

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

Nov. 28, 2011

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Healthy Forest and Ag Land Restoration Funding to Highlight Sierra Nevada Conservancy Board's Dec. 8 Meeting in Fresno

(Auburn) – The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Governing Board will hold its next quarterly meeting Dec. 8 in Fresno, and will tour sites in the nearby foothills of the Sierra Dec. 7. The board will hear updates from SNC staff on the results of its recent \$5 million Proposition 84 grant solicitation for “healthy forest” projects, as well as plans for the next round of grants focusing on preservation of ranching and agricultural lands.

“We received nearly 200 requests for funding for healthy forest projects, which underscores the need for this kind of work in the Sierra,” said SNC Executive Officer Jim Branham. “We will review the nature of the applications with the board, as well as the schedule and process for the next round of grants.”

All projects in the current grant cycle must be designed to benefit Sierra Nevada forests and associated meadows, either by reducing the risk and impacts of large damaging fires, or by preserving or restoring ecosystem function. The projects proposed to the SNC total more than \$25 million, with approximately \$5 million available to award.

Proposition 84 is the Safe Drinking Water Bond Act, passed by voters in 2006. In its first five years, the SNC, which receives no general fund tax dollars, has authorized approximately \$40 million in Prop. 84 grants for more than 220 projects throughout the Sierra Nevada region. These projects have included forest thinning/fuels reduction work, conservation easements and acquisitions, and watershed and habitat restoration.

The SNC board will participate in a field trip to Millerton Lake and nearby Finegold Ranch Wednesday, Dec. 7 (weather permitting). The tour will leave at noon from the main parking lot of the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, 2233 Ventura Street, Fresno. Following the field trip, a reception will be held in the lobby of the Fig Garden Financial Center, 5260 N. Palm Avenue, Fresno.

The board meeting will convene at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 8 at the Hugh Burns state building, 2550 Mariposa Mall, Room 1036. The public is invited to attend all SNC board meetings and events. An RSVP is requested for the field trip and transportation is not provided. Please contact Theresa Burgess at (530) 823-4670.

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All documents related to the SNC board meeting are posted on the SNC web site, <http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/news/board-meetings>, at least 14 days in advance of each meeting.

About the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Governing Board

Created in 2004, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy is a state agency whose mission is to improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region.

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

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