the probability of soil erosion resulting in a potentially significant impact. Temporary impacts from construction-related activities could increase the mass resting on top of individual fractured blocks of basalt, such that shifting or failure could occur, resulting in rock fall. Short-term increases in the mass on top of individual blocks could occur due to rehabilitation activities, resulting in a potentially significant impact.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the mitigation measures E.1 and E.2 listed below will reduce the environmental effects to a "less-than-significant" level.

E.1: Along the down hill side of disturbed areas, straw wattles (weed and snail free) shall be placed and anchored such that they intercept any runoff and sediments carried off the site. A line of straw wattles or similar sediment trapping device shall be placed between the staging area and the rim of the canyon. Anchoring this device properly will be difficult due to the thin soil overlying basalt bedrock, and creative solutions must be used to accomplish this task. This mitigation measure will be discussed in greater detail in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

E.2: Scaling of the western canyon wall, and installation of wire extensometers and survey pins across selected joints, and 30' setback from canyon rim of heavy equipment and untethered workers.

To reduce the risk of rock fall and fracture failure, scaling of the western canyon wall by tethered workers will remove loose blocks and debris from above the planned work zone. In extreme cases mechanical scaling may be used to remove potentially dangerous blocks. Wire extensometers and/ or survey pins will be used to monitor the position of individual fractured blocks to determine if movement occurs during

construction activities. If movement is detected, construction activities will cease, and personnel will be evacuated to a safe location until a certified geotechnical engineer has assessed the risk potential. A 30 foot set back of heavy equipment and untethered personnel will further reduce the load on blocks near the canyon rim

6. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

The project site is located in a low foothill canyon on the flanks of the western Sierra Nevada Mountains, and is accessed by Upper Park Road, a gravel and dirt road accessible from Manzanita Ave in Chico. The proposed project does not involve the construction of a facility or structure associated with the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. No releases of hazardous materials or substances would occur during the implementation of the proposed project. There is, however, a slight risk of fuel and other petroleum spills during construction.

The City of Chico Park Department commissioned a study in 1991 which resulted in the Wildfire Management Plan (Plan) for Bidwell Park. This study concludes that there are serious wildfire problems in Bidwell Park. According to information contained in the Big Chico Creek Existing conditions report, the north portion of the park running along the Upper Park Road is considered to be the area at greatest risk of ignition due to its dry fuels, heavy use, and presence of vehicles. The fuels are generally thicker on the north-facing slopes of the South Rim, but less use here means that there is a lower threat of ignition. The project itself will not place large amounts of people in immediate danger of wildland fire, due to sparse vegetation at the site. However, there is a possibility that workers may accidentally introduce fire hazards due to smoking.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the mitigation measures F.1 and F.2 listed below will reduce the environmental effects to a “less-than-significant” level.

F.1: Incorporate a hazardous materials handling plan into the overall SWPPP (see Geology and Soils, above, and Hydrology and Water Quality, below). The SWPPP is subject to approval by the RWQCB. This portion of the plan will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- The SWPPP shall include measures for containing hazardous materials, such as accidental fuel spills.
- No construction equipment shall be left overnight in the active, flowing creek channel or where it could come in contact with creek flow
- All refueling and/or maintenance of heavy equipment shall take place at a minimum of 100 feet away from the top of bank of the creek channel.

- All personnel, contractors and subcontractors shall comply with applicable standards and conditions set forth by the RWQCB.

F.2: Workers will follow the existing ban on smoking in Upper Bidwell Park between May 1 and November 1. In addition, mowing of the access road and staging area, as well as establishing fire safe areas around generators and other stationary operating engines, and availability of appropriate fire suppression devices on site shall occur.

7. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

In 2006, the USFWS completed an Evaluation of Iron Canyon: For Proposed Fish Ladder Structure Repair and Construction- Final Report. The Ca. Department of Water Resources completed a Preliminary Engineering Technical Report for the Iron Canyon and Bear Hole Fish Passage Project on Big Chico Creek in 2002. Rehabilitation of the fish ladder and construction of necessary staging, storage and access facilities would involve extensive use of mechanized equipment. Although the project proponents intend to use the mechanized equipment primarily on the canyon rim above Big Chico Creek, some equipment including jackhammers may be used within Iron Canyon, and within Big Chico Creek itself. Disturbed and exposed surfaces especially on the canyon rim would be susceptible to erosional forces of wind and may result in degradation of water quality down-slope of the staging and storage areas.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the mitigation measure G.1 listed below will reduce the environmental effects to a less-than-significant level.

G.1: To protect water quality from degradation related to construction activities, the SWPPP must be followed. Sediment and erosion controls will be implemented at the canyon rim and in the staging area, and additional measures must be implemented at river level. To control the spread of invasive aquatic species, equipment to be used in the creek shall be washed and completely dried before it is brought onto the construction site.

To protect migrating fish from abrasion from the concrete weirs, the finish will be smoothed on the upstream faces of the weirs and adjacent to the notches. To avoid pH changes from concrete curing in the aquatic environment, the specifications for the concrete mixes will include mixes that do not produce pH changes in an aquatic environment.

8. NOISE

The existing noise environment in the area of the proposed project is typical of open space areas. The primary noise sources are from recreational users, creek flow, aircraft overhead, and minor noise from State Route 32. The proposed project would not result in the exposure of people to long-term noise level exceeding local noise standards. The proposed project would result only in the generation of temporary construction-related noise. Construction activities may increase noise levels on a short-term and temporary basis, exposing park users in the general vicinity of the project to noise disturbance.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the mitigation measure I.1 listed below will reduce the environmental effects to a less-than-significant level.

I.1: In order to limit noise impacts, activities involving mechanized and/or gas powered equipment shall adhere to the following:

- a. All heavy construction equipment and stationary noise sources (such as diesel generators) shall be in good working order and have manufacturer installed mufflers.
- b. Limit construction activities to the hours between 7:00 am and 9:00 pm daily, except Sundays and holidays. For Sundays and holidays, limit construction activities to the hours between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm.

8. TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION

The project is located within Upper Bidwell Park which is accessible from only one road, Upper Park Road. The staging and equipment storage areas on the project site are located away from the road and will not substantially reduce the availability of parking spaces during construction. Upper Park Road is utilized by motorized and non motorized users. The road is closed to motor vehicles near Horseshoe Lake on Sundays and Mondays. The addition of worker vehicles to the existing traffic load would be noticeable when workers are arriving and leaving the project area.

Finding: Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project that mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.

Facts in Support of the Finding: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy concurs with the lead agency that the mitigation measure M.1 listed below will reduce the environmental effects to a less-than-significant level.

M.1: Heavy equipment and oversized loads (except cement trucks) shall be transported along Upper Park Road, beyond Horseshoe Lake, on Sundays or Mondays only. A pilot vehicle shall lead any large vehicles up the road to alert non motorized recreational users on the road. Where feasible, multiple large vehicles shall travel together to reduce the impact to recreational users. When large vehicles are present on the road, signage near the gate at Horseshoe Lake shall indicate that vehicles are present and caution shall be exercised. Water shall be applied to the dirt portions of the road before large vehicles or caravans pass between the project area and the parking area near Horseshoe Lake.

Workers shall carpool from the parking area near Wildwood Park to reduce the total number of vehicles in the project area. When construction activities are occurring on days when the road is closed to motorized users, workers shall be allowed to drive to the project site (in carpools), and signage near the gate at Horseshoe Lake shall indicate that vehicles are present on the road and caution shall be exercised.

A Notice of Determination (NOD) indicating the results of these findings will be filed with the State Clearinghouse of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research pursuant to Section 15096(l) of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Certification:

I hereby certify that the statements furnished above present the data and information used to support the findings made herein pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15091 or 15096 (h), and the facts, statements, and information presented herein, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name Jim Branham Title Executive Officer

Iron Canyon Fish Ladder Rehabilitation Project

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

INTRODUCTION

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), as CEQA Responsible Agency in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15096, is proposing to provide funding to the City of Chico for the implementation of the Iron Canyon Fish Ladder Rehabilitation Project. The CEQA lead agency is the City of Chico, which prepared a project specific Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the project

The CEQA statutes and Guidelines provide direction for clarifying and managing the complex relationships between a Lead Agency and other agencies with implementing and monitoring mitigation measures. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15097(d), “each agency has the discretion to choose its own approach to monitoring or reporting; and each agency has its own special expertise.”

The mitigation measures presented below in this MMRP includes those mitigation measures, identified from the IS/MND, that address the impacts of the Iron Canyon Fish Ladder Rehabilitation Project. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy, as a responsible agency and funding source, will ensure through the grant management process, that each measure found within the adopted mitigation and monitoring program will be carried out diligently by the party identified.

**SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
IRON CANYON FISH PASSAGE PROJECT
SNC 080145**

MITIGATION MEASURES

AESTHETICS

A.1: New concrete shall be color and texture matched to reflect the Lovejoy Basalt in which the concrete will sit. This would be a dark grey color instead of the current light grey.

MITIGATION MONITORING A.1:

Park Division staff and Public Works Engineering Division staff will review final project plans to ensure that the above measure is incorporated into the construction documents.

AIR QUALITY

B.1: To minimize fugitive dust and exhaust emissions during construction activities and ensure enforcement of General Plan policies pertaining to air quality, the following mitigation measures shall be included in construction plans and documents for the project:

- a. Grading operations shall be suspended when winds exceed 20 miles per hour as directed by the BCAQMD.
- b. Provide temporary traffic control during all phases of construction to improve traffic flow (e.g. flag persons) as determined appropriate by the Department of Public Works.
- c. Water active construction sites that expose areas of dirt to erosion and wind drift at least twice daily as directed by the Department of Public Works. Frequency should be based on the type of operation, soil, and wind exposure.
- d. Trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials should be covered or should maintain at least two feet of freeboard (i.e., minimum vertical distance between top of the load and the trailer in accordance with the requirements of CVC Section 23114). This provision is enforced by local law enforcement agencies.
- e. Cover inactive storage piles.

- f. Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust complaints. This person shall respond and take corrective action within 24 hours. The telephone number of the BCAQMD shall also be visible to ensure compliance with BCAQMD Rule 201 & 207 (Nuisance and Fugitive Dust Emissions).
- g. If necessary, apply chemical soil stabilizers to inactive construction areas (disturbed areas that are unused for at least four consecutive days) to control dust emissions. Dust emissions should be controlled at the site for both active and inactive construction areas throughout the entire construction period (including holidays).
- h. Limit vehicle speeds to 15 mph on unpaved roads.
- i. Exhaust emissions will be reduced by maintaining equipment in good repair and proper tune according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- j. If construction activities occur during smog season (May-October), equipment will not be allowed to idle for long periods of time.

MITIGATION MONITORING B.1: Prior to issuing right of entry permits, the Parks Division and Public Works Engineering Division staff will review project plans. The mitigation measures will be included in the project's plans and specifications, subject to the approval, to the extent practicable.

Mitigation Measure B.1 (above) would reduce the proposed project's potential air quality impacts that could stem from construction-related activities. With adherence to applicable standards, including the City's standard mitigation and monitoring program identified in the Best Practices Technical Manual and the ISRG set forth by the BCAQMD, the proposed project would result in less than significant potential air quality impacts generated by indirect sources

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

C.1: To prevent adverse affects to special status species, the following policies must be followed:

- a. Occurrence of red-legged frog is unlikely due to the bedrock nature of the stream, limited backwaters and sparse riparian habitat. Therefore, no mitigation measures are proposed for red-legged frog.
- b. Foothill yellow-legged frogs are known to inhabit Big Chico Creek upstream of the project site. However, preferred substrate for the Foothill Yellow-legged Frog is very limited within the in-stream area of the project footprint. If the frog is present, it could be impacted by flow containment and diversion. Therefore, before flow is contained or diverted from the project site, or a segment of the project site if flow management is segmented, surveys will be conducted for foothill yellow-legged frogs and their tadpoles. If frogs are found, a concerted effort will be made to capture as many individuals as possible. These individuals will be relocated to suitable habitat elsewhere on Big Chico Creek.
- c. The Northwestern Pond Turtle is known from other locations in Big Chico Creek (City of Chico, 2005). Suitable habitat at the project location is limited. However, if the turtle is present, it could be impacted by flow containment and diversion. Therefore, before flow is contained or diverted from the project site, or a segment of the project site if flow management is segmented, surveys will be conducted for northwestern pond turtles. If the turtles are found, a concerted effort will be made to capture as many individuals as possible. These individuals will be relocated to suitable habitat elsewhere on Big Chico Creek.
- d. Although the California Horned Lizard has potential to occur within the project area, the staging area and in-stream project area lack substantial or suitable habitat for burrowing, foraging and nesting. Therefore, no mitigation measures are proposed.
- e. To protect spring run Chinook salmon from impact during construction, work within the stream channel will be prohibited during April – June, to avoid interference with migration. Mobilization, equipment installation in the staging area, construction of emergency egress scaffolding and construction of the platform in the canyon bottom can proceed, as long as no equipment or structure is allowed to enter the active flowing channel. To protect migrating fish from abrasion from the concrete weirs, the finish will be smoothed on the upstream faces of the weirs and adjacent to the notches. To avoid pH changes from concrete curing in the aquatic environment, the specifications for the concrete mixes will include mixes that do not produce pH changes in an aquatic environment.
- f. Central Valley Steelhead are known to occur in the project reach of Big Chico Creek. Potential impacts to Central Valley steelhead are the same as those to spring run Chinook salmon and mitigation measures to protect the salmon will also protect steelhead.

- g. Spawning and rearing habitat occurs within Big Chico Creek; however, conditions are marginal for river lamprey habitat within the in-stream project area. Therefore, there no mitigation measures proposed for river lamprey.
- h. For special status birds that nest between June 1 and August 30 (Cooper's Hawk, American Peregrine Falcon, Yellow-breasted Chat, Yellow Warbler), a survey shall be conducted within the project area and 500 feet of the project area boundaries no less than 14 and no more than 30 days prior to mobilization, which is estimated to commence June 1. If an occupied nest is located, a qualified biologist will evaluate the nest and establish a buffer area around the nest where special measures will be taken to protect the nest. DFG guidelines recommend implementation of 500 foot buffers, but the size of the buffer may be adjusted if a qualified biologist determines it would not be likely to adversely affect the nest. Considerations for reducing the buffer include: whether the nest and construction activity are located on the bluff or in the riparian vegetation of the canyon (e.g. an active nest in the canyon would be less likely to be disturbed by mobilization activities on the bluff); the noise level of the phase of the project (e.g. mowing staging area vs. jackhammering basalt boulders). DFG will be consulted if a modification to the buffer is proposed. Within this buffer, construction activities may be allowed only under the following conditions:
- A qualified biologist is on-site to monitor the nest to ensure that normal feeding and care of the young are not disrupted;
 - Sound barriers are installed to reduce noise impacts to the nest; and
 - Work within the buffer will be ceased if deviations from normal feeding and care of the young are detected.

Work may be resumed within the buffer area once a qualified biologist has determined that the nest is no longer active.

- i. The Ringtail is known to occur in Bidwell Park (City of Chico, 2005). The in-stream project area may provide suitable habitat for foraging and nesting. However, young should be mobile during the July – October construction period, so no mitigation measures are proposed. During the first month of the project, the ringtail young may still be in the nest. Therefore, a survey will be conducted not more than 30 nor less than 14 days prior to mobilization for ringtail nests. If an occupied nest is located, a buffer area will be implemented in consultation with DFG until the young leave the nest.
- j. The Pallid Bat is known to occur in Bidwell Park (City of Chico, 2005). The vertical basalt walls of Iron Canyon may provide suitable roosting habitat for the Pallid Bat. Construction activities have potential to disturb roosting activities for Pallid Bats roosting in locations in and in close proximity to the project area. Scaling of the canyon walls has the potential to disturb nesting females, and so this activity will be conducted in February, to avoid this disturbance. If females subsequently roost on the canyon walls, they could be disturbed by construction activities. Therefore, a survey of the canyon walls will be conducted after scaling. If roosts are identified, exclusions will be constructed, (e.g. place orange

construction fencing over the roosts). The exclusions will be removed after construction.

- k. The concrete installed for the modified and new weirs will include special smoothing to reduce abrasion to fish that are pushed back against the weirs. Also, concrete specifications will include pH controls to avoid impact to water quality in Big Chico Creek.
- l. Equipment and materials entering the project area shall be washed and dried outside of Bidwell Park so that they are “weed-free” and free of aquatic species especially New Zealand Mud Snails. If erosion control materials are used (e.g., coconut fiber, rice straw), contractors shall check that it is “weed-free” and “snail free”. After ground-soil disturbances, soil shall be recontoured by hand and the site shall be monitored for two years during the late spring season to check that native annual grassland is reestablishing and no new noxious weeds have been introduced as a result of the project.
- m. To the extent possible, the project will avoid direct and indirect impacts to woody riparian species that are scattered along the water’s edge through this reach of the canyon. Whenever possible, when workers scale rocks from the canyon walls, they shall avoid pushing rocks onto canopies, limbs and trunks of the Western Sycamores present. Crane operators shall avoid riparian trees as well. Large and heavy equipment passing onto the access road from Parking Area “P” shall avoid impacts to Blue Oak crowns and trunks located on the northwest or southeast edges of the road. Temporary orange plastic barrier fencing shall be placed around the driplines of the oak stand to ensure protection.

MITIGATION MONITORING C.1: Prior to construction, Planning Division staff and Park Division staff will check that the appropriate surveys have been conducted and appropriate mitigation measures identified by the relevant agencies are implemented.

C.2: To prevent the establishment or spread of noxious weeds, the following policies must be followed:

- a. Equipment and materials entering the project area shall be washed outside of Bidwell Park so that they are “weed-free”. If erosion control materials are used (e.g., coconut fiber, rice straw), contractors shall check that it is “weed-free”, and “snail-free”.
- b. After ground-soil disturbances, soil shall be recontoured by hand and the site shall be monitored for two years during the late spring season to check that native annual grassland is reestablishing and no new noxious weeds have been introduced as a result of the project.
- c. To the extent possible, the project will avoid direct and indirect impacts to woody riparian species that are scattered along the water’s edge through this reach of the canyon. Whenever possible, when workers scale rocks from the canyon walls, they shall avoid pushing rocks onto canopies, limbs and trunks of the Western Sycamores present. Crane operators shall avoid riparian trees as well.

- d. Large and heavy equipment passing onto the access road from Parking Area “P” shall avoid impacts to Blue Oak crowns and trunks located on the northwest or southeast edges of the road. Temporary orange plastic barrier fencing shall be placed around the driplines of the oak stand for protection.
- e. During pre-project vegetation-fuels treatment, the low-growing perennial Hansen’s Spike-Moss inhabiting the mostly exposed basalt shall be left intact.

MITIGATION MONITORING C.2: During initial construction activities, Parks Division staff shall check that equipment entering the park is clean and in good repair. Visual checks shall be made to verify that fencing has been placed to adequately protect oak trees near parking area P.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

D.1: A note shall be placed on construction plans informing the construction contractor that if potential archaeological, cultural or paleontological resources are encountered during construction, work shall cease within the area of the find pending an examination of the site and materials by a professional archaeologist. The archaeologist will assess the significance of the find and prepare appropriate measures for review.

MITIGATION MONITORING D.1: Should potential resources be encountered, the supervising inspector will be responsible for reporting any such findings to the Planning Division, and a qualified archaeologist will be contacted to conduct meetings with on-site employees and monitor the referenced mitigation measures.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

E.1: Along the down hill side of disturbed areas, straw wattles (weed and snail free) shall be placed and anchored such that they intercept runoff and sediments carried off the site. A line of straw wattles or similar sediment trapping device shall be placed between the staging area and the rim of the canyon. Anchoring this device properly will be difficult due to the thin soil overlying basalt bedrock, and creative solutions must be used to accomplish this task. This mitigation measure will be discussed in greater detail in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

MITIGATION MONITORING E.1: Prior to construction activities, Parks Division and Planning Division staff will check that an appropriate SWPPP has been approved and that pollution control measures are incorporated into the construction documents.

E.2: Scaling of the western canyon wall, and installation of wire extensometers and survey pins across selected joints, and 30’ setback from canyon rim of heavy equipment and untethered workers.

To reduce the risk of rock fall and fracture failure, scaling of the western canyon wall by tethered workers will remove loose blocks and debris from above the planned work zone. In extreme cases mechanical scaling may be used to remove potentially dangerous blocks. Wire extensometers and/ or survey pins will be used to monitor the

position of individual fractured blocks to assess if movement occurs during construction activities. If movement is detected, construction activities will cease, and personnel will be evacuated to a safe location until a certified geotechnical engineer has assessed the risk potential. A 30 foot set back of heavy equipment and untethered personnel will further reduce the load on blocks near the canyon rim.

MITIGATION MONITORING E.2: Prior to construction activities, Parks Division and Planning Division staff will check that scaling of the walls has been incorporated into the early stages of the project and is incorporated into the construction documents.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

F.1: Incorporate a hazardous materials handling plan into the overall SWPPP (see Geology and Soils, above, and Hydrology and Water Quality, below). The SWPPP is subject to approval by the RWQCB. This portion of the plan will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- The SWPPP shall include measures for containing hazardous materials, such as accidental fuel spills.
- No construction equipment shall be left overnight in the active, flowing creek channel or where it could come in contact with creek flow
- Refueling and/or maintenance of heavy equipment shall take place at a minimum of 100 feet away from the top of bank of the creek channel.
- Personnel, contractors and subcontractors shall comply with applicable standards and conditions set forth by the RWQCB.

MITIGATION MONITORING F.1: Prior to any construction activities, Parks Division and Planning Division staff will check that an appropriate SWPPP has been approved and that hazard mitigation measures are incorporated into the construction documents.

F.2: Workers will follow the existing ban on smoking in Upper Bidwell Park between May 1 and November 1. In addition, mowing of the access road and staging area, as well as establishing fire safe areas around generators and other stationary operating engines, and availability of appropriate fire suppression devices on site shall occur.

MITIGATION MONITORING F.2: Prior to any construction activities, Parks Division and Planning Division staff will check that above fire prevention measures are incorporated into the construction documents.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

G.1: To protect water quality from degradation related to construction activities, the SWPPP must be followed. Sediment and erosion controls will be implemented at the canyon rim and in the staging area, and additional measures must be implemented at river level. To control the spread of invasive aquatic species, all equipment to be used in the creek shall be washed and completely dried before it is brought onto the construction site.

To protect migrating fish from abrasion from the concrete weirs, the finish will be smoothed on the upstream faces of the weirs and adjacent to the notches. To avoid pH changes from concrete curing in the aquatic environment, the specifications for the concrete mixes will include mixes that do not produce pH changes in an aquatic environment.

MITIGATION MONITORING G.1: Prior to construction activities, Parks Division and Planning Division staff will check that an appropriate Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) has been approved and that pollution control measures are incorporated into the construction documents.

NOISE

I.1: In order to limit noise impacts, activities involving mechanized and/or gas powered equipment shall adhere to the following:

- a. Heavy construction equipment and stationary noise sources (such as diesel generators) shall be in good working order and have manufacturer installed mufflers.
- b. Limit construction activities to the hours between 7:00 am and 9:00 pm daily, except Sundays and holidays. For Sundays and holidays, limit construction activities to the hours between 10:00 am and 6:00 pm.

MITIGATION MONITORING I.1: Prior to issuing an entry permit, Parks Division and Planning Division staff shall check that these mitigation measures are incorporated into the final construction documents.

TRANSPORTATION

M.1: Heavy equipment and oversized loads (except cement trucks) shall be transported along Upper Park Road, beyond Horseshoe Lake, on Sundays or Mondays only. A pilot vehicle shall lead any large vehicles up the road to alert non motorized recreational users on the road. Where feasible, multiple large vehicles shall travel together to reduce the impact to recreational users. When large vehicles are present on the road, signage near the gate at Horseshoe Lake shall indicate that vehicles are present and caution shall be exercised. Water shall be applied to the dirt portions of the road before large vehicles or caravans pass between the project area and the parking area near Horseshoe Lake.

Workers shall carpool from the parking area near Wildwood Park to reduce the total number of vehicles in the project area. When construction activities are occurring on days when the road is closed to motorized users, workers shall be allowed to drive to the project site (in carpools), and signage near the gate at Horseshoe Lake shall indicate that vehicles are present on the road and caution shall be exercised.

MITIGATION MONITORING M.1: Prior to issuing an entry permit, Parks Division and Planning Division staff shall check that this mitigation measure is incorporated into the final construction documents.

RESPONSIBLE AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION	
1. Project Title:	Iron Canyon Fish Passage Project SNC 080145
2. Responsible Agency Name and Address:	Sierra Nevada Conservancy 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205 Auburn, CA 95603
3. Contact Person and Phone Number:	Bob Kingman, Mt Lassen Area Manager (530) 823-4678
4. Project Location:	Big Chico Creek in Bidwell Park in the City of Chico, Butte County. Located near the Salmon Hole and Parking Lot P areas of Upper Bidwell Park, accessible from Upper Park Road, a gravel road that roughly parallels the creek, in T22N, R2E, an undesignated section of Arroyo Chico Land Grant.
5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:	Project Proponent: City of Chico 411 Main St. Chico, CA 95928 Lead Agency: City of Chico 411 Main St. Chico, CA 95928
6. General Plan Designation:	Natural Resource
7. City Zoning:	OS-1, Primary Open Space
8. Description of Project:	The project will repair existing weirs, expand and modify existing weirs, and install 6 new weirs at the Iron Canyon Fish Ladder (Fish Ladder) on Big Chico Creek in Bidwell Park, Chico, California. The Fish Ladder was constructed in the mid 1950s to provide spring run salmon passage during low to moderate flows, so that the fish can reach holding and spawning habitat upstream. The ladder has suffered damage and now does not function as designed. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) developed final designs and specifications and has provided funding to the CSU, Chico Research Foundation (Foundation) to complete environmental review, obtain permits and develop construction funding. The Foundation is working with the City of Chico, the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance, the CA Department of Fish and Game and the CA Department of Water Resources to complete these tasks.
9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:	The project is bounded on the north, south, east, and west by Bidwell Park. Bidwell Park is heavily used for recreation and provides important wildlife habitat.
10. Other public agencies whose approval is required:	California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG): Submittal of Streambed Alteration Notification (Determination of need for Agreement); Issuance of Final Streambed Alteration Agreement (based on decision from Notification) California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB): Issuance of a Water Quality Certification (CWA Section 401); Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE): Permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS): Endangered Species Act (Consultation)
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA): Endangered Species Act (Consultation)

Interior Department: National Historic Preservation Act, (Section 106 Report)

California Reclamation Board: Encroachment Permit

California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB): General Permit for Construction Activities

City of Chico: Right of Entry Permit

PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), as CEQA Responsible Agency in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15096, is proposing to provide funding to the City of Chico for the implementation of the Iron Canyon Fish Passage Project. The CEQA lead agency is the City of Chico, which prepared a project specific Initial Study (IS) and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Iron Canyon Fish Ladder Rehabilitation Project (SCH No. 2008082017). The IS/MND adequately addressed the impacts of the proposed project. The mitigation measures, which address the site-specific conditions of this project, are incorporated for this project. The previous environmental documents were completed and adopted by the respective state and federal agencies. These documents are on file at the offices of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy or the City of Chico Planning Division.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS

The project will repair existing weirs, expand and modify existing weirs, and install 6 new weirs at the Iron Canyon Fish Ladder (Fish Ladder) on Big Chico Creek in Bidwell Park, Chico, California. The Fish Ladder was constructed in the mid 1950s to provide spring run salmon passage during low to moderate flows, so that the fish can reach holding and spawning habitat upstream. The ladder has suffered damage and now does not function as designed. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) developed final designs and specifications and has provided funding to the CSU, Chico Research Foundation (Foundation) to complete environmental review, obtain permits and develop construction funding. The Foundation is working with the City of Chico, the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance, the CA Department of Fish and Game and the CA Department of Water Resources to complete these tasks.

