WELCOME

TO THE SIXTH

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY Board Meeting

Thursday,
JUNE 1, 2006
9:00 a.m.

AUBURN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
1225 LINCOLN WAY
AUBURN, CA. 95603

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

May 31, 2006
Field Trip and Reception

12:00 p.m. – Members of the Board and staff will participate in a field trip reviewing various watershed issues in Placer and Nevada counties. The field trip will begin at the Holiday Inn Express, 120 Grass Valley Highway, Auburn with a brief overview of the field trip. We will then proceed to the Happy Apple Kitchen, 18532 Colfax Highway, Chicago Park and a number of locations in the Bear River watershed. The field trip will conclude at approximately 4:00 p.m. (Members of the public are responsible for their own transportation; however limited space is available on vans that will be leaving the Holiday Inn Express at approximately 12:15. Those wishing to reserve a spot on the vans should call 530-823-4670 to determine if space is available. Lunch will not be provided for members of the public).

5:00 p.m. – Members of the Board and staff will participate in a reception celebrating the opening of the SNC headquarters at 11521 Blocker Drive, Auburn California. The reception is opened to the public, an RSVP to 530-823-4670 by May 26, 2006 would be appreciated.

June 1, 2006 9:00 a.m.
Board Meeting
1225 Lincoln Way
Auburn, California

BOARD AGENDA

I. Call to Order

II. Chairman's Report
- **A. Introduction of new board members**

III. Roll Call

IV. Approval of December 2, 2005 Meeting Minutes

V. Approval of February 23, 2006 Meeting Minutes

VI. Executive Officer's Report
- **A. Staffing and Administrative Update**
- **B. Budget Update**
- **C. Legislative Update**
- **D. Sierra Cascade Grant Update**
- **D. Conservancy Logo Project**

VII. Deputy Attorney General's Report

VIII. Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council

The Board will be briefed on the status of the Stewardship Council by Executive Director Jayne Battey. The Stewardship Council is a private, nonprofit organization that was established in 2004 as part of the settlement of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) bankruptcy. More

information on the Stewardship Council can be found on its website, at www.stewardshipcouncil.org.

IX. Central Sub Region Counties Overview

Representatives for each county will provide the Board with a brief overview of key information regarding their county, including significant issues in the area of the SNC's mission.

Placer County
El Dorado County
Nevada County
Yuba County

X. SNC Data Inventory Project

The SNC Board will be briefed on the status of the SNC Data Inventory Project. This project was conducted by Sierra Connections under contract with the Resources Legacy Fund Foundation with the information gathered provided to the SNC for its use. The information is consistent with the requirements of Public Resources Code 33345 and includes a wide variety of plans developed by public agencies across the region. This is an information item only.

XI. Strategic Plan

Consideration and possible direction to the Executive Officer on the development of a strategic plan to guide the SNC's actions over the next five years. The Board will review the draft plan, including consideration of public comments received through the 6 public workshops and other communications with the SNC. The Board will consider recommendations from the Strategic Planning sub committee

and staff and may provide direction to the Executive Officer relative to changes to the plan.

XII. Board Members' Comments

XIII. Public Comments

XIV. Adjournment

Staff reports on individual agenda items are now available on the SNC website at www.sierranevada.ca.gov. For more information, write to:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy,
11521 Blocker Drive
Auburn, California 95603
or call Eileen Pope at (530) 823-4670.

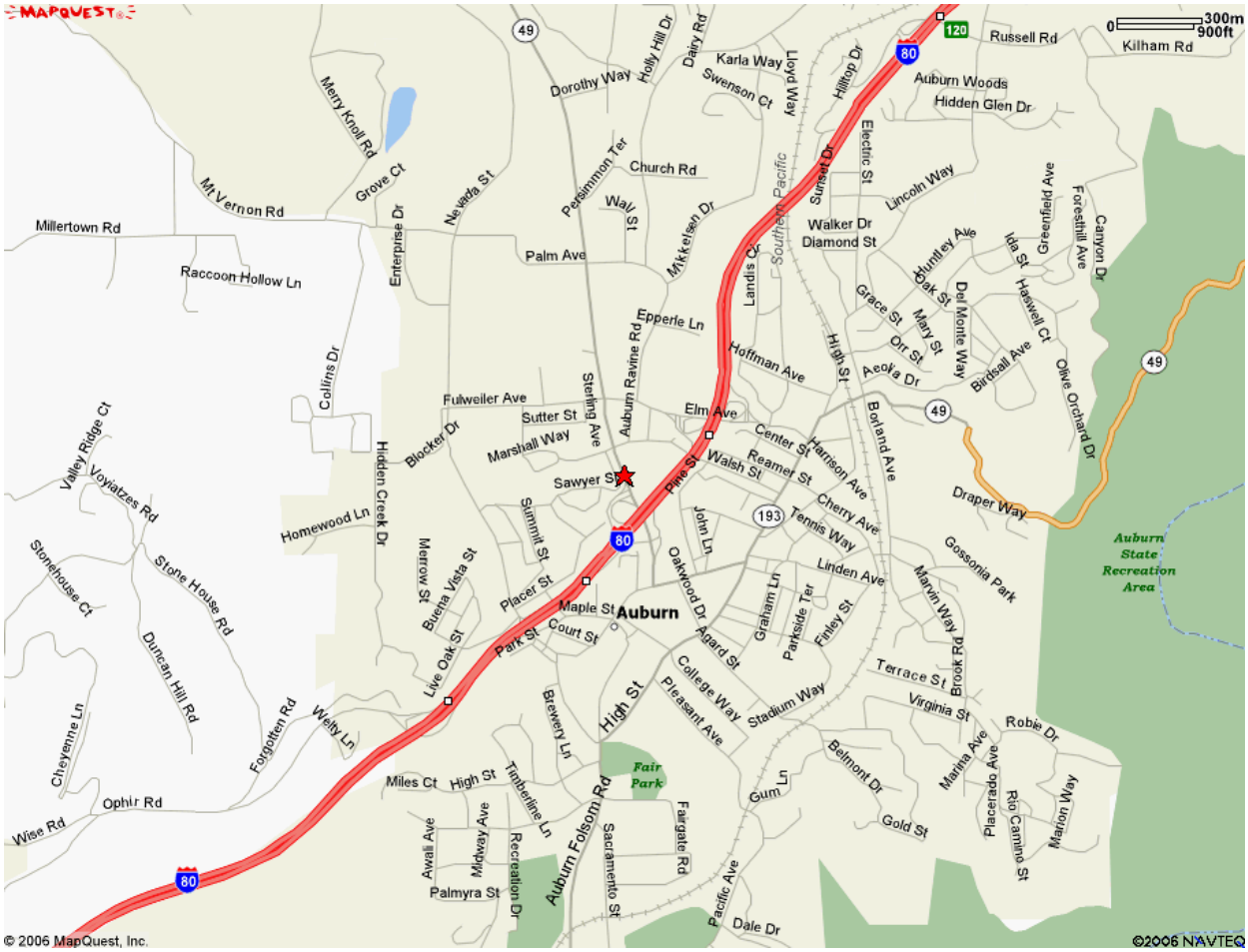
Closed Session: Following or at any time during the meeting, the Conservancy may recess or adjourn to closed session to consider pending or potential litigation; property negotiations; or personnel-related matters. Authority: Government Code Section 11126(a), (c)(7), or (e).

NOTES:
In accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, reasonable accommodations are available. Requests for reasonable accommodations should be made at least five working days in advance of the meeting date. To request reasonable accommodations, including documents in alternative formats, please call 530-823-4670

Holiday Inn Express
120 Grass Valley Hwy
Auburn, CA 95603-4500

Lodging for SNC Board Members
Board Tour to Commence
May 31, 2006 at Noon

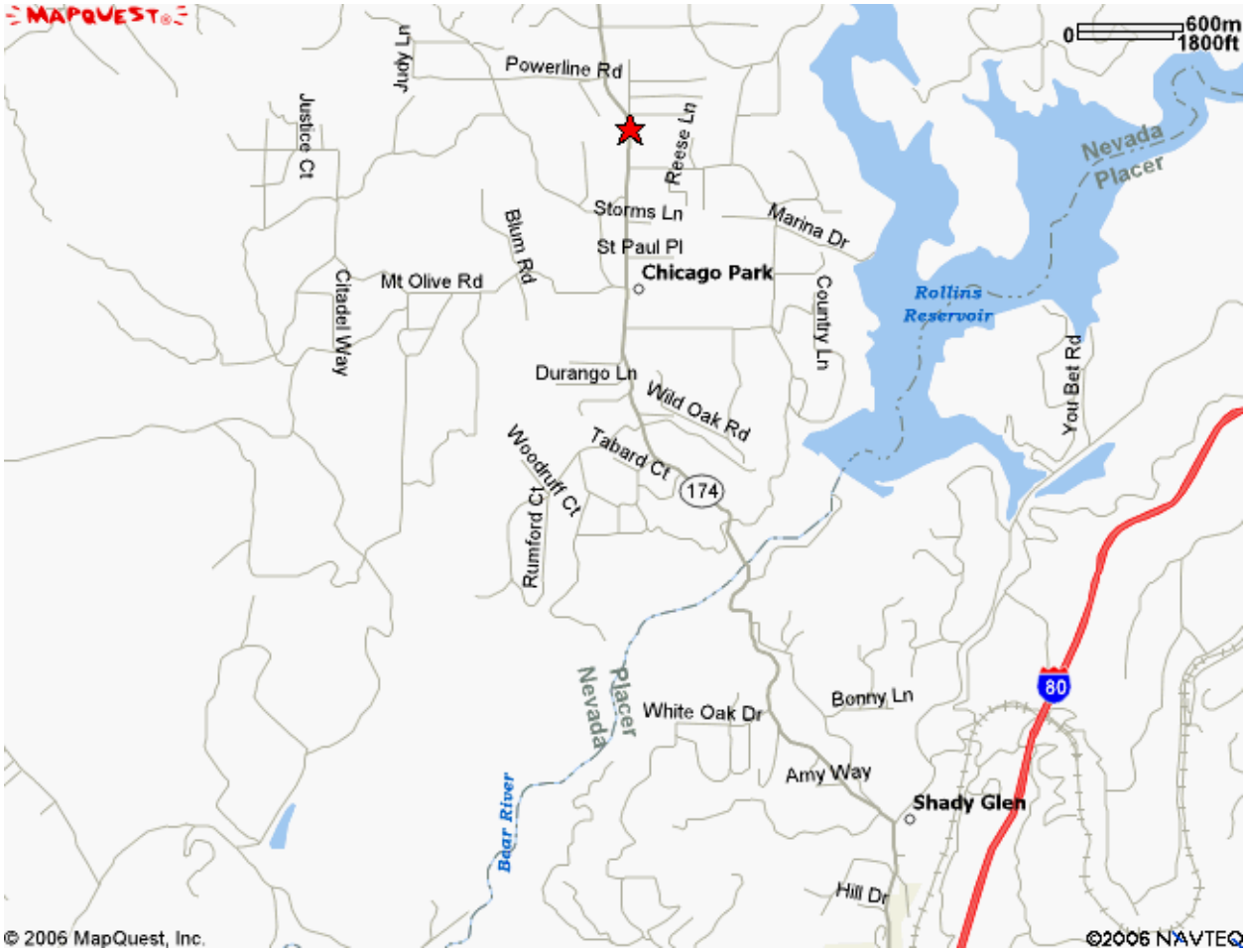
<u>Holiday Inn Express</u>
From I-80, take Highway 49 north, make an immediate right into Holiday Inn Express parking lot, above In N Out Burger.



Happy Apple Kitchen
18532 Colfax Hwy
Grass Valley, CA 95945-9619

SNC Board Tour Lunch
On May 31, 2006

From I-80, take Highway 174 north towards Grass Valley, proceed approximately 4.5 miles.

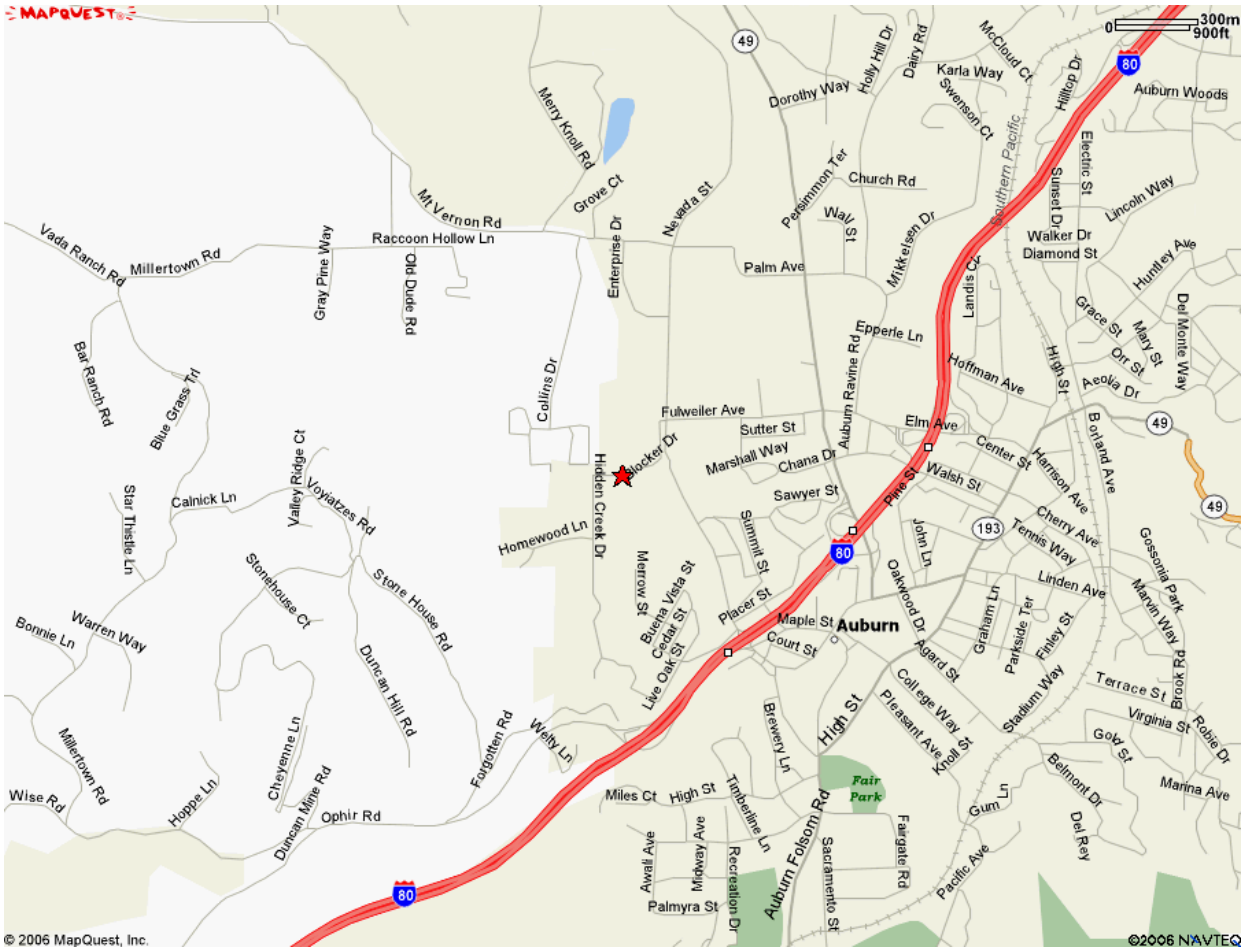


Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Dr
Auburn, CA 95603

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Headquarters Grand Opening
Commencing May 31, 2006 at 5:00 PM

