

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Sierra Nevada Conservancy awards nearly \$3 million for forest health and watershed restoration projects**

**(Sacramento, Calif.)** – Yesterday the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Governing Board approved nearly \$3 million in grants for projects that will reduce wildfire risk and restore forest and watershed health in the Sierra Nevada region. Funding for these projects comes from Proposition 1, The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014. This is the sixth set of awards made under the SNC's [Proposition 1 grant program](#).

“The 2017 fire season in California was one of the most damaging, and really emphasized the need to focus on the health of our forests,” says Jim Branham, Executive Officer for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. “Investing in projects in the Sierra Nevada, like the ones we’re supporting today, that reduce the risk of large, damaging wildfires, limit greenhouse gas emissions, and protect our water supply is critical for California’s future.”

The projects approved for funding include:

- **Mariposa County - Wagner Ridge Watershed Protection Plan, \$64,750**  
This grant to the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council will complete the environmental compliance work needed to widen a 4.2-mile section of the Wagner Ridge Fuelbreak between Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties. The Project protects two major watersheds that supply municipal and irrigation water into the San Joaquin Valley. This project leverages work funded by the Natural Disaster Resiliency Competition (NDRC) funds, as well as other project work funded by SNC's Proposition 1 grant program.
- **Fresno County - Pre-Development/Acquisition Planning for a Biomass Utilization Campus at the Auberry Mill Site, \$73,669**

This grant to the Sierra Resource Conservation District will complete the pre-development planning, due diligence, and regulatory requirements for the Sierra Resource Conservation District (RCD) to acquire and develop an integrated biomass campus on the Auberry Mill site. The eventual development of a biomass campus on this site will provide a receptacle for non-merchantable biomass for the communities of Auberry and Prather, the High Sierra Ranger District, and private forest landowners, and ultimately protect the Upper San Joaquin and Kings River Basins from large, damaging wildfires.

- **Tehama County - Childs Meadow Fuel Reduction and Forest Resiliency Project, \$75,000**

This grant to the Resource Conservation District of Tehama County will complete the planning and environmental compliance necessary to develop a timber harvest plan that will reduce wildfire risk and protect the 1,440-acre area just east of Red Bluff. This project will reduce the risk for large, damaging wildfires within the headwaters of two anadromous fish streams that lead to the Sacramento River system.

- **Nevada County – ‘Inimim Forest Restoration Project, \$75,000**

This grant to the Yuba Watershed Institute will fund the completion of biological and cultural resource surveys, develop prescriptions and cost estimates for proposed forest restoration treatments, and complete the environmental compliance necessary to thin overly-dense forests, reduce wildfire risk, and remove beetle-killed trees on approximately 1,200 acres within the ‘Inimim Forest.

- **Nevada County – Lower Steephollow Watershed Restoration Implementation Plan, \$74,928**

This grant to the Sierra Streams Institute will complete environmental compliance and fund the creation of a Healthy Forest, Watershed, and Fuel Reduction Implementation Plan to restore a wildlife-friendly and fire-resistant landscape, and reduce the threat of wildfire on 396 acres of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, and two parcels of private land totaling 59 acres near where Lower Steephollow Creek flows into the Bear River.

- **Nevada County – Upper Deer Creek Healthy Forest and Fuel Reduction Implementation Plan, \$74,928**

This grant to the Sierra Streams Institute will fund the creation of a Healthy Forest, Watershed, and Fuel Reduction Implementation Plan to develop a fire-resistant landscape, and reduce threat of wildfire on 298 acres within the Upper Deer Creek watershed above Scotts Flat Reservoir.

- **Shasta County – Crossroads Project, \$74,793**

This grant to the Fall River Resource Conservation District will complete the pre-project due diligence work for forest restoration activities on a 2,825-acre portion of a larger 20,000 acre project area identified in the Upper Pit River Watershed Integrated Regional Water Management Plan. When implemented, the restoration

activities will reduce the potential for large, uncontrolled fires, and subsequent erosion in the Upper Pit River watershed.