The project will involve the following:

Construction Staging and Site Preparation

- Mowing of an existing access road from Parking Lot "P" to a staging area and installing construction fencing along the road and chain link fencing around the staging area, which will be 400 feet by 100 feet.
- Mowing of the staging area.
- Scraping and leveling within the staging area for the installation of some or all of the following:
 - Crane pads 2 each x 6 @ 3'x3' = 108 square feet
 - Trailer pads 6 @ 2'x2' = 24 square feet
 - Concrete washout (portable) 12x20 = 240 square feet
 - Generator pad and fire safe area 10x20 = 200 square feet
 - Water Tank pads 4 @ 2x2 = 16 square feet
 - Construction box 15x40 = 600 square feet

- Installation of wire extensometers and/or survey pins across selected joints along canyon wall and/or rim.
- Scaling of the western canyon wall (use of hand tools similar to pry bars) to remove loose blocks and debris from above the planned work zone.
- Removal of Lovejoy Basalt block identified as Block 2 (estimated volume of 30 cubic yards) by mechanical scaling (e.g., excavator with rock breaker).
- Provision for emergency access/egress by installing a construction elevator (hoist) or scaffolding tower anchored to the western canyon wall at several locations along its height (120-140 feet). A bridge will be necessary to span from the setback (30 feet) on the canyon rim to the distance the elevator or tower is set back from the canyon wall (approximately 40 to 50 feet). The canyon wall set back is necessary to ensure the emergency access/egress is sufficiently sited away from overhanging blocks and/or blocks with open joints on the western canyon wall that are judged to have potential static and/or seismic instability.
- Install a single platform of approximately 1,200 square feet in area, to be constructed near Weir 8 from light steel beams with a wooden deck. A second platform could be constructed near Weirs 9 through 17 providing additional staging, although it would be more difficult to construct.

Flow Containment and Diversion

- Install aqua-dams, sandbags and plastic sheets, and piping to temporarily redirect the creek flow. Potentially use naturally occurring pool to create a temporary sump and pump some or all of the flow rather than damming the creek to a height great enough to redirect it. A combination of methods will likely be required to dewater. The dewatering and construction may also be done in sections.

Fish Ladder Construction

- Pool deepening, at minimum of 0.1 feet to 2.1 feet. Excavation of pool sidewalls will be necessary, with large boulder-sized blocks potentially requiring partial or complete removal. Jack-hammer and/or drilling may be necessary for the large block removal. Excavated material does not require removal from the site and may be disposed of in adjacent, non-fishway pools.
- Drilling into existing rocks for reinforcing and dowel attachments (sampled compressive strengths for Lovejoy Basalt ranged from 7,000 psi to 64,000 psi).
- Placing of concrete buttresses, cut-off slabs/walls or concrete foundations may be necessary to stabilize individual blocks that will support concrete ladder structures.
- Partial demolition of 18 existing weirs (Weirs 1 through 6, 6B, and 7 through 17) with removal and legal disposal of concrete debris. These weirs will then be encased in new integrally colored (dark gray to mimic adjacent Lovejoy Basalt) reinforced concrete (either cast-in-place concrete or shotcrete).
- At the contractor's discretion, existing weirs may also be entirely demolished and replaced with new weir design, rather than encased.
- Installation of 6 new weirs (Weirs 1B, 5B, 7B, 8B, 8C, 11B) constructed with integrally colored (dark gray to mimic adjacent Lovejoy Basalt) reinforced concrete (either cast-in-place concrete or shotcrete).
- Installation of fabricated stainless steel fish passage slots and bypass slots cast into new and modified/expanded weirs.
- Encasement of existing reinforced concrete basalt block strut at Weir 12 with 36-inch diameter reinforced concrete column.
- Permeation grouting of loose materials (sand/gravel/cobble bottoms) immediately upstream and downstream of most new and modified weirs.
- Installation of fabricated aluminum flashboards into finished weir slots.

Demobilization

- Removal of all demolished concrete and concrete washout from site and dispose of at appropriate recycling or disposal location.
- Removal of temporary anchorages used for securing or attaching equipment to canyon cliffs or basalt blocks.
- Removal of all scaffolding, work platforms or rigging for such.
- Removal of off water diversion structures and equipment.
- Removal of equipment and fencing.
- Seeding of site with appropriate native grassland species.

Incorporation of Mitigation Measures

In addition to the specific project components described above, mitigation measures identified in the MND would also be incorporated into this project.

IMPACT MINIMIZATION MEASURES INCORPORATED INTO THE PROJECT

All of the following environmental factors have been considered. Those environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" or Potentially Significant Unless Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the attached IS/MND. Mitigation measures including Best Management Practices, monitoring and project design components have reduced any potential impacts to these resources to below significant or potentially significant levels.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:		
The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation / Traffic
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance	<input type="checkbox"/> None With Mitigation

DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

- I find that although the proposed project **COULD** have a significant effect on the environment, there **WILL NOT** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

- I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature

Date

Jim Branham

Executive Officer

Printed Name

Title

Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Agency

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

1. A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
2. All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
3. Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
4. “Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from “Earlier Analyses,” as described in (5) below, may be cross-referenced).
5. Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
6. Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g., general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
7. Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.
8. This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project’s environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
9. The explanation of each issue should identify:
the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Appraisal and Acquisition Program – Packer Saddle Property (SNC 080231)

Project Location – Specific:

Packer Saddle, Sierra City, CA 96125 (APN 08-007-027)

Project Location – City: Sierra City-unincorporated

Project Location – County: Sierra

Description of Project:

The Sierra County Land Trust is seeking \$423,200 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to acquire the 204-acre Smailes Property which includes Packer Saddle, the ridge that forms the Lakes Basin. The property is important to the Lakes Basin region because it is one of the most heavily used recreational properties in the area at the top of the watershed with the Pacific Crest Trail, Sunrise Bike Trail and internationally known Downieville Downhill mountain bike Trail all located on the property. The property is also part of the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Special Treatment Area which indicates that it is a key recreational and economic resource for the County. The purpose of the acquisition is to protect the water quality, recreation, scenic and economic assets of the site as an important piece of the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: The Sierra County Land Trust

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15313, "Acquisition of Lands for Wildlife Conservation Purposes"

Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15313 in that it consists of the acquisition of lands for fish and wildlife conservation purposes. The purpose of the acquisition is for the purpose of protecting this property from future development and thereby preserving the native landscape that serves as wildlife habitat. By placing this property into public ownership it will be managed properly to balance recreational uses with conservation practices. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Oakvale Ranch Easement Acquisition (SNC 080234)

Project Location – Specific:

1859 Ben Hur Road, Raymond, CA 93653

Project Location – City: Raymond

Project Location – County: Mariposa

Description of Project:

The American Land Conservancy is seeking \$1,000,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 to fund the acquisition of a conservation easement on the Oakvale Ranch. The Oakvale Ranch is a 3,941-acre working cattle ranch that has been in the current landowners family for over 150 years. The purpose of the conservation easement is to preserve significant ecological and agricultural resources contributing to watershed health in the Yosemite Foothills by securing the 3,941 acres of open space including 10,000 linear feet of a seasonal stream. The conservation easement will prevent subdivision of oak woodlands and fragmentation of important wildlife habitat as well as contribute to maintaining the economic sustainability of the ranching community.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: American Land Conservancy

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15317, "Open Space Contracts or Easements"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15317 in that it consists of the establishment of an agricultural preserve and the acceptance of easements in order to maintain the open space character of the area. The acquisition of a conservation easement on the Oakvale Ranch will preserve open space and local ranching heritage. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Meadow Ranch Conservation Easement (SNC 080133)

Project Location – Specific:

Meadow Ranch Road, Calpine, CA 96124

Project Location – City: Calpine

Project Location – County: Sierra

Description of Project:

The Pacific Forest Trust is seeking \$1,000,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to acquire a conservation easement on the 237-acre Meadow Ranch. All the funds from Sierra Nevada Conservancy will be used towards the purchase of the easement. The easement will protect the property as a working ranch, while conserving its significant water resources including Fletcher Creek Spring Channel and 168 acres of wet meadows which serve as rich wildlife habitat. The Meadow Ranch is located in a focal area that the Pacific Forest Trust has named the "Southwestern Corridor of Working Forests." This corridor plays a critical role in the Sierra Valley's ecological and economic health by providing approximately half of the Valley's water supply in addition to important wildlife habitat connectivity between the open meadows and upland forests. Additional easements have been purchased in the area and the conservation of Meadow Ranch will result in the protection of working landscapes, wildlife habitat, and the headwaters of the Middle Fork of the Feather River.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Pacific Forest Trust

Exempt Status: (*check one*)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15317, "Open Space Contracts or Easements"
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: _____

Reasons why project is exempt:

This project qualifies as categorically exempt under Section 15317 in that it consists of the establishment of an agricultural preserve and the acceptance of easements in order to maintain the open space character of the area. The acquisition of a conservation easement on the Meadow Ranch will preserve open space and local ranching heritage. None of the Exceptions listed under Section 15300.2 apply to this project.

Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Bob Kingman Area Code/Telephone/Extension: 530.823.4678

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature _____ Date: _____ Title: Executive Officer

Signed by Lead Agency

Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: _____

Background

Following the decision to cancel the June Board meeting in light of the grants freeze, SNC staff initiated a "Subregional Assessment" to identify lessons learned from implementation of the SNC program to date. The primary focus of the Assessments is to identify key differences between the Subregions and potential primary factors for such differences. This item was on the agenda for the September Board meeting, however, due to time constraints we were unable to address it.

Current Status

Staff has compiled a first draft of the Assessment, a summary of which is included with this agenda item. It should be noted that the SNC's experience to date has largely been guided by funding provided under Proposition 84. However, SNC staff has engaged in a number of other non-grant related activities and a significant amount of review of various data sets has occurred as part of the Assessment.

This initial review has provided staff with substantial information about each Subregion, including an analysis of SNC activities to date. Clearly there are differences in the type of grants and applicants between Subregions, even though many of the key issues identified exist in all or most of the Subregions. At this time, the following four factors have been identified as likely contributors to Subregional differences:

- Land Ownership Patterns (Public vs. Private)
- Counties with Majority of Population and Government Center Outside the SNC Region
- Organizational Capacity
- Proposition 84 Alignment

Next Steps

Following review and direction from the Board, SNC staff will continue work on the Assessment, including interaction with key stakeholders and consultation with Subregional representatives. Staff plans to bring the Assessment back to the Board, with recommendations, for a more in-depth discussion at the March 2010 Board meeting.

Recommendation

No action is needed by the Board at this time, however comments and direction for further action is encouraged.

*-- DRAFT --
September 9, 2009*

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Subregional Assessment Overview

I. Introduction

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy Subregional Assessment report was prepared by SNC area staff over the past few months to inventory current information, trends, and issues in each Subregion to help further guide implementation of the Conservancy's strategic plan. The assessment will be used to better inform the Board and staff of geographically unique issues and Region wide trends. It should also reveal the initial impacts associated with implementation of the Conservancy's Proposition 84 grants program. The assessment will also be used to assist in the following areas:

- Inform Board and staff of Subregional differences and capacity;
- Inform Board and staff of SNC impact by Program Area and identify gaps;
- Inform Board and staff of distribution of SNC resources to date;
- Inform the development of future grant guidelines and outreach efforts;
- Refine SNC performance measures and indices;
- Help guide future bond measures language and funding strategies; and
- Broaden SNC exposure both internally and externally.

The assessment uses data from Business Analyst Software, and multiple published sources, personal conversations, grant application and awards data from the Conservancy and other Bond funded grants programs administered in the area, and reviewing notes and comments from all public meetings conducted by the Conservancy to date. The following data sets are being used in the assessment:

- Population
- Land Ownership
- Demographics
- Employment by Sector
- SNC Grant Information
- Issue Specific Data (i.e., fire severity)

The Conservancy has developed indicators and performance measures to evaluate the success of individual projects, our programs and overall trends in the Region. In future drafts, these indicators and their supporting data will be evaluated to look for opportunities to integrate the indicators and the data into this subregional assessment report.

These assessments will be refined significantly prior to presentation to the Board in December.

II. Examples of Overarching Issues, Trends and Areas of Concern

While each Subregion and county in the Conservancy area is unique in many ways, there are a number of common issues. Each Subregional assessment discussed these issues in some detail as it relates to the specific Subregion, including initial data analysis. After evaluating assessments for all Subregions the following common themes or issues were revealed.

Each of these issues will be expanded upon in the final draft of the report. Data sources that will be evaluated to further analyze these issues are included under each issue topic.

Catastrophic Fire

Prevalent among all Subregions is the threat of catastrophic fire. Although each Subregion has unique circumstances (i.e. fuel types, weather patterns, amounts of wildland urban interface, ownership and access patterns) related to fire threat, there is a strong common desire to reduce and prevent catastrophic wildfires. Developing and implementing appropriate fuels reduction activities has often been contentious and controversial, especially on public lands. Many Sierra communities have efforts underway involving community protection through Firesafe Councils, Resource Conservation Districts and local governments.

Impacts from catastrophic fires are far greater and reach much further than the communities immediately affected. In addition to the obvious losses at the local level, the state is directly impacted by a reduction in water quality, water storage capacity, habitat loss, air quality, carbon sequestration, tourism revenue and funds required to suppress catastrophic fires and restore the land.

Data sources staff will review and analyze from CAL FIRE's Resource and Assessment Program data include but are not limited to:

- Fire Hazard Severity Zones ADOPTED, 11-7-2007, SRA only
- Fire Regime and Condition Class (FRCC)
- Fire Perimeters
- Fire Rotation
- Fire Threat
- Fire: Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Fire Threat

Working Landscapes

Another common theme among Subregions is the concern about long-term viability of working landscapes. Activities including ranching, farming, and timber production are part of the historic economic foundations of the Region as a whole, yet land owners are finding it more difficult to make a living from these activities. Furthermore, open spaces are subject to increasing pressure by development and infrastructure needs. There seems to be a common desire by

policymakers, residents and visitors to retain the rural character and values associated with these working landscapes; however, public policy does not always seem consistent with the desired outcome. Also, population growth and other social pressures create difficult dilemmas for planners and decision-makers throughout the Region.

Data sources to be reviewed and analyzed:

- Department of Conservation, 2004 Statewide Inventory of Williamson Act contracts; and
- Development Projections, University of California, Davis, Information Center for the Environment (not a confirmed data source).

Sustainable Economies

Economic conditions in the Sierra continue to show negative trends, even beyond the current national and state levels. Many Sierra counties' unemployment rates run much higher than the state's average and the median household income is consistently below the state's average. In some areas, the local economies lack diversity and are heavily reliant on tourism and recreation. The service industry jobs are highly vulnerable since it is common for visitor rates and visitor durations to decline during economically slow periods. Furthermore, the service industry historically pays lower wages than other sectors and employers often do not provide benefits. While recreation and tourism will remain a mainstay of local economies, traditional economic activity related to wood products and ranching are expected to continue to decline.

Access to high-speed internet is improving, but many areas of the Region still rely on dial-up access which is too limiting to support most business functions. Communities need modern information technology to attract and retain entrepreneurs that can help develop the local economies and in some cases even create local jobs.

Data sources to be reviewed and analyzed:

- 2008, ESRI, Inc. Business Analyst Demographic Data, Employment Sectors; and
- USDA Agricultural Census.

Growth and Development

The Sierra is one of the fastest growing Regions in California. The population is expected to increase significantly by the year 2050¹. Furthermore, the metropolitan areas within a four hour drive, namely in the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys, are projected to continue to grow at a rapid rate which will

¹ Department of Finance Website: <http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/projections/p-3/>

lead to a greater number of visitor days in the Sierra. As these valley communities attempt to address this continuing growth and its impacts, it is likely to create additional pressure for growth in the Sierra foothills. Ensuring that this growth occurs in a manner that minimizes impacts to the natural resources, addresses fire risk and protects working landscapes will be an important challenge for the Region.

Data sources to be reviewed and analyzed:

- Sierra Business Council, State of the Sierra Report, 2007;
- Sierra Nevada Alliance, Planning for the Future: A Sierra Nevada Land Use Index, 2005;
- California Department of Finance Growth Projections; and
- Development Projections, University of California, Davis, Information Center for the Environment (not a confirmed data source).

Water

Reliable and adequate water supply is critical to the State's economic and environmental vitality. Approximately 65 percent of California's water supply originates in the Sierra Nevada. This water is a major source for the state's agriculture and ranching industries, is the domestic supply for millions of Californians and supports diverse aquatic habitat. Water originating in the Sierra Nevada and utilized for hydroelectric generation accounts for 15 percent of the State's overall electricity production. The State's hydroelectric generation is a critical component for utilities working toward attaining 20 percent renewable energy in the state electricity mix, as required by the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard.

The Sierra serves as the state's principal natural reservoir, storing water in annual snowpack, meadows, and forests. Intact watersheds with hydrologic connectivity between streams act as a sponge retaining the water underground and protecting it from contaminants in the air and retaining its high quality. Healthy meadows have the ability to store and yield significant amounts of water. This is particularly important since the water supply will continue to have higher demand for agricultural and municipal uses. As described below, climate change will have a significant impact on the Region's snowfall and precipitation patterns, as well as increasing the occurrence of catastrophic fire. Furthermore, as future growth occurs in the Region, the potential for deteriorating watershed health exists.

Data sources to be reviewed and analyzed:

- Investing in the California Headwaters, Sierra Nevada Alliance, 2009;
- Water faucet map showing Sierra Nevada as the state's primary source and the primary agriculture and municipal end users; and
- DWR's Draft California State Water Plan, 2009.

Climate Change

A warming climate leads to a decrease in the snowpack in the Sierra Nevada. This snowpack stores much of the state's water during the winter and releases it slowly over the spring and summer months. Less snow results in increased chances of flooding due to changes in precipitation patterns, and less water available to downstream municipalities, wildlife and crops when it is needed most. The shorter wet seasons also leads to increased catastrophic fire and longer and more frequent droughts. The Grinnell survey, UC Berkeley, and other efforts evaluating the range of species in the Sierra Nevada have documented plant and animal range contractions, expansions, and range shifts in elevation, which could re-shape the ecosystems of the Sierra and significantly affect our Region's economy.

The need to reduce greenhouse gases to minimize the impacts of climate change is vitally important to the Sierra Nevada as climate change is disproportionately affecting the Region's resources. The Sierra Region has the potential to contribute as a net benefit in the efforts to minimize climate change impacts. The storing of carbon in the Sierra forests and rangelands is a critical element in these efforts, as is reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from catastrophic fire. Development of additional renewable energy generation including biomass, wind and solar is in various planning stages within and adjacent to the Sierra. A key issue will be the connectivity to existing electrical transmission lines and the placement of future transmission corridors, while protecting significant wildlife corridors and providing benefit to the communities that the lines pass through.

Data sources to be reviewed and analyzed:

- Climate Action Plan for the Sierra Nevada, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, 2009;
- California Climate Change Portal; and
- California Energy Commission.

III. Overview of Proposition 84 Grant Program

Beginning in 2007-08, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy has administered a grant program consistent with Proposition 84 (2006), which allocated \$54 million to the SNC. The funding can only be used for projects consistent with the SNC mission and a strong tie to watershed health. Current limitations in the type of projects that can be funded through Proposition 84 do not allow the SNC to fully address the seven program areas contained in statute.

SNC staff has devoted significant time working with potential grantees in the development of projects. Staff also assists in evaluating applications that are submitted.

Once a project is granted funds, staff is responsible for oversight of project implementation.

The SNC awarded nearly the full \$17 million appropriated to it in 2007/08 for worthy projects throughout the Region. Unfortunately, the State's fiscal woes resulted in all work being frozen on these projects in December 2008. The SNC Board awarded over \$2 million worth of grants in December 2008; however at this time those projects have not been authorized to begin, unless other non-state funding is being used.

At this time, the SNC is not being allowed to authorize new projects and it is unclear when the situation may change.

An analysis of grant applications received (for seven rounds) and grants awarded (for five rounds) is included in each Subregional assessment. Two rounds of applications are still pending review and recommendation. Below is an overall review of the grant program and supporting table.

Key to Table Column Headings

- SI = Site Improvement
- PP = Pre-Project Due Diligence
- PL = Project Planning
- M = Monitoring
- E = Education
- A = Acquisition
- L = Local Government
- S = State Government
- F = Federal Government
- T = Tribal Organization
- NP = Non-Profit

Grant Application Summary

Subregion	Total Grant Apps Received (for 7 Rounds)	By Project Type						By Applicant Type				
		SI	PP	PL	M	E	A	L	S	F	T	NP
North	58	16	19	6	7	6	4	25	3	10	0	20
North Central	79	21	16	8	6	7	21	9	7	0	0	63
Central	110	32	22	13	14	19	10	34	3	3	0	70
South Central	63	22	14	5	7	10	5	31	4	1	0	27
South	64	23	10	7	7	15	2	10	2	13	2	37
East	45	15	7	11	6	5	1	14	2	8	0	21
TOTALS	419	129	88	50	47	62	43	123	21	35	2	238

% of Project Types and Applicant Types		31	21	12	11	15	10	29	5	8	0.4	57
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* does not include Region-wide awards

Grant Award Summary

Subregion	*Total Grants Awarded (for 5 Rounds)	By Project Type						By Applicant Type					% of Applications Awarded from Each Subregion
		SI	PP	PL	M	E	A	L	S	F	T	NP	
North	22	7	9	0	3	1	2	14	0	2	0	6	13
North Central	27	6	9	4	1	4	3	3	2	0	0	22	19
Central	35	10	8	3	4	8	2	12	1	0	0	22	27
South Central	25	6	11	2	2	3	1	13	0	0	0	12	15
South	23	5	6	3	1	8	0	4	0	1	1	17	15
East	21	7	4	5	2	3	0	5	0	5	0	11	11
TOTALS	153	41	47	17	13	27	8	51	3	8	1	90	100
% of Project Types and Applicant Types		27	31	11	8	18	5	33	2	5	1	59	

* does not include Region-wide awards

A total of 419 applications have been submitted to the Conservancy in the course of seven rounds of requests for applications. The Central Subregion has submitted the most applications (110) representing about 27% of all received. The North, North Central, South Central, and South Subregions all share similar volumes of applications submitted, with each area submitting between 13%-19% of all applications. The East Subregion has produced the least number of applications (45) representing 11% of all applications received. Subregional differences in the numbers of applications submitted may be correlated with factors identified in the assessments such as land ownership ratios, organizational capacity, population, and proximity of population centers in relation to SNC jurisdiction.

Private non-profit organizations represent the largest proportion (60%) of applications submitted. The next largest proportion is represented by local governments (26%) followed by federal applicants (8%) and state applicants (5%). Tribal organizations are very clearly under-represented in the ratios of eligible applicants. The high percentage

of non-profit applicants is predictable and reflective of the overall number of registered non-profit organizations operating in the Region. It should be noted that a large number of eligible non-profit organizations that have applied for and received grants operate in the Region are based outside the Region and in some cases incorporated outside of California (Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, Pacific Forest Trust, etc.). Statistics about the number of this type of potential applicant have not yet been gathered, but have been identified for further study.

Local government applicants have been reasonably well represented given the newness of the SNC grants program, but a large percentage of eligible local governments have yet to apply. Eight of the counties included in the SNC Region have their population centers and government offices outside of the SNC boundary, which may affect local government participation in those areas. Federal agencies have been somewhat active, particularly in the North, South and East. Given that the federal agencies are responsible for managing well over half of the area in the SNC Region, there appears to be greater opportunity for projects in the future. SNC outreach to federal applicants has been strong; however the relative newness of state funding availability has had an impact on the number and quality of applications received. The SNC and federal applicants continue to address challenges in satisfying NEPA and CEQA requirements to increase the viability of applications.

State applicants have shown some interest in applying, but are probably not represented at the level they will eventually attain.

Federally recognized tribal applicants are clearly under-represented in both interaction and awarded grants. There are a few tribes that have become eligible applicants as incorporated non-profit organizations. Strategies to interact with, partner with, and invite more applications from tribal organizations are being developed and implemented.

An analysis of grants awarded by type of applicant reveals that proportions of awards to applications are generally aligned. A small advantage is seen in the non-profit applicants and a small disadvantage is seen in the federal and state government applicants. These variations are likely due to issues related to NEPA and CEQA documentation as it relates to the federal agencies. Most non-profit applicants rely on the use of categorical exemptions by the SNC, while state and federal applicants must have the appropriate NEPA and/or CEQA documentation completed at the time of application.

IV. Subregional Differences That Could Affect SNC Policy and Operations

(Note: The discussion below represents a summary of the assessment to date; additional work is being done to further analyze these issues and their effect on SNC).

As the SNC has implemented its Proposition 84 grant program and undertaken other activities, it appears that there are a number of factors which result in Subregional

differences. These differences may help inform decisions of how the SNC conducts itself in the future. The differences manifest themselves in a variety of ways, including the type of projects brought forward and the type and capacity of organizations and agencies proposing projects. For example, the SNC's Competitive Grants program (for larger acquisitions and site improvement projects) has resulted in a far more projects being funded in the Central and North Central Subregions, while other the South and East Subregions have not fared nearly as well.

Land Ownership

The public – private ratio of land ownership varies greatly in each county and Subregion from about 20/80 percent (Calaveras County) to 96/4 percent (Inyo County). These ratio differences have profound effects on land management practices, population growth and land development rates, recreation trends, and patterns and diversity of the local economies. Areas with a higher ratio of private land will inevitably have more projects dealing with acquisition (fee title and conservation easements) and preservation of working landscapes, as the challenges of future growth will be most profound in these areas. Conversely, those areas with a high percentage of public ownership of land will likely see projects more aligned with site improvement and recreation and tourism program areas. It also appears that applicant type is affected by this factor, as areas with a high percentage of private lands seem to have more active non-profits.

For example, the East Subregion (average of the three counties is 4% privately owned) has had only 1 acquisition grant application and over half of the total applications have come from local government. The North Central Subregion by contrast, has had 21 acquisition applications and more than 2/3rds of the total applications have come from non-profit organizations.

Partial Counties (where population, government, media, etc. are centered outside of the Region)

Twelve of the 22 counties in which the Conservancy conducts work have a portion of their boundaries outside of the Conservancy's boundaries. In 8 of these counties, generally just one of five County Supervisors represents the area within the Conservancy boundary. These counties (Shasta, Tehama, Butte, Yuba, Madera, Fresno, Tulare and Kern) have larger populations, greater organizational capacity and local governmental infrastructure located in the Valley portions outside of the SNC boundary. Generally speaking, the issues in the Valley tend to garner far more attention than "upslope" issues and the connection between the Sierra resources and the Valley communities' dependence on them is often lost.

Organizational Capacity

(For purposes of this discussion, the term “capacity” generally refers to the organizational capacity that exists within the area as it relates to carrying out projects consistent with the SNC Mission).

There are a wide array of organizations and agencies throughout the Region that are in a position to undertake activities consistent with the SNC’s mission. Data was collected to compile lists of all eligible organizations operating in each Subregion. This was completed by inventorying all local, state, and federal government entities, federally registered tribal organizations, and incorporated non-profit organizations that appeared to have some obvious nexus with the mission of the SNC. Additional data gathered to assess potential capacity was derived from reviewing applicants who were successful in receiving grants from Propositions 12, 40, and 50 (all very similar in nature and intent to Proposition 84). More research on capacity completed in this assessment is based on data from the short history of SNC’s Proposition 84 grants program.

It is important to recognize that capacity within any of the organizations, communities, counties, Subregions, and the Region as a whole can change rapidly due to a number of external influences. Many of the Subregions in the Sierra are particularly sensitive to outside influences because they lack a diversity of economies. For example, the East Subregion is heavily dependent on tourism and any external impacts that reduce tourism have a severe impact to this portion of the Region and immediately reduce capacity on several levels. Staff has witnessed first-hand the significant impacts felt by many grantees during the recent bond freeze, and is seriously concerned about the amount of time and investment that will be needed to restore capacity in the Region.