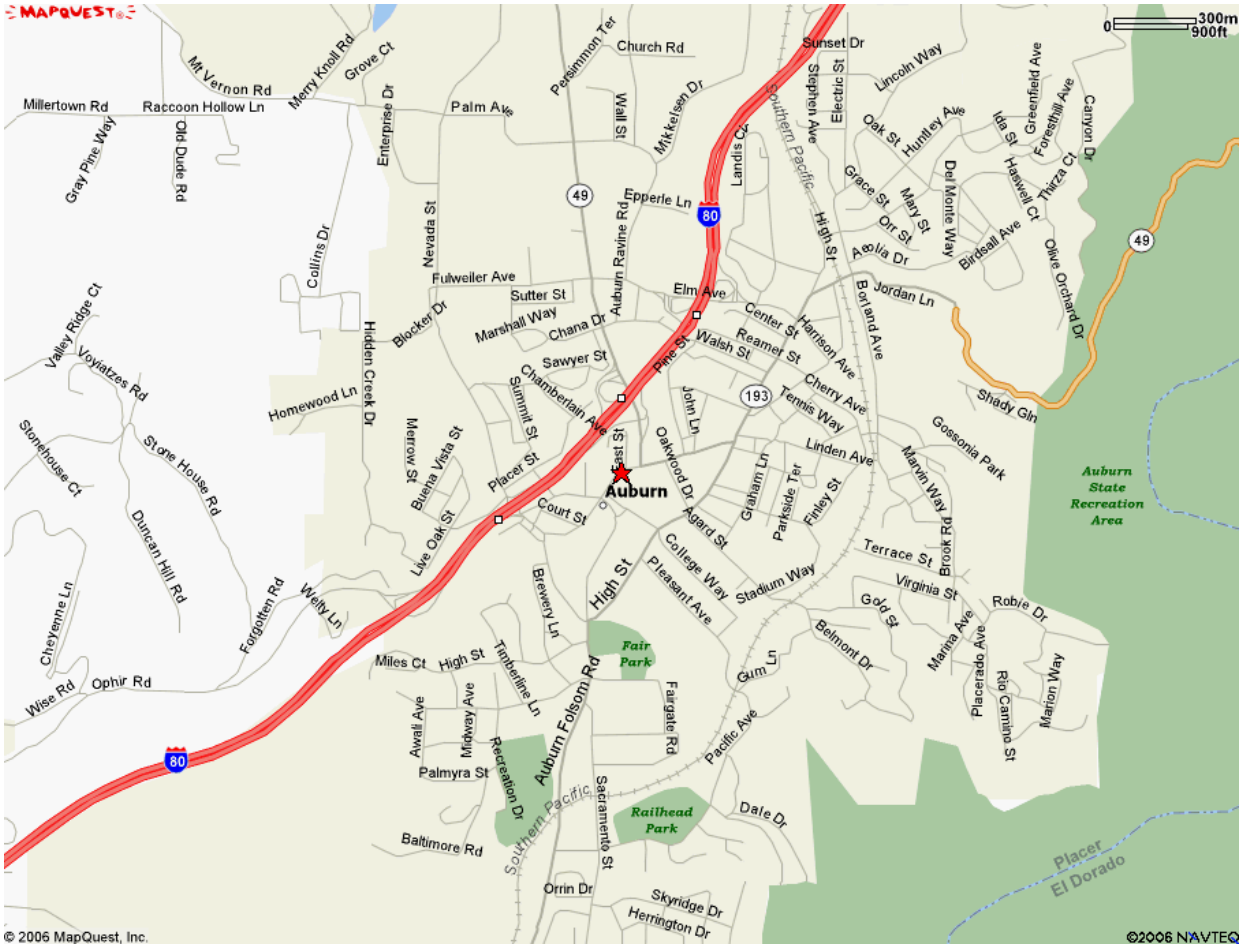
<u>SNC Office</u>

From I-80, take Hwy 49 exit and proceed north, then left on Fulweiler, across Nevada St., proceed straight across, veer left to Blocker, across RR, right into Creekside.



Auburn City Council Chambers
1225 Lincoln Way
Auburn, CA 95603-5004

<u>Auburn City Council Chambers</u>
From I-80, take the Highway 49 exit, proceed south to intersection of Lincoln Way. City Hall is at intersection; parking in back.



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SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2005

LOCATION: Resources Auditorium
1416 Ninth Street, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

12/2/05 BOARD MINUTES

I. **Call to Order –** Chairman Mike Chrisman called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

II. **Roll Call –** all members present, except Carol Whiteside, Brian Dahle, Lee Stetson and Bob Waterston. Fred Klass attending for the Department of Finance, Brent Handley attending for the U.S. Forest Service.

III. **Approval of the minutes of the September 29, 2005 meeting –** John Gussman advised that the minutes should reflect the swearing in of new Board member Brissenden**. Fred Klass moved, and Kim Yamaguchi seconded, approval of minutes as amended. Motion passed without objection.**

IV. **Chairman's report**
   A. Chairman Chrisman announced that, after the interviews of candidates during closed session, the Board unanimously selected Jim Branham as the first Executive Officer of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.
   B. Chairman Chrisman announced the expiring terms of Board members Stetson, Yamaguchi and Waterston (which expire 12/31/2005). The subregions will need to officially notify the Conservancy as to who will serve the new terms beginning January 1, 2006, prior to the February 2006 meeting.
   C. Kim Yamaguchi inquired about the 2006 meeting schedule. Jim Branham suggested the last Thursday in February for the next meeting, and indicated that a full meeting schedule would be proposed later.

V. **Deputy Attorney General's Report**

A. Deputy Attorney General Christine Sproul indicated she had no report, but expected to present conflict-of-interest regulations for the Board's consideration and possible adoption at the next meeting.

VI. **Staff Report**

A. Executive Officer introduction and report: Jim Branham introduced himself and expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to shape the foundation of the Conservancy. He has been traveling in the region and is impressed with the number of people who have energy, enthusiasm and good ideas. He indicated he wants to work cooperatively with the Conservancy's Federal partners and sister State agencies. He thanked Eileen Pope, and Secretary Chrisman and staff, including Crawford Tuttle, Dave Willis and Penny Harding. He also thanked Ray Lacey and John Gussman, from the Tahoe Conservancy, who were instrumental in organizing and running the outreach meetings throughout the region. He particularly wanted to acknowledge the remarkable contributions of Dennis Machida to the Tahoe Conservancy, and said that Dennis was his model.

B. Staffing Plan – Jim Branham introduced Eileen Pope as the new Administrative Chief, coming to SNC from a career in State service including the Department of Finance, the Treasurer's Office, and the Tahoe Conservancy. SNC is fortunate to have her experience, enthusiasm and energy. No additional staff hirings are anticipated until the SNC has chosen the location of a headquarters office within the Region.

C. Agreements and Contracts – Attorney John Gussman gave a quick update on several interagency agreements and contracts:

1. Two interagency agreements will be signed in the near future:
    a. Tahoe Conservancy and Sierra Nevada Conservancy, for travel expense reimbursement and related costs. This agreement is retroactive to the start of the fiscal year.
    b. Tahoe Conservancy and Sierra Nevada Conservancy for technical consultation and related services of Tahoe Conservancy staff (including John Gussman and Ray Lacey), not to exceed $50,000. This agreement is for calendar year 2005, and is terminable on short notice if the agreement does not continue to serve the needs of either conservancy
2. Strategic Planning Process proposal envisions a contract with one or more consultants, to prepare the initial discussion documents and draft of a strategic plan (more on this later in the meeting).
3. Staffing Consultation – we are in preliminary discussions with CPS regarding personnel services and consulting with public agencies. CPS will be helpful in analyzing staffing patterns in other, like agencies.

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D. Sierra Nevada Conservancy logo – Jim Branham indicated that the Conservancy should consider sponsoring a contest involving the educational community, to develop a logo for SNC. The SNC Board would maintain final editorial control, but this is another way to involve the community, particularly young people, which embodies our broad mission of outreach. He would bring the specifics of the contest to the next Board meeting and would like to implement this contest during the current school year. Discussion ensued regarding selection of submissions from among the top five; incentives for contestants (perhaps we might partner with others who could provide a benefit for the winning contestants), such as a computer for their school); the potential for an interesting array of submissions from such a contest; and the trademark issue. Christine Sproul said that we could be prepared to deal with that issue up front.

E. Proposed Meeting Schedule – Jim Branham proposed that the SNC Board meetings be held quarterly, on the last Thursday of the month, except for November. He indicated that it would be important for the Board meetings and/or workshops to be held throughout the region, so that all regions would have the opportunity to be involved in the Conservancy's deliberative and decision-making processes. Discussion ensued regarding exceptions to this schedule (i.e., August being difficult, due to vacations, etc.; the 4th Thursday in September is a possible alternative); and the potential conflicts with other organizations. The Board selected February 23, May 25, July 27, September 28 and December 7 as meeting dates during 2006. (Note: the May 25 date was subsequently changed to June 1.)

VII. **Consideration and possible adoption of a general delegation of authority to the Executive Officer**. John Gussman explained that the Board packet included a lengthy resolution and that he would not go through it in detail. In brief, the enabling legislation empowers the Board to employ an Executive Officer; however, the ultimate decision-making authority remains with the Board, except to the extent that the Board delegates that authority. The purpose of this resolution is to delegate to the Executive Officer and, through him, to the rest of the staff, all the day-to-day functions, responsibilities and duties necessary to carry out the mission of the Conservancy. If adopted, the resolution leaves with the Board all policy decisions of the conservancy (rulemaking, policy decisions, etc.). The Executive Officer will be delegated broad authority in the areas of personnel, budget, and administration, with authority to enter into contracts for administrative purposes and to carry out any prior action

or authorization of the Board. In addition, the Executive Officer would have authority to enter into contracts for purposes of program and project planning up to a limit of $50,000 per contract. Discussion ensued regarding the Board's reserved authority. It was noted that the Board has the right to amend or rescind the delegation at any time. Ms. Sproul suggested that the Executive Officer be delegated authority to conduct hearings for purposes of rulemaking, with the understanding that the authority to adopt regulations remains with the Board. Board discussion focused on Items #13 (modification of grants), #14 (regulations) and #18 (non-litigation claims). In response to questions from Board member Sher and others, it was explained that the present recommendation draws on the experience and practice of the Coastal, Tahoe, and other conservancies. Following the Board members' comments, Mr. Branham and Mr. Gussman suggested that Item #13 of the proposed resolution, dealing with the Executive Officer's authority to modify existing grants, be deleted.

Kim Yamaguchi moved and Bob Kirkwood seconded, a motion to adopt the delegation of authority with the deletion of Item #13; with the addition of language to Item #14 permitting the Executive Officer to hold public hearings; and with the addition of language in Item #18, comparable to the last part of Item #17c. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Discussion and possible action on a proposed 2006 strategic program planning process and timeline. Jim Branham referred to the process for developing the strategic plan (in the packet), with a target date of July 2006 for an approved plan, and providing for an annual review of the plan. Chairman Chrisman indicated the preliminary draft would be presented at the spring meeting, and that public workshops would be held, with a goal of final Board adoption of the plan in July. Jim Branham explained that the framework would be set at the February meeting; then the consultant would be hired; then, after February, the public hearing process would be initiated (including outreach through the web for public input). The process would conclude at the Board meeting scheduled for the end of May. Discussion ensued regarding legal requirements of developing a strategic plan, other conservancies' plans, the similarities and differences between the strategic plan and a local general plan, and how this process fits with hiring staff, etc. **Bob Kirkwood moved and BJ Kirwan seconded, a motion to adopt the strategic planning process, as presented in the staff report. The motion passed unanimously**. **BJ Kirwan and John Brissenden were appointed to serve as a subcommittee to assist staff with the strategic planning process.**

IX. **Discussion and possible action on proposed process and timeline for selection of Conservancy headquarters office.** Jim Branham

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indicated the importance of locating the office soon, as this will affect his ability to hire staff. He also indicated the importance of being headquartered in the region that the Conservancy serves. Patrick Foster of DGS indicated that they are going forward with an inventory in the project area for potential interim and permanent offices. At the same time, the Conservancy, through media and local government channels, is going through its own search process. Discussion ensued regarding criteria for a location, the pros and cons of leasing vs. building own offices, travel radius between the interim headquarters location and the future, permanent site; the possibility of developing satellite offices; etc. **Fred Klass moved and Bob Kirkwood seconded a motion to proceed with the office space search as presented in the staff report. The motion passed unanimously. Brian Dahle and Linda Arcularius were appointed to serve as a subcommittee to assist on this matter.**

X. **Final report on the 2005 subregional outreach sessions.** Ray Lacey thanked Secretary Chrisman, the hosting supervisors, the Sierra Business Council, the Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC) and the staff of the Tahoe Conservancy for their vital roles in carrying out these subregional outreach sessions, indicating there is a complete report of all the findings in the Board packets and on the web site. The recurring themes are: (1) the consistent message of working with local jurisdictions and their existing plans (counties, special districts, cities, etc.); (2) working in smaller communities to build capacity, applying for grants, providing technical and staff assistance with the grant application process itself; (3) recognition of the resources issues (i.e., sustainable forest practices means different things to different stakeholders); (4) looking at things regionally, including watershed approaches, natural environmental cohesiveness, bridging artificial boundaries; (5) developing community with economic programs and tourism, recognizing the richness of local uniqueness. He said he would recommend that we (1) strengthen the local dialogue – with these meetings being the beginning of that dialogue, not the end; (2) implement accessible workshops during the strategic planning process; and, (3) provide for both headquarters and satellite offices in the region. Bob Kirkwood added that other organizations should be recognized, including The Sierra Fund, Sierra Cascade Land Trust, Sierra Nevada Alliance, and Trust for Public Land.

XI. **Board member comments**

A. Kim Yamaguchi – thanks to the staff, who are competent, caring and motivated. He expressed his hope to return to the Board as a representative of the North Central subregion, and expressed his confidence in the Board and in the staff.
B. John Brissenden – referred to a proposed new bond measure, in which funding is earmarked for the SNC, and suggested that all Board members let their views be known to the Legislature and the Administration.
C. Linda Arcularius – thanks to those who may not be at the next meeting. Asked that packets be e-mailed to Board alternates, as well as sitting Board members. She also suggested a random drawing to determine the rotation of board meetings.
D. Kim Yamaguchi –suggested that all county supervisors who have been identified as Conservancy liaisons should receive meeting materials.

In his response to the Board comments, Jim Branham stated that staff will coordinate on the Sierra Nevada / Cascade Grants with the Resources Agency.

XII. **Public Comments** – none

XIII. **Administrative Matters** – a random drawing was held to determine the order of rotation of upcoming SNC meeting locations; the order will be: (1) Central subregion; (2) South subregion; (3) East subregion; (4) North-Central subregion; (5) North subregion; (6) South-Central subregion.

