

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Brittany Covich (530) 823-4686
bcovich@sierranevada.ca.gov



Sierra Nevada Conservancy authorizes \$1 million for Rim Fire restoration

Jackson — Today the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Governing Board approved \$1 million in grant funding to be awarded for projects that will help to restore areas affected by the Rim Fire. Projects will contribute to improving forest and watershed health in the burned area and will be funded by Proposition 84, passed by voters in 2006.

Preliminary estimates suggest that nearly 100,000 acres of the Rim Fire burned at high intensity, leaving little to no vegetation on the ground. Without vegetation, the forest loses its ability to filter water and slow runoff, resulting in poor water quality, increased erosion and higher flood risks during the rainy season. The impacts to habitat, recreation, air quality and grazing operations are also significant.

“The Tuolumne River watershed, where the Rim Fire burned, is a critical water source for numerous communities and agricultural producers,” said SNC Executive Officer Jim Branham. “Investing some of our limited resources will contribute directly to restoring this watershed and hopefully will leverage additional funding for the larger restoration effort.”

“Having this investment from the Conservancy is a wonderful example of a federal-state partnership that recognizes the important benefits lands managed by the Forest Service provide to all Californians,” said Susan Skalski, Forest Supervisor for the Stanislaus National Forest.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy staff will work closely with local collaborative groups, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, Tuolumne County and other stakeholders to determine how SNC’s contribution can make the greatest impact.

Tuolumne County Supervisor Sherri Brennan added, “We are certainly appreciative of this funding from the Conservancy and look forward to working with them to ensure that we maximize the benefits for our county and our forest.”

About the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Governing Board

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, which receives no general fund tax dollars, has awarded over \$50 million in grants for projects to protect and enhance the health of California's 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 comes from Proposition 84 passed by voters in 2006.

The SNC Governing Board meets quarterly around the Sierra Nevada Region, which spans 25 million acres, encompasses all or part of 22 counties, and runs from the Oregon border on the north, to Kern County.

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