There appears to be some correlation between population and capacity. The more heavily populated areas of the Region are also the areas that have been more successful in receiving grants. This may be due to the increased accessibility to communications and travel infrastructure and the elevated awareness of threats associated with intense development pressures. Many of the counties that straddle the SNC boundary may in fact have organizational capacity, but it is focused on issues outside of the Region, where population centers are located.

Many organizations that operate on a national level have been successful in applying for and receiving grants. These organizations appear to have more capacity to apply for grants than some of the regionally based organizations. In most instances however, they are actually partnering with a local entity to provide support and assistance. Data collected to date indicates that interest from these outside organizations is focused in areas where there is strong local capacity. Additional research is being done to query those organizations and assess their interest in other areas of the Sierra.

Lastly, there are likely some very distinct differences in Subregion capacity due to geographic and topographic factors. Many west-slope communities, especially in the

south, are quite isolated and have limited opportunities to build coalitions among themselves. All major transportation routes have east-west orientations and closely follow canyon contours until they connect to a north-south corridor in the valley floor. In contrast to this scenario, the central and northern communities, although spread-out, have several interstate corridors and multiple connecting routes and have more opportunity to build coalitions and combine resources.

Differences in capacity between Subregions may reflect the factors discussed above, along with differing perceptions of need and threat. Individual Subregions tend to show strength in certain types of organizations, while capacity may be lacking in other sectors (i.e. watershed groups, firesafe councils, RCDs, land trusts, etc). Even where all relevant program areas seemed to be represented, capacity for entities to carry-out projects can fluctuate and be challenging.

Proposition 84 “Alignment” Issues

Discussing the topic of Proposition 84 alignment flows nicely from the discussion of capacity and may also explain some of the Subregion differences in distribution of grants. The fundamental purpose of Proposition 84 is to provide funding for the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes, and streams, and their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. The fact that many more of the SNC’s grants have been awarded to the Central and North Central Subregions may be attributed to the high presence of water resources in those areas, and the diversity of ownership. Water resources are not missing from other less successful Subregions, but many of those resources are located on federal land and proposals for work on those resources would need to come from or be supported by federal agencies, which entails more complicated environmental review processes to be complete prior to applying for grants. The east side of the range is located in a rain shadow and has significantly fewer water resources than the west side. The majority of water resources on the east side are also located on federal government or Los Angeles Department of Water and Power lands.

Given the nature of the Sierra Nevada, projects that benefit the health of watersheds are plentiful and many of the SNC seven program areas can easily be addressed. However, program areas relating to recreation and tourism, increased public access to public lands and improving local economies have been more difficult to address under Proposition 84.

Also, the strong preference for “on the ground” Proposition 84 projects may have disparate impacts in various Subregions. Subregions that have planning efforts completed and greater organizational capacity will be in a stronger position to compete for these funds.

Background

At the September 23, 2009 Board meeting SNC staff reported on the progress of the SNC's climate change initiative and the development of a draft Climate Change Action Plan. As reported at that meeting, the draft plan was posted on the SNC Web site and distributed for public comment on September 9, 2009, with comments requested by close of business on October 30, 2009.

Current Status

The SNC received a number of comments from SNC Boardmembers and other interested stakeholders during this period. These comments fall into categories related to:

Breadth of the plan, including emphasized focus on habitat, youth education, adaptation and transit-related impacts of climate change on economic viability of rural communities;

A number of action items were modified in response to these suggestions and 10 action items were added, as well as the following:

- The system indicators being considered by the Board today that relate to success in mitigating and adapting to the current and anticipated effects of climate change were added as additional performance measures for the climate change effort.
- While the original direction by the Board was retained in this first version of the Climate Action Plan, clarification was added as to how changes will be made to broaden the effort to other areas such as habitat and community quality of life.

Structure of the plan, including comments on how the pieces each fit together and how the different organizations inter-relate on activities, as well as clarification of confusing initiatives and terms.

- Some clarification did occur and once again the opportunity for greater modification exists once the Action Team is constituted.

Structure of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team and its future activities, including how and when changes can be made to the plan, its priorities and its various action items; organizational and perspective diversity in membership.

- Additional recommendations related to the full organization of the plan could not be accommodated at this time due to the extensive re-write they would have required. In response to these comments, however, the capacity to change the

plan under the direction of the Climate Action Team, in accordance with the SNC, was emphasized.

Great appreciation is expressed to Placer County and the Sierra Nevada Alliance, whose close review and detailed comments on the plan significantly improved it.

Next Steps

Once a final plan is approved, the SNC anticipates launching the initial implementation steps related to staffing and convening the Sierra Nevada Climate Team. One of the team's first tasks will be to review and prioritize the short-term actions within each strategy and develop a plan for achieving them. Following approval by the Board, the SNC will release an request for proposal (RFP) for Web site development services and will secure the services of a Climate Change Coordinator to begin the first year implementation phase. We anticipate coming back to the Board in December of 2010 with an update on progress made and any changes the Climate Team recommends.

The Action Team will further consider comments received relative to the structure of the plan itself and the potential to expand its focus. It is important to note that in order for the plan to be fully implemented additional resources will need to be identified from outside of the SNC.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board approve The Climate Action Plan of the Sierra Nevada: A Regional Approach to Address Climate Change with any recommended modifications and; It is further recommended that the Board direct staff to take the actions necessary to begin implementing the plan, as adopted, dependent upon securing sufficient staffing and financial resources, including making any necessary non-substantive modifications deemed necessary by staff.

**THE CLIMATE ACTION PLAN OF THE SIERRA NEVADA:
A Regional Approach to Address Climate Change**

November 18, 2009



**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
NATURAL RESOURCES AGENCY
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

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IN COORDINATION WITH

U.S. Forest Service
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The Tahoe Conservancy
www.tahoicons.ca.gov



***A true conservationist is a man who knows that
the world is not given him by his father but borrowed from his children.***
Audubon

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i. Acknowledgements

Just as climate change solutions require the effort of many different parties, so too did the creation of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan. Heartfelt thanks goes to the following individuals and organizations that lent their perspectives and guidance in assisting Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) staff in completing this plan:

Anthony Brunello, Deputy Secretary for Climate Change and Energy, California Natural Resources Agency

Beth Pendleton, Deputy Regional Forester, USDA Forest Service

Mike Chapel, Regional Forester's Representative, USDA Forest Service

Patrick Wright, Executive Officer, California Tahoe Conservancy

ii. Status of Project

The climate change effort of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy began in December 2007 with a symposium evaluating the effects of climate change in the Sierra Nevada. Subsequent actions by the SNC Governing Board, the Secretary of California's Natural Resources Agency, and Governor Schwarzenegger directed the SNC to complete a Climate Action Plan for the SNC and the Sierra Nevada Region. In considering the breadth and focus of such a plan the SNC has explored what a regional climate change plan might be, looking at other regional climate action plans and considering its partners' climate-related actions.

This plan is the initial outcome of those explorations. This plan is not intended to answer all regional climate change questions nor to identify and meet all climate change needs of the Sierra Nevada. Instead, this has been an effort to better understand all relevant effects associated with a changing climate and determine what additional actions can be taken and what resources and information need to be generated to best serve the Sierra Nevada Region in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. The Climate Action Team that will be created to carry out the actions specified herein is envisioned to be made up of representatives from many Sierra Nevada communities and stakeholder organizations, as led by the SNC.

The SNC will have its own internal Climate Change Initiative (CCI) as well. Along with the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan, the SNC Climate Change/Green Team Initiatives (Appendices A and B) determine how the SNC and its partners can best contribute to and enhance existing California climate change infrastructure in order to efficiently and cooperatively meet the needs of the ecosystems and communities of the region it serves.

All climate-related plans will be reviewed by the SNC Board in September 2009, and will be submitted for final approval at the December 2009 board meeting. Activities identified within the plans and any outcomes will be tracked and reported on regularly. As climate change research and programs develop new areas of focus and urgency, the SNC will consider changes to its CCI and the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan (SN CAP) in order to address emerging problems or take advantage of new opportunities to mitigate and/or adapt to the effects of climate change. The SN CAP will be updated not less than every two years, with the first update due in December of 2011. All SN CAP updates will be conducted with public input utilizing the public review processes of the SNC.

iii. How to Participate

As with all SNC activities, the SN CAP was created and will be maintained with input from a broad group of constituencies including federal, tribal, state, and local government officials, stakeholder organizations representing interests in the region, and individual community members and businesses who live and work and have an interest in this area. SNC staff will distribute SN CAP information and updates, including requests for input, through postings on its internal website and by distribution to interested parties through its climate change [listserv](#).

Individuals or organizations who wish to find more information or stay abreast of new developments may visit the SNC website or sign up for the climate change mailing list (listserv). Those who would like to provide comments or input on any of the climate change-related activities of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy may contact the [Climate Change Coordinator](#) or any SNC [staff](#). The Climate Change Coordinator may also be contacted by organizations or individuals wishing to provide ongoing support (staff/funding/technical or other) and input to the SN CAP. Individuals or organizations interested in participating on the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team may also contact the SNC.

iv. Glossary of Key Terms

SN CCI **Sierra Nevada Climate Change Initiative** – the regional climate action initiative, generated from SNC’s 2007 Climate Change Symposium and guided by subsequent SNC board action. This is the umbrella initiative under which all the other components of climate change planning within the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and on behalf of the Sierra Nevada Region are being developed.

-
- SN CAP** **Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan** – regional climate plan initiated by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, intended to provide a Sierra Nevada perspective and further define region-specific needs in assessing, mitigating, and adapting to the current and anticipated effects of climate change on its ecosystems, habitats, species, and natural and man-made resources and communities. This plan is expected to be supported by but exist outside the organizational structure of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.
- SN CCC** **Sierra Nevada Climate Change Coordinator** – the individual responsible for establishing and implementing the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan and the SNC’s internal Climate Change and Green Team Initiatives. The SN CCC has been initially provided and guided by the SNC.
- SN CAT** **Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team** - a working group proposed to be made of up representatives from the SNC’s key partners and other organizations in the region to carry out the goals and objectives of the SN CAP and to assess progress and success and recommend its future focus and actions. The SN CAT is led by the SN CCC.
- SNC CCI** **Sierra Nevada Conservancy Climate Change Initiative** – The SNC’s assessment of its own internal operations in order to determine how it will ensure SNC programs, activities, and priorities are compliant with and supportive of various climate change-related laws, rules, and programs. This effort co-exists with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Green Team Initiative (SNC GTI).
- SNC GTI** **Sierra Nevada Conservancy Green Team Initiative** - The SNC GTI is the SNC’s internal program designed to assess and improve its own operational ecological footprint. The SNC GTI is carried out by SNC staff and management.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Sierra Nevada and Climate Change

The multiple benefits and services provided by the Sierra Nevada to its residents, to California and to the world are often not recognized or easily quantified. The ecosystems of the Sierra Nevada provide 65 percent of California's water supply and they provide habitat for thousands of species – many identified as endangered and rare and some found only in the Sierra. Sierra forests and rangelands provide food, energy, timber, and other renewable resources that can be sustainably produced. They also offer a unique “service” in helping to achieve the State's AB 32¹ greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and reduce warming impacts by storing large amounts of carbon. The area's natural, cultural, and archaeological features teach us about our past, our present, and our future, and they provide needed respite and recreation to citizens from around the world. And the rural communities and historic towns of the Sierra are home to many generations of pioneers and attract new residents and visitors every year.

Water flowing from this mountain range sustains all of Northern Nevada and the majority of California – in particular serving California's vast agricultural industry and urban water needs in addition to its own. California agricultural products, both from the Sierra Nevada Region and throughout California, literally feed the nation and the world. The Sierra snowpack serves as natural water storage and as it melts, fills California's expansive lakes and reservoirs from Spring through late Summer.

But, climate change threatens all of that.



Bark Beetle Damage:
Forest mortality has increased in recent decades as tree-damaging pests expand their range with warmer temperatures

Photos courtesy of [2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy](#)

¹ Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, goal to reduce California's greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

WATER: *A warming climate and the problems that come with it, like decreased snowpack, increased proliferation of invasive species, larger and more severe catastrophic wildfires and changes in and loss of habitat can damage the health of our forests, quality of our watersheds and quantity of our usable water. Loss of snowpack and changes in timing of snow melt is already contributing to less water Statewide – and more droughts, floods, and potentially devastating effects on California’s agricultural industry and urban drinking water supply. Loss of snowpack also threatens the winter sport/recreation/ tourism industry upon which many Sierra Nevada communities depend for economic sustenance.*

ENERGY: *Less water from snowpack has a chilling effect on California’s in-State energy production, as well. According to the August 2009 California Adaptation Plan, “California’s hydroelectricity production relies on predictable water reserves. In 2007, nearly 12 percent of California’s electricity was produced from large hydroelectric power plants, presently the state’s largest source of renewable energy. With snow falling at higher elevations, creating less snowpack, and melting earlier in the year less water is available for this source of power generation when it is most needed, during the warmer summer months. When several dry years create drought conditions, reservoir levels can be reduced to levels lower than those required for hydroelectric power generation.”*



View of Lake Oroville in 2005 (left) and November 2008 (right)
Photos courtesy of [2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy](#)

WILDFIRE: *Reducing the risk of catastrophic fire² is critical in terms of maintaining carbon storage and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from fires, not to mention protecting the natural resources and human health, lives and property put at risk during catastrophic fire episodes. Many forests are choked with overstocked biomass “fuels” – which contribute to conditions that support large, fast-moving and high-intensity wildfires. The urgency of this issue is no better demonstrated than through the devastation of the 2008 Moonlight Fire in Plumas County. According to the Sacramento Bee³ “The Moonlight fire, which burned across the Plumas National Forest and timber industry land north of Quincy, was one of the most environmentally destructive in recent memory. Vast stands of trees exploded into flame like matchsticks, including forest set aside to protect spotted owls. Smoke spread across [Northern California](#) and drifted as far south as Bakersfield. In all, six of 10 acres were burned so badly that in many places few living trees remain. The global climate suffered, too. In two weeks, the fire pumped an estimated 5 million tons of [carbon dioxide](#) into the air, equivalent to the annual emissions of 970,000 vehicles or one coal-fired power plant.” Not only can this type of fire destroy life, habitat and property, create air quality health hazards and destroy carbon storage potential, it can also weaken mature tree growth, and makes trees susceptible to pests like the bark beetle. Fire risk reduction and maintaining healthy resilient forests can include the controlled and sustainable removal of dangerous and damaging levels of biomass⁴. Managed properly this biomass has secondary benefits as well, creating a tremendous opportunity for renewable energy production, providing funding for sustainable forest management and creating jobs in the Sierra’s rural communities.*



The loss of Sierra’s irreplaceable resources may have devastating implications throughout California and beyond, yet within this potential crisis there are many opportunities to create a more resilient, self-sufficient and sustainable Sierra. Many organizations are working to understand climate change and its current and potential impacts on the Sierra as well as

² For these purposes “catastrophic” fire is defined as uncontrolled, uncharacteristic wildfire of a size and duration to have a destructive effect on lives, habitat, property, carbon sequestration and natural landscape.

³ Knudson, Tom. (2008, November 30). Sierra Nevada climate changes feed monster, forest-devouring fires, Sacramento Bee. Retrieved from <http://www.sacbee.com/ourregion/story/1436736-p2.html>

⁴ Controlled and sustainable removal of biomass is defined by specific land management plans and practices whose primary focus is natural resource protection and land/forest health and resilience.

implement win-win, climate-proof solutions to reduce emissions and adapt. Many more individuals and organizations continue to make positive contributions through their long-standing conservation and resource management efforts. Collaborative groups are forming around common goals and building trust and productive working relationships that will benefit the natural health and economic vitality of their communities. Climate change research continues at the State and Federal levels and through academic and non-profit organizations as well. But more can be done on a regional scale to maximize the benefits of all these dispersed efforts and the time and resources being dedicated to these issues. The SN CAP will offer this regional approach and work to integrate, support and enhance existing programs and projects to address the Sierra's unique needs and protect its valuable resources for future generations.

B. Why Climate Change in the Sierra Nevada Should be Addressed Regionally

One of the most significant natural and biologically diverse regions in the world, the Sierra Nevada constitutes about 25% of all of California's land area. It serves as a home to over 600,000 Californians, and provides recreational opportunities for millions of people (nearly 4 million Californians live within 30 minutes of the region). The Sierra Nevada also:

1. Provides 65% of California's most valuable commodity – water – the vast majority of which is used for energy production, residential, agricultural and environmental uses outside of the region (Southern California, Central Valley, and the Bay Area);
2. Supports 212 communities dependent upon natural resources for jobs, recreation, and community character;
3. Supports half of all plant species found in California;
4. Provides habitats for 66% of the bird and mammal species and about 50% of the reptile and amphibian species in California;
5. Is home to more than 400 species of terrestrial vertebrates and in excess of 320 species of aquatic invertebrates (the Region contains more endemic aquatic invertebrates than any other ecological region in the world);
6. Produces from 33% to 50% of the State's annual timber supply; and

7. Sustains a growing tourism industry involving more than 50 million recreation visit days per year;
8. Provides solace and recreational opportunities for all.

California's tourism industry could be hit hard. Due to snowpack loss, California's snow sport sector could lose \$1.4 billion annually by 2050 and 14,500 jobs.

Climate Change Scoping Plan
California Air Resources Board
December 2008

The threat of loss of the resources of the Sierra, many of which cannot be replaced, has devastating implications throughout California and beyond. The potential for climate change impacts to dramatically alter provision of these services and continued existence of the habitat and species of this area is high, and, as emerging research is demonstrating, is increasing each year. Understanding the issues and making thoughtful, effective, and broadly supported changes is not easy in the Sierra. Land use and management planning in this rural region is complicated by the size and ownership of the land. Unresolved conflicts over land management policies and practices has in some instances led to single-issue solutions, which can have unintended negative consequences on the resource and the Sierra community at large. The diversity of interests and benefits that are dependent on the health of the communities and ecosystems of the Sierra is enormous.

It should be noted that many of the communities of the Sierra are rural and not easily accessible. Traditionally these towns have relied on tourism or forest-based industries such as logging and lumber mills for jobs and sustenance. The closure of mills for a variety of reasons has economically devastated the surrounding economies. The potential climate impact on snowpack and recreational water and forestry resources can significantly reduce the tourism and snow sport industries throughout the region. Additional focus on the climate change impacts on the economic viability of these cities and towns of the Sierra is needed, emphasizing the creation of green jobs as a means to make a positive contribution to ecosystem health while buying them time to adapt to climate changes already underway.

Politically, California is an urban oriented state. At the state government level, most legislators and administrators are from urban areas and focus on urban issues. At times, legislation focused on urban issues may not be viewed positively by rural California.

*Regional Council of
Rural Counties
2009*

Furthermore, there is a need to ensure that the rural perspective is understood by political decision-makers in Sacramento and Washington D.C., so that actions they take are sensitive to and protective of the services provided by the ecosystems of the Sierra Nevada. Policy-making and funding decisions tend to be focused on urban centers even when the well-being of urban dwellers is directly tied to the health and services of the forests, oak woodlands, and rangelands of the Sierra. For example, the California water supply debate taking place in Sacramento needs to address the impacts of snowpack loss in the Sierra because the

documented effects of climate change on snowpack will make the Delta and urban Los Angeles water supply/quality challenge that much more difficult and costly. If water is not flowing to the dams down the streams and rivers of the Sierra throughout the year it will not be available to meet the needs of California's Valley, Bay Area and Southland. Decision-makers should be openly discussing this problem as part of the Delta water discussions, and should be considering how to fund and improve natural water storage systems that provide late season runoff and that enhance environmental services at the same time. These natural system improvements are being implemented today – and decision-makers should understand and expand cost effective approaches like “above-the-dam” meadow restoration in dealing with this problem.

Water, endangered and sensitive species, habitat, homes, economic development, tourism, recreation; like the Sierra itself, the services of the area are wide and invaluable, impacting on larger interests than the land area and population it encompasses. These common challenges and issues across the Sierra make a strong case for addressing climate change at the regional level rather than town-by-town or county by county. By working as a region to address climate change, the SN CAP will be able to integrate and coordinate efforts in order to create economies of scale, share resources and expertise and maximize the benefits for the region as a whole.

C. The Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan: A Starting Point

The Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan is one of three efforts being led by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) in responding to the direction of its board

in the development of the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Initiative. This initiative was an outcome of the SNC's 2007 Climate Change Symposium and the subsequent Board direction to create and lead a regional climate action plan effort and to assess the SNC's internal compliance with climate and resource efficiency requirements. In responding to this direction the SNC has created this regional Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan (SN CAP) and its own internal SNC Climate Change and Green Team Initiatives. The latter two plans are attached to the SN CAP as Appendices A and B.

The Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan of 2009 is written and intended to be a dynamic document. This plan is a starting point – a stake in the ground – from which to begin to determine how climate change can best be addressed in such a diverse and complex region. In identifying initial opportunities to reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to current and potential climate impacts and improve the sustainability and economic vibrancy of the Sierra Nevada Region, the SN CAP will:

- Respond to direction received and information gathered through the SNC December 2007 Symposium on Climate Change, the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Initiative, the climate change efforts of the California Natural Resources Agency and its departments and input provided by numerous regional organizations, communities, and individuals;
- Adopt a “bias for action,” and in doing so emphasize achievement of outcomes and reporting of specific objectives;
- Identify funding opportunities and other support for projects that will further the goals and objectives included herein;
- Enable activities that benefit the Sierra Nevada Region by highlighting agreed-upon needs and opportunities, by supporting pilot projects and other start-up efforts that address the climate change challenges of the region, and by seeking out partnerships that will further research efforts and demonstrate emerging emission reduction and climate change impact reduction techniques and technologies;
- Be a “living” document that integrates new relevant information and data as it becomes available;
- Be a self-assessing effort that includes regular effectiveness reports and metrics that measure success;

-
- Establish a repository for information that will track research, reports, trends, and legislation that are relevant to climate change issues in the Sierra Nevada Region and will seek to make that information meaningful and available for use by organizations and communities within the Sierra Nevada Region;
 - Use the best available science in identifying and understanding climate change risks and potential mitigation and adaptation strategies needed within the Region;
 - Disseminate information on relevant topics to interested audiences;
 - Establish and maintain collaborative, transparent and inclusive planning and governance practices to involve all interested stakeholders and to maximize local knowledge and expertise, integrate and coordinate mutual efforts and to effectively consider and incorporate information on local land, environmental and economic needs and issues;
 - Promote awareness and opportunities to educate others on the value of the Sierra Nevada and the impacts of climate change on those values, and
 - Educate SNC staff, partners, and constituents on climate change issues, practices, consequences, and opportunities in order to improve collaboration in the region.

In order to be as effective and efficient as possible the SN CAP will not:

- Seek to supplant the jurisdictional authorities of any organization or community contained within the Sierra Nevada Region; nor
- Seek to “reinvent” the climate change efforts already underway – will instead tap into and support and enhance efforts by others.

D. Intended Audiences

The Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan is intended to provide information, assistance and guidance, as well as enhanced awareness of the climate change-related needs of the Sierra Nevada Region to the following general audiences:

- Federal, state, regional and local government officials;
- Federal, state and private land managers;

- Stakeholder organizations who operate within and represent Sierra Nevada interests; and
- Sierra-based communities including individuals and businesses.

E. Coordination with Federal, Tribal, State, and Regional Programs

The Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan (SN CAP) is focused on the broad climate-related issues and needs of the Sierra Nevada, including the impacts on environmental and economic viability in the region. The SN CAP is not an implementation plan for other efforts, however, it will harmonize with and support the climate change goals of other federal, tribal, state, regional and local public and private programs. The SN CAP will coordinate with other organizations and jurisdictions by working with their representatives to promote strong partnerships in further developing the CAP and in reviewing their programs for shared goals and objectives. The SN CAP will support achievement of mutual goals as identified in Appendix C (Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan Coordination and Integration with Partner Programs and Efforts).

II. PLAN ELEMENTS

The following issue areas, mission, vision, goals, strategies and outcomes of the SN CAP have been developed considering the issues addressed in Section I of this report and the climate change activities being conducted by organizations working within and on behalf of the Sierra Nevada Region.

The key issue areas are summarized and explained first - they represent the focus guidance provided by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Board to the SNC in creating this initial SN CAP. The problems listed in the goals section II.D. are understood to be currently affecting the Region and/or are likely impacts of climate change if no intervening actions are taken. These problems are not intended to be an exhaustive list of climate change impacts – they have been chosen for inclusion here because they represent largely uncontroverted issues identified in recent research and regional climate assessments. The goals of the SN CAP are what we would rather see in the Sierra and are what the SN CAP was created to achieve in identifying and carrying out actions. Strategies, located in section II.E, are specific categories in which to organize actions and were created from the key issue areas in order to address SN CAP goals and produce desired outcomes. SN CAP action items are specific activities to be carried out in order to make progress in addressing regional climate change impacts. And finally, the SN CAP outcomes listed in section II.G describe the

characteristics of the Sierra if the SN CAP is successful in addressing current and potential climate action issues within the region.

These plan elements will be assessed regularly to ensure they continue to represent the highest priority needs, and will be subject to change as appropriate as part of the regular SN CAP review.

A. Key Climate Action Plan Issue Areas

As directed by the Board of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, the initial focus of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan is on the regional issues of fire, forest, water and renewable energy, identifying and targeting ideas or actions for which consensus already exists, and using and leveraging available resources where possible. These issues are discussed below.

Resilient Forest/Fire Risk Reduction: Because climate change and its predicted temperature increases throughout this century are expected to increase the intensity and duration of uncontrolled, catastrophic wildfires in the region, the SN CAP's first resilient forest focus is on reduction of dangerous levels of fire fuels through application of sustainable land management practices. In a related effort, this plan also supports development and promotion of consensus community decision-making models to promote collaborative planning and reduce traditional regional conflict and resistance to changes in forestry land management practices. As these efforts are successful they will provide adaptation benefits by preserving habitat and allowing for natural species migration – an important response to a warming climate's impact on species health and diversity.

The number of large wildfires could increase by 12–53 percent by the end of the century...

The Future is Now
California Climate Change Center
September 2008

The long-term increase in fire occurrence...is substantial, with increases statewide ranging from 58 percent to 128 percent by 2085. Likewise, estimated burned area [will] increase...57 to 169 percent...

Biennial CAT Report
Climate Action Team
March 2009

The SN CAP also considers the impact on forest and rangeland carbon sequestration of wildfires and of rangeland and forestry "projects" developed and registered with organizations such as the Climate Action Reserve and, in

the future, Placer County⁵ The plan also supports additional voluntary land conservation easements and purchases in order to capture the multiple benefits of protecting and enhancing land and resource values and carbon sequestration, further providing contiguous habitat and migration corridors as an adaptation strategy.

Water: In the area of water issues, the SN CAP works toward the goal of protecting and balancing water supply, quality, and ecosystem health needs in all Sierra watersheds. Because one of the most serious impacts of climate change on the provision of water throughout California is the reduction of natural water storage due to the reduction of the great Sierra snowpack, the SN CAP will first look to improve natural water storage systems by supporting the development and promotion of “above-the-dam” water storage. Its first focus is on meadow restoration which is not only cost effective, but also captures the co-benefits of improving ecological health and restoring and extending habitat. Meadow restoration is also an effective adaptation strategy, in that it facilitates species migration in response to a warming climate.

Furthermore, activities supported through the SN CAP to improve forest health and resiliency through land management practices to reduce fire fuel loading will also contribute positively to the quality, quantity, and late season storage of water in the Sierra Nevada.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy will also continue its general efforts to improve water quality and overall ecosystem health by working with local water agencies and other organizations in promoting the development of Integrated Regional Water Management Plans across the region and supporting and participating in the consensus groups undertaking this effort. The SNC and the SN CAP will promote events and create opportunities for urban legislators and policy-makers to visit the watersheds to better understand the importance of the Sierra in the provision of clean, ample water to California’s urban centers and agricultural industry and the nexus between climate change and water/watershed health.