- **Sierra County – Planning for Resilient Forests in Mining-Impacted Landscapes: Fuels Reduction and Erosion Prevention, \$74,483**  
This grant to The Sierra Fund will leverage already planned management actions for the Tahoe National Forest (TNF) and develop strategies for integrating hydraulic mine remediation into holistic forest health restoration. This project will develop a fuels-reduction and erosion-prevention plan for the two sites – Grizzly Creek Diggings and Tippicanoe – which total 99 acres, as well as remediation design for the two hydraulic mines, ultimately protecting the Yuba River watershed and New Bullards Bar Reservoir.
- **Nevada and Sierra Counties – Yuba Headwaters Healthy Forest Project Phase I, \$65,000**  
This grant to the Nevada Irrigation District (NID) will complete a Timber Harvest Plan (THP) for approximately 550 acres of NID land in and around English Meadow in the Upper Middle Yuba River watershed. The THP will focus on restoring a more diverse, uneven-aged forest and reducing wildfire risk immediately upstream from Jackson Meadows Reservoir, a keystone facility for the NID's water supply.
- **Shasta, Lassen, and Plumas Counties – Improving Landscape and Watershed Health through Restoring Fire Regimes in Lassen Volcanic National Park, \$74,966**  
This grant to the Sierra Institute for Community and Environment will complete the cultural and biological surveys, and environmental compliance necessary to support 2,400 acres of future prescribed fire work in the Lassen National Park. The planned prescribed fire activities will reduce fuel loading and risk of large, damaging wildfires in the headwaters of the North Fork Feather River.
- **Nevada County – Western Nevada County Community Defense Project, \$500,000**  
This grant to the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County will reduce fuel loads and the risk of large, damaging wildfires on 239 acres of Tahoe National Forest land in the Deer Creek watershed in Nevada County. The project site is just above the inlet to Scotts Flat Reservoir, which stores water for approximately 75,000 residents in Nevada City, Grass Valley, and surrounding areas.
- **Butte County – Butte Creek Forest Health Project, \$499,100**  
This grant to the Butte County Fire Safe Council will complete fuel reduction and forest restoration treatments within three populated watersheds on three parcels: Paradise Irrigation District (PID) (30 acres), Paradise Unified School District (PUSD) (15 acres), and Paradise Pines Property Owners Association (PPPOA) (386 acres). Project work will reduce the risk of large, damaging wildfires within the Little and Middle Butte Creek watersheds, tributaries to the Sacramento River.

- **El Dorado County – Trestle Forest Health Project, \$487,715**  
This grant to the National Wild Turkey Federation will treat 270 acres of overly dense forest and reduce the risk of large, damaging wildfires. This work will protect drinking water infrastructure and the residents in the community of Grizzly Flats in El Dorado County.
- **Tehama County – Onion Ridge Fuel Reduction and Forest Health Improvement Project, \$250,006**  
This grant to the Resources Conservation District of Tehama County will increase forest and watershed health and resiliency over 533 acres through the creation of a strategically-designed fuel break along a 25-mile long road on the ridge between Mill Creek and Deer Creek, two anadromous fish-bearing streams in eastern Tehama County that drain to the greater Sacramento River Basin.
- **El Dorado County – Fire Adapted 50 – Sly Park Vegetation Management Project, \$500,000**  
This grant to the El Dorado County Resource Conservation District will fund 260 acres of forest restoration treatments within the larger Sly Park Vegetation Management Project landscape, an all-lands approach focused on creating a fire-resilient landscape on 3,724 acres of forested land surrounding Jenkinson Lake, a key water supply feature for El Dorado County.

In addition to meeting the requirements of Proposition 1, the projects awarded support the goals and objectives of the [Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program](#), a large-scale restoration program designed to address ecosystem health in the Sierra Nevada. This program is being coordinated by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the U.S. Forest Service, and seeks to increase the pace and scale of restoration across the Sierra by increasing funding, addressing policy barriers, and increasing infrastructure needed to support restoration.

To date, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy has funded 47 Proposition 1 projects totaling \$12,846,168 that support the restoration goals of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program. Additional information about each of these projects can be found at [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 \$65 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 on the north to Kern County on the south. The Region is the origin of more than 60 percent of California's developed water supply.*

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