I. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m.

II. Oath of Office for New Boardmembers
The Oath of Office was administered to Nevada County Supervisor Richard Anderson, Mono County Supervisor Stacy Corless, Lassen Volcanic National Parks Superintendent Jim Richardson, and Department of Finance designee Karen Finn.

III. Roll Call

Absent: All Boardmembers present at roll call.

IV. Approval of December 6, 2018, Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

ACTION: Boardmember Tom Wheeler moved, and Boardmember Julie Alvis seconded, a motion to approve the December 6, 2018, meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Board Chair’s Report
Board Chair Terry O'Brien thanked staff and presenters involved in the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) Summit that took place the previous day.

Chair O'Brien explained to the Board that there was a significant scheduling conflict with the December Board meeting and requested the Board take action to move the December 2019 Board meeting to December 11-12, 2019.

ACTION: Boardmember Paul Roen moved, and Boardmember Stacy Corless seconded, a motion to move the December Board meeting to December 11-12, 2019.

Chair O'Brien provided the Board with a brief update on the status of the new Administration. O'Brien announced that former Boardmember and Placer County Supervisor Jennifer Montgomery has been appointed as the new leader of the Governor's Forest Management Task Force.

Chair O'Brien announced the Rim Fire Tour date will be May 30 and said this tour will be a full-day tour.
VI. Executive Officer’s Report (INFORMATIONAL)

a. Executive Officer Update

Executive Officer Angela Avery provided the Board a brief update on her 30-, 60-, and 90-day executive action plan. Avery said that she has met with dozens of partners, sister state agencies, and legislative liaisons with a focus on understanding needs and prepping for opportunities as implementation of the new Strategic Plan begins. Avery provided thanks to SNC staff for their commitment and support in implementing her executive action plan.

Avery said in the coming months her focus will turn to in-region perspectives, and she will be visiting the six Subregions to meet with local supervisors, decision makers, and partners who are doing the important work on the ground to protect our watersheds, forest communities, and citizens.

Avery also provided an update on the Implementation Plan for the newly developed Strategic Plan. She pointed out that the WIP Summit that took place the previous day and grants awarded at today’s meeting represent significant progress in completing both of these plans.

Avery told the Board that the SNC had recently been identified as a block grant recipient of about two million dollars in Regional Forest and Fire Capacity funding from a program of the California Natural Resources Agency and administered by the Department of Conservation. This funding is primarily geared towards capacity building, and SNC is anticipating confirmation as a recipient. This funding would greatly complement the Strategic Plan goals related to Resilient Sierra Nevada Communities.

Avery provided the Board with an update on the planned May 30 Board Tour of the Rim Fire area. As part of coordination of this tour, Board, staff, Chad Hanson and his colleagues, as well as policymakers and members of the scientific community have been invited to join us. The tour and discussion that follow are expected to help shed some light on the value of the restoration work being done in the area and inform decisionmakers on all perspectives as work to achieve the goals under the National Disaster Resilience Competition Grant continues.

b. Administrative Update

Administrative Division Chief Amy Lussier provided the Board a brief update on the status of the Administrative Division and encouraged the Board to review the materials provided in the Board meeting packet. Lussier also stated that the top priority of the Conservancy is to hire the Career Executive Assignment position and fill the vacancy being left by Bob Kingman. Lussier hopes to have that vacancy filled by May 1. The second priority will be to fill behind Angie Avery for the Policy and Outreach Manager. Lussier said that analyst positions will be filled shortly thereafter, but the priority will be to fill the high-level management and Executive positions first.
c. Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program Update
Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) Coordinator Mandy Vance shared a summary of the previous day’s WIP Summit and thanked the presenters who took the time to share examples of the work being done under the WIP. Vance highlighted several ideas/approaches that were discussed during the summit and summarized the themes from the summit by stating that the success of one area is dependent on the others, so keeping programs connected will be critical.

Vance introduced the Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan (SNSIP) project, which is a coordinated effort between ten state agencies to explore opportunities to invest strategically in the Sierra Nevada Region. Vance shared that the group continues to meet and explore high-level issues, needs, and funding resources available in the areas of forest health, water supply, habitat, infrastructure, biomass infrastructure, carbon storage, recreation and tourism, and capacity.