Renewable Energy - Biomass: Closely connected with the fire threat reduction effort, and a potential funding source for increased sustainable land management, is the beneficial use of biomass to create clean, climate-

⁵ Placer County Air Pollution Control District is currently developing a Greenhouse Gas Offset Protocol for Biomass Waste for Energy Projects. This protocol was endorsed by the California Board of Forestry in October 2009. On October 28, 2009 the BOF requested that the California Air Resources Board also endorse the protocol.

friendly, local renewable energy. Efforts in this area include supporting the development of biomass-to-energy as well as biomass-to-fuels projects. The potential economic development benefits of these projects also support the SNC's program goal to "Assist the regional economy" by re-vitalizing communities devastated by the continuing closure of mills throughout the Sierra region. According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, for each megawatt of electricity produced via the collection and use of woody biomass, approximately 4.9 jobs are created.⁶

The SN CAP also supports the development of a region-wide energy "view" – a balanced energy plan for the Sierra Nevada – that can provide an all-inclusive perspective of its "power" potential and lead future efforts to fund and sustainably develop its clean energy. These efforts have the additional statewide benefit of supporting achievement of California's renewable energy portfolio standard and low carbon fuel standard goals, as well.

Renewable Energy – Energy Efficiency: In the area of energy the SN CAP also promotes the development of energy efficiency programs at the local government level. Support is proposed through education and outreach efforts to local governments in the region.

Further supporting the focus of renewable energy development and energy efficiency efforts is the fact that federal and state funding sources have been developed that may be tapped to help fund near-term regional renewable energy and energy conservation projects.

Other Important Issue Areas - Biodiversity/Habitat and Community Quality of Life: The key focus areas of this SN CAP have been directed by the SNC board to address high priority threats and opportunities with great potential for multiple climate and ecosystem benefits. However, while reducing fire/fuel loading and potential catastrophic fire risk, improving watersheds and natural water storage systems, and developing beneficial use of biomass toward forest resiliency and economic/jobs development have important biodiversity/habitat and community quality of life benefits, it is recognized that additional attention can be brought to these issues with potentially significant regional climate-related benefit. The Climate Action Team will consider these and other issue areas as part of its regular reviews and performance reporting responsibilities.

⁶ Morris, G. (1999). [Value of the Benefits of U.S. Biomass Power](#). NREL Report No. SR-570-27541

B. Mission

The mission of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan is to 1) develop a regional community and ecosystem perspective on climate change, 2) avoid single-issue solutions and give priority to multi-benefit, win-win actions designed to address both climate change adaptation and mitigation needs, and 3) pursue broad collaborative decision-making processes focused on holistic (system-wide) solutions that address all aspects of climate change impacts including those affecting the environmental, economic, and cultural resources of the Sierra Nevada Region.

C. Vision

The ecosystems and communities of the Sierra Nevada are healthy and resilient to the impacts of climate change. Communities of the Sierra Nevada understand problems associated with climate change and the responsibilities and opportunities they have to participate in the solutions, protect the environment and vital ecosystem services, and meet their legal responsibilities. Sierra Nevada communities, businesses, and inhabitants are aware of and have access to opportunities to fund climate change mitigation and adaptation measures that address the value and support the health and vibrancy of the Sierra Nevada.

D. Goals

Climate change impacts of concern in the Sierra Nevada include:

- Warmer temperatures creating less snowpack and earlier melt;
- Increased flooding and drought conditions;
- Reduction of and damage to the State's water quality and supply;
- Weakening of forest health and greater susceptibility to pest infestation and drought;
- Increase in catastrophic wildfires and loss of carbon sequestration;
- Warmer temperatures affecting habitat and species migration/survival; and
- Economic devastation to remote and disadvantaged rural communities due to loss of businesses and jobs

The region also lacks region-specific climate information on which to base development of specific problem identification and resolution tactics.

The goals of the SN CAP are intended to reverse the potential outcome of these impacts, should they be fully realized. These goals are expected to grow and change over time, depending on many variables. The initial goals of the CAP are:

1. Healthy, resilient forests;
2. Exceptional, sustainable water resources;
3. Thriving local economies;
4. Long term conservation values;
5. Broad political awareness of the value and statewide impacts of the services provided by the Sierra Nevada and the needs of the region in order to retain those services;
6. Robust understandable Sierra-based climate change research and data bases; and
7. Funding in support of the SN CAP goals and objectives.

The Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan is being developed as recommended by the 9/8/08 Eubanks report entitled [Sierra Nevada Climate Change: Helping Address Climate Change Effects in the Sierra Nevada Region](#) (Appendix D). As recommended, the guiding principles developed as part of this plan will be applied to the actions proposed within the SN CAP. They are:

1. Build Relationships; avoid duplication of efforts; coordinate and share existing information; pursue funding options; maintain good communication with stakeholders
2. Retain credibility to attract new partners and to create and retain high value of information provided
3. Adopt a bias for action; focus on high benefit/low cost actions first that can be implemented rapidly and effectively
4. Keep equal focus on mitigation and adaptation

E. Strategies

Because more regional needs exist in these issue areas than resources are available to address them the SN CAP has focused on specific, high urgency, multi-benefit actions in each of these areas of concern in establishing the following strategies:

1. Promoting land management practices that contribute to forest health, resilience, and the reduction of catastrophic wildfire threats;
2. Increasing “above-the-dam,” basin-wide natural water storage systems such as meadow restoration and forest treatments for storage and groundwater recharge;

3. Securing carbon sequestration⁷ by forests, woodlands, and working landscapes;
4. Promoting clean and sustainable energy production (including but not limited to biomass to energy and biomass to fuel production, solar, wind, geothermal, etc.) and energy efficiency program development throughout the region
5. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions (and as appropriate, other toxic air emissions) region-wide through support for local government efficiency and land use efforts;
6. Educating decision- and policy-makers, as well as community members on the services provided by the Sierra Nevada Region and the potential impacts to the region and the State if those services are lost due to climate change;
7. Promoting continued development of region-specific climate research; and
8. Pursuing and promoting funding sources to achieve the goals and objectives of the SN CAP.

Action items to be conducted as part of these strategies are noted in Section F. below. The SN CAP has also been created to integrate with and enhance the efforts of its partners working for and living in the Sierra Nevada Region. The SN CAP has identified partner climate-related programs, as they are currently known, and has identified how it may integrate with them in Appendix C. One of the first tasks of the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Coordinator and Climate Action Team will be to coordinate with these partner organizations to validate these actions and mutually agree upon priorities.

It should be noted that these strategies and their specific action items do not strictly define the priorities of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team in conducting the business of the SN CAP. They are identified as a starting point. Assuming resources are provided in support of this plan many of the actions are expected to be initiated and completed within the first 12 months of implementation. In all cases it is anticipated that all strategies and actions will be reviewed for continued priority as part of the SN CAP Performance Report.

⁷ Carbon sequestration is an important element in meeting the goals of AB 32, however, pursuit of carbon sequestration through the SN CAP will be balanced with meeting the broad goals of forest and rangeland health and resilience, which should in turn secure and enhance existing carbon stores.

F. Specific Action Items by Strategy

In consideration of the noted climate change impacts of concern in the Sierra Nevada and in support of its eight strategies, the SN CAP has identified a number of action items to be carried out. These action items leverage and contribute to programs and projects undertaken by partner organizations, address SN CAP strategies, and adhere to the direction provided by the SNC Board. These action items each address one or more of the SNC focus areas as identified in the 9/8/08 Eubanks Climate Change Initiative report and subsequent Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Board guidance. Specifically, the SNC was directed to establish regional climate-related action in four “focus areas” of expertise: 1) to support demonstration and/or model projects; 2) to create a repository of web-based information, 3) to educate others; and 4) and to convene experts in the field. The action items as listed below have been organized by strategy and timeframe.

Of the forty-four actions presented below four have been completed by the SNC and nine are currently underway. The capacity to carry out at least fourteen of the actions will be dependent upon active partner participation and support. The SNC will coordinate with the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team (see Section III.B.) to identify the participants and the final priorities and timeframes associated with these and other actions identified and proposed over time. In all cases the SN CAT will work with local jurisdictions including city and county governments, water districts, and various non-profit organizations to understand their activities and capitalize on current projects and options.

1) Promoting land management practices that contribute to forest health, resiliency and the reduction of catastrophic wildfire threats

Short Term (1-12 months)

- a. Promote partnership strategies such as the Amador/Calaveras Consensus as a model process addressing land management practices that achieve multiple benefits, emphasizing the reduction of catastrophic wildfire threats to and loss of natural habitat stored carbon to local, state, regional and federal leaders and organizations (Wildfire)
- b. Focus the 2009 SNC Symposium on Fire/Carbon Sequestration/Land Management through models of collaborative policy-making (Wildfire)

- c. Work with the USFS to explore the use of stewardship contracting as a self-sustaining means for long term fire fuel management, forest management, habitat protection and beneficial biomass utilization. Where possible, identify and document demonstration sites to test the functionality of stewardship contracting (Wildfire, Carbon, Water, Energy, Education)

2) Addressing water quality and supply; increasing “above-the-dam,” basin-wide natural water storage systems for storage and groundwater recharge

Short Term (1-12 months)

- a. Identify existing meadow restoration demonstration and model projects; capture and/or quantify benefits of the projects (Water)
- b. Promote existing watershed projects to local, state, regional and federal leaders and organizations (Water)
- c. Annually conduct the Great Sierra River Clean Up and other projects to promote watershed supply and quality improvement and awareness (Water)

....the Sierra Nevada snowpack has been melting earlier in the year than it did in the past...this trend will likely continue and accelerate in the future. Given the importance of high-resolution streamflow predictions for state water supply and reservoir management purposes, continued research on the California Sierra Nevada snowpack, a significant source of warm –season streamflow, is critical to understanding the state’s future water supply.

Observed Changes in the Sierra Nevada Snowpack: Potential Causes and Concerns
California Climate Change Center
March 2009

Mid Term (13-24 months)

- d. Work with SNC to consider water storage and management in the Sierra as a future Symposium topic; assist SNC in development of the focus, content, and speakers for the symposium (Water)
- e. Determine on a preliminary basis if particular management regimes in forests could significantly increase natural upstream water storage for

the economic benefit of downstream water users and be particularly valuable in the context of climate change.

- f. Work with federal partners (e.g., USFS, NPS, USGS) and existing public-private consortia groups such as the Feather River Coordinated Resource Management Group to identify and initiate meadow restoration and other “above-the-dam” water storage demonstration projects on public and private lands (Water)
- g. Work with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Sierra Nevada Meadow Restoration Initiative to identify and/or quantify the water supply, quality and habitat benefits of meadow restoration projects (Water/Research)

3) Securing carbon sequestration by forests, woodlands, and working landscapes

Short Term (1-12 months)

- a. Promote efforts to understand and account for carbon sequestration and impacts of climate change, catastrophic wildfire, and land management practices to total carbon secured within forests, woodlands and working landscapes (Carbon, Wildfire, Water, Energy, Local Government)

Mid Term (13-24 months)

- b. Work with partners to identify and support private landowner interest in developing and submitting projects for compliance with various applicable, validated protocols (through such organizations as the Climate Reserve, Placer County, etc.) to quantify and protect carbon sequestration on their lands (Carbon)

4) Promoting clean and sustainable energy production (including but not limited to biomass-to-energy and biomass-to-fuel production) and energy efficiency program development throughout the region

Short Term (1-12 months)

- a. Create a region-wide model Energy Management and Production Plan for the Sierra Nevada (see Appendix E, Sample Strategy X); (Energy)

-
- b. Convene an energy investors group to understand biomass to energy and biomass to fuels project development needs and issues (Energy, Local Government)
 - c. Work with the Board of Forestry's Interagency Forest Working Group to represent the Sierra perspective on biomass development;
 - d. assist the IFWG with their landowner incentives and public education initiatives (Energy)
 - e. Track and promote the efforts of organizations like Placer County and the Amador/Calaveras Consensus in their beneficial management of biomass materials toward forest health, clean energy production, and economic development (Energy)
 - f. Track and promote the benefits of the Alder Springs Mendocino Project (USFS) to further carbon/energy/wildfire objectives (Wildfire, Carbon, Energy)
 - g. Track and promote BLM Sierra-based energy activities and educational efforts (Energy, Education)

Mid Term (13-24 months)

- h. Work with partners such as the Interagency Forest Working Group, the California Energy Commission, and the California Biomass Collaborative to recognize and develop clean and sustainable bio-energy, forestry, Sierra Nevada-based research and model projects (Energy)
- i. Work with the CEC and PUC on the upcoming public goods charge process to consider including a source of funding for biomass energy development in the Sierra Nevada Region of a as a potential (Energy)

5) Reducing greenhouse gas emissions region-wide through support for local government efficiency and land use efforts

Short Term (1-12 months)

- a. Include "best practice" climate/sustainability documents that local governments can access as model plans (see Appendix F, including

but not limited to [ARB's Local Government Toolkit](#), [CAPCOA's Model Policies for GHG in General Plans](#), various other jurisdictions' plans) in all Sierra Nevada Conservancy community outreach efforts (Local Government)

- b. Work with public-private partners (e.g. ARB, Energy Commission, Regional Council of Rural Counties, the Sierra Nevada Alliance, etc.) to develop and schedule Sierra/rural-specific educational seminars with local government representatives (at least one in each of the SNC's 6 regions) to present information on climate change impacts on their local landscape and economy, how general planning efforts can help them address (mitigate and adapt to) these impacts, the importance of "smart growth" development and land use planning in these efforts, model efforts and organizational resources to help them get started and know where they are going, and funding and recognition opportunities for energy efficient communities (Local Government, Education)
- c. Share information and the lessons learned of local utilities developing and implementing energy efficiency programs (Local Government, Energy, Education)

Mid Term (13-24 months)

- d. Identify one or more representative rural Sierra communities to assess their "Climate Change-Readiness," document their status, and build a model educational plan (what they have done so far, what they need to know and do, where to get the information, how to get started with creating a local climate action plan); access information from the evolving implementation of SB 375 in communities outside the Region, and efforts carried out by organizations such as TRPA/South Lake Tahoe within the region for "lessons learned" and best practice ideas in this effort (Local Government)
- e. Review existing research and work with local governments and communities to identify viable and appropriate public transit strategies for remote rural communities that address the economic impacts of climate change and opportunities for reducing the community's carbon footprint, and; communicate those findings to local governments and applicable regional organizations for possible action (Local Government, Energy, Education)

6) Educating decision- and policy-makers, as well as community members on the services provided by the Sierra Nevada Region and its potential climate-related benefits and losses

Short Term (1-12 months)

- a. Develop the Sierra Nevada Climate Change website in order to coordinate public access to activities and materials created from the SN CAP, including but not limited to:
- Documenting the establishment of the SN CAP, including all component parts (i.e., the original CAP and all subsequent updates and performance reports), and including sections on news and events related to climate change in the Sierra Nevada, listing of organizations addressing or impacting Sierra-related climate change mitigation, adaptation, and carbon-market development, and current climate change-related activities of the SNC and its public and private partners (All)
 - Linking to other organization's educational components for different audiences (e.g. [carbon calculator](#), [curricula on climate change for teachers](#); [kid's resources](#), etc.) (All)
 - Creating a "Climate Change and the Sierra Nevada" speakers' bureau, identifying individuals and their area of expertise and including an outreach and promotion component encouraging local communities to invite speakers to their events (All)
 - Listing, annotating and explaining the latest key research so that legislators, organizations, and community members can easily understand the impacts and track and highlight new and emerging research; archive existing research (All)
 - Establishing a section on natural resource values including the latest research dedicated to demonstrating modeling on the climate change impact to various values (All)
 - Identifying and promoting various climate and efficiency related awards programs such as the [Cool California Small Business Award Program](#) in order to further the recognition and achievements of efforts in the Sierra Nevada Region (Local Government)

- Creating a Funding Sources section that highlights/lists and describes funding sources for climate related efforts, including notation of summary sites such as the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency [DSIRE](#), the SNC's [Funding Sources and Incentives](#) page, and the California Energy Commission's [funding opportunity summary page](#) (All)
 - Including an outreach mechanism to notify interested parties of all funding opportunities (All)
- b. Invite state and local policy-makers to participate in on-the-ground tour opportunities to educate them on the need to take action to protect the communities of the Sierra. Include projects such as the Placer County Biomass Project and the Amador/Calaveras Consensus as models of project development and community engagement in positively addressing traditional conflicts while creating multiple environmental and community benefits. Link the watershed/s that serve them to their local communities and needs (All)
- c. Invite urban legislators and decision-makers to the annual Great Sierra River Clean Up to participate and educate them on the urgency of protecting Sierra watersheds and agricultural water supply (Water)
- 
- d. Post on the SN CAP website model project tour information (see below) in outreach and educational efforts for the general community and for legislators, policy-makers, and other decision-makers (Wildfire, Water, Energy, Local Government)

Mid Term (13-24 months)

- e. As information and efforts are developed, additional information in the following areas should also be included in the SN CAP Website:
- Performance/cost data based on the Placer County Biomass Project (Energy)
 - The Southern Sierra Consortia clearinghouse information (hosting their 2-year pilot project) (Carbon)

-
- The activities and findings of the Climate Change-Readiness project (see 5.c. above) (Local Government)
 - Existing and developing demonstration and model water projects, including meadow restoration efforts and outcomes (Water)
 - Carbon sequestration information developed by partners to promote the development of model policies and projects (Carbon)
 - Model Project Video tours (see 6.g. below) (All)
- f. Identify model Sierra Nevada projects for physical and virtual (video) tour development (including but not limited to the Amador/Calaveras Consensus, [Placer County Biomass Project](#), the [Hayfork Project](#), and the [White Mountain Stewardship Project](#)); establish a project tour “list” that highlights services provided and actual and potential ecosystem, community and economic losses addressed and opportunities gained through these projects; utilize this information to establish tours for legislators and others and to educate decision-makers on the benefits of these types of projects (Wildfire, Water, Energy, Local Government)
- g. Develop video resources including virtual project “tours” (as described above) and discussion pieces aimed at “Changing the Dialogue” to move historic land management and financial support conflict to productive action; video should include the benefits of addressing climate and wildfire threats while creating new regional jobs, providing for clean local energy, and attracting new industries to the region; video should also represent many different perspectives in the analysis of the problems and recommendations for resolution (All)

7) Promoting continued development of region-specific climate research

Short Term (1-12 months)

- a. Work with research organizations such as the USFS, PSW, CIRMOUNT, the Southern Sierra Consortia and CEC and with local water agencies and non-profits to identify existing research and model projects which quantify the multiple benefits of “above-the-dam” water storage systems such as meadow restoration including costs and environmental advantages relative to that of building water storage in the form of dams and reservoirs; post this information on the SN CAP

website and distribute this information to policy and decision-makers (Water)

Mid Term (13-24 months)

- b. Work with research organizations such as USFS' Pacific Southwest Research Station (PSW) and WESTCARB to identify carbon storage within various regional landscapes; use that information to support recommendations to utilize biomass materials in a manner that reduces catastrophic wildfire threats and benefits local ecosystems and economies while maintaining terrestrial carbon sequestration (Wildfire)
- c. Work with research organizations in assessing and quantifying the climate change benefits of various conservation practices, developing measurement methodologies or tools (which could include but are not limited to "carbon calculators") that would help project proponents to determine the relative climate benefits of their efforts (see Appendix E, Sample Strategy XX) (All)
- d. Work with research organizations such as the USFS' PSW, CIRMOUNT, and others to develop a white paper defining the climate-related research gaps for the Sierra Nevada Region (survey all partners as a basis for this proposal); engage the CEC Pier program, the USFS and/or UC system to conduct this research (All)

8) Pursuing and promoting funding sources to support community action and achieve the goals and objectives of the SN CAP

Short Term (1-12 months)

- a. Immediately work with CEC on possible ARRA EECBG funding available to support the SN CAP (All)

- b. Work with CEC to establish outreach specific to local rural governments in the Sierra on how to build projects and access their funds (All)
- c. Develop SNC grant project selection criteria that takes into consideration the climate change impacts and benefits of proposed projects (All)
- d. Establish proactive climate-focused database funding search process; post on SN CAP Website; notify eligible entities of opportunities (All)
- e. Work with the IFWG to identify appropriate and effective landowner incentives to implement sustainable land and expanded conservation practices (Wildfire, Water, Energy, Carbon)

...financial incentives and cost-share programs with government agencies encourage farmers and ranchers to implement more conservation practices. Many farmers and ranchers choose to implement these practices without the help of government agencies. However, those that do partner with agencies express willingness and desire to do more, if they can find the additional financial support they need to implement those programs.

Commitment to Conservation
 California Farm Bureau
 Federation
 January 2002

Mid Term (13-24 months)

- f. Research the broad applicability of unique and emerging funding opportunities such as [Cuyamuca State Park](#) (reforestation) and identify other public/private partnerships with funding opportunities; discuss findings with State entities in order to broaden funding base for forest and rangeland conservation, reforestation (wildfire restoration), and adaptive land management (Wildfire, Carbon, Water)
- g. Document the carbon trading funding benefits of registered forest projects' participation in carbon markets through case study development and publication to the SN CAP Website (Wildfire, Carbon)

G. Outcomes

The outcomes listed below describe the characteristics of the Sierra if the SN CAP is successful in addressing current and potential climate action issues within the region. These are the conditions that are desirable to achieve the goals set forth in section II.D, above.

1. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy has developed and maintains an informative, science-based Climate Change Web Portal that connects the communities and citizens of the Sierra Nevada and the state with important, understandable, up-to-date information, assisting them in taking action to reduce and combat the effects of climate change on their environmental and economic wellbeing and their day-to-day life.
2. Collaborative planning projects have been organized throughout the Sierra Nevada Region (in the model of the Amador/Calaveras Consensus, the Northern Sierra Partnership, et. al.) to effectively address historic land, environmental, and business needs and issues.
3. Federal, state, and private land managers within the Sierra Nevada apply fire fuels management practices that maximize forest health and resiliency while sustaining forest-based carbon sequestration.
4. All Sierra forests (public and private) have been treated to remove dangerous fire fuels and are operating under integrated and connected fire management plans.
5. Registered forests and landscapes exist within the Sierra Nevada that comply with forestry protocols, protecting the natural values of the land and qualifying for restoration and maintenance funding through participation in carbon credit markets.
6. Biomass energy projects have been initiated in the Sierra Nevada Region, reducing the cost of removing fire fuels while creating local jobs and contributing toward meeting the goals of the [California Renewable Portfolio Standard](#) and the [Low Carbon Fuel Standard](#).
7. Counties and cities within the Sierra Nevada are aware of and are using smart growth and energy efficiency planning tools available (including but not limited to the SB 375 Local Government [Toolkit](#) and the Sierra Nevada Alliance's [Climate Change Toolkit](#)) that can help them take local action to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in order to mitigate future impacts of climate change.
8. Climate Change educational materials and regional outreach plans have been completed to ensure the communities of the Sierra Nevada have the information they need to take effective mitigation and adaptation actions and to capitalize on opportunities for funding and economic development.

H. Resources and Accountability

Many of the actions proposed by the SN CAP are ambitious considering that to this point this is a voluntary effort and no significant resources have been identified for staffing or other financial support. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), in its Climate Change Initiative presented in Appendix A of this Plan, proposes to lead the SN CAP implementation effort by providing funding for the first year for a dedicated Climate Change Coordinator, additional funding of up to \$20,000 for the development and publication of the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Website and additional minor and in-kind funding and support for publication materials development and office and related logistical support. The SN CAP further proposes that additional staff resources for first year implementation be provided by its partner organizations, and that any activities proposed outside of what the SNC can reasonably do with its current staff be dependent upon receiving that level of support and collaboration. Assuming necessary support is provided, it is anticipated that all action items contained within this plan can be completed by the end of calendar year 2011.

In order to ensure accountability the SN CAP proposes regular reviews and performance reports on climate action measures and outcomes. The SN CAP Performance Report will include metrics that measure specific outcomes of its efforts. Part of the first year actions of the SN CAP implementation team will be to help the SNC determine how to capture and report performance data.

The draft Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan also anticipates that the focus of its efforts may change over time. The plan recognizes that this is a starting point - that research, policy, and regulatory programs in this area are rapidly evolving. For this reason, in order to ensure the Climate Action Plan's perspective continues to address the most relevant research findings and policy guidelines, it is proposed that a full plan review be completed approximately every two years. The Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team and/or the Sierra Nevada Conservancy may propose to make changes to this plan more frequently, as they are needed.

I. Public Participation and Plan Changes

All action associated with development and implementation of the SN CAP is considered public and will be posted on the Sierra Nevada Climate Change website. Once the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team (SN CAT) has been

convened SN CAP action items and their priorities may be adjusted. Any significant adjustments will be identified by the SN CAT, with concurrence of SNC staff and Board. In this case notification of proposed changes and public input would be pursued in advance of significant changes being made, as noted below.

The full plan review will be submitted to the SNC Board for consideration and approval. Significant changes to the SN CAP will follow a public notification and participation process by posting proposed changes and an invitation to comment to the public Sierra Nevada Climate Change web page and by sending a notification out to all participants of the SNC climate change listserv. Minor clarification and order changes may be made without public review but require SNC review and approval.

J. Regular Review and Performance Reporting

A performance review of the activities carried out under of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan will be conducted in regularly to determine the effectiveness of the SN CAP efforts. It is recommended that this review be conducted early in the calendar year so that changes may be reviewed and coincide with State budgeting processes. The SN CAP Performance Report will include metrics that measure specific outcomes, to the extent possible, including but not limited to:

1. Funding dollars pursued and applied to climate-related activities in the region,
2. Number of Sierra Nevada projects annually registered with various applicable, validated protocols (through such organizations as the Climate Reserve, Placer County, etc.)
3. Number of Sierra Nevada cities, towns, and communities with energy, efficiency/sustainability and climate action plans in place or under development,
4. Acres treated and tons of biomass removed from the Sierra Nevada,
5. Kilowatt-hours generated through clean energy projects in the region, and, as developed, gallons of fuel produced,
6. Greenhouse gas emissions avoided through SN CAP-related efforts, and

7. Jobs created and industries attracted to the region as part of the climate plan.

III. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The staffing and resource needs to carry out the actions within this plan can be significant. No single organization has all of the expertise, jurisdictional authority, or staffing levels necessary to carry out these actions alone. Furthermore, coordination and collaboration are called for from across the partner organizations and stakeholders for effective long-term regional solutions and outcomes to be achieved.

In order to most efficiently capture these perspectives and utilize existing talents and resources while distributing the responsibilities reasonably and maintaining maximum flexibility, the SN CAP proposes a year-by-year resource plan. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy will provide one paid staff person, the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Coordinator (SN CCC), and in-kind physical support for the first year; state, federal, and stakeholder partners in the region will be asked to provide part time staffing or other resources as identified in the staffing strategy below. Long-term independent funding for staffing and expenses will be pursued by the SN CCC, supported by the SNC, as sources are identified.

This short term approach allows the plan to get off the ground immediately without having to create long term resource commitments and mechanisms. It also allows each contributing organization to work within its means while supporting mutual climate goals and objectives, building collaboration and a coalition approach needed to make a regional climate impact.

It is anticipated that at the end of the first 12 months of operation the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team (SN CAT) will report successes, re-assess goals and objectives, and recommend how resources should be provided in the second and subsequent years. At a minimum first-year activities of the SN CAT should be to complete and populate the Sierra Nevada Climate Change web page, to inform Sierra Nevada communities of available funding that can reduce and address regional and local climate impacts, to create action strategies in the areas of a regional energy plan and conservation action climate benefits assessment, to assess and provide a layman's explanation of the scope and impact of regional climate-related research findings, to provide climate-related educational materials for presentation to local groups and community

organizations, to assist in development of the next SNC Symposium, and to prioritize and provide a specific timeline for all additional SN CAP activities.