XIV. **Adjournment**. Chairman Chrisman adjourned the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

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Sierra Nevada Conservancy Public Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 23, 2006

Location: Resources Auditorium
1416 Ninth Street, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

I. Call to order – Chairman Chrisman called meeting to order at 10:10 a.m., in the Resources Agency Auditorium (1416 Ninth Street, First Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814).

II. Chairman's Report

a. Chairman Chrisman indicated that the Governor has put forth an aggressive strategic growth plan that includes: $9 billion for flood protection, control and water management; $5 billion water investment fund, water conservation and infrastructure investments on an ongoing basis; $21 to 22 billion for local projects. The Department of Water Resources website has information on the bond package. The Chairman indicated this is not a traditional bond package, in that it does not include specific funding for conservancies and other organizations, but rather take a more strategic approach. There is also $215 million for various park needs. The process if very fluid, efforts are being made to reach agreement so that the measure can be placed on the June ballot.

III. Oaths of Office – Christine Sproul administered the oaths of office to the three new Board members:

a. Louis Boitano – South Central Sierra
b. Allen Ishida – South Sierra
c. Kim Yamaguchi – North Central Sierra

IV. Roll Call – Board member Whiteside was absent.

V. Approval of December 2, 2005 Meeting Minutes. After discussion, it was determine that legal counsel John Gussman would make necessary changes to the December 2, 2005 minutes and the matter would be put on the agenda for the June 1, 2006 meeting.

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VI. Executive Director's Report

a. Staffing and Administrative Update – Jim Branham noted that the SNC is being assisted by Resources Agency employees Vickie Key and Penny Harding as well as receiving support from the Tahoe Conservancy. Mr. Branham express appreciation to all. He also indicated that he has hired a couple of retired annuitants – Ken Jones (former Chief Deputy Director at Parks) who is working on a variety of organizational issues and John Nott (former Parks Superintendent) who will work closely on strategic planning (public outreach and meeting organization).

b. Mr. Branham indicated that the SNC was anticipating receipt of the Data Inventory Project that was being conducted by Sierra Connections, through the support of the Resources Legacy Fund. This project is identifying and compiling various state, federal and local plans that address issues relating to the SNC's mission throughout the region. The SNC is in the process of determining how best to make this information available through the website, with the ultimate goal of a "point and click" map. Hope that at May meeting to have interactive presentation. One of the key challenge will be to keep the site up to date. The next step may be to create an inventory of funding opportunities for various activities.

   Chairman Chrisman asked precisely what kind of data is included.

   Mr. Branham responded that the database included a broad array of plans including county general plans, water district plans, forest management plans and various program plans for parks and recreation. May not include local watershed plans or fire safe plans, but it is a starting point.

   Chairman Chrisman asked if the database was linked to the websites of agencies that developed the plans.

   Mr. Branham indicated that yes, most of the information is available through links. Mike – links to other agencies? Jim, yes, large percentage of information is already available electronically via links.

   Boardmember Kirkwood asked if the information extended to data sets such as various information that the Forest Service has developed.

   Mr. Branham responded that initially it won't include that level of detail.

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Kerry Timmer of Sierra Connections (the consultants that put together the data base) indicated that there was not an effort to gather that level of detail, but rather focus on plan level information identified in the legislation creating the SNC. She indicated that a total of 670 documents are available in the database.

Chairman Chrisman asked how Ms. Timmer envisioned the database maintained and expanded.

Ms. Timmer replied that (1) a significant effort was necessary to keep existing data up to date; some percentage of the documents have already changed; (2) there is a opportunity for users in the public to provide the SNC with plans and other information that meets the criteria.

Boardmember Brissenden asked if holes or mission information had been identified.

Ms. Timmer responded that there had not been a comprehensive review of potential gaps, but that might be a possible next step.

Mr. Branham indicated that the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection has applied for a CalFed grant to do this type of research.

Boardmember Arcularius indicated that it will be important to track the age or timeliness of documents as many smaller localities don't have the ability to update. Jim Branham – good suggestion. Gap analysis needs to be ongoing.

c. Budget Update. Mr. Branham indicated that the Governor's budget proposed same level 3.6 million (as current fiscal year). The SNC is working with the Department of Finance to assure that any unexpended start-up funds in this fiscal year will be reappropriated. The SNC also had a requirement in the 2005-06 budget to provide a report to the legislature regarding funding needs. The SNC staff is meeting with the Legislative Analyst's Office to discuss progress to date.

Boardmember Arcularius indicated it is important to stress the things that have been accomplished.

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d. Discussion on Conservancy Logo Project. Mr. Branham indicated he is having discussions with the California Association of Local Arts Councils regarding the implementation of the logo contest. The group has conducted similar activities previously and would provide a good fit for this project. He anticipates that a more complete will be presented at the June 1 meeting, with a plan to conduct the contest in the fall.

VII. Deputy Attorney General's Report. Christine Sproul indicated that she had no specific items to report.

VIII. Adoption of Conflict of Interest Regulations. Christine Sproul reviewed the proposed regulations with the board. She indicated that language had been submitted to the Office of Administrative Law and available for public comment. No public comment was received.

Boardmember Sher asked about investment in a public corporation (under Form 700), does that mean that disclosure is necessary for any corporation that does business in the jurisdiction?

Ms. Sproul indicated that despite efforts to make the reporting requirements more reasonable, any such investment would be reportable under the regulations.

Boardmember Kirkwood indicated that you don't have to disclose individual investments of mutual funds.

Mr. Branham asked at what point an alternate must file a document, given they are not sworn in unless a member misses a meeting.

Ms. Sproul indicated that they must file within 30 days of taking office, meaning the date they are sworn in.

Boardmember Yamaguchi said as an elected official he filed the report, even as alternate, that way it was a matter of routine. He also indicated he discloses everything for the purpose of transparency.

Chairman Chrisman asked for public comment, there was none.

Boardmember Dahle asked for those who have not held state office, where do we file?

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Ms. Sproul indicated that the reports should be filed with FPPC, with copy at SNC.
Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Dahle seconded a motion to approve proposed regulations. The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Update on Resources Agency's Sierra Cascade Grant Program – Stan Bajorin of the Resources Agency provided the board with an update on the Sierra Cascade Grant program that was included in Proposition 50 in 2002. After releasing draft guidelines, the agency held three public hearings in Nevada City, Susanville and Bishop. The guidelines include a provision that requires projects within the SNC boundaries to demonstrate how the project will further the goals of conservancy. In addition, the SNC will have a person on Mr. Bajorin pointed that out that while the grant funds are to be used for acquisition, the term is broadly defined to include things such as conservation easements, lease and the purchase of development and water rights. A total of $15.8 million is available to local public agencies, water districts, and local agencies (state agencies are not eligible. Mr. Bajorin indicated that decisions on grant will be made by Secretary Chrisman in the late spring.

Boardmember Arcularius commended Resources staff for conducting the outreach meetings, indicating she attended the Bishop meeting.

Boardmember Sher asked for examples of projects funded through these funds.

Mr. Bajorin replied that no funds had been expended and that the funds were appropriated in the current budget year

X. Strategic Planning Process. Mr. Branham described process to date, which includes the following: approval at the December meeting of a planning process and identification of members Kirwan and Brissenden as a sub committee; a number of discussions have occurred with stakeholders and the sub committee; a review of various formats used by other agencies, concluding that the Department of Finance format is preferred; development of a set of guiding principals, which will assist the SNC and the public in understanding the organizations core principles and how we will conduct ourselves; review of extensive public comments received at last year's workshops and organizing them to fit in the strategic plan.

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Mr. Branham also indicated that he is working to identify resources to carry out this ambitious plan in order to be ready for July.

Boardmember Kirwan stated that the team had hit the ground running, a lot had been accomplished. She indicated that the set of guiding principles for future conduct was important as it provides people with a framework and foundation as to who we are. Ms. Kirwan enumerated the various principles for the board.

Boardmember Kirkwood suggested that the principles should address "downward collaboration" with local community groups. He also indicated his belief that projects should not be funded where local entities adopt incompatible zoning and land use planning policies. Mr. Kirkwood also expressed the view that the SNC must deal on a watershed scale and be cognizant of impact of and on surrounding lands. He indicated he would provide specific language to staff.

Boardmember Sher suggested that one criterion for projects should be their "regional significance".

Boardmember Kirwan replied that information from the workshops shows a clear preference for local needs as well as regional needs.

Mr. Branham indicated that the SNC needs to think about projects in a regional context and how local projects fit regionally. And, there will be areas where we will try to identify regional needs (i.e. information technology).

Boardmember Brissenden indicated that the area is not terribly comfortable with regionalism; it tends to be more provincial. Initial projects may have to be more local to get people involved.

Boardmember Arcularius indicated it is a huge region and progressed should be measured against a regional perspective, as long as not in conflict with local needs.

Boardmember Baumann indicated the principles relate well to the specific goals of the legislation and that workshops had community specific projects, for example, wildfire prevention.

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Public Comment

Izzy Martin, The Sierra Fund, congratulated the SNC for producing the principles and an approach to the strategic plan. She reminded board members that 90% of funding will come from outside of the conservancy area and that the urban areas are important to the success of the SNC. She also indicated that a great deal of scientific research exists and should be used to guide the SNC plan. She also noted that the area does not favor regionalism, but taking advantage of region-wide thinking is essential.

Julie Leimbach, Sierra Nevada Alliance, expressed appreciation for the efforts of staff and the subcommittee and generally supports the guiding principles.

Kerry Timmer, Sierra Cascade Lands Trust Council, agrees with the comments of Ms. Martin and Leimbach. She indicated appreciation for development of the guidelines. .

Boardmember Brissenden thanked everyone for their input and involvement. He wants to be certain that we have an open process, open to comments form the public. He also concurred with Ms. Martin's comments relative to the importance of the urban areas.

Boardmember Kirkwood indicated that visitors and part time residents are not referenced in the principles. He believes the SNC needs a way to involve them.

Boardmember Arcularius wants to be sure that the SNC recognizes the value of agriculture to the region, believes that the workshop summary should reflect this.

Boardmember Yamaguchi supports the idea of leveraging funds, but wants to be sure that local matching funds are required of communities without resources.

Boardmember Brissenden suggested that development of a guide to potential funds could be developed.

Mr. Branham indicated next steps are critical and will involve receiving input from wide array of stakeholders. He indicated that he was close to agreement with two entities, CA State University Center for Collaborative Policy and the UC extension, which has staff in the region. A draft plan will be released in

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coming weeks and public workshops will be scheduled in each of the sub regions. The board will review the plan at the June 1 meeting with a final plan before the board in July.

Chairman Chrisman asked if board members were clear on the process.

Boardmember Ishida suggested involving UC Merced.

Boardmember Tollefson suggested expanding the mailing list to include other doing public outreach.

Boardmember Kirkwood moved, Boardmember Kirwan seconded, authorizing Executive Office to enter into agreements necessary to develop a strategic plan. Motion passed unanimously.

XI. Conservancy Headquarters Office Search. Mr. Branham indicated this was an issue of great interest and importance to the conservancy and the region. He thanked Linda Arcularius and Brian Dahle for spending considerable time on the project including two full days reviewing potential sites. Mr. Branham reminded the board that at the December meeting they approved a set of criteria for evaluating office locations. Staff worked with the Department of General Services (DGS) in getting information out and available to targeted area. Mr. Branham also communicated directly with many local jurisdictions. Eight communities within the region submitted proposals by the deadline. DGS reviewed the proposals for minimum specifications and conducted some site visits prior to the sub committee visits. The sub committee visited six communities and viewed a number of sites. All of this information is included in the staff report.

Mr. Branham thanked Eileen Pope of the SNC staff and Patrick Foster of DGS for their work. He also commended the communities and individuals who came forward with their offers for their efforts.

He indicated the decision was a difficult one. The recommendation of selecting Auburn is before the board.

Boardmember Arcularius said she echoed Mr. Branham's comments and if there was any doubt about the interest, spending two days in the region convinced her. It was a difficult decision and she acknowledged the communities for their outstanding presentations. She indicated that

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Supervisor Boitano should be particularly proud of his community (Jackson). She emphasized the recommendation was for an interim location.

Boardmember Dahle said he shared the views expressed by Mrs. Arcularius and Mr. Branham and further stated that the goal how been to try and WOW Linda with a location. He stated that this proposal will allow SNC to develop the WOW!

Mr. Branham stated that in reviewing the criteria against the sites (community infrastructure, transportation, access and available space) Auburn came out on top. He recommended that the SNC establish an interim office in Auburn, and continue exploring a permanent office within general geographic area (30 minutes driving distance of Auburn).

Chairman Chrisman asked Mr. Branham to describe the office space in Auburn.

Mr. Branham indicated that there were a couple of options and preferred not to be too specific as negotiations would be taking place.

Boardmember Dahle indicated that keeping the permanent home with 30 minutes would allow employees to be hired and that many good sites existed with that area.

Boardmember Arcularius suggested thinking of it as an area, not specific sites.

Mr. Branham said that, assuming the recommendation is adopted, the SNC needs to begin thinking about satellite offices to meet its needs.

Boardmember Arcularius stressed the importance of satellite offices.

Boardmember Baumann asked for clarification as to when search for a permanent facility would occur.

Mr. Branham stated that the recommendation is establish an office in an interim location in Auburn. There are a number of permanent options within 30 minute commute that the SNC may want to consider. He indicated his intent is to further explore options in depth, but there was no clear timeline.

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Boardmember Baumann asked if the public would be informed through the same process as the current search.

Mr. Branham indicated that yes a similar process would be followed.

Boardmember Kirkwood suggested that about half of those that applied would be within 30 minutes of Auburn and that the board should be open to new proposals as well.

Boardmember Sher asked if it was necessary for the office to be able to accommodate board meetings.

Mr. Branham that was not part of the criteria and with board meetings being rotated around the region, this was not important

Public Comments

Kevin Handley, City Councilman from Auburn, thanked the board for the opportunity and expressed his appreciation to sub committee and staff for road tour. He indicated Auburn looked forward to a partnership with the SNC.

Bob Perrault, City Manager of Colfax thanked the subcommittee and staff for considering Colfax. He indicated they believe they are the right community for the SNC and will continue to work to secure the permanent site in their community

Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Yamaguchi seconded, a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to secure an interim headquarters office in Auburn, continue to explore options for a permanent location within 30 minutes of Auburn and to look into possible locations for satellite offices. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. Review of 2006 Meeting Schedule and Format –

Mr. Branham indicated a proposed meeting schedule for 2006 was in the board packet. After some discussion the following dates were identified for board meetings:

Thursday, June 1 (Central sub-region)
Thursday, July 20 (South)
Wednesday, Oct 4 (East)

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Thursday, Dec 7 (North Central)

XIII. Board Members' Comments

Boardmember Sher asked Chairman Chrisman if the bond proposals being discussed in the legislature had funds to support conservancies.

Chairman Chrisman indicated many conversations were being held, but at this point the administration proposal does not have specific funds for conservancies.

Boardmember Kirkwood asked if workshops would be held along with board meetings to gain a better understanding of issues facing the conservancy.

Mr. Branham indicated that he planned to schedule workshops in conjunction with board meetings held in the region, in addition to strategic planning workshops.