Vance provided a brief update on the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI) and said the group is making good progress and continuing to pull in great partners who are bringing in new resources and perspectives. Vance quickly highlighted the upcoming TCSI contractor workshops taking place which are designed to maximize the limited capacity of contractors, reduce competition between TCSI implementors, and allow contractors to better leverage their resources across the landscape. She shared that the Tahoe National Forest will be hosting the first workshop on March 29 and will be presenting a suite of TCSI projects that are available.

d. Policy and Outreach Update
Acting Policy and Outreach Manager Brittany Covich provided the Board with an update on the activities of the Policy and Outreach Division.

Covich said that, through legislative bill AB 2849 (Stone) which passed in 2018, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy received the addition of four legislative liaisons to the Board. These are advisory liaisons: two from the Assembly and two from the Senate. Covich said that, since the development of the staff report, SNC staff has met with appointment staff from both the Senate and the Assembly to discuss possible legislative liaisons that could be appointed to those positions. The hope is that the SNC would have one Senate and one Assembly member representative from in-region, and one Senate and one Assembly member representative from out-of-region.

Covich said that SNC is tracking several legislative bills. Two of the bills are included in the Board report as well as an additional four bills that are focused on biomass utilization: AB 144, AB 343, AB 296, and SB 515. These bills cover everything from analysis of available material to funding for transportation and
technology to feedstocks that would be considered eligible under the Public Utilities Commissions wildfire risk reduction requirements.

Covich said SB 462 is a bill focused on workforce development through the community college system. AB 1111, which would establish the Office of Outdoor Sustainable Recreation and state government, and SB 168, which would establish a state-wide lead for coordinating climate adaptation policy, are additional bills that SNC is tracking.

Covich announced that SB 45, which is one of the bills that's listed in the Board report, has now been amended to include the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program as a potentially funded program under that bill.

Covich told the Board that on February 13, Executive Officer Avery had the opportunity to provide testimony in a joint hearing between the Assembly Budget Subcommittee Number 3 and Assembly Natural Resources Committee on Wildfire Impact on Watershed Lands. The panel included agency representatives from the Legislative Analyst’s Office, the Department of Conservation, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the Wildlife Conservation Board, and the California Air Resources Board. The panel discussed current watershed restoration activities and how those activities are coordinated.

Covich also shared that the SNC has migrated the website to a new, mobile-friendly platform. The initial focus of the transition was simply to move everything from the old website to the new platform. SNC is now in the process of going through all content on the website and designing a plan for what needs to be added, updated, or deleted. Covich said the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program webpage and the homepage design will reflect how the WIP is presented in the Strategic Plan.

Boardmembers engaged in brief conversation regarding legislative liaisons and current legislative efforts to increase pace and scale to get on-the-ground projects started.

VII. Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program Proposition 1 and Proposition 68 Grant Award Recommendations (ACTION)

Regional Manager Andy Fristensky provided the Board with a brief overview and update on the grants being presented to the Board.

Fristensky told the Board that twenty-one projects totaling $11,830,138 are being recommended for the Board’s approval today. The twenty-one projects that are being presented are spread through each of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy’s six Subregions. Six projects are Category Two planning projects, and the other fifteen are Category One implementation projects, or what are considered to be on-the-ground projects.
Projects highlighted were:

- Project 1054: Scotts Flat Reservoir Fuels Break Project, Phase 4 – $981,000
- Project 1061: Tramway Road Fuel Break Network – $235,858
- Project 1065: Diamond Mountain Forest & Watershed Restoration Project – $882,087
- Project 1067: South Fork Mokelumne River Watershed Restoration, Phase 3 Treatment – $865,835
- Project 1068: South Fork Mokelumne River Watershed Restoration, Phase 4 Planning – $89,125
- Project 1069: Independence Lake Forest Health & Resiliency – $99,688
- Project 1070: Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Properties Fuel Reduction – $167,200
- Project 1074: Webber Lake Little Truckee Headwaters Forest Management, Phase 2 – $419,250
- Project 1075: Serene Lakes / Royal Gorge Headwaters Forest Health Improvements – $364,510
- Project 1081: Quincy Watershed Improvement Project – $99,997
- Project 1088: Lakes Basin – $995,995
- Project 1089: French Meadows Forest Restoration - Biomass Project – $1,000,000