A. Funding and Staffing Resources

It is proposed that the SN CAP procure funding and staffing resources for its first (and perhaps subsequent) year(s) in the following manner:

- The SNC will provide one (1) half- to full-time staff person, the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Coordinator (SN CCC), to oversee and guide the team in its first year implementation efforts, beginning January 2010 and continuing through December 2010.
- The SNC will provide office, supplies, and equipment resources in support of the SN CAP at its Auburn office, beginning January 2010 and continuing through December 2010.
- The SNC will provide funding for professional services, including technical support for the development of a SN Climate Change Website and services such as graphics and printing. Funding will be provided in fiscal year 2009-10.
- Climate partners will be requested to provide representatives and/or funding for staffing resources to participate on the SN CAT, per the staffing strategy defined below.
- The SNC and its climate partners will pursue additional monetary and staffing resources on behalf of this effort through private and federal grants and other funding mechanisms, as identified. The Funding and Resource Coordinator for the SNC will work with the Climate Change Coordinator to provide assistance in proactively identifying funding opportunities. The SNC and SN CAT will notify local governments, tribal organizations, and other qualified entities of funding opportunities for which they qualify that support the goals and projects of the SN CAP.

B. Staffing Strategy

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy will lead the SN CAP implementation effort and provide guidance to a Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team (SN CAT) for the first implementation year, through December 2010. The SN CAT is a working group and is proposed to be made of up representatives from the SNC's key partners and other organizations in the region. Membership on

the SN CAT is proposed to be an initial commitment of one year (12 months). With the exception of the SN CCC noted above, no additional funding is being provided for SN CAT membership (although organizations may provide funding for their representatives). Members should have some connection/experience in the Sierra Nevada Region; final membership should represent all areas of the region. Activities to be carried out by the SN CAT will be guided by the SN CAP and the SN Climate Change Coordinator. To the degree possible, a broad array of member expertise is recommended, including but not limited to:

- Research
- Natural resources/environmental studies
- Wild Fire
- Forestry/Woodland/Agricultural Land Management
- Forestry/wood products
- Spatial programming
- Architecture/energy efficiency
- Environmental engineering/biomass energy production
- Written communications
- Environmental non-profit
- Renewable energy production
- Regulatory government/natural resources/climate change
- Fundraising/grant writing
- Information Technology Services
- Climate change/greenhouse gas/carbon sequestration
- Land use

To the degree possible, membership on the SN CAT should represent a variety of interests and regional perspectives, including but not limited to:

- Members of the public
- State/federal/regional/local agencies
- Farmers and ranchers
- Environmental non-profit and environmental justice organizations
- Tribes
- Public health officials
- Land use planners
- Local elected officials
- Water agencies
- Youth and teachers

A minimum of 10 team members will be sought to carry out the first year goals and objectives of the SN CAP. Initially the SNC will contact organizations to pursue diverse membership on the SN CAT. Once established the SN CAT will pursue expansion membership in order to keep resources sufficient to carry out the action items of the SN CAP. Time commitment is anticipated to be approximately 8-10 hours per week per person (which may include current time being spent on regional climate-related activities and programs). Partner organizations with climate change programs or projects could encompass participation on the SN CAT within existing dedicated resources within the individual's own organization. The SN CAP does not have a source of compensation for these services at this time.

Another option for SN CAP support would be for partner organizations to choose one or more specific projects to carry out and/or support, working with the SN CAT and the SN Climate Change Coordinator.

C. Technical Support (Website)

There is an immediate need for technical support for the development of the Sierra Nevada Climate Change website. Finding and providing this support will be one of the first tasks of the SN CAT. These activities will include identifying possible information technology resources available within its partner organizations for possible in-kind services. Sierra Nevada Region partners with expertise and information technology server capacity will be solicited for website development, hosting and technical support. The SNC will provide funding for website development services during FY 2009-10. Until the website is completed the SNC will use its existing climate change web page as a repository and access vehicle for information developed as part of the SN CAP.

IV. CONCLUSION

The inter-connectedness of water, forest, fire, habitat, species, human health and well being, land management practices and policies, economic vitality, and climate is the reason for the existence of this regional climate action plan. Actions that protect and ensure sustainability of species, ecosystems, and their services are essential – and those actions cannot stop at a landowner boundary or a county line, or a public or private interest. The very nature of the global damage from greenhouse gas emissions and global benefits of carbon sequestration – i.e., what happens here can affect systems' health and resilience

elsewhere – demands a coordinated effort to address the total effects of regional actions and to work together to create processes that appropriately value multiple priorities and needs. This plan presents measures and actions that help the region and the organizations that serve the region to work toward solutions. This plan identifies tools and opportunities to help the communities of the Sierra Nevada continue to create a vibrant and healthy Sierra economy and environment that addresses its own impacts and helps its various occupants and landscapes adapt to certain change.

Addressing climate change on a regional level in such a sensitive and diverse geographical area is a huge undertaking. The problems are further exacerbated by the diversity of interests that operate within and on behalf of the Sierra Nevada – interests that don't all agree on the cause, duration or even the outcomes of recent warming trends. This plan does not focus on the cause of the change being experienced in the Sierra. Instead, it recognizes the measured dramatic changes that have been recorded and the profound impacts on the natural systems of the Sierra should those trends continue, unabated, into the future. This plan emphasizes the need for awareness, communication and collaborative action in order to protect the irreplaceable natural, cultural, and community resources of the Sierra Nevada. Its outcome and the future health of California's Sierra Nevada rely upon developing partnerships that build trust across the landscape and a working understanding of the broad and varied perspectives of the people and organizations of the Sierra.

V. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Climate Change Initiative

I. Background

The Sierra Nevada Climate Change Initiative was created as an outcome of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's 2007 Climate Change Symposium. As directed by their board and assisted by Steve Eubanks, former Supervisor of the Tahoe National Forest, the SNC solicited input from a broad array of organizations and individuals in an effort to recognize the Sierra Nevada's important contributions and to take the actions necessary to help mitigate and adapt to changing conditions. With the perspective of nearly 300 respondents it was determined that the region needs a cohesive, strategic approach, supported by key stakeholders, which would:

- Reduce the effects of climate change through carbon sequestration in Sierran forests;
- Reduce the risk of wildfire through successful application of sustainable forest management practices on both public and private lands;
- Reduce localized greenhouse gas emissions from Sierra residents and businesses; and
- Support the development of sustainable alternative energy production in the Region.

Potential actions that were recommended for consideration included:

1. Identify, encourage and support projects, including research and demonstration projects, designed to address climate change in the Sierra;
2. Establish a web-based information center for attracting and sharing information specific to Sierra Nevada climate change issues among broad-based networks;
3. Provide education and unbiased advocacy for actions within the Sierra Nevada Region and the importance of investment in the Region; and
4. Serve as a convener to bring together researchers, practitioners, educators, government representatives and the public to discuss and learn more about climate change and how people and resources in the Sierra can contribute to the mitigation and adaptation effort.

From these efforts the SNC was tasked with the completion of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan (SN CAP), in coordination with the USFS, Tahoe

Conservancy, Northern Sierra Partnership, and California Natural Resources Agency. The SNC was also directed to look at its own internal operations and determine how it could ensure they were compliant with and supportive of various climate change-related laws, rules, and programs. This separate effort became the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Climate Change Initiative (SNC CCI) and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Green Team Initiative (SNC GTI). The components of the SNC CCI are identified below. The SNC GTI is documented as a separate report (included here as Appendix B.)

II. Goals of the SNC Climate Change Initiative:

1. SNC has completed the first Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan and leads partner efforts in implementation of the Plan's goals, objectives, and activities.
2. SNC has established climate change related grant selection criteria and performance measures SNC and the counties and cities within the Sierra understand and fully apply CEQA changes made to address greenhouse gas emission impacts on projects for which they are responsible.
3. SNC applies a climate change focus to its actions and initiatives.
4. SNC has a fully integrated green/sustainable program for its internal operations and has identified and certified its operational greenhouse gas emissions through the Climate Registry.

III. Objectives of the SNC Climate Change Initiative:

In addition to direction provided by its Board and any region-wide climate activities identified for the SNC as part of the SN CAP, the SNC, as a state department within the California Natural Resources Agency has other roles and responsibilities in relation to statewide climate change goals and plans. The SNC operates in a primarily supportive role relating to climate change and ecosystem health, preservation, resilience and adaptation. The following SNC climate change objectives reflect that role in supporting organizations with specific and designated authority to act in reducing the impact of climate change and protecting the State's natural and economic resources. These objectives comply with and support the implementation of AB 32 and its Scoping Plans and Biennial Reports, SB 97, SB 375, DWR's Adaptation Strategies, Cal/Fire's Forestry Sector Adaptation Plan, the SNC's mission, vision, and program areas focus, and the focus and intent of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan.

A. The SNC will provide leadership to the development and implementation of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan by:

- Providing staffing to coordinate and create the first Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan
- Coordinating broad input into the plan
- Funding and appointing the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Coordinator to help guide first year implementation actions of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan
- Convening an action-oriented implementation team to carry out the prioritized activities of the first year of the plan and to assess and recommend plan, focus and action changes for subsequent years

B. The SNC will assist Cal/Fire and the California Board of Forestry to:

- Maintain no less than the current level of carbon sequestration by supporting and creating education opportunities on sustainable management practices including reducing the risk of wildfires, avoiding or mitigating land-use changes that reduce carbon storage, and supporting voluntary actions to conserve biodiversity.
- Reduce wildfire emissions through fuels reduction on private and federal lands and provide GHG benefits by using woody biomass for bio-fuels and bio-power as fossil fuel alternatives
- Encourage documentation of forest conservation benefits through the Climate Registry Forestry Protocols
- Increase forest conservation purchases to produce annual benefits through continued growth and sequestration; prevent conversion of forestlands through publicly and privately funded acquisitions and easements.
- Increase attention to and implementation of reforestation/afforestation projects and identify educational opportunities on the benefits of reforestation/afforestation in mitigating impacts of climate change

C. The SNC will assist the Department of Water Resources to:

- Support local governments in promoting greater implementation of water conservation measures, including best management practices to improve efficiency, increase storage, and protect water quality.
- Help implement the Statewide Adaptation Plan by developing regional solutions to adaptation needs and disseminating those practices and recommendations to Sierra Nevada communities
- Identify and provide funding for integrated regional water management throughout the Sierra Nevada watersheds and for research and analysis on climate change impacts and adaptation strategies
- Identify and establish practices to enhance and sustain ecosystems, particularly as these practices protect, enhance, and restore upper watershed forests and meadow systems that act as natural water and snow storage

D. The SNC will facilitate Local Government Actions to comply with AB 32 et.al. by:

- Gathering and disseminating information useful to the rural communities that populate the Sierra Nevada Region including but not limited to: funding opportunities in addressing AB 32 goals and climate change challenges; funding opportunities for energy conservation and energy conversion through distributed energy source applications; local government protocols and toolkits and business protocols and toolkits established by the ARB; emerging cap and trade program components; Climate Reserve forestry and other protocols applicable to activities in their region.
- Disseminating information relating to CEQA changes mandated by AB 32, implemented through SB 97, and by distributing OPR's General Plan Guidelines Supplement to provide advice to cities and counties for including policies in their general plans to address climate change and greenhouse gas reduction strategies.

E. The SNC will assist the SCSA in meeting its green building objectives and targets by:

- Developing an internal Green Initiative to measure, report, certify, and reduce its own operational emissions, including fleet emissions (see [Appendix B](#)).
- Establishing goals for GHG reduction and reporting on progress toward those goals (and resultant contributions toward meeting the goals of AB 32).
- Joining the Climate Registry and reporting and certifying its operational GHG emissions.
- Benchmarking its energy consumption through the USEPA's EnergyStar Building program and encouraging its landlord to do the same for the entire business park.

F. Through its grants program and other collaboration/demonstration projects the SNC will contribute positively to:

- Sharing information on the benefits of certification, encouraging the certification of projects through the Climate Reserve's Forestry Protocol (and other applicable related protocols);
- Supporting the design and application of adaptive land management methods to land manager decisions that facilitate habitat preservation/adaptation, improve and increase water quality and storage;
- Supporting the design and application of life cycle analysis methods in the development of holistic fire management practices that support healthy forests through fire suppression/fuel load reduction and contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions and the sequestration of carbon, as well as the economic viability and opportunities of surrounding communities;
- Supporting the development of information on the value of ecosystem services and their potential in protecting and funding the conservation of Sierra Nevada resources; and
- Increasing climate change and ecosystem health and resilience monitoring, data analysis and management within the Sierra Nevada Region; ensuring that funding for such pilot projects are focused on

regions with adopted IRWM plans that meet DWR's plan standards and have broad stakeholder support.

G. In its information dissemination role, the SNC will also:

- Create a new website that will present climate change information relevant to the entities and organizations within the Sierra Nevada Region, acting as a web-based information center for attracting and sharing information of broad interest to various parties;
- Measure the effectiveness of its website by tracking usage through "hits" and information inquiries and pursuing input on Web site content;
- Convene conferences, symposia, and other forums that help share and develop Sierra Nevada-based information about climate change;
- Establish a climate change speaker/presentation repository, with resources available upon request to local communities and organizations; and
- Communicate the efforts of our partners in addressing the challenges of climate change in this unique area (i.e., the Sierra Business Council's Sierra Nevada Carbon Cooperative, the Sierra Nevada Alliance's Sierra Water and Climate Change Campaign, The Pacific Forest Trust's Working Forests Winning Climate program, etc.).

H. SNC System Indicators with Climate Change Interaction

As part of its Systems Indicators Initiative, the SNC plans to track progress in its core programs through the development of "core" system indicators. As approved by the SNC Board in December 2009, the indicators with climate change implications and that can help inform the regional Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan of progress toward its goals include:

1. Change in Habitat – Wildlife Habitat Relationship
2. Air Quality (PM¹⁰, PM^{2.5})
3. Carbon Storage and Net Annual Sequestration on Forests
4. Acres Treated for Fuels Reduction by Risk Category
5. Air Quality (Ozone)

6. Water Quality – Impaired Water Bodies
7. MWH for Energy Produced by Renewable and Distributed Energy Sources
8. Acres of Land Conserved
9. Quantity and Value of Water Exports
10. Percent Change in Temperature, Precipitation and Snow Pack.

IV. Leadership and Resource Commitment to the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan

In support of the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan the SNC will provide one full-time staff person to act as the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Coordinator (SN CCC). The duties of the CCC will include but are not limited to:

- Ensuring that deadlines and milestones established within the SN CAP are tracked and reported on
- Pursuing establishment of the SN CAP Climate Action Team; coordinating with key partners on provision of team members and/or funding; helping establish cooperative agreements and Climate Action Team structure
- Overseeing and guiding Strike Team members in their duties and responsibilities
- Ensuring that the SN CAP performance report is completed as per its schedule and presented to the SNC Board and the SNC key partners for review and approval
- Pursuing additional federal and other State funding in support of the SN CAP goals and objectives
- Communicating with interested parties and updating webpage postings with up-to-date SN CAP information

In addition, the SNC will provide operational assistance (in the form of an office and necessary equipment and supplies) to the CCC in support of the SN CAP. In the first year of operation (through 2010) the SNC will also provide funding and oversight for development of the Climate Change Web site.

Attachment 1

A link to the SNC Action Summary 2007 Symposium on Climate Change is included here as additional information related to the development of the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Initiative, the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan, and all of the components contained as part of each of these efforts.

<http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/docs/Climate.pdf>

APPENDIX B

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Green Team Initiative

In March 2009 the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC's) Green Team created and considered its draft Green Initiative, including the components necessary to create a robust and comprehensive strategy for identifying and reducing its own greenhouse gas emissions. The draft document created at that time, along with next steps to implement the identified strategies, is included here. This document is considered draft until it has been fully reviewed and approved by the SNC management team.

A. PURPOSE OF THE SNC GREEN INITIATIVE

The SNC Green Initiative is a critical component of the SNC Climate Action Plan. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy recognizes that action to protect the environment starts locally, and that each individual has an important role to play in reducing and mitigating greenhouse gas emissions in order to meet the goals of AB 32. "Individuals" includes individual organizations and their employees occupying the Sierra Nevada Region, and therefore encompasses the SNC operations and employee activities. The Green Initiative is the SNC's internal program designed to assess and improve its operational ecological footprint in order to do the following:

- Hold itself accountable in reducing its own broad impact on the environment
- Contribute positively to achieving the goals of AB 32 by reducing its own direct and indirect carbon "contribution"
- Be a role model to others – lead by example – in addressing the grave challenges of climate change that the Sierra Nevada Region faces
- Be an educator to its own staff and others regarding their personal potential to reduce global warming

1) GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE SNC GREEN INITIATIVE

VISION

The SNC is a role model in operational efficiency and self-evaluation, undertaking consistent and positive actions toward reducing its own environmental and carbon impacts, and reducing operational costs to maximize its potential in carrying out program-based activities.

The SNC Green Initiative is emulated throughout the Sierra Nevada Region and is considered a progressive example of responsible government operations.

ALIGNMENT

The SNC Green Initiative will align with and positively contribute to the following State programs/priorities:

- [AB 32 – Global Warming Solutions Act](#)
- [EO S-3-05 Climate Change](#)
- [EO S-20-04 – Green Building Initiative and Action Plan](#)
- [EO S-12-04 – Energy Efficiency and Energy-Use Management](#)
- [CEC Energy Action Plan](#)
- [PCC 12200-12320 – State Agency Buy Recycled Campaign](#)
- [PCC 12400-12404 – Environmentally Preferable Purchasing](#)
- [CCR Title 22, Chapter 23 – Universal Waste](#)

The SNC Green Initiative will encompass internal operational activities for all SNC offices including Auburn, Susanville, Mariposa and Bishop.

2) ORGANIZATIONAL PLEDGE

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy pledges to assess, report on, and improve its resource-intensive operational activities in an effort to reduce the environmental impact of its operations and therefore to support a healthy, vibrant, resilient environment and economy as a citizen organization of the Sierra Nevada Region and as a department of the State of California.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy further pledges to report its own greenhouse gas emissions through membership in The Climate Registry and to establish goals to reduce those emissions through its Green Initiative Program.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy further pledges to work with its lessors to benchmark energy consumption in order to establish real and reachable consumption reduction goals and to support the use and expansion of green energy where feasible.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy further pledges to provide information and support to its own and its stakeholder's employees regarding actions they may take to reduce their personal "ecological" footprint.

3) GOALS

Energy: Reduce energy consumption 20% by 2020 for all SNC facilities.

Transportation: Reduce miles travelled on business using conventional fossil fuels 10% by 2020. Ensure that 100% of SNC employees are aware of any alternative modes of transportation and available benefits.

Technology: Increase use of web-conferencing 20% by 2020.

Purchasing: Increase the use of recycled content products to 30% by 2020, including proactive agency participation in the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) Program.

Waste: Obtain waste diversion levels of 70% by 2020.

Water: Reduce water consumption 20% by 2020.

Education: Raise awareness internally and externally relative to the Green Initiative and its principles, activities, and successes.

4) STRATEGIES

- **Energy** – Join Climate Registry; Track energy usage and create a 12 month energy consumption baseline for each SNC office. Identify and implement focused energy reduction actions in each facility to begin no later than January 2010. Benchmark energy consumption in Auburn office; Review energy consumption and apply energy conservation methods and equipment as part of new lease efforts; Encourage Auburn lessor to assess possible energy benefits of transitioning to daytime cleaning schedule; determine how to reduce overnight energy consumption of computer systems and take action
- **Transportation** – Join local TMA to obtain rideshare benefits for employees; Notify staff of State's transit subsidy (75 percent up to \$65/month); quantify results of 5/08 transportation survey, conduct annual transportation survey by Earth Day each year; Annually track and report on vehicle miles travelled per capita each January for the preceding 12 months. Establish policy to utilize e-meeting options for SNC-initiated meetings with external stakeholders to the extent possible. Establish policy on attendance at meetings that require travel to utilize webcasting first when possible and when there is no impact on effective involvement with the meeting topic/sponsors. Conduct annual employee commute survey. Distribute materials and access services to assist staff in avoiding single-occupant vehicle commuting.
- **Purchasing** – Purchase only high recycled content products when possible; Work with local suppliers to identify recycled products; Notify staff of availability of 100 percent recycled content products so that

they can choose those items first; Track percent of recycled content product purchasing (as compared to non-recycled products) and report to staff on an annual basis

- **Waste** – Identify methods to measure and report on waste and recycling materials produced by SNC staff; Provide guidance to staff that consumption of materials should be reduced including but not limited to re-using waste paper for scrap paper, ensuring that all printers and copiers are set to double sided printing as default, encouraging use of re-usable eating utensils, plates, and cups, etc.). Report annually on success of efforts.
- **Waste** - Review recycling programs for all SNC offices; improve signage and/or processes to increase recycling; Educate staff on how to reduce use (not just increasing recycling)
- **Indoor Air Quality** – Train staff on personal impacts and impact reduction – use of dry erase markers, cleansers, air fresheners, personal fragrances etc.; set policies for reduction of impact of construction (low- zero-VOC paints/glues/carpets, no MDF, new MSF airing out, etc.)
- **Personal Impacts** – Develop and distribute to staff personal responsibility materials (how to measure and reduce your carbon footprint; how you make a difference in SNC’s Green Initiative Program; Focus personal training around Earth and/or Arbor Day
- **Personal Impacts/Education** - Create green program brochure/fact sheet to distribute to employees and other interested parties

5) ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTING

The SNC Green Team will create an annual progress report, to be completed by the end of March each year. The annual report will include measurements toward meeting goals in each of the categories identified in this plan. The annual report will also include an analysis and adjustment of goals and strategies as needed.

The annual plan will be reviewed and approved by SNC management within 30 days of receiving the final draft.

B. NEXT STEPS

Specific actions to be taken by the Green Team and SNC’s management team in order to put all of the components of this initiative into place are listed here.

1) Green Team to:

- Complete draft plan including proposed Vision, Guiding Principles, Pledge, Goals, Policies, Strategies and Regular Progress Reporting
- Consider how to incorporate recommendations created to date into draft plan (Limit watering of landscape to mornings and evenings, establish a baseline for our water usage, determine ways to decrease water flow in bathrooms, rain catchment system for Auburn office, staggered lighting, install motion activated light sensors, improve temperature regulation in office, define package of incentives available for the installation of energy savings features, PV Array on roof, energy management system/energy miser, cool roof coating, formalize recycling program, window glazing). If possible, establish goals rather than solutions in these areas. Where needed provide implementation details along with the recommendations.
- Identify timelines for action; completion of draft plan; review and approval by staff/management; annual update/action cycles; specific annual actions (when will we join TCR; when will we conduct the annual transportation survey; when will we conduct educational and outreach events)
- Create educational materials, brochures, web postings to promote the efforts and outcomes of the Green Initiative

2) Management Team to:

- Review and comment on draft plan including proposed Vision, Guiding Principles, Pledge, Goals, Policies, Strategies and Regular Progress Reporting. Provide specific directions on changes and expectations.
- Identify funding needed for essential activities (like annual fees for greenhouse gas registry and certifications and for membership in the local transportation management association).
- Support the success of the program by carrying out own personal responsibilities – benchmark personal carbon footprint and establish goals for reducing it; reduce, reuse, recycle; support staff efforts to comply with Green Initiative Strategies.
- Attend meetings with lessors, vendors, and other service providers to encourage their support of the SNC Green Initiative Goals and Objectives.
- Incorporate SNC Green Initiative efforts into regional presentations; ensure that goals and progress toward them are reported (as impacts on GHG reductions as well as tons/kWh, etc.)

- Review and comment on draft plan including proposed Vision, Guiding Principles, Pledge, Goals, Policies, Strategies and Regular Progress Reporting. Provide specific directions on changes and expectations.
- Identify funding needed for essential activities (like annual fees for greenhouse gas registry and certifications and for membership in the local transportation management association).

APPENDIX C

Sierra Nevada Climate Action Plan Coordination and Integration with Partner Programs and Efforts

Actions noted below were gathered as part of the planning process through review of partner climate-related programs and how they may connect with initial SN CAP focus areas and action items. It is recommended that, as a follow up and verification action, the Sierra Nevada Climate Change Coordinator (SN CCC) and the Sierra Nevada Climate Action Team contact these various organizations and confirm the proposed actions to integrate with their programs.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy: The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) acts as the project manager for the development and implementation of the SN CAP. As directed by its Board, the SNC will support and develop demonstration projects that improve the region's adaptation to and mitigation of climate change impacts, will lead in the creation of a web-based portal focusing on the issues of and solutions to climate change in the Sierra Nevada Region, and will convene experts to further the understanding of climate change impacts in the region. The SNC will modify its grants guidelines, with SNC Board approval, and will develop project selection criteria that takes into consideration the climate change impacts and benefits of proposed projects. The SNC will also carry out efforts to reduce its operational greenhouse gas emissions and will support the efforts of its sister-agencies in the achievement of AB 32 and related legislative goals. See Appendices A and B for SNC's full Climate Change and Green Team Initiatives.



California Tahoe Conservancy: The CTC was established to develop and implement programs through acquisitions and site improvements to improve water quality in Lake Tahoe, preserve the scenic beauty and recreational opportunities of the region, provide public access, preserve wildlife habitat areas, and manage and restore lands to protect the natural environment. The SN CAP will identify areas for coordination with and enhancement of CTC efforts to reduce regional wildfire risk, improve water quality and supply, and integrate climate change resiliency and adaptation efforts into land management practices across the Sierra landscape. Special emphasis will be placed on coordinating research and educational efforts, as well as funding opportunities, in these areas. The SN CAP will seek to identify and promote climate-related best practices developed by the CTC, Tahoe Regional Planning Authority, City of South Lake Tahoe and other local authorities for use as model efforts by other Sierra Nevada Communities.

USFS: Within the U.S. Forest Service climate change is one of three primary emphasis areas. The USFS Climate Change program is divided into eight different focus areas relating to forest lands owned and managed for the public's benefit. They are: Ecosystem Services: Carbon, Ecological Restoration, Biomass Utilization, Sustainable Resource Management, Educator Resources, Sustainable Operations, Research and Development, and International Programs. The USFS website contains a vast amount of information including tools, research and current activities in each of these focus areas. The SN CAP will work with USFS representatives in achieving their mutual goals and assist in outreach and education activities that will help address the public's understanding of climate challenges. The SN CAP will emphasize the collaborative power and outcomes of the Southern Sierra Consortia and will promote the development of California-based projects modeled on efforts such as the USFS White Mountain Stewardship project in Arizona. The SN CAP will also track and utilize outcomes from the Mendocino National Forest project of the USFS in order to make progress on carbon/fire/fuels objectives in the Sierra region.

There are three ways in which fuel reduction projects can reduce greenhouse gas emissions:

1. Thinning forests improves forest health, and healthy forests absorb more carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere.
2. Thinned forests decrease fire risk and so have the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from catastrophic wildfires.
3. Biomass from thinning projects can replace nonrenewable fossil fuels used to produce energy, potentially reducing fossil fuel carbon emissions.

Mendocino Project
U.S. Forestry Service
2008

BLM: Bureau of Land Management efforts correlate with SN CAP focus areas in wildfire management, including awareness and education efforts, and the development of clean energy production, including biomass, geothermal, solar and wind initiatives currently underway in California. The SN CAP will promote the educational efforts of the BLM in these areas to its audience, emphasizing its clean energy production efforts, and will encourage support and participation in these initiatives as well.