Boardmember Brissenden urged board members to review the Sierra Nevada Alliance's publication "Planning for the Future" and their Sierra Climate Change Tool Kit.

XIV. Public Comments –

a. Bettony Jones, Sierra Business Council (SBC), expressed support of the headquarters decision and for strategic planning process. She stressed concerns for maintaining a regional perspective, and to include the Cascade portion of the region. She also urged forum locations to be central. She also indicated that SBC had developed a report using applied network mapping software to analyze last year's workshops.

b. Claudia Elliott stated she published the Southern Sierra Messenger in Tulare County. She urged more coverage of the SNC's activities and indicated she will work with weeklies and dailies in area to find a way to maximize the limited resources and to cover this conservancy and its programs.

c. Terry Davis, Motherlode Chapter of the Sierra Club, stated that the chapter includes 24 counties and 24,000 members. She stated the guiding principles were impressive and she appreciated the "bottoms up" nature of

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the approach. She indicated she believed the SNC was off to a great start and she supports the decision to locate in Auburn.

XV. Adjournment – **Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Baumann seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously at 12:52 p.m.**

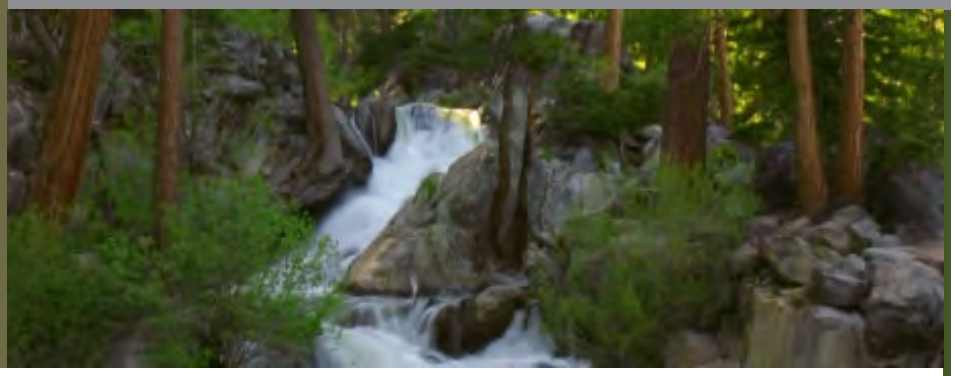
2005-06 BUDGET			2006-07 BUDGET		
	AUTHORIZED			AUTHORIZED	
	POSITIONS	FUNDING		POSITIONS	FUNDING
SALARIES & WAGES	13.5	$ 951,000	SALARIES AND WAGES	20.5	$ 1,568,000
OPERATING EXPENSES & EQUIPMENT		$ 2,630,000	OPERATING EXPENSES & EQUIPMENT		$ 2,094,000
REIMBURSEMENTS		$ (200,000)	REIMBURSEMENTS		$ (200,000)
AUTHORIZED FUNDS	13.5	$ 3,381,000	TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED & APPROVED BY SENATE & ASSEMBLY SUBCOMMITTEES	20.5	$ 3,462,000
REAPPROPRIATION OF CURRENT YEAR FUNDS		$** (276,000)	REAPPROPRIATION OF 2005-06 FISCAL YEAR FUNDS		$** 276,000

** 2005-06 FISCAL YEAR INCLUDED $442 FOR ONE TIME COSTS PRIMARILY FOR I.T. EQUIPMENT. DUE TO DELAYS IN START UP A REAPPROPRIATION OF THESE UNEXPENDED FUNDS WAS REQUESTED AND APPROVED.

AGENDA ITEM VIII – A, B, C
6/1/

Stewardship
Council

Stewardship Council



A historic stewardship for California

JOIN US!

Community Meetings
Summer 2006

The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council (Stewardship Council) brings together the expertise of leading conservation, natural resource management, business, and public officials to undertake a historic conservation effort for California. A unique and collaborative endeavor, the **Stewardship Council Board of Directors** unites a broad range of interests to guide the development and execution of a Land Conservation Program and a Youth Investment Program to benefit current and future generations of Californians.

The Stewardship Council is a private, nonprofit organization that was established in 2004 as part of the settlement of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) bankruptcy. One of its primary goals is to ensure that over 140,000 acres of watershed lands throughout California are conserved for a broad range of beneficial public values. These values include:

- Outdoor recreation
- Sustainable forestry
- Agriculture
- Habitat protection
- Open space preservation
- Protection of historic values

Located across 22 counties, the land encompasses some of California's most stunning and wild landscapes. The parcels - almost 1,000 in total - stretch

from Shasta county in the north to Fresno county in the south, from the Sierra Nevada and Cascade ranges to the Eel River watershed in Mendocino County and the Carrizo Plains in San Luis Obispo County.

The Stewardship Council believes that its programs can only be successful through the active involvement of its intended beneficiaries: the people of California. Please visit our **public information page** to learn more about how you can get involved.

The Stewardship Council is a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation

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Stewardship Council

Youth Investment Program

GUIDELINES & APPLICATION

RESEARCH & BACKGROUND MATERIAL

GRANT WORKSHOPS

GRANT AWARDS

FAQ

On January 31, 2006 the Stewardship Council announced the recipients of $225,000 in grants aimed at connecting California youth with the outdoors. Sixteen organizations serving California youth were awarded between $5,000 and $18,000 to increase access to urban parks, gardens, wilderness programs, and other outdoor education opportunities.

These grant announcements represent the first of four rounds of youth grants that will take place this year. The Stewardship Council will distribute $2.25 million in grants in 2006, and will work with park and youth program providers to bring new opportunities to underserved youth. This funding is the first phase of a ten-year $30 million commitment that will support efforts to invest in parks and youth programs in both urban and rural areas of Northern and Central California.

For more information on the recipients of these first round of grants, please visit our **Grant Awards** page for more information.

California's youth face an unprecedented combination of challenges. The challenges are particularly acute for underserved youth. It is widely recognized that youth benefit greatly from meaningful outdoor experiences, whether in urban or rural areas, yet low-income urban youth have little access to such experiences. Significant financial, programmatic, cultural and logistical barriers stand in the way. Moreover, public and philanthropic funding for youth environmental education and recreation programs have declined in recent

years. The Stewardship Council's Youth Investment Program will significantly increase the amount of funding for programs as it seeks to make a profound difference in the lives of Northern and Central California's underserved youth.

HOME

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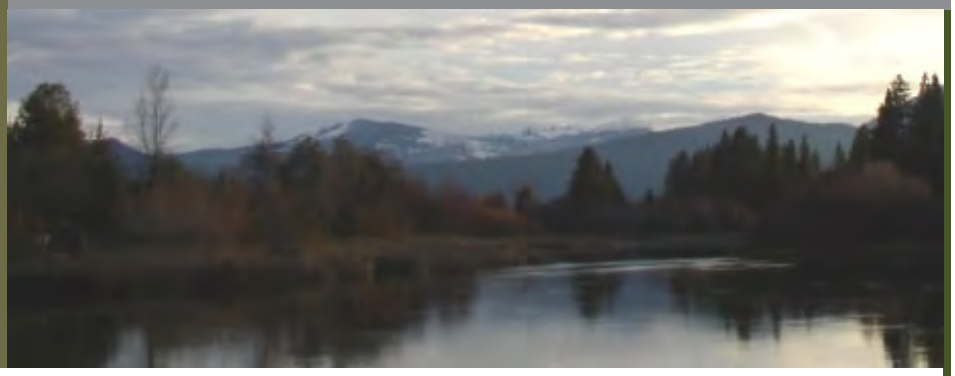
Stewardship Council



Land Conservation

STATUS OF PLANNING EFFORT

MAPS OF CONSERVATION LANDS

PLANNING UNIT ANALYSIS

FAQ

The Stewardship Council is tasked with ensuring the permanent protection of over 140,000 acres of land for the benefit of the citizens of California. To accomplish this objective, we are developing a Land Conservation Plan that will recommend how the beneficial public uses of this land can best be conserved. Our work will include developing an understanding of the unique characteristics of each area, existing and potential uses, and the range of interests within each community that should be considered.

The Stewardship Council began work in 2004 by gathering information about each planning area. We have met with state and federal agencies, Native American organizations, members of interested environmental, land conservation, and natural resource organizations, and the public to research the existing conditions of the lands. Using this information, a range of conservation alternatives is currently being developed. In 2006, these alternatives will be refined through further research and input from communities and stakeholder groups. We anticipate that a preliminary draft of the land conservation plan will be available to the public at the end of 2006. After a third series of community meetings, the draft land conservation plan will be revised by staff and considered by the Stewardship Council Board of Directors.

In accordance with the **Stipulation Agreement**, the Stewardship Council's goal is to have the Land Conservation Plan completed and adopted by early

2007. All land transactions necessary to implement the Plan will then be subject to approvals from the California Public Utilities Commission, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, and other regulatory agencies.

HOME

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In 2005, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the Resources Agency made arrangements to have Sierra Connections, a Sierra Nevada based consulting firm, gather relevant plans and other information from throughout the region and compile them in a digital library. This project was funded by a grant from the Resources Legacy Fund and was intended to meet the requirements of Public Resources Code 33345, which states, in part:

> "The conservancy shall adopt guidelines setting priorities and criteria for projects and programs, based upon its assessment of program requirements, institutional capabilities, and funding needs throughout the region, **and federal, state, and local plans, including general plans, recreation plans, urban water management plans, and groundwater management plans"** (emphasis added)**.**

The *Sierra Nevada Conservancy Planning Data Inventory and Electronic Library (E-Library)* is designed to be an online tool to provide access to plans, reports, studies, assessments, handbooks and other relevant information relating to the mission of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Documents listed in this database represent an effort to compile federal, state and local plans identified in Public Resources Code 33345, as well as other documents deemed useful for carrying out the SNC's mission.

The E-library contains a searchable database of more than 670 local, regional, state and federal planning and research documents related to the work of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Documents are primarily agency-generated documents that were identified and acquired through contact with local, state and federal jurisdictions within the region, as well as searches for pertinent information in existing web-based databases, such as CERES or LUPIN. Additional documents were identified using links from various non-governmental organizations in the region, such as the Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC) and others, to provide additional information potentially relevant to Conservancy mission.

The electronic database has been transmitted to the SNC and staff is working with information technology staff at the Resources Agency to make the database accessible through the SNC website. It is currently anticipated that the information will be available on the website by June 15, 2006.

Additional information is provided in appendix A of this item.

SIERRA CONNECTIONS

530-273-7329 phone 530-273-2332 fax

PO Box 1317 ♦ Cedar Ridge, CA 95924 ♦ kvtimmer@yubanet.com

24 March 2006

Jim Branham, Executive Officer
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
1416 Ninth St., 13th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Sierra Nevada Conservancy Planning Data Inventory and E-library

Dear Jim,

Sierra Connections is pleased to submit its Final Report for the *Sierra Nevada Conservancy Study: Planning Data Inventory and Electronic Library (E-Library)* to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. The report includes:

- a description of the E-library and how it works;
- the methodology used to identify and procure documents and create the database;
- details about the compatibility and transfer of the E-library to the State;
- a list of challenges, assumptions and caveats about the research and final product; and
- a set of recommendations for additional tasks once the database is housed on the State website.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

There is a wide range of information available about planning, resource management, and economic development activity in the Sierra-Cascade region that has not been collected in one place before. In recognition of the fact that this important information did not exist in one place and that the job of the new Conservancy, its Board and staff could be made easier with a tool that provided access to all this information in one easy-to-use location, Resources Legacy Fund contracted with **Sierra Connections** to create the Planning E-Library tool. The searchable inventory now available through the *Sierra Nevada Conservancy Planning E-Library* is intended for use as a tool to assist the Conservancy and its staff and Board as well as others interested in finding specific information about the Sierra-Cascade region.

DESCRIPTION OF E-LIBRARY

The *Sierra Nevada Conservancy Planning Data Inventory and Electronic Library (E-Library)* is an online tool to provide access to plans, reports, studies, assessments, handbooks and other publicly available information relating to the geographic area and purposes of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy E-library contains a searchable database of more than 670 local, regional, state and federal planning and research documents related to the work of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Documents listed in this database represent our best effort to locate federal, state and local plans called for in Public Resources Code section 33345, including general plans, recreation plans, urban water management plans, and groundwater management plans, as well as other documents deemed useful for evaluating, understanding or accomplishing one or more of the Conservancy's goals and purposes.

Documents in this E-library are primarily agency-generated documents that were identified and acquired through contact with local, state and federal jurisdictions within the region, as well as searches for pertinent information in existing web-based databases, such as CERES or LUPIN. Additional documents were identified using links from various non-governmental organizations in the region, such as the Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC) and others, to provide additional information potentially relevant to Conservancy goals and purposes.

This tool was designed and intended to be handed over to the Resources Agency for use by the Conservancy and the public. The searchable compilation of planning documents was designed to provide a more integrated picture of planning activities taking place in the region. Such information is intended to support the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's efforts to formulate its own complementary strategic program objectives and priorities for the nine purpose areas and six geographical subregions of the Sierra-Cascade.

How E-Library Works

Consultants created an interactive, Web-based database to house information on all the plans, reports, assessment/inventories and maps collected as part of this project. The database recorded each plan and available information, including:

- Document name
- Document type
- Document description
- Conservancy purpose(s) addressed
- Document contact information, including direct link (URL)
- Entity responsible for document
- Jurisdiction of plan
- Conservancy subregion
- County(ies)
- Watershed(s).

The web-based interface allows easy access to the information in the database. A user enters the homepage, which contains an introduction describing the database and its use. The search page is the mechanism by which the user finds information in the database. There is both a simple *Quick Search* function, which allows the user to find records based on simple criteria such as a word, phrase or title, and a more advanced *Search Criteria* function, that allows more extensive searches based on a variety of search criteria.

When a user enters criteria through either the *Quick Search* or more advanced *Search Criteria* function, the database produces a list of documents that match those criteria. The user can then click on a single document to get more specific information about that document, including a brief description, contact information, and a live link to the document.

- Quick Search – if the user knows the name of a particular document or wants to search on a particular word or words; and
- Advanced Search Criteria – if the user wants to build a more advanced query based on one or more of six search categories:
    1. county(s)
    2. region(s)
    3. watershed(s)
    4. document category
    5. Conservancy purpose(s)
    6. Jurisdiction (e.g. federal, state, local, NGO, academic).

Extent of coverage

The database contains available county general plans, county zoning ordinances, fire plans, motorized and non-motorized transportation plans, agriculture/crop reports, economic development plans, recreation plans, air quality plans, groundwater/stormwater/wastewater management plans, arts and culture plans or reports, farmland conversion reports, wetland mitigation plans, vegetation management plans, natural resource and wildlife management and/or restoration plans, exotic or noxious species control/removal plans, monitoring plans, capacity-building reports, facility development plans, federal land management plans, state agency plans, NGO plans and reports, some academic reports, and more.

METHODOLOGY

Creating this data inventory/E-Library was a complex undertaking due to the size of the region (25,000,000 acres and all or parts of 22 counties) and the number of jurisdictions and organizations active in the area (20 incorporated cities, 40 special districts, and 212 communities).