Boardmembers asked clarifying questions regarding funding and the acres and types of treatments this project would support. Fristensky clarified that this project would focus on biomass removal resulting from thinning activities being funded by other sources, as well as 410 acres of mastication. The biomass materials removed will be taken to the Rio Bravo facility in Rocklin. Fristensky further clarified that the French Meadows Project is a multi-million-dollar project that is leveraging SNC funding with a number of other public and private funding sources.

- Project 1091: Black Springs Restoration Project - $1,000,000
- Project 1094: Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project, Phase 1 – $1,000,000

Boardmembers requested clarification regarding an SNC grant previously awarded to the same applicant that they postponed due to unexpectedly high bids during the contracting process. Fristensky confirmed this and said that if this project is awarded, the originally approved grant amount of $500,000 in 2018 would be returned to the pot of available funds. Fristensky added that a large amount of in-kind funds is being provided, and the water district and the Forest Service are providing quite a bit of technical assistance.

Boardmembers also asked for clarification on the process if grantees overspend. Fristensky stated that the grantee is obligated to produce the deliverable outlined in
the grant agreement. Occasionally, the grantee may ask to amend the agreement and add additional funds; this amendment would come to the Board for approval.

- Project 1096: Tiger Creek Fuel Break Watershed Protection – $100,000
- Project 1099: Blue Rush Forest Restoration Project – $999,960
- Project 1124: Dry Creek Ecological Site Watershed Restoration Plan – $97,400
- Project 1126: Big Chico Creek Forest Health Management Plan – $100,000
- Project 1130: French Meadows Prescribed Fire Project – $1,000,000
- Project 1131: Rim Fire Invasive Plant Control and Eradication – $332,400
  The Board asked about the species of invasive plants that would be eradicated through this project. Fristensky provided clarification, saying that this project will include many different invasive species.

- Project 1146: Valley Creek Botanical Special Interest Area and Watershed Protection – $999,878

The Board acknowledged ongoing capacity issues in the Region. Staff and Boardmembers engaged in further conversation and acknowledged the need to address the capacity issues.

Public Comment:
Clay Davis – USDA Forest Service Plumas NF
Thanked the Board for considering the project submitted on behalf of the Valley Creek Botanical Special Interest Area and Watershed Improvement Project.

Richard Sykes – Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority
Thanked the Board for considering his project and said this would be the third year of work if the Board chooses to go with the staff recommendation. Sykes said that this project will assist in meeting the 14,000-acre vision of the Hemlock Project.

Michael Hall – Plumas Audubon Society
Addressed the Board regarding Project 1080, the Quincy Watershed Improvement Project and provided thanks to the Board for their consideration of this project.

Steve Wilensky – Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions (CHIPS)
Thanked the Board for the past and future work SNC has done with the CHIPS program and highlighted some of the successes, especially in the area of capacity building. Wilensky also requested the Board’s consideration in changing a current SNC policy change to allow funding to address road erosion as a watershed restoration need.
Eli Goodsell – CSU Chico Ecological Resources
Addressed the Board regarding Project 1126, explaining that it is a planning proposal to support years of on-the-ground projects where they can engage students in the planning and implementation of restoration, resulting in workforce development for the future.

Ryan Bauer – Plumas National Forest
Acting Forest Fire Manager for Plumas National Forest thanked the Board for consideration of the application for Project 1088, the Lakes Basin Project. Bauer also thanked SNC staff for their assistance in preparing the application. Bauer said that the money in the WIP grants has allowed them to pursue increased pace and scale projects. He stated that this landscape is well suited to allow natural fire to maintain the landscape and habitat, and this project will protect the infrastructure that is vital to the economy in the area.