BLM

CNRA/DWR/CalFire/IFWG: In the area of climate change the California Natural Resources Agency and its subordinate departments have the responsibility to carry out various AB 32 scoping plan [measures](#) including various water and forestry based measures. The Department of Water Resources is leading the way in developing statewide climate change adaptation plans and is part of a team working on a possible public goods charge for water that could provide local and regional funding for water efficiencies and related sources of renewable energy. The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal/Fire) houses the Board of Forestry, which is leading the Interagency Forestry Working Group in developing statewide activities in five priority areas: 1) greenhouse gas inventory in forests statewide; 2) determining the effect of State regulations on meeting greenhouse gas goals; 3) defining sustainable woody biomass utilization for the LCFS and developing projects for AB 118 (alternative fuels development) funding; 4) enhance incentives to maintain/enhance carbon stocks; and 5) enhance education opportunities for landowner action. The SN CAP will support the implementation of the Statewide Adaptation Plan through the development of adaptation plans across the Sierra Nevada, will identify possible opportunities to represent Sierra Nevada interests in the IFWG activities (particularly in the areas of landowner incentives and education), and will investigate possible opportunities for the proposed public goods charge to provide an ongoing source of funding for the region that provides 65% of California's developed water supply.



CALIFORNIA
CLIMATE CHANGE PORTAL

ARB/CEC/Climate Action Team: The Air Resources Board and the California Energy Commission both have wide and varied regulatory and administrative responsibilities in addressing the issues and impacts of climate change statewide and within all greenhouse gas contributing sectors. There are a number of subgroups that the Climate Action Team has been divided into that look at the various issues and create opportunities to meet or exceed the goals of AB 32 and various related legislation. In supporting the work of these organizations in the Sierra Nevada Region the SN CAP will pursue and develop additional opportunities to educate local communities on greenhouse gas emission reduction guidance and support as has been created in the Local Government Toolkit. The SN CAP will assist the CEC as it administers funds

from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act by helping to educate local Sierra Nevada governments on funding requirements and opportunities. The SN CAP will also work with the CEC to develop needed research focused on the Sierra Nevada Region and will seek to direct CEC PIER funds toward this effort.

Northern Sierra Partnership: As an exemplary model of cross-organizational collaboration, the NSP demonstrates the power of partnerships in pinpointing common values, needs, challenges and opportunities for a large and diverse regional area. The NSP also sponsors the Carbon Collaborative which seeks to reduce barriers for landowners to participate in the emerging market for carbon credits with the potential to generate a reliable source of revenue to fund stewardship and restoration of the region's forestlands and watersheds. Additional work of the Carbon Collaborative is to implement sustainable forest management and land use practices that reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire. The SN CAP will promote this partnership strategy as a model approach in addressing the complex cross-jurisdictional issues impacting the region, and will work to support the Carbon Collaborative goal to establish pilot projects using sustainable forest practices and to increase registered and verified forest projects in the area.

California is a national leader in establishing a policy framework to regulate carbon dioxide emissions and create a market for trading carbon reduction credits that would include carbon sequestered in northern Sierra forests. While this market is currently voluntary, regulatory policies may soon require polluters who don't meet legal emissions standards to purchase carbon credits or "offsets" on the open market. Proceeds from the sale of these carbon offsets can be directed towards registering additional credits, purchasing forestlands for conservation, and implementing best practices for land stewardship throughout the northern Sierra region. The Carbon Cooperative seeks to research and demonstrate ways to engage private forest landowners in the emerging carbon markets.

The Carbon Cooperative
Northern Sierra Partnership
2009

Sierra Nevada Alliance:

The Sierra Nevada Alliance is a conservation non-profit organization that is a network of over eighty member conservation groups that are based or work in the Sierra Nevada region. The mission of the Alliance to protect and restore the natural resources of the Sierra Nevada for future generations while promoting sustainable communities. Over the past three years the Sierra Nevada Alliance Water & Climate Change Program has worked to promote climate change adaptation and sustainable watershed management by: 1) Expanding, informing and training the network of Sierra resource managers, conservation leaders and others to help them reduce emissions and adapt to climate change; 2) Developing and promoting practical and replicable models of local and

regional resource plans and projects that address emission reduction AND climate adaptation to protect water resources; and 3) Ensuring more state investment in the protection and restoration of Sierra upper watersheds as a vital state water strategy. The SN CAP will utilize the Alliance's Sierra Climate Change Toolkit in developing additional educational and presentation materials for use with community groups within the Sierra Nevada region. The SN CAP will support expanded water education and active and robust community participation in the collaborative Integrated Regional Water Management Planning efforts throughout the Sierra Nevada.

Sierra Business Council: The mission of the Sierra Business Council (SBC) is to pioneer innovative projects and approaches that foster community vitality, environmental quality, economic prosperity, and social fairness in the Sierra Nevada. The SBC is a member-based organization of over 700 individuals and businesses

Creating the "third voice" on forestry and fire-safety issues - a voice that is tied to a broader movement for sustainable forestry in the Sierra.... Millions of dollars are spent on fire fighting while very little is being spent on restoring the Sierra's magnificent forests.

Forestry Project
Sierra Business Council
2009

committed to pioneering innovative solutions in the Sierra Nevada. SBC's forestry program is designed to develop effective systems for managing and restoring the region's forests, reducing the forests' exposure to catastrophic wildfire, preserving wild and natural landscapes, and sustaining Sierra's communities. Through their Sierra Nevada Carbon Cooperative the SBC has assisted two land projects to register their carbon emissions through the Climate Action Registry – Heart K Ranch in Plumas County and Waddle Ranch in Placer County. The Carbon Cooperative seeks to encourage additional project

registrations in order for these projects to be able to capture the land conservation and environmental benefits of accessing the funding source that the sale of carbon credits might bring. The SBC is making a significant effort to educate potential project proponents on what it takes to register and is providing support to their efforts. The SN CAP will access SBC's expertise in developing further opportunities in this area and will support development of registered sustainable forestry projects.

Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council: SCLTC consists of 15 local land trusts scattered throughout the Sierra Nevada plus national and regional partners such as The Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, California



Rangeland Trust, The Pacific Forest Trust and The American Land Conservancy. All of these organizations share the goal of protecting ranches, forest land and areas of vital wildlife habitat within dozens of critical watersheds across the Sierra Nevada and

Cascades. Member groups often work in partnership on projects, and have succeeded in protecting tens of thousands of acres over the years through conservation easements or purchase. The very nature of this work makes it a vital component of preparing for climate change - which has become an important part of planning project areas for the land trusts and their partners.

Land trusts in the Sierra Nevada and Cascades operate on two principals that are critical. The first principal is that whether protecting sustainable forestry, farms,

Changing landscapes, moving species: Under pressure from climate change, the habitat for plant and animal species will shift even further northward and upward on land or to cooler depths in the ocean. Species will respond in different ways and their ability to adapt and migrate to a better suited environment depends on the presence of barriers and protected areas.

The Future is Now
California Climate Change
Center
September 2008

economically viable ranches or wildlife habitat, bigger is always better. Land trusts and their partners strive to protect large contiguous blocks of land and, where possible, to connect them with other protected lands. The second principal is that protecting upslope corridors will be important in providing for upslope migration of species – an essential service under a warming climate scenario. This often involves working toward protecting long stretches of river and stream corridors.

In addition to protecting habitat vital to the ability of native plants and animals to adapt to a changing climate, land trusts also protect the resources that will help reduce the impacts of

increasing human influence on global climate. The woodlands and grasslands protected by conservation easements continue to remove and store carbon dioxide from the atmosphere that would otherwise contribute to climate change. Additionally, by protecting productive forests, ranches and small farms in rural areas, land trusts help to encourage development in areas better suited to it, thereby acting as a restraint to urban sprawl and preserving the potential for a local food economy not dependent upon long-distance transport for vital food supplies.

Land protection through supporting expansion of conservation easements and purchase will be a vital part of the Climate Action Plan for the Sierra Nevada. These tools can permanently remove key properties from uses that would be negative in terms of climate change while keeping these lands available for sustainable timber and ranching uses that contribute to local community economies. Land trusts have been working to mitigate the effects of “climate change” long before the term was coined and will continue to provide time tested tools for responding to this increasingly urgent issue.



California Biomass Collaborative: The CBC is a statewide collaboration of government, industry, environmental groups, and educational institutions administered by the University of California, Davis. The CBC works to enhance the

sustainable management and development of biomass in California for the production of renewable energy, bio-fuels, and products. It realizes its mission through statewide coordination with government and industry; resource inventory and generation assessment; facility performance reporting and evaluations; technology research, development, demonstration, and deployment; the study of policy issues and implications; developing standards; research management; education and training; and extension and public outreach. The SN CAP will work with and through the CBC to create and support projects that develop the bio-energy industry throughout the Sierra Nevada.

Pacific Southwest Research Station: The Pacific Southwest Research Station (PSW), an element of the U. S. Forest Service, plays a leadership role in climate change and greenhouse gas science at national and international levels. Research of PSW scientists focuses on assessing climates, evaluating ecosystem responses, promoting approaches to sequester carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and developing adaptation strategies to manage natural resources in the face of changing climates. The PSW coordinates research with the western Forest Service Research Stations in the Pacific Northwest and Rocky Mountains, and with federal, state, academic, and non-governmental partners. Through collaborations, PSW has taken key leadership roles in catalyzing coordinated and integrated research, resulting in the following outcomes: the [Global Change Research Strategy](#), the [Westwide Climate Initiative](#) and the [Climate Change Resource Center](#), [CIRMOUNT](#) (see below), the [Forest Service Strategic Framework for Responding to Climate Change \(version 1.0\)](#) [Strategic Aspirations - FS National Leadership Council](#), and the [Climate Change Science Program](#). The SN CAP will look to the PSW to incorporate the latest climate-related actions into its objectives, will partner with PSW in identifying landscape-wide research perspectives, and will promote the efforts and outcomes of the PSW for others to access and utilize.



CIRMOUNT: The Consortium for Integrated Climate Research in Western Mountains (CIRMOUNT) is a research-focused consortium of ecological scientists working in western North

American mountain climate sciences. While coming from diverse disciplines, these scientists and those who align with CIRMOUNT share a common passion to improve and integrate understanding and applications about climate in western mountains and its effects on ecosystems and its goods and services. CIRMOUNT focuses on improving the understanding and ability to predict future climate and ecosystem changes in the West. In particular, they work to develop strategies to encourage close collaboration among researchers from many scientific disciplines regarding the likely impacts that temperature and precipitation changes arising from both natural variability and greenhouse warming may have on western North American mountain ecosystems. The SN CAP will assist in the development of regional research perspectives and needs to address climate change in the Sierra Nevada. The SNC will partner with CIRMOUNT to provide in-kind and logistical support as needs are identified.

WESTCARB: The West Coast Regional Carbon Sequestration Partnership (WESTCARB) is a



collaborative research project bringing together dedicated scientists and engineers at more than 80 public agencies, private companies, and nonprofits to identify and validate the best regional opportunities for keeping CO₂ out of the atmosphere and thereby reducing mankind's impact on the climate. WESTCARB is exploring opportunities in seven Western states and one Canadian province for removing CO₂ from the atmosphere by enhancing natural processes (terrestrial sequestration) and by capturing it at industrial facilities before it is emitted and storing it underground (geologic sequestration). SN CAP will work to partner with WESTCARB in identifying the carbon stored in Sierra Nevada forests, rangelands, and woodlands and in using that information to help develop model policies that support broad landscape services while retaining and enhancing as much natural carbon storage as possible.



**CLIMATE
ACTION
RESERVE**

The Climate Reserve: The California Climate Action Registry (California

Registry) was created by the State of California in 2001 to address climate change through voluntary calculation and public reporting of emissions. The California Registry established protocols to guide emissions inventory reporting and served as a central database for emissions reports. As the California Registry grew and became more successful, the need became apparent for emissions reporting and protocol development to exist in an integrated system that stretched beyond California's borders. For this reason, the California Registry was involved in establishing The Climate Registry and the Climate Reserve. Through collaborative development of the Forestry Protocol, the Climate Reserve is promoting the opportunity to both conserve forest carbon assets through conservation-based forest management, forest

conservation, and reforestation project registry and verification, and to assist projects to utilize their carbon credits in the developing carbon market to provide a long term source of funding for these efforts. Of the nine California forestry projects listed or registered in the Reserve only two reside in the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The SN CAP will support additional Sierra Nevada project development and registration and will participate in additional Climate Reserve activities that benefit the projects and communities of the Sierra Nevada. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is also a member of the Climate Registry, a sister agency of the Climate Reserve, and is underway to report and verify its own greenhouse gas emissions in order to monitor and reduce its own impact on greenhouse gas emissions in the region.

Various Coalition Organizations and Efforts: Coalition organizations are being developed throughout the Sierra Nevada Region that seek to address environmental, institutional, and governmental challenges through broad stakeholder collaboration. In addition to the Northern Sierra Partnership, Sierra Business Council, and Sierra Nevada Alliance noted above, organizations of note include the California Rangeland Conservation Coalition and the Amador/Calaveras Consensus, and programs such as the Nature Conservancy's "Fire Learning Networks" which emphasize working together to overcome historic conflicts for the benefit of the natural environment and human health and well-being. Also of note is the 2004 USFS White Mountain Stewardship Project that continues to build trust and legitimacy through inclusion of a citizen-based [Multi-Party Monitoring Board](#) component. The SN CAP will promote the expansion of these models of collaboration as an essential tool in bringing environmental and economic resilience and vibrancy to the towns and communities of the Sierra Nevada.

One way the Initiative builds partner capacity is by sponsoring collaborative, multi-stakeholder learning networks. Fire Learning Networks take a long-term approach to restoring the natural role of fire through a collaborative process that ensures the needs of different stakeholders are met. All stakeholders -- from community groups to federal agencies -- come together to develop a shared vision for a given landscape, and to learn how to overcome critical challenges related to maintaining or restoring ecosystem health. Network projects demonstrate successful approaches, speed technology transfer and generate on-the-ground results.

Fire Learning Networks
The Nature Conservancy
2009

APPENDIX D

Sierra Nevada Climate Change Initiative: Helping Address Climate Change Effects in the Sierra Nevada Region September 8, 2008

Author: Steve Eubanks

Executive Summary:

In December 2007, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy convened a symposium on climate change. The enthusiasm resulting from the symposium generated interest in establishing a Climate Change Initiative for the Sierra Nevada Region. To further explore this idea, an assessment was completed. A broad range of organizations and interests was contacted through a combination of facilitated meetings and a web-based survey to ask whether people thought a Climate Change Initiative would be beneficial, what role a Climate Change Initiative would fulfill, and where a Climate Change Initiative should be headquartered.

The facilitated meetings and web-based survey provided much valuable information. There was solid support for establishment of a Sierra Nevada Climate Change Initiative and for associating the Initiative with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Responses from participants about possible roles for the Initiative generated the following recommendations for initial focus of a Climate Change Initiative:

- Establish a web-based information center for attracting and sharing information in broad-based networks.
- Provide education about climate change to a broad audience.
- Be a convener of conferences, symposia and other forums that help share and develop information about climate change.
- Encourage and fund demonstration projects that address climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Actively pursue and develop partnerships with a wide range of organizations and agencies that have an interest in addressing climate change effects.

Background:

The effects of climate change on the Sierra Nevada region are expected to be significant and could have far-reaching consequences. Based on this understanding, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) convened a symposium in December, 2007, to learn more about the potential impacts and consequences to the Region and the opportunity for mitigation and/or adaptation. Panelists included experts from government, academic, business and non-profit fields. The workshop panels explored the implications of changes in precipitation and temperature on water supply and

management, vegetation, fish and wildlife habitat, fire frequency and intensity and recreation. There was also discussion regarding Sierra-specific tools and community strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to anticipated impacts in the Region.

The symposium was considered successful in terms of both attendance and enthusiasm about the topic of climate change. That enthusiasm generated post-symposium discussions about further actions that could be taken to deal with climate change-related issues. One such action discussed was the creation of some kind of Climate Change Initiative in the Sierra Nevada region, perhaps even establishment of a Climate Change Center. The SNC Board endorsed the further exploration of this idea and the decision was made to do outreach among a broad spectrum of interests to ask two primary questions:

- Should some kind of climate change-related initiative or center be established for the Sierra Nevada region?
- If so, what should be the role or focus of an initiative or center?

Also woven into discussions was a third question:

- Where should any initiative or center be headquartered?

The various interests were reached in two main ways. When interests were represented by an organization that had a regularly scheduled meeting that could accommodate a 1 to 1 ½ hour topic, a facilitated discussion was held (see Appendix for discussion template). This approach was used for meetings with Federal Land Managers, the Sierra Nevada Alliance, climate change researchers, The Sierra Nevada Conservancy “Kitchen Cabinet”, The Mountain Counties Water Resource Agency Managers, and the Sierra Nevada Land Trust Board. To supplement the facilitated meetings, there were also informal phone discussions with some other individuals representing various organizations or agencies. Their input was incorporated into results from the facilitated meetings.

It was clear early on that many interests could not be adequately surveyed at some kind of meeting. Therefore, a web-based survey was developed to reach more interests and individuals (see Appendix for web-based survey text). The web-based survey was sent to attendees of the December symposium, federal land managers, Fire Safe Councils, the Sierra Nevada Alliance, Lake Tahoe area interests via the California Tahoe Conservancy, the Quincy Library Group, the SNC Communications and Outreach Plan List, representatives of California State agencies involved in forestry climate change issues, and climate change contacts in non-land managing federal agencies, ultimately reaching 947 people. Responses were received from 261 people representing numerous organizations and interests. This 26 percent response rate is considered by web survey professionals to be quite good and seems to further indicate the level of interest and concern that exists for issues surrounding climate change.

Findings:

Results of the facilitated meetings: Though the meetings were held with very diverse interests, the feedback received from all the interests was almost surprising in its similarity.

Responses to Question 1: “Should some kind of climate change-related initiative or center be established for the Sierra Nevada region?”

- The answers to this question were a nearly unanimous “yes.”
- Several people suggested that there is effort coming from the State of California to address climate change and that perhaps that is a more appropriate level for climate change actions to occur. However, other people quickly suggested that statewide efforts tend, often just by default, to be “urban-centric” and cannot be relied upon to address concerns or opportunities specific to the Sierra Nevada region or communities. There was general consensus that any concerns could be avoided by ensuring that there is good communication and cooperation between and among efforts at the state level and those focused on the Sierra Nevada Region.
- Feedback indicated that it did not matter whether an effort is called an “Initiative” or a “Center”, rather what mattered was the role or focus of the effort. There was much input about where a “center” might be located and that is addressed later in this report.

Responses to Question 2: “If so, what should be the role or focus of an initiative or center? “

- At each facilitated meeting, there were many individual ideas about what a climate initiative or climate center should focus on but there was strong commonality among the meetings in ideas presented and in agreement about what should be the most important focus or roles.
- There was strongest support for the following suggestions for focus or roles:

--Create a Site for Sharing Information Concerning Climate Change:

- * Be a place/site that provides credible information on climate change. This would include scientific/research results, information on actions that are being undertaken to address climate change (adaptation and mitigation), and information from other organizations that are dealing with climate change issues. Accompanying this suggestion were the quotes: “Provide sound science, not political science;” “Create the ‘Switzerland’ of climate change discussion” (i.e., be a place where it is “safe” to discuss differing views); “Be a place that is visible and ‘attracts’ wide interest and information;” Be a primary “voice” for the Sierra Nevada region in the climate change arena.

- * The point was made that an information site needs to be more than just a dumping ground for data or general information; i.e., there needs to be a concerted effort to catalog information so that it can be easily found and retrieved by those who seek it.

-- Provide Education and “Unbiased Advocacy” for Climate Change, Climate Change Issues and Actions to Address Climate Change Effects.

- * Provide information to the State Legislature to increase understanding about climate change and to encourage action by the Legislature to address climate change issues.
- * Provide information to the general public to increase understanding and to encourage support for addressing climate change issues. This should include helping develop “Climate Change Best Management Practices” for people who want to know what they can do as individuals to implement mitigation or adaptation actions.
- * Provide information to educators to increase understanding and to encourage development of curricula that builds understanding among young people.
- * Help develop climate change “Best Management Practices” (BMPs) that would provide simple “how-to” guides for people wanting to know what they can do in their daily lives to help offset the effects of climate change.
- * Provide information to organizations and communities to increase understanding and encourage actions to address climate change issues.
- * Help distill research and technical information into information products useable by broad audiences.

--Be a “convener.”

- * Organize additional symposia/conferences to bring together researchers, practitioners, educators, government representatives and the public to discuss and learn more about climate change and what can be done to mitigate and adapt.
- * Organize teams of experts and bring them together to develop strategies for addressing climate change effects.
- * Develop a “sabbatical” program where individual experts can spend time developing strategies for addressing climate change effects.

* All of the above would include development of strategies that would encourage Sierra Nevada communities and organizations to work together to implement programs to address climate change synergistically.

--Help encourage and fund demonstration projects designed to address climate change.

* This could be a logical spin-off of the current SNC programs providing funding for projects in the Sierra Nevada region.

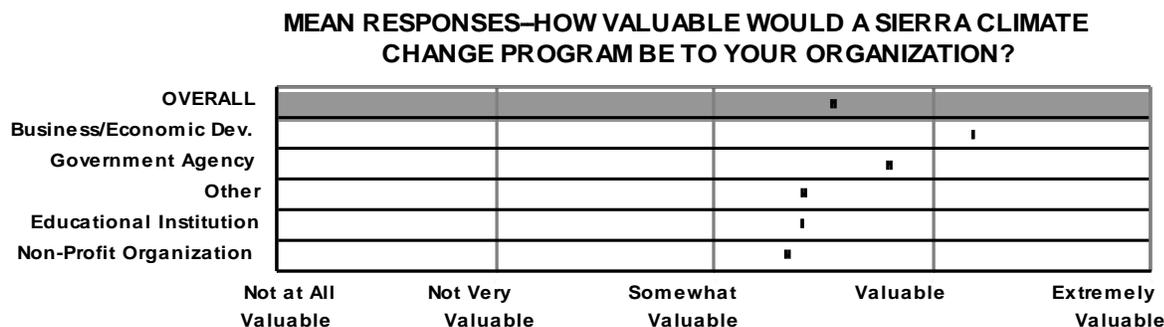
Responses to Question 3: "Where should any initiative or center be headquartered?"

- The general consensus of meeting participants was that the appropriate sponsoring organization for a climate initiative or location for a climate center is the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. There were three primary reasons stated: 1. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy has a reputation as a neutral body that has developed a broad constituency and sponsorship that would ensure good support for any effort directed at climate change; 2. The Conservancy has the kind of visibility that, together with its reputation, would strongly attract the participation that is necessary for a successful climate initiative or center; and 3. Establishing a new entity or a new location would require the expenditure of funding on "bricks and mortar" and there is a much higher need to spend available funds on actual work dealing with mitigation or adaptation.

Results of the web-survey:

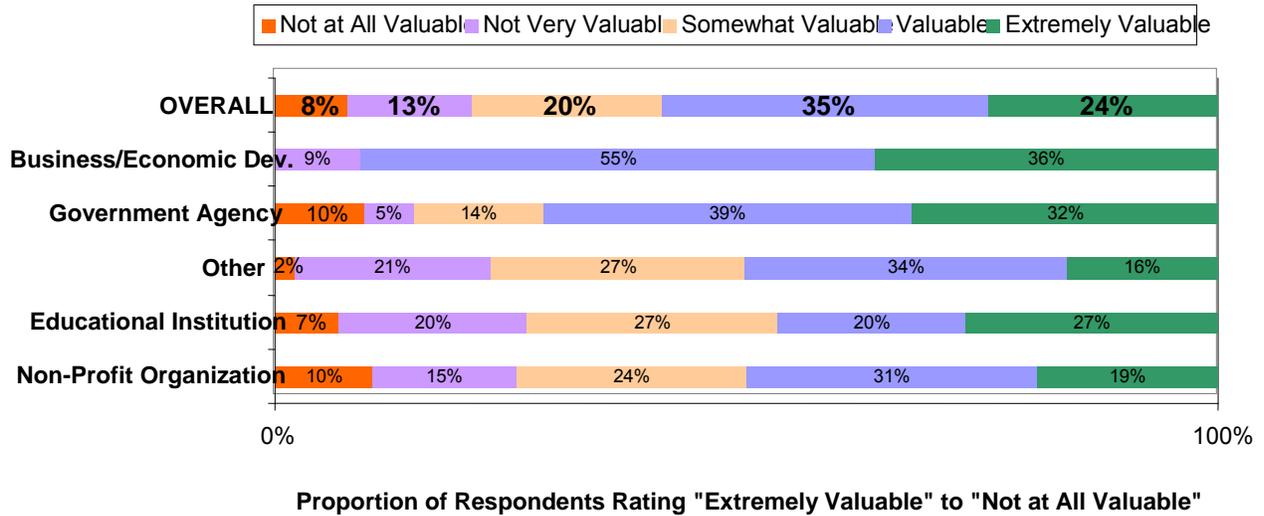
Responses to Question 1: In the web-based survey, this question was stated, "How valuable would a Sierra Climate Change Program Be to Your Organization?"

- The responses were tallied in several ways and, overall, give support for the establishment of some kind of Climate Change Initiative.
- This first chart lists the mean ratings for all respondents in their constituency category:

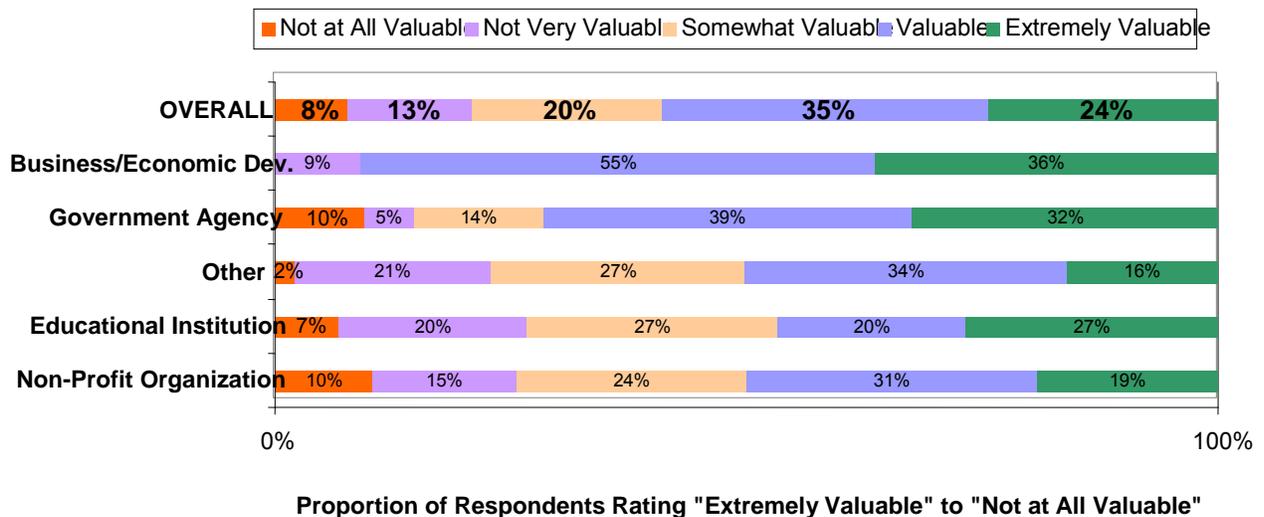


This second chart further breaks down ratings from respondents. Note that well over 50% of respondents indicated that it would be valuable or extremely valuable to establish some kind of Climate Change Initiative.

