

STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund

SNC ID Number: TRFRF004

Applicant: Sierra Business Council

Project Title: Workforce Development Initiative Phase I – Assessment and Gap Analysis

SNC Subregion: Region-wide

Funding Amount Requested: \$35,000

Funding Amount Recommended: \$35,000

Total Project Cost: \$35,000

PROJECT SCOPE / DESCRIPTION

The Truckee-based Sierra Business Council (SBC) will create a comprehensive workforce development initiative to meet the needs of on-the-ground forest and watershed restoration work, including wood processing businesses. The initiative will assess relevant workforce programs, specifically those serving the SNC Region, and identify program gaps. A working group consisting of representatives from workforce services agencies, educational entities, state and federal departments, industry organizations and other relevant entities will be convened to identify the funding and programs needed to recruit and train the workers needed to assure a robust, sustainable forest restoration/wood processing Regional economy.

The destructive fires of the last few years have effectively communicated the need for forest restoration and fuel reduction projects to both public and private landowners. Several funding sources have recently become available to support this type of work. Unfortunately, gaps in available workforce have slowed down these restoration projects. There is increasing competition for on-the-ground crews that can complete forest restoration and prescribed burning projects. There is also a critical lack of trained truckers, heavy equipment operators, and skilled labor needed in wood-processing businesses. These workforce needs have been discussed in several recent plans, including the SNC 2019 Strategic and Action Plans. As a result of discussions among numerous agencies, the SBC has outlined a phased approach to address workforce development needs on a Regional basis. The proposed funding will cover Phase I of such a process: a comprehensive assessment. The SBC will research, catalogue, and assess the capacity of training resources available to the Region, and will assist the working group in identifying resources and next steps needed for program development. Future phases will require additional funding to develop pilot programs and assess the success of these programs in providing training and support needed to help local residents succeed in the wood-based economy. SNC and partners are currently working on identifying sources for future phases.

This program is another aspect of the workforce development proposals for TRFRF funding represented by proposed project #003 (Sierra Nevada Alliance professional staff internships) and #005 (CHIPS forestry crew training program). Those proposals are actual training programs to meet immediate needs. This initiative is a long-term planning and implementation project which involves and engages other state and local workforce and educational resources, including Workforce Investment Boards, Community Colleges, the wood products industry, and others. The results of this initiative will be to institutionalize needed training programs to make them available and sustainable into the future.

The SBC is a non-profit organization located in Truckee which implements regional projects that model proactive change. Its goal is to bring about a diverse, inventive, and sustainable region where the economy is vibrant, the land is thriving, and the communities offer opportunity for all. The SBC has worked very closely with the SNC on past efforts, including the Geotourism project. The SBC is also the Small Business Development Center serving northeastern California.

Partners in this effort will likely include state agencies such as CAL FIRE, GoBiz, and the California Community Colleges Workforce and Economic Development Division. The work will also involve communication with federal land managers, business and industry leaders, and other relevant groups. It is anticipated that the involvement of these groups and the completion of a comprehensive assessment will help leverage funding for future implementation pilot and scale programs.

This project meets the criteria of the SNC’s TRFRF funding by providing seed funding for a workforce development program in forest restoration and wood-based business development. The proposed work also directly addresses the SNC Action Plan Resilient Communities Strategy 3: Develop and implement collaborative approaches that enhance community resiliency and bring entities together to solve problems and overcome obstacles. Action 1: Support and participate in efforts to establish new workforce internships or service programs focused on planning and implementing forest health projects and wood products/biomass utilization.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Progress Reports	Every 6 months until project completion
Identify, recruit, convene and manage working group	July – October 2019
Collect, collate and catalogue relevant data	July – December 2019
Identify, Survey, Interview training and apprenticeship Programs	September – December 2019
Draft and review recommendations report	December 2019 – June 2020
Final report to SNC	June 2020
Estimated Project Completion Date	Spring 2020

PROJECT COSTS

BUDGET CATEGORIES	SNC FUNDING
Project Costs:	
Staff expenses	\$20,000
Consultants	\$5,000
Operating Costs (travel, equipment, printing, etc.)	\$5,000
Administrative:	
Administrative Costs	\$5,000
TOTAL:	\$35,000

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Number and Type of Jobs Created
- Number and Value of New, Improved, or Preserved Economic Activities
- Number of People Reached
- Resources Leveraged for the Sierra Nevada
- Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments

CEQA Documentation

SNC #: TRFRF004

Project Title: Workforce Development Initiative Phase I – Assessment and Gap Analysis

Applicant: Sierra Business Council

CEQA:

The project is Statutorily Exempt under Section 15262. Feasibility and Planning Studies and Categorically Exempt under Class 6 Section 15306. Information Collection.

- **Notice of Exemption:** See Below

Notice of Exemption

Form D

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 212
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

(Address)

County Clerk
County of _____

Project Title: Workforce Development Initiative Phase I – Assessment and Gap Analysis (SNC #TRFRF004)

Project Location - Specific:

The analysis will cover the entire Sierra Nevada Region - potentially including programs in Modoc, Lassen, Shasta, Tehama, Butte, Plumas, Sierra, Yuba, Nevada, Placer El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, Tholumne, Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kern, Alpine, Mono, and Inyo counties.

Project Location – City: NA Project Location – County: See description above

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide funding in the amount of \$35,000 to the Sierra Business Council to develop a comprehensive workforce development initiative to meet the needs of on-the-ground forest and watershed restoration work. The initiative will assess relevant workforce programs, and identify program gaps. A working group consisting of representatives from workforce services agencies, educational entities, state and federal departments, industry organizations and other relevant entities will be convened to identify the funding and programs needed to recruit and train the workers needed to assure a robust, sustainable forest restoration/wood processing Regional economy.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sierra Business Council

Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
- Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15306, "Information Collection"
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: Section 15262, "Feasibility and Planning Studies"

Reasons why project is exempt:

This is an analysis activity to identify gaps in forest-related workforce availability and capacity. It does not involve physical alterations to the environment.

Lead Agency
Contact Person: Shannon Ciotti Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 823-4689

If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Title: _____

- Signed by Lead Agency Date received for filing at OPR: _____
- Signed by Applicant

Revised 2005