Brett Storey – Placer County
Thanked the Board and acknowledged the staff for the support they provide for funding. Storey provided the Board with background and current status information on the French Meadows Project.

Laurie Oberholtzer – Sierra County Land Trust
Thanked the SNC Board and Staff for the funding and project support over the years which have had a huge impact on the Region.

Neysa King – Nevada Irrigation District
Spoke to the Board about project 1054. Provided highlights and benefits of this project including an effective forest treatment that would improve forest heath and benefit habitat.

Ed Smith – The Nature Conservancy
Spoke on behalf of project number 1069 and highlighted the benefits of this proposal which included hiring a professional forest harvester. Smith said that this project is a part of the TCSI project area/boundaries and much of the project area is open to the public.

Boardmember Sherri Brennan commented on the distribution of these grants and acknowledged that SNC is working to expand the distribution and increase funding in the areas that are not receiving funds. She also encouraged staff to challenge project proponents to take the broad and comprehensive look at projects that TCSI has and to consider how to address maintenance of forest health projects into the future.
ACTION: Boardmember John Brissenden moved, and Boardmember Bob Johnston seconded, a motion to:

(a) Authorize the Executive Officer to file Notices of Exemption for the Scotts Flat Reservoir Fuels Treatment Phase 4 (1054), South Fork Mokelumne River Watershed Restoration Phase 4 Planning (1068), Independence Lake Forest Health & Resiliency (1069), Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Properties Fuel Reduction (1070), Quincy Watershed Improvement Project (1081), Lakes Basin (1088), French Meadows Forest Restoration – Biomass Project (1089), Tiger Creek Fuel Break Watershed Protection (1096), Blue Rush Forest Restoration Project (1099), Dry Creek Ecological Site-Watershed Restoration Plan (1124), Big Chico Creek Forest Health Management Plan (1126), French Meadows Prescribed Fire Project (1130), Rim Fire Invasive Plant Control and Eradication (1131), and Valley Creek Botanical Special Interest Area and Watershed Protection (1146) projects; and

(b) approve findings concurring with the Mitigated Negative Declarations and Timber Harvest Plans and authorize the Executive Officer to file Notices of Determination as a Responsible Agency for the Tramway Road Fuel Break Network (1061), Diamond Mountain Forest & Watershed Restoration Project (1065), Webber Lake Little Truckee Headwaters Forest Management Phase Two (1074), Serene Lakes Royal Gorge Headwaters Forest Health (1075), Black Springs Restoration Project (1091), and Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project - Phase 1 (1094) projects; and

(c) make findings that there is no substantial evidence that the South Fork Mokelumne River Watershed Restoration Phase 3 Treatment (1067) project, with mitigation measures, may have a significant effect on the environment and authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as a Lead Agency on the previously adopted Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration and related Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and

(d) authorize a grant award to each of the projects listed above for the amounts recommended by staff, and further authorize the staff to enter into the necessary agreements to move forward with these projects.
Boardmembers Paul Roen, Tom Wheeler, and Sherri Brennan recused themselves and did not deliberate or vote on this item.

The motion passed unanimously.

Boardmember Bob Johnston left the meeting at this time. A quorum of the Board was still present.

VIII. Resilient Sierra Nevada Communities Proposition 68 Grant Award Recommendations (ACTION)
North Subregion Area Representative Kristy Hoffman presented on SNC’s first grant under the Resilient Sierra Nevada Communities Grant Guidelines. This is a directed funding program. The proposed Grant RC001, titled Strategic Conservation Action Plan, was submitted by the Sierra Cascade Land Trust Council. The total amount requested is $163,405 to support three primary outcomes: 1) land conservation assessment; 2) gap analysis between the assessment and state and local conservation goals; and 3) recommendations for land conservation priorities. Hoffman highlighted the overall goals of the project as outlined in the Board materials.

Boardmembers engaged in discussion about the need for county collaboration in this project. Assistant Executive Officer Bob Kingman clarified that local county collaboration is something that has been weaved into every part of these grant opportunities, and that should have been explicitly stated.