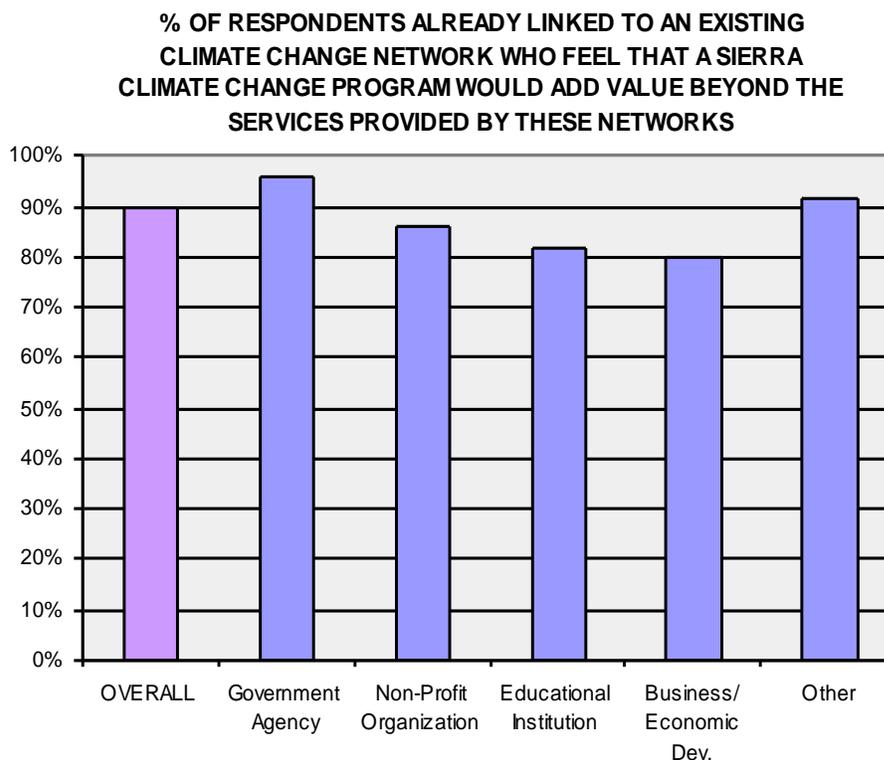
HOW VALUABLE WOULD A SIERRA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM BE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION?



HOW VALUABLE WOULD A SIERRA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM BE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION?



This third chart is perhaps most informative and important. Among those respondents who seem to be most connected with and knowledgeable of climate change information there is strong support for establishment of some kind of Climate Change Initiative.



Responses to Question 2: In the web-based survey, respondents were given sample roles to rate, the roles having been derived from input in earlier facilitated meetings. The question asked in the survey was “How valuable would the following potential roles of a Sierra Climate Change Program be to your organization?” The first roles listed were some that received most interest in the facilitated meetings.

Advocating for...adaptations = “Advocating for and supporting Climate Change adaptations.”

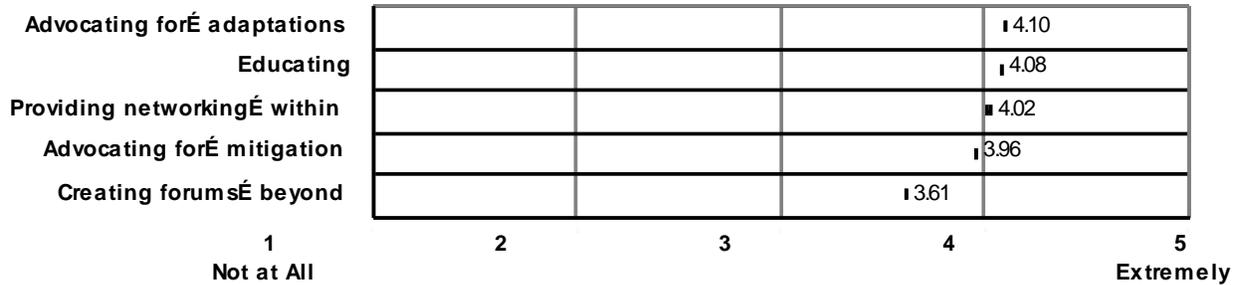
Educating = “Educating organizations, agencies, legislators and the general public on Climate Change issues, research, and programs.”

Providing networking...within = “Providing networking and coordination within the Sierra Nevada for organizations working on Climate Change issues.”

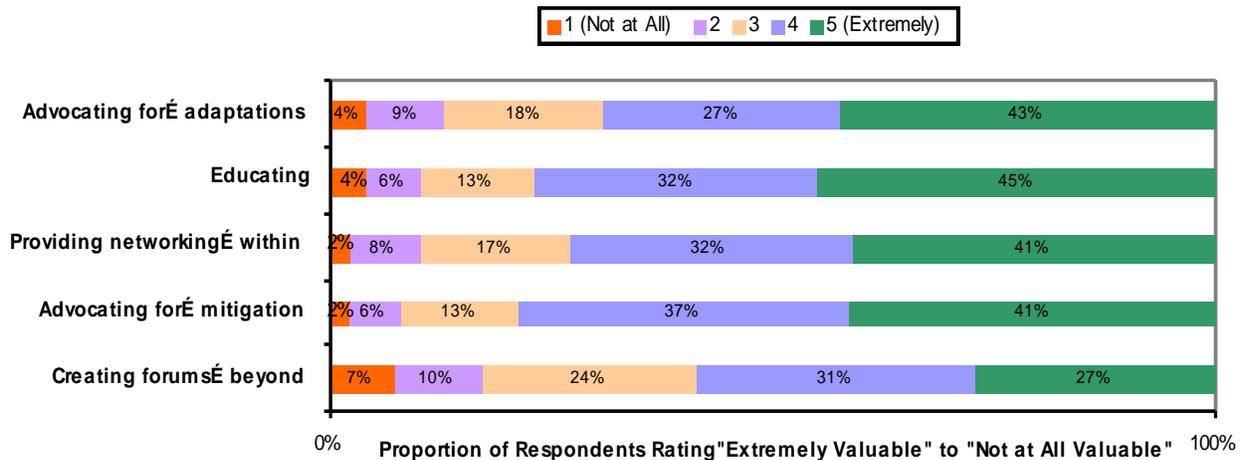
Advocating for...mitigation = “Advocating for and supporting Climate Change mitigation.”

Creating forums...beyond = "Creating forums for sharing information with organizations working on Climate Change issues beyond the Sierra (to compare strategies, research, etc.)."

HOW VALUABLE WOULD THE FOLLOWING POTENTIAL ROLES OF A SIERRA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM BE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION (on a scale of 1-5)?

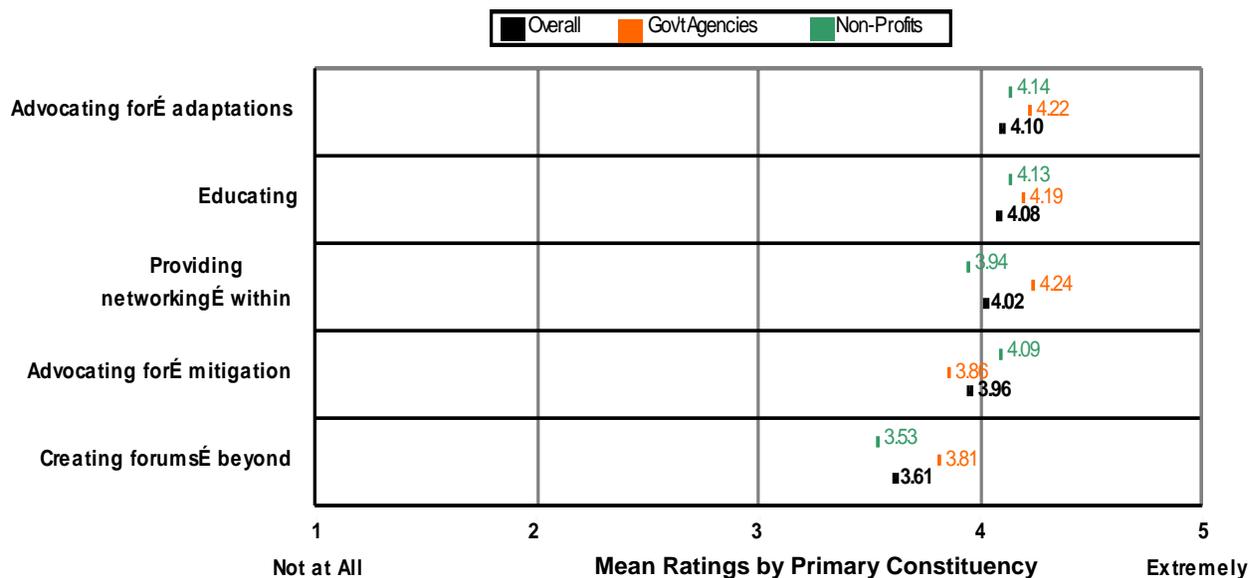


HOW VALUABLE WOULD THE FOLLOWING POTENTIAL ROLES OF A SIERRA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM BE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION (on a scale of 1-5)?



It is also interesting to look at how the mean value for people serving each of the primary constituencies varies from the overall mean. The following chart demonstrates this variation for Government Agencies and Non-Profit Organizations—the other primary constituencies were not included because of their small sample size.

HOW VALUABLE WOULD THE FOLLOWING POTENTIAL ROLES OF A SIERRA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM BE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION (on a scale of 1-5)?



As you can see from the graph, the respondents from Government Agencies placed more value on “Providing networking within the Sierras” and “Creating forums beyond the Sierras” than those from non-profit organizations. Conversely, respondents from non-profit organizations placed more value on “Advocating for mitigation” than those from Government Agencies. The valuation of “Advocating for...adaptations” and “Educating” were very close.

There were other roles from the facilitated meetings that were available for rating in the web-survey and the results are shown in the charts below. It’s important to note that there were many more potential roles that came up in discussions at the facilitated meetings. The web-survey concentrated on those that seemed to have elicited the most support in those meetings.

Recommendations...Land Managers = “Develop Recommendations on how land managers can incorporate climate-related changes into their management decisions.”

Conferences/Seminars/Webinars = “Offer periodic Sierra-specific Climate Change conferences, seminars, and/or webinars.”

Publicity Materials = “Create publicity materials to educate the general public about Sierra-specific Climate Change issues.”

Online Database...Within Sierra = “Host an online database of organizations, projects, research and events dealing with Climate Change within the Sierra.”

Newsletter/Ebulletin = “Produce a regular newsletter/e-news bulletin publicizing new Climate Change research, case studies and Sierra-specific projects.”

Regular Press Releases = “Produce regular press releases to a wide base of Sierra-Nevada media to publicize the latest research and successful initiatives.”

Neutral Venue = “Provide a neutral venue in which to discuss issues with people of disparate viewpoints and help facilitate solutions to those issues.”

Think Tank = “Convene and facilitate an ongoing ‘Think Tank’ of Climate Change experts.”

Online Season Tracking = “Provide an online venue where volunteers of all ages can record and view seasonal change trends across the Sierra.”

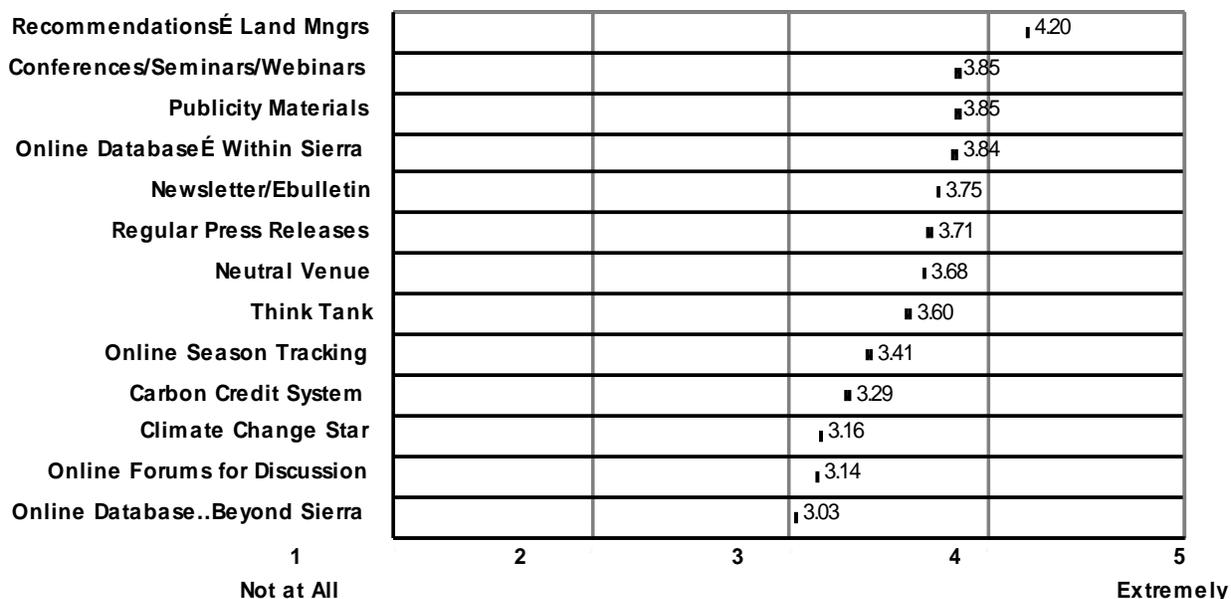
Carbon Credit System = “Create/promote a Sierra-wide carbon credit system.”

Climate Change Star = “Create/promote a system for a Climate Change Star certification similar to *Energy Star* and *Water Sense*.”

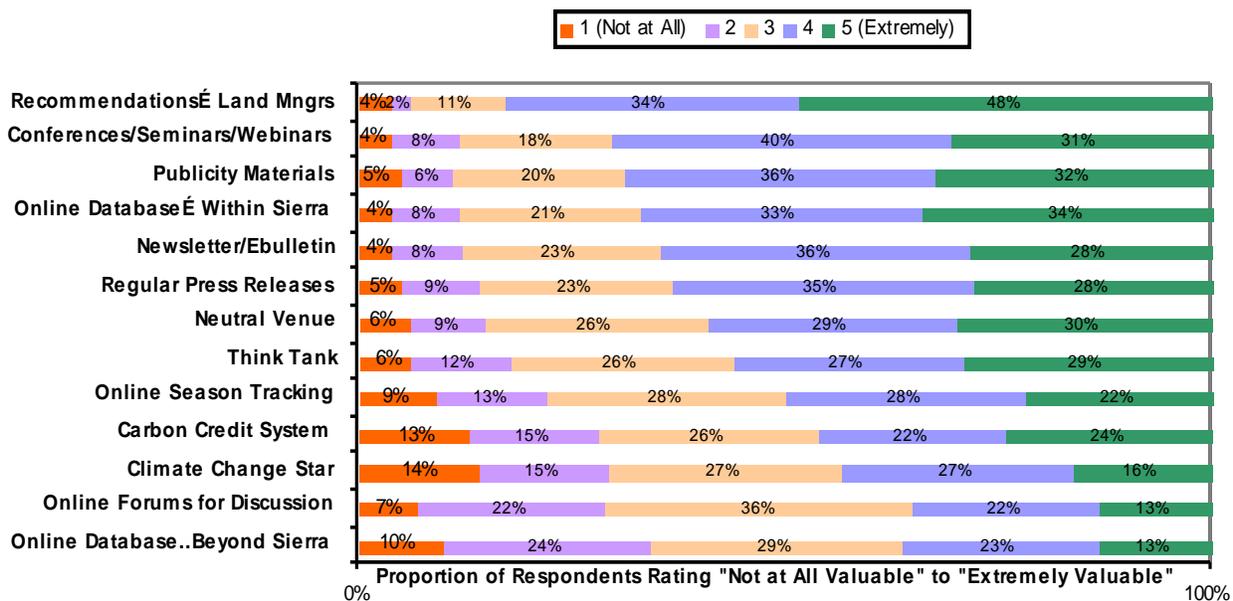
Online Forums for Discussion = “Host online forums for ongoing discussion of Climate Change issues.”

Online Database...Beyond Sierra = “Host an online database of organizations, projects, research and events dealing with Climate Change outside the Sierra.”

HOW VALUABLE WOULD THESE POTENTIAL SERVICES OF A SIERRA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM BE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION (on a scale of 1-5)?

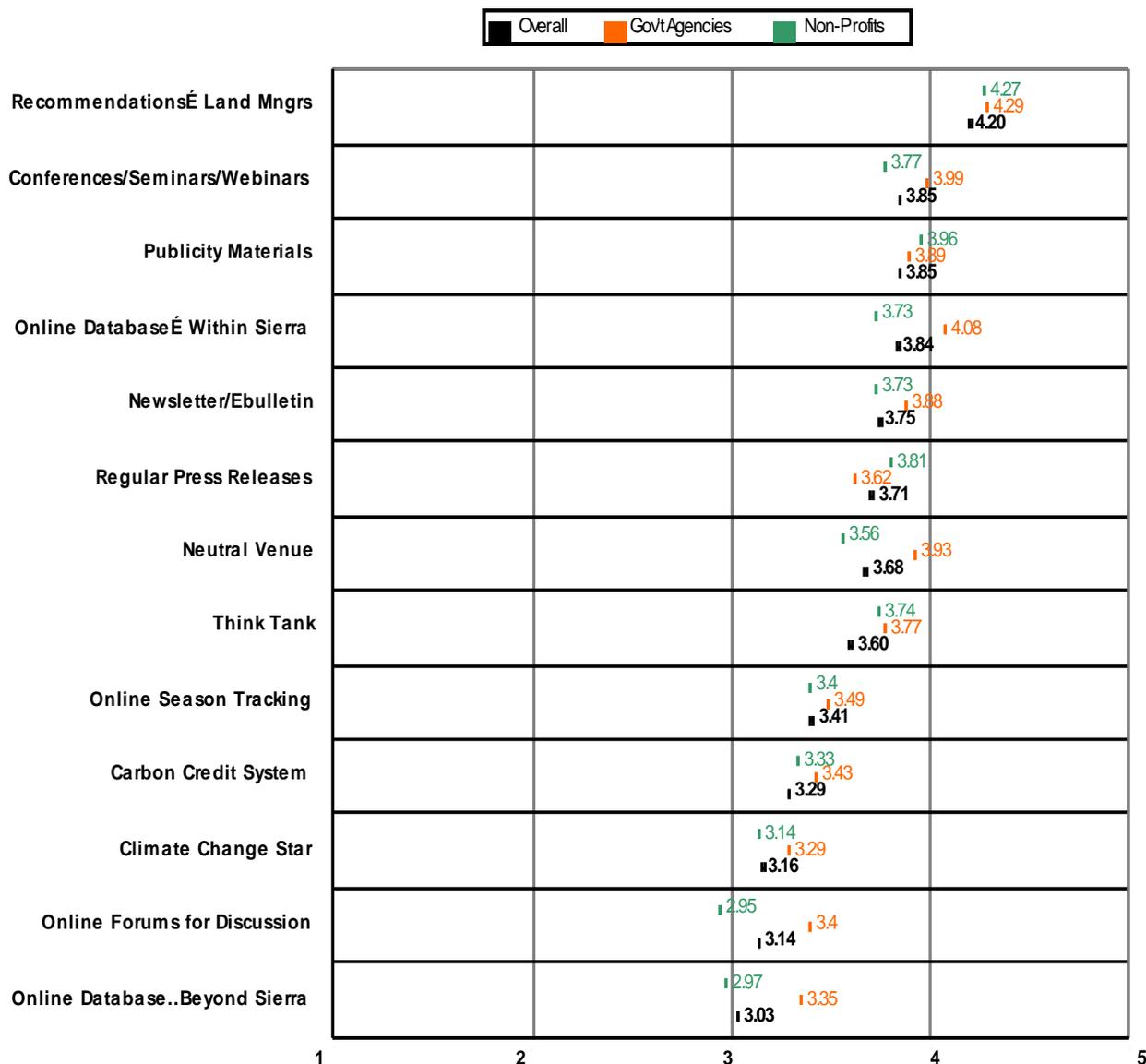


HOW VALUABLE WOULD THESE POTENTIAL SERVICES OF A SIERRA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM BE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION (on a scale of 1-5)?



Again, it is interesting to look at how the mean value for people serving each of the primary constituencies varies from the overall mean. The following chart demonstrates this variation for Government Agencies and Non-Profit Organizations—the other primary constituencies were omitted once again due to their small sample size.

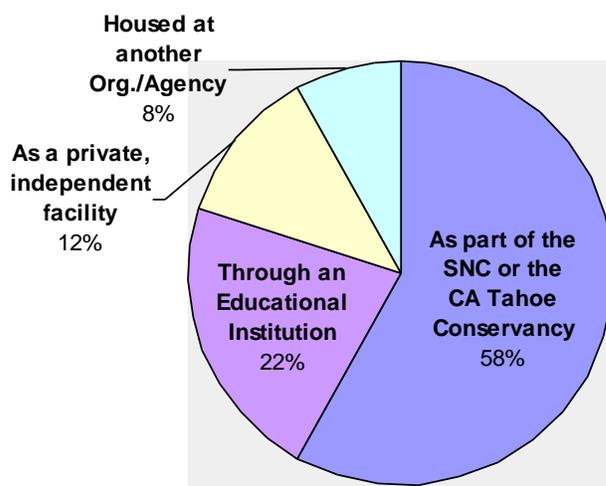
HOW VALUABLE WOULD THESE POTENTIAL SERVICES OF A SIERRA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM BE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION (on a scale of 1-5)?



As you can see from the graph, respondents from Government Agencies and non-profit organizations valued some services equally. However, other services, such as “Online Database...Within Sierra” and “Neutral Venue,” are valued very differently by respondents representing each of these two primary constituencies.

Responses to Question 3: In the web-based survey, this question was stated, “How do you think a Sierra Climate Change Program should be run?” Based on responses to this question at the facilitated meetings, there were several options offered to respondents. Also similar to the facilitated meetings, the strongest support was for having a climate program run by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

HOW DO YOU THINK A SIERRA CLIMATE CHANGE PROGRAM SHOULD BE RUN?



Summary of Findings:

Question 1: “Should some kind of climate change-related initiative or center be established for the Sierra Nevada region?”

- There is good overall support for the idea of establishing some kind of climate initiative for the Sierra Nevada region. This support was expressed both in the facilitated meetings and in the web-based survey. Moreover, there is good support for the initiative to include a Climate Center associated with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Question 2: “If so, what should be the role or focus of an initiative or center?”

- The top responses for this question from the facilitated meetings and the web-based survey had many common threads but were somewhat different. This may be due to the fact that participants in the facilitated meetings were not able to see total results of the other meetings and had a smaller number of initial prompting ideas to which to respond. Adding to this perspective is the fact that participants of some of the facilitated meetings also received and responded to the web-based survey. With this in mind it may be appropriate to assign a somewhat higher

priority to the results of the web-based survey when considering roles for an initiative or center.

Overall, the potential roles for a climate initiative or climate center receiving strongest support were:

- Be an information center, collecting and sharing information broadly.
- Be an advocate for mitigation and adaptation.
- Provide education to a broad spectrum of interests.
- Be a convener.
- Encourage and fund demonstration projects that address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Actively pursue and develop partnerships with a wide range of organizations and agencies that have an interest in addressing climate change effects.

Question 3: “Where should any initiative or center be headquartered?”

- As discussed earlier, strongest support was for any Sierra Nevada Climate Change Initiative or Center to be connected to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Recommendations:

Establish a Sierra Nevada Climate Initiative (SNCI). Facilitated meetings and web-based survey responses indicated good support for establishing a Climate Initiative that would focus on the Sierra Nevada region. It seems likely there will be new sources of funding available to establish and maintain such an initiative. There is also a strong likelihood that several organizations will help an initiative succeed by providing staff support and by helping in the initial establishment or startup of the various roles of an initiative.

Headquarter the Climate Initiative with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. This would essentially mean establishing a “Climate Center” at the Conservancy office as part of a climate initiative. Connecting the Climate Initiative with a known and successful organization like the Sierra Nevada Conservancy offers several advantages:

1. There would be no need to spend time or funding establishing a new organization or seeking additional office space. In addition, new staff time necessary for implementing a climate initiative can be easily incorporated into the existing Conservancy operation. And, redirecting or ending the initiative would be much simpler than for a new, separate organization;

2. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy has an established network of partners and constituents. This would facilitate the initial development of climate change information networks and cooperation throughout the region;
3. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy has a solid and positive reputation for fairness and objectivity that would make it much easier to begin a positive initiative dealing with an issue like climate change that has attracted controversy. The Conservancy's reputation will also allow it to effectively "attract" the kind of cooperation and sharing of information that will be necessary for an initiative to succeed;
4. The Conservancy has an established information network and processes for things like distribution of project funding that can be easily adapted to work associated with a climate initiative; and
5. The Conservancy's established networks and its reputation would facilitate successful securing of the funding and support necessary for operation and ongoing maintenance of a climate initiative.

In addition to consideration of the above advantages, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy mission and Key Objectives fit quite well with leading the establishment of a Climate Initiative and being the headquarters for that Climate Initiative:

Mission Statement:

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.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Key Objectives:

- * The SNC seeks to "add value" and build upon existing community and regional efforts.
- * The SNC brings a regional focus to the issues of the Sierra Nevada, collecting and sharing information across the region and communicating the benefits and contributions of the region.
- * The SNC encourages community-based solutions and will assist communities with technical expertise, information and resources necessary to achieve local solutions.
- * The SNC uses the best available information and science in making decisions, identifying opportunities to fill information and technical gaps and building on and expanding community information.
- * The SNC informs and educates the public throughout the Region and the State about the important contributions the Sierra Nevada provides to all Californians, including providing clean water for many uses outside the Sierra, access to world-

class recreation and tourism and the production of a variety of important commodities.

- * The SNC strives to identify and implement activities that result in integrated environmental, economic and social benefits rather than “either or” outcomes.

Begin implementing important roles as soon as possible and generally in the following order (as listed below, roles incorporate more than one of the roles discussed at facilitated meetings and in the web-based survey):

Establish a web-based information center for attracting and sharing information in broad-based networks. This information would be multi-faceted:

1. Climate change-related research/science, particularly as it relates to the Sierra Nevada region;
2. Information on current mitigation and adaptation activities occurring in and applicable to the Sierra Nevada region;
3. Climate change educational information and sources of such information; and
4. Information on climate change and “cumulative effects” related to climate change that agencies are incorporating in Environmental Assessments or Environmental Impact Statements to ensure consistency and thoroughness in these kinds of environmental documents.

Provide education about climate change to a broad audience. This role is related to the first priority of establishing an information center but includes additional elements particularly, the preparation and providing of information and publicity materials to legislators, educators, communities, partner organizations and the general public to increase understanding and to promote actions for mitigation and adaptation. This would help fulfill the input related to “advocacy. Help develop BMP guides for implementing mitigation and adaptation activities.

Be a convener. Coordinate and convene conferences and symposia to share climate change information. Associated with the convener role, develop a “think tank” operation that involves bringing together key interests to quickly develop suggestions for addressing key climate change issues that can then be shared widely.

Encourage and fund demonstration projects that address climate change mitigation and adaptation. Ideally, this will involve developing an additional grant program that focuses on climate change-related projects or programs. However, it will also be beneficial to build additional climate change emphasis into existing SNC grant programs. This should include having SNC staff work with grant applicants to consider climate change benefits in their submittals. As an example, a project that **involves hazard** reduction cutting and chipping of biomass might, with little additional need for funding, also

include removal of the chips to a cogeneration facility where the chips offset the need for fossil fuels.

The Sierra Nevada region offers particularly attractive opportunities to explore projects that focus on forest resource-oriented projects such as those related to reducing effects of wildfire, protection and enhancement of water and watersheds, and protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat.

Actively pursue and develop partnerships with a wide range of organizations and agencies that have an interest in addressing climate change effects. This should include exploring the possibility of establishing a climate change project “clearing house” similar to the one that is now used among federal agencies in California to allocate grant funds. There is an opportunity to combine the actions described in “4” above to pursue projects that can be partially funded by SNC grants and various state or federal programs. This can produce a synergistic effect by expanding the funding available overall and helping focus available funding on the highest priorities.

One example of a possible partnership is the Pacific Forest Stewardship Program, where certain lands currently owned by Pacific Gas and Electric Company will be dispersed to various entities in the next few years. These lands may offer an opportunity for the SNC and the Stewardship Council to explore possible climate change-related research, management, mitigation and adaptation projects.