The process was made even more complex by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's wide range of resource and technical assistance objectives, including: improving air and water quality, strengthening the regional economy, supporting working farms/ranches/forests, protecting lives and property from natural disaster (e.g. wildfire), enhancing public use and access to recreation, protecting wildlife and natural areas, linking tourism to community development and recreation, preserving and enhancing cultural/archeological/historical assets, providing

technical assistance to local governments/agencies/nonprofits and building capacity within local governments, agencies and non-profits to help achieve Conservancy goals.

The research team used the following process to create and populate the interactive database/E-library:

Document identification

- Developed an initial list of potential public and private information sources – including County, State and Federal agencies, non-governmental entities and academic sources –based on an outline provided by John Gussman of the California Tahoe Conservancy (copy attached – APPENDIX A).
- Consulted several useful websites with collections of informational links, such as:
    - Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC) (http://www.rcrcnet.org/) for county, rural economic development, and other information;
    - California Resource Conservation Districts (RCD) website (http://www.carcd.org/wisp/wispdata.htm) for resource management and other information;
    - Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) (http://www.acwa.com/news_info/waterlinks/other.asp) for water-related links;
    - Sierra Nevada Alliance (www.sierranevadaalliance.org) for watershed group and other information;
    - The State of California website for documents from various State agencies and portals.
- Conducted a round of exploratory phone calls to key partners in the region, including: Sierra Economic Development District, Department of Environmental Science and Policy at UC-Davis, Sierra Business Council, Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council, Sierra Nevada Alliance, and others to better understand what information was available.
- Prioritized the data sources for collection purposes (approved by Resources Legacy Fund), as follows:

    (A+) highest priority – required by Section 33345 of the Conservancy enabling legislation (general plans, recreation plans, urban water management plans and groundwater management plans);

    (A) high priority – even though not called for specifically by the enabling legislation;

    (B) medium priority – would be helpful but may take more time to locate;

    (C) lower priority – needs further investigation.

Document procurement

- Hired and trained a team of researchers to conduct extensive Internet-based research, beginning with priority A and A+ documents, to identify and chronicle specific plans, reports and other documents associated with the agencies and entities in the initial list. Research resulted in a final list of more than 670 documents.

- Held weekly meetings with the researcher team to assess progress, identify challenges, track desired priorities and adapt procurement strategy as necessary.

Database creation

- Hired database consultant to create a web-based interactive database to house the information about the 670+ documents and enable that information to be searched based on various criteria.
- Held weekly meetings with the database consultant to perfect the tool and make it as user-friendly as possible.

Data *groundtruthing* **and refinement**

- Once the data procurement process was complete, the primary researchers checked for bad or erroneous links using the following process:
  - First we ran an automated check of every URL to determine how many were "live" and connected to something on the web. Of the 649 URLs total, 24 or 3.7% came up as "failed" or "not found." *[Note: There are a handful of documents for which we don't have a live URL, hence the difference between the 672 total number of documents in the database and the 649 URLs.]*
  - Next we randomly selected 136 entries, or 20% of the 672 total database entries, and followed each link to confirm not only that it was a "live" link, but also that it went to the *appropriate* document and not some other location on the host site. Out of the 136 test entries, we came up with 7 bad links where the listed document was "not found" or "no longer available" according to the host website. That represents 5% of the 136 entries checked. None of the 7 was related to erroneous data entry; they all appeared to be a function of problems related to the host site. *[Note: please refer to the* Caveat *section below for more information on potential host site problems.]*
- Provided multiple beta testing opportunities to both RLFF staff and Conservancy staff/advisors to review and test the database tool both for content and usability. Made changes to text and design as requested.

Application transfer

- Early in the design process the database consultant communicated with an information technology specialist at the Resources Agency to determine the appropriate platform and technical specifications upon which to build the database functions (MySql version 4.1 or higher and PHP version 4.3.1 or higher).

- The database consultant also researched existing State conservancy websites, particularly the California Tahoe Conservancy site, to ensure that E-library function and design elements were compatible with existing conservancy websites within the Resources Agency host site.

- The database consultant researched Americans with Disabilities Act Section 508 compliance as well, and reported the following:

  Users interact with two components of the database application: 1.) an HTML administration section, and 2.) a Flash front-end interface. Both of these

  pieces are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act section 508, as specified in W3C WCAG guidelines.

  <u>Accessibility in the HTML administration</u>:

  The administration section is HTML-based and is "accessibility-ready." For example, a minimal amount of CSS style is applied to the layout; the application relies mainly on the style declarations already employed at the tahoecons.ca.gov website, assumed to be 508-compliant. The text is plain text and all in English, and screen-readers will have no problem interpreting this data. Other accessibility options have been included: care has been taken to avoid <B> and <I> tags; summary attributes exist for the tables; access keys for all relevant links are buttons; use of <fieldset> and <legend> tags to group data, and other important accessibility considerations. While there may be some extra accessibility features above and beyond what already exists, the HTML portion of the database application is certainly already in compliance with W3C WCAG guidelines.

Accessibility in the Flash front-end:

Flash is ordinarily more complex to make accessible. Its time-based nature and emphasis on dynamic, multimedia content often make it difficult for screen-readers or similar devices to interpret. However, the application in question is primarily text-based, not graphical or aural. By default, all text inside of Flash is exposed to the screen-reader through Microsoft(r) Active Accessibility(r) (MSAA) or the Mac Accessibility API. These defaults are preserved throughout. Additionally, all movie-clips and non-text-based items are named and have descriptive text within Flash's accessibility properties. In short, screen-readers should have no problem dealing with this particular Flash movie.

CHALLENGES/ASSUMPTIONS/CAVEATS

Assumptions (approved by RLFF)

- We focused specifically on finding publicly available documents from both public and private sources.
- Paper documents are going out of style; people are using the Internet more and more for this type of research. As a result, we focused our collection efforts on documents that were publicly available on the Internet rather than creating a paper-based physical library that would require storage space and physical maintenance and could limit people's access to the information based on geographic considerations.

Caveats

- Neither the consultants nor the State has control over what may happen to listed documents on the host sites. Problems with the host site can include:
    - The host website has changed its content since we completed our initial research 6-9 months ago, and/or
    - A particular host site can experience a shutdown or other temporary failure. For example, during one "groundtruthing" session we checked a number of documents that showed up as "failed" through the US Forest Service website and one county website – then 45 minutes later we re-checked the same "failed" documents, and we were able to link to them successfully. The number of bad links will, therefore, fluctuate depending on conditions at the various host sites at the time of any given search.

Challenges

- The sheer number of potential documents out there – including from local, regional, state and federal agencies and departments, academic sources, NGOs and others – was somewhat daunting. And in some cases, trying to determine whether a given report, study or plan related to the Sierra-Cascade region was no easy task.
- Several counties had limited information available on the Internet. Some counties that do have websites don't have many documents available online.
- Many of the land use planning documents for Sierra Nevada counties and cities are housed on the UC Berkeley Digital Library. Unfortunately, the 2,500+ documents listed under the "California Environmental Documents" heading (which included most of the Sierra county and city Zoning Ordinances and General Plans, among other documents of interest) have been permanently removed from this host site *due to a disk failure and an end to the funding that supported having this data online*, according to the host site. So where we thought we were going to be able to access large numbers of key reports or plans through this one portal, we had to spend much more time looking elsewhere and/or contacting individual jurisdictions.

Potential Additional Research

- Revisiting certain government agency sites that have temporarily restricted the amount and types of data made available over the Internet due to homeland security concerns (e.g. Army Corps of Engineers) or legal issues (e.g. the Bureau of Land Management). These sources might become available again in the future; so checking back periodically could be helpful.
- Publicly available information on tribal documents.
- Interstate agreements and compacts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The current *E-library* consisting of 672 documents is just a starting place – but it provides the Sierra Nevada Conservancy with a usable format and the beginnings of a comprehensive library with information located all in one place. In order to remain useful over the long term, this E-library will need to be kept up-to-date through communications with users and periodic review of the content.

Overall recommendations include:

1. This is a library. We recommend that it be treated as seriously as a physical library. Just like physical reports and documents go out of date, so do documents on the Internet. We recommend that the State assign someone to be formally in charge of maintaining and updating this E-library over time.

   Suggestions for possible ways to handle this:

   - assign an intern or someone at the State to check 10-20 entries a day once a year for bad links, updates, etc. *[NOTE: When we were groundtruthing entries, it took us approximately 1 minute per entry to check for bad links; so this entire task could be completed in a month at 20 entries a day.]*
   - add a disclaimer to the E-library homepage stating the date that the overall E-library site was last updated so that users can gauge the relative freshness of the data.

2. Consider adding a new category to the document types: natural and human history of the region, and conduct research to locate and enter these documents. This category was not included in the approved list for this project; but the **Sierra Connections** team believes it would be helpful to add such documents to the E-library. Possible titles to start the research process: *Shaping the Sierra* by Tim Duane, *The Crow's Range* by David Beesley, *The Sierra Nevada* by Stephen Whitney, *Geology of the Sierra Nevada* by Mary Hill, *Discovering Sierra Mammals* by Russell K. Grater, *Sierra Nevada Natural History* by Tracy I. Storer and Robert L. Usinger, *Sierra Wildflowers Mt. Lassen to Kern Canyon* by Theodore F. Niehaus, *History of the Sierra Nevada* by Francis P. Farquhar, and many others, including those about different areas within the region.

3. To help address the fact that host sites can change their content at will, the Conservancy may want to consider adding an additional caveat or disclaimer sentence to the Introduction, such as:

   > *Individual entities may change the content of their websites and/or may experience temporary shutdowns at any time, preventing access to the documents listed. If you encounter a bad link, please try the link again at a later date and/or inform the webmaster.*

4. Digitize any hard-copy-only documents so the full library is available over the Internet.

5. Work with Betty Riley of Sierra Economic Development District (SEDD) to determine whether to accept the donation of many archival/historical documents SEDD has offered to make available to the Conservancy (lists attached as APPENDIX B). The Sierra Connections team does not know how much utility there would be in keeping these documents in-house at the Conservancy office given the fact that many seem to be outdated and would likely take up quite a bit of storage space. Contact: Betty Riley, SEDD, 560 Wall Street, Suite J, Auburn, CA 95603; tel: 530-823-4703.
6. Consider partnering with one of the academic institutions or private organizations that have a Sierra-specific program or geographical focus for future maintenance and updating of this E-library, such as (in alphabetical order, with descriptions taken from website or other general information provided by each organization):

    - **Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC)**. The Regional Council of Rural Counties is dedicated to representing the collective unique interests of its membership, providing legislative and regulatory representation at the State and Federal levels, and providing responsible services to its members which will enhance and protect the quality of life in rural California counties. Contact: Patricia Megason, Vice President of Governmental Affairs, RCRC, 801 12th Street, Suite 600, Sacramento, CA 95814, tel (916) 447-4806, patriciam@rcrcnet.org.

    - **Sierra Business Council.** The Sierra Business Council (SBC) is a nonprofit association of more than five hundred businesses, agencies, and individuals working to secure the social, environmental and financial health of the Sierra Nevada region for this and future generations. Founded in 1994 and based in Truckee, California, the council explicitly rejects the notion that Sierra communities must choose between economic and environmental health. Sierra Business Council views environmental quality as key to the Sierra Nevada's economic prosperity, and natural resource conservation as essential to building regional wealth. SBC is a resource for business leaders, government officials, and other decision-makers seeking solutions to local and regional challenges. The Council's work includes research, policy analysis, public education, leadership development, and collaborative initiatives with local partners. (Contact: David Mattocks, President, PO Box 2428, Truckee, CA 96160, tel (530) 582-4800, dmattocks@sbcouncil.org).

- **Sierra College – Center for Sierra Nevada Studies.** Founded in 2002, The Center for Sierra Nevada Studies: utilizes the resources of Sierra Community College to examine and celebrate the unique character of the Sierra Nevada and its region; facilitates the exchange of information and ideas about the Sierra Nevada, with special emphasis on the Central Sierra and the counties within the Sierra Community College District; unites the insights of the arts, the humanities, the sciences, and historical scholarship to study the traditions, culture and environment of the Sierra Nevada region; informs the community about public policy and events to assist in understanding the past, in educating about the present and in helping to shape the future. Contact: Center for Sierra Nevada Studies,
  Sierra College, 5000 Rocklin Road, LRC 442, Rocklin, CA 95677, tel (916) 781-7184, sierracenter@sierracollege.edu.

- **Sierra Nevada Alliance**. The mission of the Sierra Nevada Alliance is to protect and restore the natural resources of the Sierra Nevada for future generations while promoting sustainable communities. The organization is an Alliance of conservation groups that are based or work in the Sierra Nevada region. There are over sixty member groups that span the entire 400 mile mountain range. The Sierra Nevada Alliance unites individuals and groups behind a common vision. The Alliance envisions a Sierra where natural and human communities coexist in harmony. A Sierra where residents and visitors alike understand and value the unique qualities of the range and protect the places they love. Contact: Joan Clayburgh, Executive Director, PO Box 7989, So. Lake Tahoe, CA 96158, tel (530) 542-4546, joan@sierranevadaalliance.org.

- **UC Davis – Information Center for the Environment (ICE).** The Information Center for the Environment (ICE) is an environmental information brokerage and research laboratory in the Department of Environmental Science & Policy at the University of California, Davis, under the direction of Professor Jim Quinn and Academic Administrator Mike McCoy. ICE specializes in the development and dissemination of geospatial data and technologies; the development of robust data architectures dedicated to the cataloging of global environmental information; and the creation of decision support systems geared toward improving the capabilities of resource managers in a variety of sectors. ICE currently employs ~30 professional staff and students. Contact: Mike McCoy, ICE, 2120 Wickson Hall, Davis, CA 95616, tel (530) 754-9171, mcmccoy@ucdavis.edu.

Another Sierra-specific UC Davis contact is Fraser Shilling, Department of Environmental Science and Policy, University of California, Davis 95616, tel (530) 752-7859, fmshilling@ucdavis.edu.

- **UC Merced – The Sierra Nevada Research Institute (SNRI).** The SNRI is creating new knowledge on questions of national and international scope through the prism of the natural laboratory that is UC Merced's home – the San Joaquin Valley and the Sierra Nevada region. It is carrying out research on the critical issues that affect humankind's ability to live in an environmentally sustainable way such as: population growth and development, water and watersheds, air quality, fire ecology, biodiversity, climate change, transportation, resource management and policy, public recreation. These issues are especially vital to sustaining the unparalleled agricultural resources and magnificent natural landscapes of the San Joaquin Valley and Sierra Nevada. Contact: Samuel Traina, Ph.D.
  Director, Sierra Nevada Research Institute and Professor of Natural Sciences, tel (209) 724-4311, straina@ucmerced.edu.

We very much enjoyed working on this project and thank you for the opportunity. We look forward to the possibility of working with the Resources Agency in the future on exciting projects like this that can have a true impact on the place where we live, work and play.