Boardmembers engaged in further conversation to clarify some of the goals of these grant awards and discussed the use of bond dollars for master planning as well as the drivers and prioritization given to these funding sources.

Public Comment:
Bridget Fithian – Board President of the Sierra Cascade Land Trust Council Fithian addressed the Board to clarify the purpose of the project and address previous Boardmember concerns regarding local county and community collaboration. Fithian said one of the goals in the strategic land conservation action plan is to facilitate relationship building between the planning departments, local government, and the land trusts. As discussed yesterday, there’s a great diversity of organizations working in the Sierra; some of them are hand-in-hand with their local governments and their planning departments, and some of them need some help in developing those relationships. Fithian said an additional goal in the planning process is to make those connections more solid.
ACTION: Boardmember Susana Reyes moved, and Boardmember Richard Anderson seconded, a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Strategic Conservation Action Plan project (RC001), authorize a grant award to the Sierra Cascade Land Trust Council in the amount of $163,405, and authorize staff to enter into the necessary agreements to move forward with the project.

Boardmember Bob Johnston was not present for and did not vote on this item.

The motion passed unanimously.

 IX. Vibrant Recreation and Tourism Proposition 68 Grant Award Recommendations (ACTION)

East Subregion Area Representative Matt Driscoll presented an overview of the highlights and deliverables of this project as outlined in the March Board meeting materials.

Driscoll said that SNC has been working closely with partners in the East Subregion, including the applicant, the town of Mammoth Lakes, to develop this project proposal and submit an application for funding through this Vibrant Recreation and Tourism Grant Program. Recreation partners in the East Subregion have a history of collaboration and have been building momentum in relationships in recent years. In 2014, the Eastern Sierra Recreation Collaborative was formed to help guide and inform the Inyo National Forest update of their forest management plan.

A direct outcome of these forest management planning efforts also resulted in the formation of the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP), which is a public partnership between local government agencies and the U.S. Forest Service.

On behalf of and in coordination with the ESSRP, the town of Mammoth Lakes has submitted proposal RT001 to the SNC Vibrant Recreation and Tourism Grant Program for $618,750 for the creation of the Eastern Sierra Office of Sustainable Recreation and Tourism.

This will be accomplished through four project deliverables. The first deliverable will be a series of regular regional recreation stakeholder meetings to identify collaborative support for project prioritization and implementation.
The second deliverable will provide capacity to partners by providing technical assistance for project planning and development, and identification and pursuit of appropriate funding opportunities for those projects.

The third deliverable will be an Eastern Sierra climate change vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategy, related to the region’s recreation and tourism economy. This assessment will provide recommendations to help inform future investment in sustainable recreation and tourism by identifying the vulnerability of existing recreation infrastructure and programs.

The fourth deliverable is education and outreach tools to connect the Eastern Sierra visitor audience to its Eastern Sierra recreation opportunities. These tools will create a focused regional identity and media products to tell the story of sustainable recreation and tourism in the Eastern Sierra and how these visitors can be stewards of that landscape.

This landscape-scale collaborative effort will also establish the Region’s presence in the larger national outdoor recreation movement and serve as a replicable model for other SNC Subregions.

Boardmembers engaged in brief conversation regarding this program serving as a model for other counties in the Sierra Nevada. Assistant Executive Officer Bob Kingman encouraged members of the Board to share with other organizations that may have similar interests.

Public Comment:
John Wentworth – Town of Mammoth Lakes
Wentworth thanked SNC staff for their willingness and availability to work with the local stakeholders and champions for this effort to develop this application. Wentworth also mentioned the USFS support. Wentworth reiterated that this project will serve as a replicable model at the federal, state, and local level.

ACTION: Boardmember Stacy Corless moved, and Boardmember Tom Wheeler seconded, a motion to:

(a) authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Eastern Sierra Office of Sustainable Recreation and Tourism project (RT001); and

(b) authorize a grant award to the Town of Mammoth Lakes for the Eastern Sierra Office of Sustainable Recreation and Tourism project (RT001) as described in Exhibit A in the amount of $618,750 and further authorize staff to enter into the necessary agreements to move forward with this project.
Boardmember Bob Johnston was not present for and did not vote on this item.

