

Background

In September 2011, the Board adopted a new Strategic Plan (Plan), which establishes objectives for the SNC within five areas of focus and lays out the strategies the organization will employ in meeting those objectives. The five areas of focus are:

- Healthy Forests
- Preservation of Ranches and Agricultural Lands
- Watershed Protection and Restoration
- Promotion of Sustainable Tourism and Recreation
- Long-term Effectiveness of the SNC

Meeting Plan objectives requires that the organization take a number of specific actions each year in support of the strategies included in the Plan. These actions are to be included in an annual Action Plan. Input received from the Board, stakeholders and staff in strategic planning workshops throughout the Region and numerous meetings held over a year-long period not only served as the basis for the new Strategic Plan, but will also serve as the basis for the Action Plans as well.

Current Status

While staff had planned to have a first Action Plan in support of the new Strategic Plan ready to present to the Board at its December meeting, staff has not been able to complete the resource analysis required to develop a meaningful plan due to other pressing workloads, including soliciting and responding to a surprisingly large number of pre-applications for the 2011-12 Healthy Forests Grant Program.

However, while the staff continues our efforts to develop a thoughtful and realistic Action Plan, we will continue with a number of ongoing efforts to implement the strategies and achieve the objectives laid out in the Strategic Plan. Most of these efforts are being undertaken in accordance with prior direction given by the Board. Others are foundational and/or time sensitive in meeting Strategic Plan objectives. The key projects that will be the focus of staff time and attention between now and the presentation of the Action Plan to the Board in March are the:

- 2011-12 Healthy Forests Grant Program—staff will conduct site visits, work with grant applicants to develop full applications by the January deadline, and begin the project evaluation process.
- Sierra Nevada Forest and Communities Initiative—staff will continue to support local collaboratives and work with stakeholders at the regional level to address state and federal policy issues and research and assessment needs.
- Sierra Nevada System Indicators Project—staff will complete the System Indicators report on Water and Air Quality and Climate.
- Mokelumne Watershed Environmental Benefits Projects—staff will work on getting key parties signed onto to participate in the avoided cost analysis study, draft and circulate a Request for Proposal and hire contractors to support project implementation.

- Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project—staff will begin the second phase of marketing for the project and contract for the procurement of mobile applications for the web site.
- Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council—staff may enter into the first of several agreements to serve as a covenant holder on lands donated to the US Forest Service.
- External Outreach—staff will continue to work with stakeholders to reach out to decision-makers in Sacramento and will increase outreach to those involved with ranching and agriculture in the Region in order to assess needs and aid in the development of the 2012-13 Grant Program.
- Funding Development—staff will continue to work with an outside contractor to develop opportunities to bring additional funding to the Region and the SNC.
- State Water Plan—staff will work with agencies and stakeholders to continue representing Sierra interests in two statewide water planning efforts, including developing the Mountain Counties Overlay regional report, proposed management strategies and financing options for the *California Water Plan Update 2013*, and providing input to the *Delta Plan*.
- IT Systems Improvement—staff will continue to implement improvements to SNC's information technology systems, including updating its Web site to a new state template and building additional functionality into our internal tools.

Next Steps

Staff will continue the development of an Action Plan to bring to the Board in March 2012. The Action Plan will be a 15-month plan that covers the period from March 2012 to June 2013. Subsequent plans will be developed on an annual basis aligned with the state's fiscal year.

Recommendation

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