Sincerely,

Janet Cohen

Kerri T. Zimmer

Janet Cohen

Kerri Timmer

Attachments:

Appendix A prioritized list of procurement targets

Appendix B lists of documents available in hard copy from Sierra Economic Development District

Sierra Nevada Conservancy **Agenda Item XI**
Board Meeting **Strategic Plan**
June 1, 2006 **Staff Report**

At the December 2, 2005 board meeting the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Board approved a process for the development of a strategic plan (see Appendix A to this item). This plan generally called for the preparation of a draft strategic plan that would utilize the input received at last year's public workshops and other relevant information. Following release of the draft plan, six sub regional public workshops were to be held to solicit public comment and input on the plan. The Board designated board members Brissenden and Kirwan to serve as a board sub-committee on this matter.

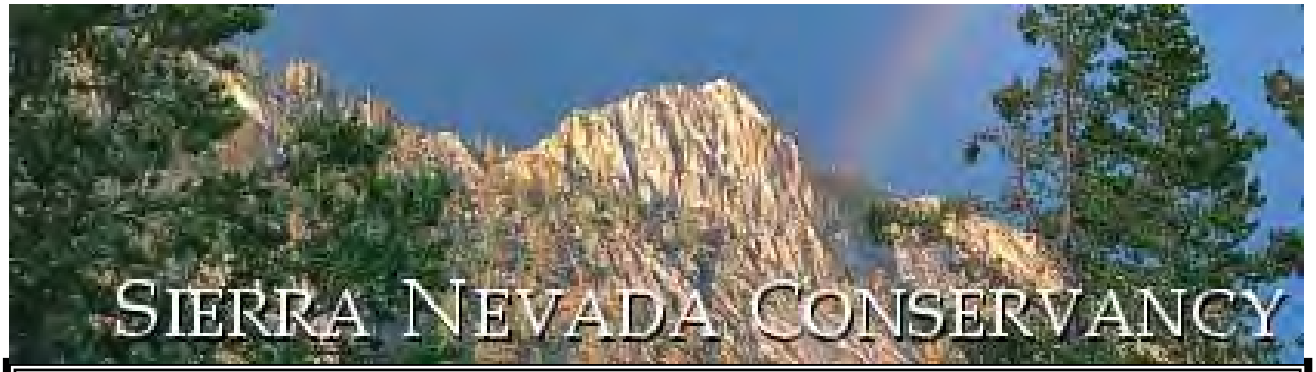
At the February 23, 2006 Board meeting the board provided further direction after reviewing a set of draft guiding principles and authorized the Executive Officer to enter into contracts and interagency agreements for consulting and technical services necessary for development of the Conservancy's strategic plan.

Following the February Board meeting, the SNC secured the services of the Center for Collaborative Policy at California State University, Sacramento to assist in development of the strategic plan. In addition, staff resources were provided by the Tahoe Conservancy, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and a retired annuitant from the Department of Parks and Recreation was hired. Working with SNC staff and board sub-committee, in early April, a draft strategic plan was released to the public and a series of public workshops were scheduled.

As of May 17, workshops have been conducted in Jackson, Exeter, Nevada City and Paradise, with more than 150 members of the public in attendance (workshops will be held in Mammoth Lakes and Alturas the week of May 22). The workshops have provided valuable input, identifying areas where the plan can be improved and issues to be addressed as we move forward with implementation. In addition, the SNC has received written comments from regional organizations both before and after the release of the plan that have and will continue to be useful (see appendix B to this item).

Following the final workshops, the board will be provided with a number of recommendations on modifications and clarifications to the plan to consider at the June 1 meeting. Pursuant to anticipated direction from the Board on June 1, a revised plan will be released and additional public comment solicited. It is anticipated that a final plan will be presented to the board at the July 20, 2006 meeting.

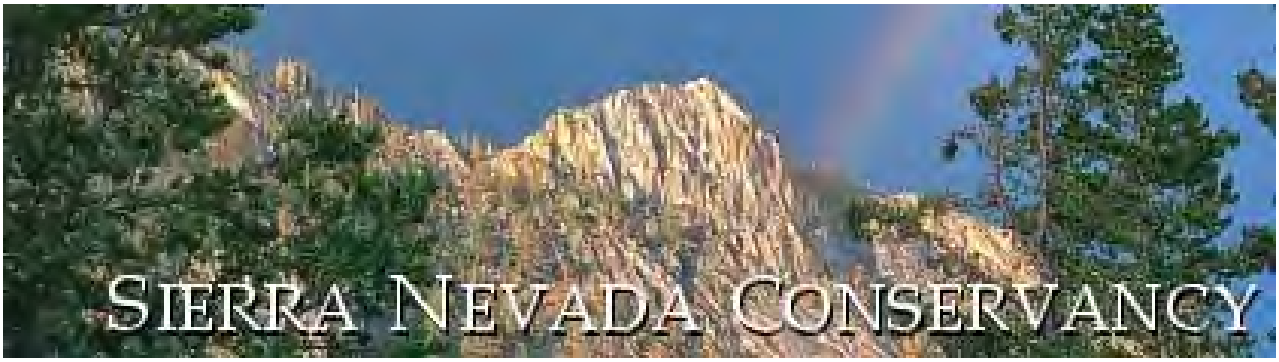
Recommendation: Review recommended modifications to the strategic plan and provide direction to the Board sub-committee and Executive Officer, as appropriate.



Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Public Review Draft
STRATEGIC PLAN
April 2006

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
RESOURCES AGENCY
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor
Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Resources
Jim Branham, Executive Officer
11521 Blocker Drive, Auburn, CA 95603
Phone (530) 721-0018
www.sierranevada.ca.gov

NAME **GROUP NUMBER:**



Sierra Nevada Conservancy

STRATEGIC PLAN WORKSHOP

April-May 2006

INDIVIDUAL WORKBOOK

WORKSHOP LOCATION: _____

If you would like to make more comments, you may also:

TURN IN YOUR WORKBOOK TODAY – (Please include your name if we have questions.)
MAIL IN TO: 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 210, Auburn CA 95603
EMAIL: max@sierranevada.ca.gov
OR FILL OUT ON LINE AT http://sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/

STANDING GROUND RULES:

There will be many opportunities for group discussion. We ask you to accept several key agreements to allow for productive outcomes.

- **USE COMMON CONVERSATIONAL COURTESY**
  Don't interrupt; use appropriate language, no third party discussions, etc.

- **HUMOR IS WELCOME AND IMPORTANT**
  BUT humor should never be at someone else's expense.

- **ALL IDEAS AND POINTS OF VIEW HAVE VALUE**
  You may hear something you do not agree with or you think is "silly" or "wrong." SNC wants to hear what everyone has to say. Please remember that the purpose of the workshop is to share ideas. All ideas have value in this setting. The goal is to achieve understanding. Simply listen, you do not have to agree.

- **CELL PHONES**
  Most people here have responsibilities outside of the meeting room. We ask that these responsibilities be left at the door. Please turn cell phones, or any other communication item with an on/off switch to "silent." If you do not believe you will be able to participate fully, please discuss your situation with one of the facilitators.

- **BE COMFORTABLE**
  Please feel help yourself to refreshments or take personal breaks. If you have other needs please let a facilitator know.

- **SPELLING DOESN'T COUNT**
  Research shows that writing on a vertical surface (like blackboards or flipcharts) actually increases the number of spelling errors.

- **HONOR TIME**
  We have an ambitious agenda, in order to meet our goals it will be important to follow the time guidelines given by the facilitator.

- **USE THE MICROPHONE**
  We are in a large room with varying acoustics. Please use a microphone so that others can hear you.

- **AVOID EDITORIALS**
  It will be tempting to analyze the motives of others or offer editorial comments. Please talk about YOUR ideas and thoughts.

WORKING IN GROUPS

You will spend much of the workshop sharing ideas in groups. As a group you will be asked to IDENTIFY MAJOR THEMES, analyze or develop ideas, keep track of the issues you develop, and then make a report to the larger group. Each group will need:

Facilitator/Leader: One or more members should ensure that the group stays with the assigned task and that all participants have an opportunity to share ideas. This person and all group members should ensure use of ground rules.

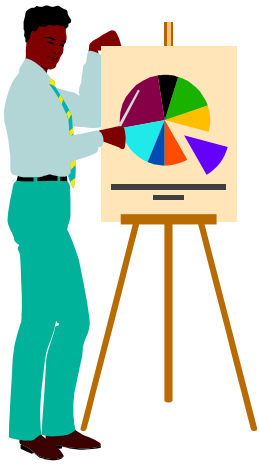
Recorder and Note Taker: Ideas will be shared on flipcharts and in workbooks. Information from the charts and group workbook will be used to make reports AND used later to transcribe the proceedings of the meeting. Ask the facilitators if you need help with this. On your flipcharts and Group Workbooks please:

A. List table participants
B. Put Table # and Page # on each sheet
C. Note issue being addressed
D. Prepare Summary Sheet for Spokesperson

Reporter: Someone will report on behalf of the full group. This person:

- Will summarize table conclusions from Flip Charts
- Should not be Conservancy Board members or staff
- Must speak into microphone
- Limit presentation to the 3-minute time allotted.

Time Keeper: All activities will involve blocks of time. In order to complete tasks, one group member needs to keep track of time. This same person will help the reporter stick to the 3-minute time allotted for the presentation back to the full group.



Personal Worksheets: Because 3 minutes isn't a lot of time for each group to give a report, you may wish to make more in-depth individual or organizational comments. Extra Workbooks will be available to do this if you wish to keep yours. These may be turned in at the end of the session. If you are willing to include your name and contact information, it will help the person preparing the notes in the event they have questions.

You may also answer the questions on line during the next few weeks at: www.sierranevada.ca.gov**.**

Name: Contact Information:

SMALL GROUP WORKSHEETS

Part I – Vision, Mission, Principles

Time: Now _____	**Time to End work on all Worksheets: _____**	**Total Time Available: _____**

Welcome to your group. Take a minute to meet those you will be working with. The information you need for this worksheet is on this page and page 5.

The vision describes what the future should be if SNC is successful.
The mission explains how SNC will get there.
The principles define how SNC will make decisions.

Thinking about the Vision, Mission and Principles, spend about 3 minutes as an individual considering the 3 questions on this page. As a group spend about 8-9 minutes sharing your answers:

Proposed Vision

The Sierra Nevada is a thriving place with rich physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources. The healthy, diverse economy allows for sustainable communities and recognizes the value of working landscapes. Residents and visitors enjoy a wide spectrum of recreational and cultural experiences, well-maintained public lands, high quality water and air and communities protected from natural disasters.

1. The vision statement should make sense for the region. What would you add, subtract or change to improve it?

Proposed Mission

The mission of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy is to support efforts that improve the environmental and economic well being of the Sierra Nevada region, its communities and its citizens through collaboration and cooperation with local governments and other interested parties.

2. The mission statement should fit with what the law (page 5) says what the SNC can do. What would you add, subtract or change to improve it?

3. What would you add, subtract or change about the guiding principles (page 5)?

AGENCY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The SNC has a number of principles that will guide the organization's operations into the future:

How We Operate

- We conduct operations openly. Decision-making will be transparent. We strive to improve communications throughout the region.
- We strive to maintain neutrality so all interested parties have an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the SNC's activities.

Our Key Objectives

- We seek to "add value" and build upon existing community and regional efforts.
- We bring a regional focus to the issues of the Sierra Nevada, collecting and sharing information across the region and communicating the benefits that accrue from the region.
- We encourage community-based solutions and will assist communities with technical expertise, information and resources necessary to achieve local solutions.
- We use reliable information and sound science in making decisions, identifying opportunities to fill information and technical gaps and building on and expanding community information.

Implementing Our Programs

- We develop program priorities considering the input received through community outreach efforts and seek to meet community needs, recognizing local and regional differences, through program and organizational flexibility.
- We give priority to multi-benefit projects and activities (those that address more than one of the SNC's objectives).
- We encourage projects and activities that leverage other governmental, private and non-profit funding and non-financial capabilities.
- We evaluate projects considering what is occurring on surrounding lands, cognizant of potential impacts to those landscapes.
- Where possible we purchase and/or create incentives for purchase of resources for goods and services within the Sierra Nevada region. We diligently seek opportunities to improve the economic well-being of communities in the region.

Working with Others

- We emphasize cooperation with local governments and organizations, and provide information, technical assistance and financial support to assist in meeting mutual goals.
- We collaborate with other state and federal agencies to achieve research, project funding and program goals.
- We respect the mission, responsibilities and obligations of other agencies.

What the Law Says the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Can Do:

- Award grants and loans;
- Develop projects and programs designed to further its purpose;
- Facilitate collaborative planning efforts;
- Enter into agreements and contracts with willing participants;
- Encourage and initiate collaboration and cooperation among other governmental entities and the public;
- Provide technical information, expertise, program and project development and other non-financial assistance to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and tribal organizations.

Name: Contact Information:

SMALL GROUP WORKSHEETS

Part II – Organizational Goals

Time: Now _____	**Time to End work on all Worksheets: _____**	**Total Time Available: _____**

During the next five years SNC needs to develop strategies and set priorities for projects and activities. To get this work done SNC must be an effective agency. To become effective they will organize in ways that help them get work done. They will begin by focusing on five key areas:

I. Create an Effective Organization
II. Use and Share Reliable Information
III. Increase Knowledge and Capacity
IV. Balanced Portfolio
V. Funding

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THESE GOALS IS ON PAGE 7 & 8.

Part II Questions:

As an individual spend about 3 minutes thinking about the Goals on page 7. The goals should help SNC organize in a way to help it do the work it needs to do. What would you add, subtract or change about these goals? Spend about 10-12 minutes sharing ideas with your group.

Part II – Organizational Goals

I. Create an Effective Organization

1.1& 1.2 Find permanent location for headquarters and establish satellite offices. Use buildings and select locations will that help SNC's work AND contribute economic value to the community. (Year 1)

1.3 Make rules, guidelines and procedures easy to understand. Make decisions in ways the public and others know what is going and can provide input. (Ongoing)

1.4: Stay in communication and reach out to public to get feedback on priorities and how things are going. (Ongoing)

II. Use and Share Reliable Information

2.1 Do an Information Needs Assessment. Find out what information people need for better decision making, how people want to receive information. Find out what is needed from technology and the limitations of current data. Inventory the information now available that could help SNC do its work. (Year 1)

2.2 Based on Assessment, define overall information needs. Develop a strategy to meet needs, build on and improve the existing information structure. (Year 1, ongoing)

III. Increase Knowledge and Capacity

3.1 Do a regional assessment. Find out existing and potential education, joint learning and research projects SNC can support and enhance. (Year 1)

3.2 Based on this assessment and the information technology assessment, develop a community capacity building plan. Identify technology, communication, technical assistance and other infrastructure needs and ways to assist. (Year 2, ongoing)

3.3: Develop an education and communication plan to support increased understanding of the region. (Year 1, ongoing)

IV. Balanced Portfolio

4.1: Working with other organizations develop an "economic and environmental well being index" to monitor indicators related to SNC program areas. Indicators might be things like water quality measurements, tourism numbers, or population statistics. (Year 2)

4.2 Develop a tracking system to make sure there is a fair distribution of SNC resources across subregions and programs. (Year 2)

V. Funding (ongoing)

5.1: Define and communicate the region's funding needs to decision makers at all levels.

5.2: To leverage and improve funding options and opportunities, identify and communicate potential funding sources to those doing work consistent with SNC's mission.