The motion passed unanimously.

X. Proposition 68 Funding Allocation to the California Tahoe Conservancy (ACTION)
Assistant Executive Officer Bob Kingman provided the Board with an overview of the proposed allocation to the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC). Kingman described the background of the funding, which was identified in Proposition 68 bond language as funding that the SNC may allocate directly to the CTC from the $25,000,000 Healthy Forest and Watersheds allocation that SNC received. This allocation is to support the CA Tahoe Conservancy for their role in the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI).

The Board engaged in discussion regarding funding allocation amounts and ability to use Proposition 68 funds on staff work and coordination. The Board also asked questions regarding the direct public benefit resulting from the use of Bond funds on this project.

Jason Vasques from the CTC and SNC staff clarified that the project meets Proposition 68 requirements for planning, monitoring, and implementing capital improvement projects and that all activities are directly linked to future on-the-ground forest health projects. Vasquez clarified that the Proposition 68 funds would not be used to directly manage projects that are already funded through other sources.

ACTION: Boardmember John Brissenden moved, and Boardmember Tom Wheeler seconded, a motion to:

(a) authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the TCSI Project Lead and Conservancy Engagement Project (P68WIP001); and

(b) authorize a grant award to the California Tahoe Conservancy for the TCSI Project Lead and Conservancy Engagement Project as described in Exhibit A in the amount of $1,954,590 and further authorize staff to enter into the necessary agreements to move forward with this project.

Boardmember Bob Johnston was not present for and did not vote on this item.

The motion passed unanimously.
XI. Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund (TRFRF) Grant Award Recommendations (ACTION)

Elissa Brown provided a brief background and overview of the TRFRF proposed grant awards as outlined in the March 2019 Board Meeting Materials.

- Project TRFRF 002: Building Capacity for Rural Development Across Sierra Communities – $400,000
- Project TRFRF 003: Sierra Corps Pilot Program – $275,000
- Project TRFRF 004: Workforce Development Initiative, Phase I - Assessment and Gap Analysis – $35,000
- Project TRFRF 005: Forest Restoration and Prescribed Fire Crew Development – $40,000

Brown addressed Boardmember concerns and questions stating that funding for mill development would be evenly disbursed across all six of the SNC Subregions.

Public Comment:
Jonathan Kusel – Sierra Institute for Community and Environment
Kusel addressed the capacity building issue raised earlier in the meeting and said that SNC was key in the creation and implementation of a landscape-scale collaborative working across broad landscapes and communicating with agencies about how better to work with these landscapes, multijurisdictional groups, agencies, nonprofits, and communities working together. Kusel thanked the Board for their consideration of Project TRFRF 002 allocation, as well as all the work that the Conservancy has done over the years to really build capacity across the Region.

Jenny Hatch, Executive Director – Sierra Nevada Alliance
Hatch thanked the Board for consideration of Project TRFRF 003. The funding opportunity will allow the Sierra Institute to leverage other funding sources and programs. The project was also written to allow flexibility, and they will use the Sierra Nevada Alliance AmeriCorps program as a model.

Chris Mertens – Sierra Business Council (SBC)
Mertens shared that SBC was excited to be considered for the Workforce Development Initiative and provided an overview of the two phases of this proposed effort, Project TRFRF 004.

Steve Wilensky – CHIPS
Wilensky provided the Board with a quick overview of progress in the Calaveras County areas. Wilensky shared project successes and growth in the area. Wilensky said that the objective of Project TRFRF 005 is to get people “back on their feet” and out there in a year-round workforce. Wilensky also mentioned that seventy percent of the project workforce is from the Paiute, Washoe, and Miwok Communities.
ACTION: Boardmember Sherri Brennan moved, and Boardmember Susana Reyes seconded, a motion to:

(a) authorize the Executive Officer to file Notices of Exemption for the Building Capacity for Rural Development Across Sierra Communities (TRFRF002), Sierra Corps Pilot Program (TRFRF003), Workforce Development Initiative Phase I - Assessment and Gap Analysis (TRFRF004), and Forest Restoration and Prescribed Fire Crew Development (TRFRF005) projects; and

(b) authorize a grant award to each of the projects listed above for the amounts recommended by staff, and further authorize the staff to enter into the necessary agreements to move forward with these projects.