Roles Perspective. It should be noted that all the roles discussed above, though listed separately, are inter-related and overlapping to some extent and should be considered a holistic package. Any one or several of the recommended roles might provide a benefit, but there will be a much greater overall benefit if all are implemented together and used to complement one another. In addition, these are recommended roles for initial implementation of a Climate Change Initiative. Over time, additional roles will certainly be added and the initial roles may be modified, all in order to provide more effective and beneficial operation of the Initiative.

Adopt General Principles for the Sierra Nevada Climate Initiative. Based on discussions and input from facilitated meetings and the web-survey, there is support for several principles to guide implementation and operation of the SNCI:

- Coordinate widely to build relationships and avoid duplication of efforts. There are many public and private organizations involved in climate change activities and discussions. This includes state and federal agencies and many nonprofit organizations. They are doing much good work related to climate change that does not need to be duplicated. A valuable role that can be fulfilled by the Sierra Nevada Climate Initiative is coordination and sharing of information about all these activities. There is also a potential role that would involve support of various activities through acquisition and distribution of funding. All this will require good coordination and communication.

- Retain the credibility necessary to successfully attract people who want information, want to share information and want to find ways to help address climate change.
- Adopt a bias for action. Climate change effects seem to be occurring faster than predicted, making mitigation and adaptation actions increasingly important. Thus it is essential to ensure the Sierra Nevada Climate Initiative focuses on, encourages and facilitates streamlined implementation of climate-related activities. It is also important to focus initially on actions that can be implemented rapidly and effectively.
- Focus on both mitigation and adaptation. There are advocates for putting top priority on either mitigation or adaptation activities. However, there seems to be a growing consensus that both are needed in order to adequately address climate change effects.

Appendices:

Implementation Plan

Included below are actions to be taken to initiate the Sierra Nevada Climate Initiative and to carry it through the first few years of operation. It should be noted that the authorities and mission of the SNC are sufficient to allow establishment of a SNCI, to provide leadership in addressing climate change issues and to fully implement the actions outlined in this report. However, the SNC does not currently have sufficient staff and resources for implementation, thus the need to seek additional funding and support.

- Assign responsibility for initial coordination of the SNCI to an Interim Coordinator.
- Begin process of recruiting full-time coordinator.
- Begin seeking grant funding for coordinator and for initial operation of the SNCI.
- Set up a basic website for the SNCI.
- Establish an Advisory/Steering Committee. This would include one or more SNC Board members.
- Prepare a "Business Plan" that would outline operations and staffing for the foreseeable future. (Work on steps 2,3,4,5 and 6 would occur concurrently and would begin as soon as the Interim Coordinator Position was established)
- Create a web-based center for information sharing. Coordinate widely to attract pertinent information and encourage use of the center. Include a section for sharing information on approaches being taken for mitigation and adaptation.

- Hire or contract for full-time coordinator.
- Develop an initial SNCI Education Plan, focusing on priorities for audiences to reach with education and for the topics and types of educational materials to most effectively reach these audiences.
- Convene key stakeholders to gather further information regarding operation of the SNCI; i.e., what should be the next tier of priorities for the SNCI to focus on, what role would the stakeholders like to play in the future operation of the SNCI, how can the SNCI best assist stakeholders?
- Update the SNCI Business Plan to reflect information resulting from convening stakeholders.
- Establish and implement an initial SNCI grant program to encourage and assist implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation projects.
- Concurrent with “12” above, actively pursue the establishment of partnerships with interested organizations and agencies.
- At the end of the first year of operation of the SNCI, convene stakeholders to do an assessment of the operation and value of SNCI and to update priorities for future operation.

Key Comments

There were literally hundreds of comments documented from the facilitated meetings and the web-survey representing different points of view and organizations. Obviously not all can be included in a report like this. There was commonality among many in terms of general concepts and the comments below are an attempt to capture some of those concepts. Some are in the words of specific participants because they portray ideas so well. Others are combinations of several comments that relate to the same idea but were stated differently.

- Create a “Switzerland” of scientific ideas and sharing; i.e., a forum or place that different opinions and information can be shared safely and discussed diplomatically.
- Be a center for true science, not political science as related to climate change; i.e., be sure information is accurate and not just opinions.
- Distill all the information about climate change, especially research/science, into something suitable for broad distribution and understanding.
- Create a “think tank” for addressing climate change issues.

- A think tank would be a good idea, but also needed is a “Do Tank”, an entity that does more than generate ideas or coordinate information—a “Do Tank” would promote and implement solutions in a timely manner.
- Do not try to be the “doer” of everything. There are many organizations getting things done already. Be a place for “doers” to come to obtain information and share ideas.
- Be an advocate for implementing mitigations and adaptations to address the effects of climate change (advocate action and how to take action). Advocate to the Legislature, to key interests, to educational institutions and to the public in general.
- Most organizations do not have adequate staff to keep attuned to all the information relating to climate change. Serve as the “information distiller” to help these organizations focus on the information that is most important; i.e., do not just create data bases of pertinent information. Catalog that information in ways that make it easy and efficient to access.
- Help develop guides (similar to Best Management Practices) for people to use to address mitigation and adaptation in their daily lives.
- There may be climate change efforts at the state level, but they tend to be “urban-centric” and will not adequately represent the Sierra Nevada region.
- Help bring Sierra Nevada counties together to address climate change in a synergistic way.
- Because of its extensive natural resource base, the Sierra Nevada region has huge potential for helping mitigate the effects of climate change. This can be a benefit to Sierra Nevada communities. Help communities develop plans to help the region and the state deal with climate change.
- Be a main, credible voice for climate change issues in the Sierra Nevada region.

APPENDIX E

Sample Strategy Development Outlines

This appendix includes sample project development outlines for potential projects as identified in the SN CAP. These projects are:

1. Strategy X – Energy Management and Production Plan for the Sierra Nevada
2. Strategy XX – Assessing and Quantifying the Climate Change Benefits of Various Conservation Practices

Strategy X – Energy Management and Production Plan for the Sierra Nevada**Intent:**

To redefine the discussion of fire/fuels management and biomass around the larger issue of energy production, linking possible actions to meeting the goals and objectives of a variety of existing energy programs (such as the Low Carbon Fuel Standard and the Renewable Portfolio Standard) and in doing so illuminating co-benefits and garnering non-traditional support (other agencies and programs not usually connected with forestry/wildfire issues). This approach connects the related climate issues in the water, local government/land use, forestry, waste, and energy sectors around goals and objectives that benefit them all (each sector has energy-related strategies).

Discussion:

Development of a cohesive region-wide perspective on energy, focusing on its use, management, and production will allow the Sierra Nevada to capitalize on many energy related opportunities. By assessing and actualizing the potential for the Region to become a power-producer, the Region's importance in solving State and Nation wide energy problems can be elevated and the potential to contribute to its own energy independence, the development of alternative fuels and "green jobs/technology," and the reduction of the State's use of non-renewable polluting fossil fuels can be identified. By developing the metrics that support the cost-benefit opportunities of the region in energy production (and secondarily, reducing consumption), with co-benefits in a variety of climate and environmental areas (land use, forestry health/ecosystem resilience, water, waste) we change the scale of the region's impact. In other words, the Region can be seen as a number of small counties and communities, and/or a disparate set of landowners and managers, and/or small business interests/opportunities -- or it can be seen as 25 million acres of energy generating potential. Furthermore, by becoming a regional player in the energy discussion the Sierra Nevada can become a larger voice in the debate regarding water storage, dam management and development, and hydroelectric power that protects natural resources while providing a small but significant source of energy to the State's portfolio. Finally, framing fire fuels management as an energy issue rather than a forestry or fire management issue helps to reduce the traditional silo-view of the problems associated with it and invites other decision makers and stakeholders to the table.

For the purposes of this proposal "energy management" includes two focus areas: fire danger reduction and energy conservation. "Energy production" includes the potential for biomass to energy, biomass to fuel, and the development and provision of energy

through other renewable sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, and small hydroelectric.

Fire fuels management and wildfire danger reduction is included here as a category of energy management because fire fuels are a significant source of energy. Whether that energy is wasted and released into the atmosphere, with health, environmental, and climate impacts, or is harvested and used as a productive, clean, and controlled source of energy is simply a matter of management practices. The same holds true for grid- or other fossil fuel based energy consumed by residents of the Sierra – the difference between the efficient use/reduction of demand and wasted resources (with commensurate unnecessary cost and environmental impacts) is simply a matter of operational practices.

Needs/Issues:

1) In order to represent the “power” of the Sierra Nevada Region we first must establish it. In order to do so we will need to assess its capacity, which will include (but is not limited to) gathering the following region-specific information:

- Possible sources of electricity generation, by type (biomass to energy-electricity/thermal/combined heat and power, biomass to fuel-cellulosic ethanol/bio-oil, solar, wind, geothermal, hydroelectric (resource:
- Estimated # bone dry tons (BDT) of biomass available for conversion to fuels (by land ownership) (resource:
- Estimated energy benefit of available BDT of biomass (by land ownership)
- Current CO₂e sequestered
- CO₂e sequestered via potential fire risk reduction measures
- Estimated BDT of biomass available from fire risk reduction measures for use as energy fuel stock

2) In order to determine progress and to provide focus to the effort we need to establish goals in each area, taking into consideration what the appropriate role of the SNC would be in these matters:

- Identify actions needed to increase acres treated by xx per year to reduce fire risk (could establish this by landowner category) and provide biomass fuel stock
- Identify actions needed to maintain acres currently treated to continue to maintain fire risk reductions (could establish this by landowner category) and provide on-going fuel feed stock
- Work with federal agencies to address federal lands issues regarding biomass management practices
- Coordinate with local and county representatives region-wide to expand Placer County’s biomass pilot project to xx additional counties by 20xx

-
- Coordinate with local and county representatives region-wide to replicate the communication and planning model of the Calaveras Collaborative to xx additional counties by 20xx
 - Work with xx local governments to increase CEC funding for Sierra Nevada-based renewable energy projects by \$500,000 per year

3) In order to provide motivation in meeting the established goals we must quantify the potential benefits, including but not limited to:

- CO₂e avoided
- CO₂e sequestered
- Dollar value of megawatts of potential available energy from these sources
- Criteria pollution reductions from provision of “clean” energy
- Funding available for these purposes
- Jobs created/preserved
- Ecosystem services preserved/enhanced
- Co-benefits toward goals of AB 32 sector scoping plans (land use/local government, waste, energy, agriculture, transportation); as well as the goals of the Low Carbon Fuel Standard and the Renewable Portfolio Standard

4) In order to determine issues to be addressed we must also identify problems/obstacles to meeting these goals.

- Costs/available resources
- Organizational/jurisdictional impediments
- Public support/education
- Uncertainties of modeling or estimation methods

Guiding Principles: Actions taken to develop and apply this strategy should:

- Ensure that all issues are identified and addressed before implementation. Resultant actions/plans should avoid “single issue” policy drivers that only affect one area (i.e., carbon vs. habitat vs. energy production). Actions should be based on balanced, reasoned considerations that work to improve the overall health and resiliency of the community, environment, economy and culture.
- Involve all members of the community in their consideration. To convert supplemental natural resources into energy and to reduce fire danger and carbon loss in the forests will require bringing federal, tribal, multiple state, county and city, non-governmental organizations, businesses/business representatives and impacted citizens to the table.

- Not be hindered by initial difficulties. This process addresses sensitive and complicated issues that will take time and the construction of
- Keep in mind that provision of energy production through the use of natural resource materials is a sensitive matter and has a long history of legal contentiousness and mistrust. All issues must be discussed and addressed in an open and transparent manner in order to restore trust and ensure broad cooperation.

Strategy XX – Assessing and Quantifying the Climate Change Benefits of Various Conservation Practices**Intent:**

To explore the potential benefits and possible initiation of a project to identify climate-related benefits of “sub-protocol” projects and practices. For these purposes the term “sub-protocol” refers to those projects for which it is too resource intensive or otherwise impractical to register with the Climate Reserve in order to define their carbon/climate benefits. The outcome of this project would be to develop measurement methodologies or tools (which could include but are not limited to “carbon calculators”) that would help project proponents to determine the relative climate benefits of their efforts. The intent of this strategy would not be to create methodologies that compete with the Climate Reserve. The outcomes of this effort would simply allow conservation managers and others to understand the relative climate benefits of their plans and practices, so that information can be transmitted to the public in an understandable and consistent manner.

Discussion:

Environmental management, protection and conservation organizations are, in general, unaware of how to determine or communicate the climate change benefits associated with their current conservation efforts. They know that their land management practices, easement/trust efforts, and restoration activities not only mitigate climate change impacts but they also facilitate adaptation to climate change impacts. Some of these benefits include:

- improved carbon capture and storage (mitigation)
- improved water quality, storage and supply (mitigation)
- reduction of catastrophic wildfire threat (mitigation)
- improved natural landscape health resulting in improved resiliency to increased thermal stressors (adaptation)
- increased resistance to invasive species (adaptation)
- protection of natural habitat which supports the survival of species and allows those species affected by a warming environment to migrate upward, as possible (adaptation)

The protocols being established by the Climate Reserve and other organizations that intend to accommodate carbon “trading” systems will help some projects measure and verify their carbon benefits. But most conservation organizations will not have the means or otherwise be able to meet the high and conservative “reporting” bar of the

protocols. Regardless, these programs and their projects can and do contribute significantly and positively to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and their impacts on the natural resources of the Sierra and the services they provide for the rest of California.

These organizations would benefit from a consistent and real, but more generalized “measure” of the climate outcomes of their programs by educating the public on the relative carbon values and impacts of their efforts. Efforts to stop and reverse climate impacts would benefit through a better understanding of the climate-related impacts of conservation and land management. Natural resources would benefit because a better understanding of the climate-related benefits of a broad range of conservation and management methodologies can lead to more effective application of those methodologies to a broader landscape.

Needs/Issues:

A need exists to identify existing resources and to develop a Sierra-related methodology that will uniformly measure the climate benefits of a vast array of conservation efforts, including but not limited to:

- Conservation through easements and trusts
- Adaptive land management
- Avoided land conversion and “Smart” land use planning
- Habitat/natural resource restoration
- Fire fuel load reduction
- Various other voluntary, public, and private efforts to protect the environment

Potential “cons” of this proposal may include:

- Measurements may not be real/accurate (the generalization applied could dilute potential benefit for any given landscape or could overstate the benefits of one measure over another)
- Measurements may be manipulated (applied inappropriately, exaggerated) resulting in harm, not protection, and in skewing funds and resources away from real protective measures
- Planning decisions may be overly focused on singular issues, such as carbon sequestration, rather than holistic efforts that improve forest and working landscape health and benefits

Guiding Principles: Actions taken to develop and apply this strategy should:

Include working with all interested private and public organizations to identify the appropriate scope of and all potential issues related to such a project.

- Identify potential funding and research partners to carry it out.
- Include guidelines in the use of resultant tools such as “carbon calculators” and the appropriate application of resulting information (including caveats and/or limits).

APPENDIX F

Samples of Model City, County, and Regional Climate Action Plans and Policies

The **City of South Lake Tahoe** has acknowledged that “Mountain Communities are quite unique when it comes to the opportunities and challenges of incorporating green initiatives and sustainability. Climate, seasons, aspect, erosion, vegetation, growing season and solar exposure play an important role in defining unique opportunities for sustainability.” In response to these challenges the City has created a [Sustainability Plan](#), engaging the public in a community-based process designed to be inclusive, interactive and informed. The City of SLT’s Sustainability Plan includes programs focused on reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and climate change impacts. Energy conservation and reducing the City’s carbon footprint will take concerted efforts by the public and private sectors. The concept of sustainability will guide City policy, programs and projects. The long-term impacts of policy choices will be considered to ensure a sustainable legacy. The City is committed to meeting its existing needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Plan builds on existing projects, programs and policies and sustainability strategy, tailored to the specific needs, challenges and opportunities of the City. There are over 35 projects and programs in progress that will help move the City and region toward a sustainable future including:

- Supporting “Green” transit (low and zero-emission transit)
- Focusing on a mix of land uses that support transit use
- Emphasizing infill instead of Greenfield development
- Using alternative energy sources and infrastructure investment
- Incorporating “Cradle to cradle” design solutions and green building for new construction
- Planning for infrastructure that improves water and air quality
- Working with the public and private sector to reduce energy use in all buildings including residential, commercial and industrial properties

The **City of San Francisco’s** [Climate Action](#) Plan is a primer on climate change and its effects on an urban environment, addressing the causes of climate change, its impacts on San Francisco, existing mandates to curb climate change, San Francisco’s

greenhouse gas inventory and reduction target, and an action plan to meet the City's reduction goals. Areas the plan addresses include:

1. Transportation – public transit, driving disincentives, use of alternative modes of transportation
2. Energy efficiency – incentives, disincentives, technical assistance in residential, commercial, and municipal building efficiency, education and outreach, codes and standards changes
3. Renewable energy – including solar, wind, and biomass project development and pilot projects for emerging technologies, supporting green power purchasing
4. Solid Waste – recycling, composting, including residential, commercial, and construction demolition debris, innovative collection techniques, source reduction programs.

San Francisco estimates that by implementing this plan fully they will reduce annual CO2 emissions by 2.6 million tons.

The **Bay Area Climate Change Collaborative** (BACCC) was created in March 2009. The purpose of the BACCC is found in its simple two-page [Charter](#), which states “No one agency, company or organization’s actions alone can effectively address the challenge of climate change. We recognize the profound need for cross-sector, regional collaboration to promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other best practices at the regional, State and Federal levels to address the challenge of climate change. The Bay Area Climate Change Collaborative brings together leaders from government, the business community, academia, and not-for-profit advocacy groups to address the challenge of climate change across the region to best meet these challenges and sustain our quality of life.

Its members are the Cities of Oakland, San Francisco and San Jose, the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, the Bay Area Council, the Joint Venture Silicon Valley, and Santa Clara County. These organizations and agencies signed a compact that specifies ten measurable goals in such areas as renewable energy, zero emission vehicles, municipal and organizational climate adaptation plans and workforce training for the new clean and green economy:

1. Establish a standard for “baseline” green building and rooftop solar by the end of 2010.

2. Change transportation patterns to reduce gasoline consumption 3 percent by the end of 2013; and 8 percent by the end of 2018.
3. Increase renewable sources of electricity by 30 percent by the end of 2013 and by 50 percent by the end of 2018.
4. Through conservation and energy efficiency, reduce electricity use in buildings by 10 percent by the end of 2013 and 15 percent by the end of 2018.
5. Increase the available blue and white collar “clean and green workforce” course/trainings and help place 20,000 trainees and graduates in the labor force by the end of 2013.
6. Decrease community water consumption by 15 percent by the end of 2013 and 20 percent by the end of 2018. Increase water recycling by 10 percent by the end of 2013 and 15 percent by the end of 2018.
7. Develop and adopt climate adaptation plans by the end of 2013 to increase resiliency to the impacts of climate change.
8. Implement a region-wide public information campaign by the end of 2010.
9. Increase solid waste diversion from landfills to 75 percent by the end of 2013, and achieve zero waste by the end of 2020.
10. Increase the number of zero emission and other ultra-low emission vehicles to 10 percent of municipal fleets by the end of 2013, and to 25 percent by the end of 2018.

The **San Diego Association of Governments** (SANDAG) (representing 18 cities and county government) serves as the forum for regional decision-making. SANDAG builds consensus, makes strategic plans, obtains and allocates resources, plans, engineers, and builds public transportation, and provides information on a broad range of topics pertinent to the region's quality of life. The SANDAG Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP) will include an inventory of regional GHG emissions, establish an emissions reduction target for 2030 and identify policy and planning methods to meet the target. It will focus on the largest emitting sectors: transportation and energy. In 2007 SANDAG published the [Background Report on Climate Action Plans](#) is a helpful resources which describes the CAPs at that time of Chula Vista CA, King County WA, Los Angeles CA, Portland-Multnomah County OR, San Diego CA, San Francisco CA, and Santa Monica CA. This report also lists Mitigation Best Practices from those plans

in ground transportation, buildings and industry, solid waste, aviation and freight, sequestration and offsets, and policy and education.

The **South Coast Air Quality Management District** (SCAQMD) has created a [Climate Change Policy](#), which guides their regional program to identify, certify, and reduce greenhouse gases in their region and within their jurisdiction. The SCAQMD policy includes guidance on coordinating with other jurisdictions' climate change programs, sharing their experiences and lessons learned with their own command and control market based rules, weigh in on legislative proposals, prioritization of projects to include reduction of ghgs (as appropriate), help to define and assist in establishing significance thresholds and mitigating ghg emissions within the CEQA process, include ghg strategies, compliant with AB 32, into their local government guidance document, update the South Coast Air Basin ghg inventory and help local governments to update theirs, reduce their own operational ghg emissions, provide multi-lingual educational materials on climate change and available actions to reduce ghgs and conduct various climate change related conferences. At the direction of their board they have created the [SoCal Climate Solutions Exchange](#), in order to provide high quality greenhouse gas emission reductions that enhance the local economy and capture needed co-benefits for Southern California as businesses achieve voluntary, early reductions of greenhouse gases.

Sonoma County's [Climate Action Plan](#) states that it is "...in essence, a public works project to meet Sonoma County's bold goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2015. All nine Sonoma cities and the County established this goal in 2005." The four major categories of the Sonoma County plan include:

1. Efficiency First: Invest in widespread energy and water efficiency to reduce demand.
2. Smart Transit and Land Use: Shift transportation from fossil fuel vehicles to transit, walking, bicycling, and electric vehicles.
3. Power Up Locally: Invest in Sonoma County renewable energy sources and jobs.
4. Conserve and Capture: Protect our forests and farmland, sequestering carbon, and convert waste into energy.

In 2007 several large counties from across the country joined the Sierra Club in announcing the creation of the [Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration](#), a

major initiative to combat global warming. The counties - led by King County, Washington, Fairfax County, Virginia, and Nassau County, New York - pledged to reduce global warming emissions 80 percent by 2050, an achievable average annual reduction of 2 percent. The Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration also urges the federal government to adopt legislation requiring an 80 percent emissions reduction by 2050 and calls for fuel economy standards to be raised to 35 miles per gallon within a decade. On July 16, 2007 at the National Association of Counties Annual Conference in Richmond, Virginia, 12 pioneering counties representing 17 million people launched "Cool Counties." The Cool Counties initiative seeks to marshal the resources of all 3,066 counties across the nation to address the challenges climate change poses to our communities. Participating counties commit to four smart actions:

1. reducing our own contributions to climate change through our internal operations;
2. demonstrating regional leadership to achieve climate stabilization and protect our communities;
3. helping our community become climate resilient;
4. urging the federal government to support our efforts.

As of December 2007 nearly 40 counties had joined in taking this pledge. Six of these counties were from California; none were counties within the Sierra Nevada.

The **California Air Pollution Control Officers Association** has created a report to assist cities and counties to address climate change in their general plans. **CAPCOA's Model Policies for Greenhouse Gases in General Plans** is available on their [website](#). CAPCOA summarized the intent of its efforts:

"The General Plans developed and implemented by cities and counties must be at the heart of any effort to change our built environment, and many of these local governments have stepped up to the challenge. In order to support their important efforts, the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) has prepared this report of Model Policies for Greenhouse Gases in General Plans. The report is intended to serve as a resource for cities and counties. It discusses General Plan structure and options for including GHG policies in existing General Plan Elements, or by creating a separate GHG Element and/or GHG Reduction Plan. The Model Policies Report contains a menu of model language for inclusion in the General Plan Element(s). The report does not dictate policy decisions rather it

provides cities and counties with an array of options to help them address GHGs in their General Plans.”

Chapter 2 “Climate Change Statutes and Regulations in California” of this plan includes an excellent listing of State climate change requirements that “...create a strong foundation upon which General Plan elements for GHGs can be built.” Various appendices of this report include additional helpful information.

The [Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative](#) (RGGI) is a cooperative effort by ten Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states to limit greenhouse gas emissions. RGGI is the first mandatory, market-based CO₂ emissions reduction program in the United States. The states of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont are signatory states to the RGGI agreement. These ten states will cap CO₂ emissions from the power sector, and then require a 10 percent reduction in these emissions by 2018. RGGI is composed of individual CO₂ Budget Trading Programs in each of the ten participating states. These ten programs are implemented through state regulations, based on a RGGI Model Rule, and are linked through CO₂ allowance reciprocity. Regulated power plants will be able to use a CO₂ allowance issued by any of the ten participating states to demonstrate compliance with the state program governing their facility. Taken together, the ten individual state programs will function as a single regional compliance market for carbon emissions.

The [Western Climate Initiative](#), launched in February 2007, is a collaboration of seven U.S. governors and four Canadian Premiers. The WCI identifies, evaluates, and implements collective and cooperative ways to reduce greenhouse gases in the region, focusing on a market-based cap-and-trade system.

Oregon’s **Metro** (an elected regional government, serving more than 1.4 million residents in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties and the 25 cities in the Portland region) [Climate Change Action Plan](#) is aimed at establishing regional greenhouse gas emissions, documenting regional goals, and working with regional constituents to create new goals and identify ways to meet them.



**Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in,
where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.**

John Muir

Background

Funding for the SNC currently comes from two sources: the operation of the organization is funded from the state's Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF) and Proposition 84 bond funds (limited to 5% of the total allocation); grants are funded from Proposition 84 bond funds. Both types of funding—funds appropriated for operations and Proposition 84 bond funds—are limited in their uses. In addition, overall funding for the SNC from these sources will decline over time as the organization expends all of its Proposition 84 funds and may decline further if funding from the ELPF is reduced in future years due to a declining fund balance.

The anticipated decline in funding from current sources and limits on the uses of that funding prompted the Board to establish a Future Funding Board Committee at its meeting in October of 2008. The Committee, comprised of Boardmembers Wilensky and Sher, reported to the Board at its meeting in December 2008, noting that the Committee had asked staff to continue to evaluate other organizations as potential models for funding and that staff continue to evaluate funding in four areas:

- Identifying additional sources of funding and developing partnerships with other agencies;
- Ensuring support of the SNC in future bond ballot measures;
- Considering a "fee for service" model, where the SNC is reimbursed by other organizations for services rendered; and
- Increasing public and private partnerships outside the Region by targeting urban areas that benefit from SNC funded projects

Current Status

As reported under Agenda Item VIId, SNC staff continues to evaluate other potential sources of funding for the organization and for our partners throughout the Region. Our current focus with regard to potential grant or foundation funding for the SNC is on finding funding for existing organizational initiatives such as climate change and system indicators.

In addition, staff has been working diligently over the last several weeks to provide information to the Legislature relevant to the development of a new state water bond, including information on the status of SNC funding, the benefits to the Region and the state of SNC funded projects, and the identified needs within the Region for additional project funding. Staff has been supported in these efforts by members of the Board, local government representatives within the Region, and other stakeholders. At the time this staff report was written, SBX7 2 (Cogdill) has been signed by the Governor. This bond measure, which contains \$75 million dollars for the SNC, will be on the November 2010 ballot. While the SNC and its partners were successful in obtaining

funding in the water bond bill, the amount of funding continues to lag significantly behind other geographic areas in the state.

SCN staff has also initiated an effort to increase partnerships outside the Region, developing an outreach plan for this fiscal year that targets foundations, state and federal government organizations, and statewide and national interest groups that benefit from or have an interest in the protection and enhancement of the resources within the Sierra Nevada.

The SNC has not pursued the “fee for service” option except for the ongoing discussions with the Stewardship Council.

Next Steps

SNC staff will continue to look for funding for specific organizational initiatives. In addition, staff has already begun implementation of the outreach plan and will be meeting with a number of potential partners in the San Francisco Bay Area during the second week in December.

Recommendation

No action by the Board is necessary, although the Chair may wish to reconstitute the Future Funding Board Committee to advise staff on ongoing activities. Staff also welcomes direction and/or suggestions to staff regarding efforts to secure additional future funding for the SNC.