Name: Contact Information:

SMALL GROUP WORKSHEETS

Part III – Program Areas

Time: Now _____ **Time to End work on all Worksheets: _____** **Total Time Available: _____**

What the Law Says SNC Will Do

1. Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation.
2. Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources.
3. Aid in the preservation of working landscapes.
4. Reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfires.
5. Protect and improve water and air quality.
6. Assist the regional economy through the operation of the Conservancy's program.
7. Undertake efforts to enhance public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

What the Law Says SNC Can't Do

1. Use eminent domain
2. Buy land directly (purchase of easements okay)
3. Affect water rights held by others
4. Regulate land use or regulate any activities on land it does not ownexcept by agreement with the landowner

The Governor and Legislature's defined seven (7) program goals for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC or Conservancy). These are in the box on this page. The strategic plan proposes actions for these areas. They are listed on pages 9 & 10.

<u>As an individual, spend about 5 minutes considering the 2 questions on this page. As a group, spend about 18-20 minutes sharing your answers:</u>

1. Among the program goals (this page), **what should be the priorities** for the sub-region you are most interested in? Describe any different priorities you might have for the full Sierra Nevada region.

2. What would you add, subtract or change about the program actions and approach (pages (9 & 10)?

III- Program Goals

SNC is directed to work with seven (7) program goals. In the next 5 years (*note: read full plan for target due dates*) it plans to focus on the following approaches and actions to achieve its goals:

I. TOURISM, RECREATION

1. Identify top priority tourism and recreational opportunities, including those in non-traditional activities.
2. In cooperation with other organizations within the region, develop and make available a comprehensive guide to recreational and tourism opportunities in the Sierra.
3. Identify funding sources, specific to the program that may be utilized, to complement SNC activities in order to achieve objectives.
4. Develop and make available a list of resources, consultants, organizations, etc. with skills, expertise and knowledge to assist communities with projects consistent with this goal.

II. PROTECT, CONSERVE, RESTORE

1. Identify priority projects that protect key resources in each subregion. For lands in need of protection, use conservation easements and similar mechanisms as a primary approach.
2. Identify critical information needs at the regional and community level to assist in assessing resource protection needs.
3. Identify specific funding sources that complement SNC activities in order to achieve program objectives.
4. Work in partnership with local governments to identify information, assistance and resources needed to support community projects that protect, restore, and conserve these important assets.
5. Work in partnership with local governments to identify information, technical assistance and resources that would be of value in local land use decision making.

III. WORKING LANDSCAPES

1. Identify private landowners interested in preserving their working landscapes through conservation easements and similar mechanisms.
2. Identify incentive-based programs (complementing and enhancing regulatory efforts) to assist in achieving environmental protection and natural resource conservation objectives and aid in preserving working landscapes.

IV. NATURAL DISASTERS

1. Work with state and federal land managers to identify projects and activities that will reduce risks of natural disaster on public lands.
2. Assist communities in the development and implementation of firesafe community plans and other community based plans addressing natural disasters.

3. Work with federal, state and local fire agencies to identify opportunities for SNC to assist in risk reduction efforts on private lands.

V. WATER AND AIR

1. Assist in achieving environmental protection and sustainability goals. Find programs that create incentives to complement and enhance regulatory efforts.
2. Develop and make available a list of funding sources, resources, consultants, organizations, etc. with skills, expertise and knowledge to assist communities with projects consistent with this goal.

VI. REGIONAL ECONOMY

1. To the maximum extent feasible, focus SNC's expenditures and conduct activities within the region, utilizing community businesses.
2. When investing in SNC's information technology system and other infrastructure, factor in approaches to increase value to the region.

VII. PUBLIC LANDS

1. Identify community priorities for specific opportunities to enhance public use of public lands.
2. Develop, in consultation with state and federal land managers, sustainable projects that meet this objective, consistent with the land management agencies' objectives and responsibilities.

WRAP UP TIME

IT IS TIME TO TELL THE OTHER GROUPS WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT.

- Pick your reporter/ spokesperson.
- Spend about 5 minutes putting together your 3-minute presentation.
- Remember to mark you flip charts and complete a group workbook.
- The group note taker should put down contact information in case there are questions.

If you would like to make more comments, you may also:

TURN IN YOUR WORKBOOK TODAY – (Please include your name if we have questions.)
MAIL IN TO: 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 210, Auburn CA 95603
EMAIL: max@sierranevada.ca.gov
OR FILL OUT ON LINE NEXT WEEK AT: http://sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/

Memo

To: Jim Branham, BJ Kirwan and John Brissenden
Fr: Sierra Nevada Alliance staff and board
Date: 2/3/06

Re: Sierra Nevada Conservancy Strategic Plan Ideas

Our purpose with this draft plan is to provide ideas to assist in your efforts to develop a Conservancy strategic plan. These ideas are from feedback we have received from our 71 membership groups and from observations from the Conservancy's subregional meetings. We know you will need to incorporate in your plan the mission, vision, and operational procedures. However, we thought that determining the first goals and objectives was the biggest challenge in the strategic plan process. We believe the goals we offer for consideration in this memo incorporate a lot of the feedback we saw at the public forums and in our own subregional gatherings.

We hope the following provides some food for thought in your current planning. We realize this draft plan will not "just pop out" from your working group to the board. However, we feel you have a tough job starting from scratch and we hope components or ideas are helpful. The final goal I think we can all agree on is to have a strategic plan that can be accepted by all parties and adopted by the Conservancy's board that truly takes our region to the next level.

Goals, Objectives

Goal One: Improve water quality, habitats, forest health and other Sierra resources within Sierra watersheds:

Objective A: Identify and compile available baseline data on watershed characteristics, land uses, problem sources and restoration opportunities.

- Identify gaps in baseline data and work with local partners to initiate watershed assessments to compile the appropriate data to prioritize areas for protection, restoration, public access and recreation. Data should include flow, water quality, and groundwater studies.
- With assistance from local partners, identify and prioritize restoration and protection projects in specific watersheds.
- Map important natural resources.

Objective B: Fund restoration projects

- Include in restoration the support of erosion control projects that reduce sediment and improve groundwater recharge.

Objective E: Build the capacity of watershed groups

- Fund watershed coordinators for multi-stakeholder groups that involve agencies, landowners, conservation groups, and the public.

- Fund programs that help watershed coordinators build sustainable funding mechanisms.

Objective F: Protect anadromodous fisheries through water trust funding
Objective G: Fund Integrated Regional Water Management

Goal Two: Support local, comprehensive planning for future growth that protects our natural resources, wildlands, and builds sustainable local economies.

Objective A: Provide grants to do GIS analysis to identify important natural resource areas (such as habitat, riparian corridors and prime farmland) to inform local land use planning processes such as General Plan updates.
Objective B: Provide grants to governments and non-profit organizations to involve the public in land use planning processes through community visioning workshops and charettes.
Objective C: Educate developers, landowners, and planners on best management practices that conserve resources and protect habitat.
Objective D: Provide funding for specific planning for infill development and revitalization of rural town centers applying smart growth principles.
Objective E: Support efforts to encourage shaded outdoor lighting in public and private places to maintain dark Sierra skies.

Goal Three. Enhance and preserve biological diversity and ecological function in the Sierra

Objective A: Support organizations and agencies to acquire properties of significant biological or ecological significance.
Objective B: Apply land and habitat protection tools such as land swaps on in-holdings in public lands and conservation easements.
Objective B: Prioritize supporting projects that protect the foothill oak woodlands
Objective C: Provide incentives to private landowners to protect biological diversity and habitat
Objective D: Support invasive, exotic species removal

Goal Four: Conduct and support priority research, monitoring, and information sharing to evaluate regional needs and support local conservation and sustainable growth efforts.

Objective A: Identify research gaps and update resources such as SNEP and FRAP.
Objective B: Establish an interactive database to serve as a clearinghouse for Sierra research and monitoring data
Objective C: Fund priority research and monitoring needs
Objective D: Support GIS Mapping and analysis to determine conservation priorities and conduct broad resource planning.

Goal Five: Create and improve public access and recreation opportunities

Objective A: Fund projects that acquire easements or acquisition for access to Sierra rivers, lakes and streams and other significant resources.
Objective B: Fund projects that support facilities and educational signage in public lands and recreation areas
Objective C: Study recreational impacts on habitat, ecosystems, and cultural sites to implement protection plans.

Goal Six: Preserve working landscapes

Objective A: Fund conservation easements for working landscapes
Objective B: Conduct education programs on economic strategies and marketing to keep working ranches and farms viable in the Sierra.

Goal Seven: Effectively communicate with and engage the public in the Sierra Conservancy's programs and planning.

Objective A: Involve Sierra residents in local planning
Objective B: Educate Californian's particularly urban residents about the value of Sierra resources
Objective C: Hold issue based forums for peer learning and discussion.
Objective D: Hold subregional forums to update residents about Conservancy activities and gain input/feedback.

Goal Eight: Promote Sustainable Economics

Objective A: Support making technology available for information-based industries, etc.
Objective B: Enhance ecotourism by studying ecotourism opportunities in the Sierra and providing information on the findings.
Objective C: Provide grants for projects that support ecotourism – such as the Highway 49 historic corridor project.
Objective D: Fund efforts to manage/mitigate tourism impacts.

Goal Nine: Support Sustainable Fuel Load Reduction Focused on the Urban Interface

Objective A: Research ways to make small wood removal economically viable such as mobile cogeneration plants and then support implementation.

Objective B: Fund/support cottage industries for small wood projects

Goal Ten: Preserve historical and cultural resources

Objective A: Identify key archaeological sites and fund their preservation

Objective B: Fund historical preservation in the Sierra.

Goal Eleven: Recruit staff and outside support to develop the programs and identify and implement projects that meet the Conservancy's mission

Objective A: Organize the Conservancy staff geographically allowing staff to develop strong relations within the region and gain expertise in specific watersheds.

Objective B: Develop program guidelines to define grantee eligibility and parameters for funding allocations, in compliance with the Conservancy's legislation.

Objective C: Encourage staff, with assistance from local partners, to identify and implement projects that meet multiple objectives such as sustainable economics and restoring ecological systems.

January 23, 2006

To: Sierra Conservancy Strategic Planning subcommittee
From: Izzy Martin, The Sierra Fund

Re: Strategic Planning Issues

The charge of creating a coherent strategy for developing the Sierra Conservancy is a daunting one, and I thank you for signing up for this complicated task. I wanted to just summarize some key issues that I hope the committee will take into consideration as you produce a plan.

1. Involving Urban Constituencies: The Sierra Fund, as sponsors of the legislation that created the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, worked hard to build urban support for this new state agency. With the urban Californians contributing the vast majority of funding for this new agency, and considering the key importance of Sierra resources to the whole state, I believe that the strategic planning process must reach out to urban voices.

There are several ways that this could be accomplished, including:

a. Creating an outreach strategy for urban media (San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Fresno) with materials about the plan and inviting public
comment.

b. Circulating the draft strategic plan for comment to key urban decision makers, possibly including the Coastal Conservancy, City and County elected officials in key areas, large water agencies (such as EBMUD or MWD) and both urban and rural state legislators.

c. Presentations to elected leaders in formal settings (such as presentations to the Coastal Conservancy), or possibly at public meetings of government officials at conferences such as the County Supervisors Association of California, the Los Angeles Council of Governments, or the Association of Bay Area Governments.

d. Informal meetings with conservation, recreation industry, labor, business and other interested leaders from throughout the state. A possible list of interested groups could be the nearly 100 organizations that endorsed the Sierra Conservancy legislation. I will be happy to supply this list of groups and contacts.

2. Conservation-based Economic Development: The findings and goals in the enabling legislation clearly describe the primary function of the Conservancy as a conservation tool to protect the Sierras natural resources upon which the state relies. Within this context, economic development activities are mentioned. The Strategic Plan needs to carefully balance these issues.

I have read and heard some discussion that economic development in the region could be a primary role of the Conservancy. I believe that if the strategic plan emphasizes development without placing it in the context of conservation of natural resources there will be a strongly negative reaction by the legislature and public. Other tools exist for straight-up economic development activities.

3. Sierra-Wide and Regional focus: I think it is important that the Plan carefully consider programs that work for the whole region, as well as programs that may be only important in certain subregions. For example, a blue oak woodland conservation plan may not serve the far north or eastern subregions, but may be a top priority for several other subregions. However, a storm water management program may be useful in every region, despite wildly varying geography. The Conservancy board may want to create a "checklist" for ensuring that the Conservancy has programs that are important to every region.

This is especially important when considering major programs such as land acquisitions. In Inyo County, where 98% of the land is already publicly owned, any transfer of land into public ownership could have a negative impact on the community. However, in western Nevada County where almost no land is in public ownership, it may make sense to create new public lands. There needs to be flexibility and sensitivity to the different regions unique conditions.

Thanks again for your hard work on this important topic!

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Board Meeting
June 1. 2006

Agenda Item XI.D.3
Strategic Plan
Letters

MOTHER LODE CHAPTER
1414 K STREET, SUITE 500
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
TEL. (916) 557-1100 x 108
Fax: (916) 557-9669
coordinator@sierraclub-sac.org
www.motherlode.sierraclub.org

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February 8, 2006

Jim Branham, Executive Officer
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
1416 9th Street, Room 1311
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Strategic Planning Process

Dear Mr. Branham,

Thank you for the opportunity to propose ideas to be considered in drafting a Strategic Plan by your staff and the sub-committee of the Conservancy Board. It is an important document.

We at the Sierra Club Mother Lode Chapter applaud the creation of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and appreciate your openness in seeking information from the groups working on Sierra Nevada environmental issues.

At the meeting sponsored by the Sierra Alliance on January 13 in Nevada City, over 30 groups introduced themselves and their missions to you. I was struck by the theme of requests for data to help them do their work. They may have data pertaining to their area or county but do not know what other groups near them are doing or have access to their data.

1. I request that in its strategic plan, the Conservancy will include a goal of becoming a clearinghouse for Sierra-region-wide data on major topics. Using the table of contents of the Sierra Nevada Resource Investment Needs Assessment as a guideline, the categories could be: Watershed Health; Open Space, Working Landscapes, Species Biodiversity, Habitat, Recreation-Public Access, Cultural-Historic Preservation, Economic Development.

   Further, in the process, the Conservancy could set standards and create protocols for the information so that it can be compared to each other.

2. I also request that you make available technical resources such as software, access to GIS data and other databases, etc., to enable collaborative planning efforts not only for the environmental groups but for County, city and regional planning agencies as they address open space, species and other regional concerns.

3. Since the Sierra Nevada is the source of 60 percent of California's water supply, it seems reasonable that the Conservancy will rank highly the goal of working to preserve, protect and enhance the watersheds present in the region. This goal would require coordination of the many separate groups working with their own particular watershed as well as public and private agencies such as NID, PG&E, MWD, etc.

4. In your short-term plan (prior to receiving funding expected in 2007), can you identify projects that are near to completion and need a small investment to finish? This not only will encourage the environmental groups striving to accomplish a goal, it will go far to help them see that the Conservancy can act. It will encourage others to keep working and will help the Legislature see how well the Conservancy can fulfill its mission.

If there is any way that we can help you in your tasks, please feel free to ask. You can reach me, Olivia Diaz, monitor on behalf of the Mother Lode Chapter of the Sierra Club, at 530 470-8303 or email odiaz@foothill.net and I will do my utmost to gather the information you need.