Boardmember Bob Johnston was not present for and did not vote on this item.

The motion passed unanimously.

XII. Fire Settlement Funds (FSF) Grant Award Recommendation (ACTION)
Assistant Executive Officer Bob Kingman introduced Andrea Williams to review the proposed funding. Kingman explained that funding will be used to implement projects on federal land using fire-settlement funds in an efficient, timely, and effective manner.

Williams provided background and introduced the proposed grant to Feather River Resource Conservation District for a total of $6,097,370. Williams shared that the project will restore 12,703 acres of the over-65,000-acre 2007 Moonlight Fire area. Williams indicated that the project will focus on high-severity fire areas, aspen grove restoration, thinning, and other outcomes.

Boardmembers discussed recent work, including reforestation and regrowth, in the burn area and the plan for long-term maintenance of the project area. Kingman and Williams conveyed to the Board that the Good Neighbor Agreement associated with the grant has a term of ten years and allows for monitoring, continued brush control, and adaptive management as needed so that the restoration will be successful.

Public Comment:
Brad Graevs – Feather River RCD
Addressed the Board’s concerns about recent work and long-term maintenance, provided thanks for the Board’s consideration, and expressed to the Board the value of administering these funds for the RCD.
ACTION: Boardmember Richard Anderson moved, and Boardmember Tom Wheeler seconded, a motion to:

(a) approve findings concurring with the Mitigated Negative Declaration and authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency for the Moonlight Fire Area Restoration Project (FPNMFSF001); and

(b) authorize a grant award to Feather River Resource Conservation District for the Moonlight Fire Area Restoration Project (FPNMFSF001) as described in Exhibit A for $6,097,370 and further authorize staff to enter into the necessary agreements to move forward with this project.

Boardmember Bob Johnston was not present for and did not vote on this item.

Boardmember Paul Roen recused himself and did not deliberate or vote on this item.

The motion passed unanimously.

XIII. CAL FIRE California Climate Investments Agreement Authorizations (ACTION)
Assistant Executive Officer Bob Kingman provided a brief background and review of the recommendation and directed the Board to the staff report in the March Board Meeting Materials. This recommendation is for six of the nine projects, including two forest health projects, that will be implemented under the CCI grant. Kingman also stated that this is the same French Meadows project that was awarded two grants out of SNC’s competitive grants program, for which the Board previously heard testimony earlier in the Board meeting.

ACTION: Boardmember John Brissenden moved, and Boardmember Sherri Brennan seconded, a motion to:

(a) authorize the Executive Officer to file Notices of Exemption for the Planning and Environmental Review project (R1831015), French Meadows project (R1833016), Landscape-Scale Carbon Accounting project (CCI005), Completion of LiDAR on Eldorado National Forest project (CCI006), and the HRV Studies in the TCSI Area project (CCI007); and

(b) make findings that there is no substantial evidence that the Tobacco Gulch project (CCI003), with mitigation measures, may have a significant effect on the environment and authorize the
Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as a Lead Agency on the previously adopted Initial Study / Mitigated Negative Declaration and related Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and

(c) authorize staff to enter into all necessary agreements to implement the projects described in this report, pursuant to CAL FIRE - SNC grant agreement 8GG18601.

Boardmember Bob Johnston was not present for and did not vote on this item.

Boardmember Paul Roen recused himself and did not deliberate or vote on this item.

The motion passed unanimously.

XIV. Boardmembers’ Comments
Boardmember Tom Wheeler requested that SNC staff look into options for future recommendations, so he may recuse himself from a particular grant rather than recuse himself from an entire agenda item.

XV. Public Comments
Dan Porter – The Nature Conservancy
Porter addressed the Board to thank them for supporting the French Meadows project work. Porter acknowledged the large team of partners working on this project and stated that they appreciate the Board’s leadership in supporting projects like this.

XVI. Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.