

# NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release:  
June 19, 2018**

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## **Sierra Nevada Conservancy now accepting pre-applications for projects that restore forest and watershed health in the Sierra Nevada**

**(AUBURN, Calif.)** – Today, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) announced the opening of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) grant cycle for FY2018-2019. The focus of this Grant Program is on forest health projects that result in multiple watershed benefits. Funding for this program comes from Proposition 1, the *Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014* and the recently enacted Proposition 68, the *California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018*.

Healthy forests play a critical role in California’s water supply system. They capture and filter precipitation while Sierra meadows store runoff, releasing it slowly for use during summer months when it is needed most. The ongoing drought, an increase in large, damaging wildfires, and a changing climate have placed many Sierra watersheds at risk.

“Reducing the risk of large, damaging wildfires and investing in the long-term health of the Sierra Nevada Region will benefit all Californians,” says Jim Branham, Executive Officer for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. “Healthy forests protect our water supply and they provide habitat, places for recreation, and opportunities to reduce California’s greenhouse gas emissions.”

The Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) is a coordinated, integrated, collaborative program to restore the health of California’s primary watershed through increased investment, needed policy changes, and increased infrastructure. This comprehensive effort is organized and coordinated by the SNC in close partnership with other federal, state, and local agencies as well as diverse stakeholders, and it aims to increase the pace and scale of restoration in the Region.

Grant awards may be made out to public agencies, qualifying 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organizations, and eligible Tribal organizations. Applicants can submit proposals for grants to:

- Implement fuel treatment projects to reduce wildfire risks, protect watershed tributaries to water storage facilities, and promote watershed health.

- Protect and restore rural and urban watershed health to improve watershed storage capacity, forest health, protection of life and property, and greenhouse gas reduction.
- Implement watershed adaptation projects in order to reduce the impacts of climate change on California's communities and ecosystems.

Grants can be utilized for on-the-ground projects or for planning and project development activities directly leading to on-the-ground projects located within the Sierra Nevada Region or that have a direct impact on lands or waters within the Region.

For more information about the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's WIP grant program, visit [www.sierranevada.ca.gov](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov).

### ***About the Sierra Nevada Conservancy***

*Created in 2004, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) is a state agency whose mission is to improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region. The SNC has awarded over \$68 million in grants for projects to protect and enhance the health of California's primary watersheds by improving forest health, remediating mercury contamination from abandoned mines, protecting critical natural resources, and reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfire. Funding for these projects came from Proposition 84 passed by voters in 2006 and Proposition 1 passed by voters in 2014.*

*The Sierra Nevada Region spans 25 million acres, encompasses all or part of 22 counties, and runs from the Oregon border in the north to Kern County in the south. The Region is the origin of more than 60 percent of California's developed water supply.*

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