Sincerely,

Olivia Diaz
Sierra Club Monitor

Cc: Terry Davis, Conservation Program Coordinator
Mother Lode Chapter Sierra Club

Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council

Chuck Peck, President
559-855-3473
Paul Hardy, Vice President
Kathleen Gilman, Treasurer
Tony Taylor, Secretary

Amador Land Trust
American River Conservancy
California Rangeland Trust
Eastern Sierra Land Trust
Feather River Land Trust
Lassen Land & Trails Trust
Middle Mountain Foundation
Mountain Meadows Conservancy
Nevada County Land Trust
Nevada Land Conservancy
Pacific Forest Trust
Placer Land Trust
Sequoia Riverlands Trust
Shasta Land Trust
Sierra Foothills Conservancy
The Nature Conservancy
Truckee Donner Land Trust
Trust for Public Land
Tuolumne County Land Trust

At-Large Members:
Steve Frisch, Sierra Business Council*
Darla Guenzler, California Council of Land Trusts*

(*) affiliations listed for identification purposes only

*The mission of the **Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council** is to promote and preserve natural, cultural and recreational resources, open space, and working landscapes throughout the Sierra Nevada*

Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council

7 February 2006

Jim Branham, Executive Officer
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
1416 Ninth St., 13th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SCLTC input to Conservancy strategic plan process

Dear Jim,

Thank you again for meeting with us last month. SCLTC appreciates your commitment to protecting the natural and community values that make the Sierra-Cascade the wonderful place that it is.

As we mentioned at the meeting, the Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council is very interested in being involved in the strategic plan process for the Conservancy. We've put together some ideas for your consideration as you and your Board committee work on the first draft.

SCLTC - why we want to be involved in the Conservancy's strategic planning process

- SCLTC was a resource that helped with the creation of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, and we would like to continue our involvement in implementation, as well.
- SCLTC is made up of professionals with expertise in various land conservation tools (together our 16 local land trust members have protected more than 80,000 acres of important natural and community resources up and down the Sierra-Cascade region) – and we believe such expertise could be helpful to the Conservancy staff and Board as you consider various strategic directions or options.
- SCLTC's member land trusts are involved in land conservation projects that address many of the

Conservancy's purpose areas, including: protecting wildlife and natural areas (100% of our members); supporting working farm/ranch/forest lands (93%); preserving and enhancing cultural, archaeological and historical assets (93%); protecting and improving water quality (86%); enhancing public use and access to recreation (86%); strengthening the regional economy (64%); and linking tourism to community development and recreation (57%).

- SCLTC has estimated the land conservation need in the Sierra-Cascade over the next 5-10 years to exceed **1,850,000 acres** – for protection of working farmland, ranchland, forestland, riparian and wetland areas, parks and trails, open space, cultural resources and wildlife habitat – and we hope to partner with the Conservancy and our local communities to help meet this need over time.
- SCLTC has similarly estimated the amount of money required to meet the conservation need over the next 5-10 years to be roughly **$1.7 billion** – and we hope that the Conservancy can help fund some of this work.
- SCLTC is well-positioned to help the Conservancy meet its outreach and conservation objectives as a result of our relationships in the region and our experience with specific constituencies in our own communities, including private property owners, working farmers and ranchers, recreationists, and members of the cultural/historic/archaeological communities.
- Individual SCLTC member land trusts are eager to assist the Conservancy as project partners in fee title acquisition projects, when that type of protection makes the most sense.
- SCLTC members are actively engaged in training and continuing education to ensure the highest level of operational integrity – as proscribed by the national Land Trust Alliance in both its existing Standards and Practices guidelines and the new land trust accreditation process being launched this year – making us reliable and effective project partners.

Strategic Planning/Public Input Process

In keeping with the tenor of the first six Conservancy outreach forums held last summer, SCLTC hopes that the public outreach process for the strategic plan will be:

- an open and inclusive process that goes beyond the minimum requirements and provides clear opportunities for meaningful public input;
- a proactive process that actively seeks input on specific ideas or purpose areas from people in the region and beyond (for example, by distributing different portions of the draft plan or ideas through existing networks –

such as local government, arts councils, cultural/historic preservation groups, land and water conservation organizations, tourism/recreation industry groups, economic development councils, etc. – to solicit specific feedback from interested people with related experience);

- a participatory process where interested people really get a chance to shape ideas in partnership with Conservancy staff/Board/consultants, both to strengthen the plan and to minimize the opportunity for people to sling arrows from the outside, with no real opportunity for understanding or buy-in; and
- a respectful process that reflects the interests, needs and desires of the region on equal footing with those of the rest of the state.

Content - general

SCLTC believes the strategic plan should:

- be respectful of existing processes, plans and networks;
- foster cooperation and connectivity between existing processes, plans and networks;
- reflect what was learned through the 6 subregional outreach forums held in the Summer 2005;
- acknowledge and describe ways the Conservancy can work with existing partnerships in the region;
- be sensitive of the specific needs, issues and concerns of each subregion, i.e. one size does not fit all, and what may work well in one area may not work at all in another part of the region;
- provide some mechanism for ensuring fair and equitable distribution of funding and assistance across purposes and geographical subregions;
- take a page from the PG&E Stewardship Council by including a strong youth component – both in terms of involving local youth in projects and, especially, in getting youth from urban areas of the state to "adopt" or otherwise get to know the Sierra-Cascade region;
- emphasize locally-based solutions rather than top-down approaches;
- emphasize solutions that meet multiple needs rather than single objectives;
- focus on areas with important values that are most at-risk or threatened; and
- encourage different interests to work together in local areas, and encourage similar interests to work together across geographic boundaries to achieve more far-reaching results (and to strengthen the capacity of individual groups and organizations in the region through collaborative projects).

Content - specific

SCLTC hopes that the strategic plan will promote (through funding and programmatic focus):

- a better understanding of the region's importance to the rest of California (e.g. through drinking and irrigation water, forest products, specialized agricultural products, recreational opportunities, ecological functions, important habitat types, history and heritage, etc.);
- protection of the region's rural character;
- local participation in planning and project implementation;
- landscape-level planning and prioritizing so there is some background and justification for where project dollars are being spent;
- project monitoring to assess the relative success of different tools and approaches;
- cooperation and collaboration among various groups in the region;
- economic development activities that are connected to and supportive of conservation-based goals and objectives;
- capacity-building among existing organizations in the region that work in the different Conservancy purpose areas;
- incentive-based programs to encourage voluntary conservation of important natural, social and economic resources;
- projects that address the management difficulties inherent in the unique "checkerboard" public/private ownership patterns in the Central Sierra;
- research needed to fill data gaps in the region; and
- pilot projects to test new theories or approaches.

We hope you find these thoughts helpful as you take on the huge task of planning for the future of the Conservancy and its work in the Sierra-Cascade region. As always, the Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council and its members look forward to continuing the partnership that we forged at the beginning of this process.

All best,

Chuck Peck
President, SCLTC

Kerri Timmer
Co-coordinator, SCLTC

May 10, 2006

To: John Brissenden & BJ Kirwan
Strategic Planning Committee
Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Jim Branham, Executive Officer
Sierra Nevada Conservancy

From: Elizabeth "Izzy" Martin
The Sierra Fund

Re: Comments on the draft Strategic Plan

First I would like to congratulate you on putting out to the public a document so quickly, and allowing the bulk of the 6-month timeline to be used in public dialogue. In addition, the structural "bones" of the document are excellent for providing focused comments.

Thanks, too, for providing multiple opportunities to meet in public to provide comment on the document. In addition, the "Survey Tool" on your website is a great way to include public comment in this process.

Overall, I feel the document is a little timid in its language and vision. The Conservancy offers such a huge opportunity for change that is tailored to our region, but this language is a bit generic. I think the document would be improved with an introduction that paints a bright picture about what could be the outcome 5, 10 or even 50 years from now as a result of the Conservancy. This could use either anecdotes, poems, or other ways of expressing the multiple gifts that the Conservancy has the potential to bring to the area.

One key change needed is a widened understanding and description of local partners, especially local government. County Supervisors are only one small portion of the locally elected officials that lead special districts in the Sierra. Water, recreation, sanitation, fire and even

cemetary services have local boards of directors that must be engaged. In many cases these agencies have a much more direct role in protecting water quality and fire safety than do county government.

The document barely mentions tribal government, though there are dozens of recognized and unrecognized tribes in the Conservancy service area. It needs to greatly increase its emphasis on the importance of the partnership with private and community partners, including non-governmental organizations such as conservation groups, arts councils and chambers of commerce. And, the document also needs to recognize the need to build relationships with area land owners and businesses in the range.

In addition, the Conservancy needs to find a way to work with the urban constituents that are footing the bill for the whole enterprise. This could include facilitating joint planning projects between upstream and downstream water agencies, or partnering with Conservation Corps from urban areas around restoration or trail projects.

Finally, the document needs to reflect conservation as a very top priority of the Conservancy. Ecosystem and wildlife health, including protection and enhancement of ecologically important habitat and migration pathways and biological corridors, needs to be listed as a goal, and discussed more specifically throughout the document.

Specific comments on the draft Strategic Plan:

Agency Guiding Principles (page 9): The "Working with Others" section needs to be expanded to include the following bullets:

* We collaborate with cities, counties, special districts (including fire, water, recreation, park, sanitation, waste disposal and resource conservation districts) as well as state and federal partners in our work.

* We recognize the importance of tribal governments in the region and will work respectfully to include this community in our programs.

* We understand the importance of cooperating with local and regional non-governmental organizations, who often provide important services and programs in remote and sparsely populated rural regions.

* We respect the role that land owners and businesses play in the region, and strive to work closely with them.

* We recognize the importance of California taxpayers that do not live in the region but rely on its natural resources for both recreation and water.

Agency Assessment (page 11): I want to applaud the "Institutional Challenges Section" for recognizing lack of capacity at the local level. At this point most of the Counties in the Sierra are terrifically under-resourced in their ability to participate in meaningful, well-informed technical long term planning. This affects road development, sanitation systems, land use planning, and water distribution. There are no wildlife biologists in most county offices with the credentials or time to participate in the Timber Harvest Plan comment processes that are central to forest planning.

Under the "Resource Challenges" section:

* Bullet #1 should be expanded to include the concept that rapid population growth increases risk of downhill flooding.

* Bullet #6: I think it is hard to say how health care is a resource challenge.

Agency Five Year Organizational Strategic Goals
III. Increase Knowledge and Capacity (page 17): This section should include discussion of the value of regional planning. The Conservancy needs an internal structure to help its multiple partners to take advantage of regional opportunities for solving multiple problems with integrated planning, investment, and maintenance of the natural and human infrastructure. This could take the form of either regional committees, or Conservancy-wide issue committees (like intergrated water planning, protection of cultural resources, etc).

The plan could add the following:

Goal 3.4: Support integrated regional and sub-regional planning on all the priority issues of the Conservancy.

Goal 3.5: Recruit technically trained staff for the Conservancy available to work collaboratively to identify projects and design programs aimed at the Conservancy's long term goals.

Goal 3.6 Help to provide better and more technical information to the cities, counties, special districts, tribal governments, and non-government organizations serving on the front lines of land use decision-making in the Sierra.

The Conservancy should help to provide the "software" to the counties necessary to protect their "hardware" (forests, ranches, rivers, lakes, wildlife, etc). This includes improved computer technology and the training and data to use it.

Agency Five Year Programmatic Goals (page 19): The plan should include an additional goal:

8. Protect ecosystem and wildlife health, including protection and enhancement of ecologically important habitat and migration pathways and biological corridors.

There should be an action goal added:

Goal 8.1: To facilitate and foster good planning to protect and enhance ecosystem and wildlife health along with working landscapes and open space.

Program Goal 4 Natural Disaster Risks (page 23): This section needs to be broadened to include discussion of a couple of additional natural disasters possible in the Sierra including:

* Avalanches, which routinely take lives in the Sierra;

* Subsidence and mining hazards (like the poor guy who died last month in Alta when an old mining tunnel opened up under his living room);

* Volcanic eruption threats from Lassen & Shasta;

* More about the risk of flooding from putting more pavement in the foothills.

Two action goals should be added:

4.4. The Conservancy to work with communities to assist in the development of plans to recognize and plan for natural resource disasters from avalanches, subsidence and mining hazards.

4.5. The Conservancy should work with local communities to reduce risk of localized flooding due to development of roads and other impervious surfaces.

Program Goal 5 Water and Air Quality (page 24): This page contains a serious error of fact regarding air quality. Nevada County and other low-elevation counties of the Sierra, are non-attainment areas for ozone, which blows up the hills from the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento Valley. We have some of the poorest air quality in the nation. In addition, certain areas of the Sierra have serious air quality problems related to wood burning stoves.

Discussion around water quality needs to include land use planning issues. Land use planning is central to water quality, particulary in the development and management of roads, which are a top contributor to surface water quality contamination. Sanitation districts also need to plan carefully with new water quality regulations coming into effect in the region.

One program goal need to be added:

5.3 Identify threats to water and air quality in the region, both area-wide and regionally specific.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about these comments. Thanks again for providing an opportunity to comment!

Cc: The Sierra Fund Board of Directors

The Union

Nevada City not out of the running for Conservancy base

By Dave Moller, davem@theunion.com
May 11, 2006

Con Pri Print Ema Email

Nevada City hasn't lost the battle to land the Sierra Nevada Conservancy headquarters just yet.

Wednesday night, conservancy director Jim Branham poked fun at Nevada City Mayor Conley Weaver's ceaseless efforts to land the headquarters at a public meeting for input into the conservancy's plan. The headquarters were located on an interim basis in Auburn in February.

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Jim Branham, left, executive officer of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, stands with Mike Chrisman, secretary for resources, State of California, Wednesday evening during the conservancy's strategic plan workshop at the Miner's Foundry in Nevada City.
The Union photo/Louise Caulfield

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But Branham said the permanent location will be within 30 minutes of Auburn, and "I've assured Mark Miller, the city manager, that Nevada City was in that sphere."

Which area ends up with the headquarters will be dealing with conservancy plans to protect the Sierra's ecosystem while making its economic engine hum. The conservancy is the largest there is, covering 22 counties from Kern County north to the Oregon border.

Helen Baumann, a supervisor from El Dorado County, represents the conservancy's central subregion of her county, Nevada, Placer and Yuba counties. She and others said the turnout of about 100 people at the Miners Foundry in Nevada City was the best yet in the third of six subregion meetings to deliver ideas for the conservancy plan.

"We rely on you," Baumann told the crowd, which later worked on ideas in small groups. "We reach out to you; we don't want the communication to stop."

California Resources Agency leader Mike Chrisman was also on hand, telling the participants, "What we're doing is creating the vision for something like we've never seen."

What the Sierra hasn't seen for years is grant money for conservation and economic projects, the target of the conservancy. The strategic plan now being drafted will be the map for "how we're going to deliver the program across the region," Branham said. The plan will be updated every five years and evaluated yearly.

Branham said comments will be taken before the conservancy board June 1. After the board's input, the plan will be reissued with another public input period provided. The board hopes to pass a final plan at its July 20 meeting.

To contact senior staff writer Dave Moller, e-mail davem@theunion.com or call 477-4237.