JUNE 5, 2019

Board Tour 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Members of the Board and staff will participate in a field trip to explore issues and activities related to recreation and tourism and resilient communities in the South Subregion. Members of the public are invited to participate in the field tour but are responsible for their own transportation and lunch. The tour will start at Circle Park in downtown Kernville, adjacent to Kernville Road, between Blue Rd. and Tobias Street.

Reception 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Following the Board tour, Boardmembers and staff will attend a reception open to the public. The reception will be held at the Kern Valley Museum located at 49 Big Blue Road in Kernville, CA.

JUNE 6, 2019

Board Meeting 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (End time is approximate)
Kern River Valley Senior Center
6405 Lake Isabella Boulevard
Lake Isabella, CA 93240

I. Call to Order

II. Oath of Office for New Boardmembers

III. Roll Call

IV. Approval of March 7, 2019, Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

V. Board Chair’s Report (ACTION)
The Board may take action to adopt SNC Resolution No. 6-19-01, honoring Bob Kingman for his service to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

VI. Executive Officer’s Report (INFORMATIONAL)
a. Executive Officer Update
b. Administrative Update
c. Policy and Outreach Update
d. Field Operations & Grants Update
VII. Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan (INFORMATIONAL)
Staff will provide the Board with an overview of the Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan and a summary of the high-level analyses that have been completed to support this effort.

VIII. Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program Block Grant (ACTION)
The Board will consider and may act on a delegation of authority for the Executive Officer to administer grants under the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program Block Grant.

IX. Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program Proposition 1 and Proposition 68 Forest Health Grant Award Recommendations (ACTION)
The Board may take action to adopt California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) findings and award grants for the following projects:
   a. #1053 the ‘Inimim Forest Restoration Project – Phase 1 project in Nevada County in the amount of $300,000 to the Yuba Watershed Institute with a CEQA Notice of Exemption
   b. #1056 the Sagehen Forest Project – Pushing the Larger Landscape Into Resiliency Through Fire project in Sierra and Nevada counties in the amount of $1,000,000 to the University of California, Berkeley, with a CEQA Notice of Exemption
   c. #1063 the Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project in Mariposa County in the amount of $721,487 to the Sierra Foothill Conservancy with a Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency
   d. #1082 the Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan in Plumas County in the amount of $506,714 to the Plumas Audubon Society with a CEQA Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency

X. CAL FIRE California Climate Investments (CCI) Agreement Authorizations (ACTION)
Pursuant to CCI grant agreement 8GG18601 between CAL FIRE and SNC, the Board may take action to adopt California Environmental Quality Act findings and award sub-grants or enter into contracts with partners to implement the following component of the grant:
   a. #CCI001 the Blacksmith Project in the amount of $594,350 to the Eldorado National Forest with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

XI. National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC) Grant (INFORMATIONAL)
Staff will provide the Board with a status update on recent activities and next steps for the NDRC grant.
XII. **Boardmembers’ Comments**  
Provide an opportunity for members of the Board to make comments on items not on the agenda.

XIII. **Public Comments**  
Provide an opportunity for members of the public who have not previously addressed the Board to comment on non-agenda items. The Board Chair reserves the right to limit the time allocated for each person providing public comment.

XIV. **Adjournment**
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 Board members 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.
Current Status – Accounting and Budgets
In March, a budget revision requesting an additional $1.8 million to Sierra Nevada Conservancy’s (SNC’s) Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF) reimbursement authority was approved, increasing it to $3.25 million. This request will cover the estimated reimbursements SNC projects it will receive through the end of the fiscal year. Administration staff is working on completing contracts, accruals, and other year-end accounting functions. The current status of SNC’s FY 2018-19 budget can be viewed on page three of this report.

In May, Governor Newsom released his revisions for the 2020-21 budget. The requests SNC submitted to add an appropriation to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Fund of $8.3 million and a reduction of $1.45 million to SNC’s reimbursement line item under ELPF were approved. Starting in fiscal year 2020-21, SNC will deposit all reimbursement funding into the newly established Sierra Nevada Conservancy Fund.

Current Status – Human Resources
Since its creation in 2004, SNC’s operations budget has increased by 15 percent, bond funding has doubled, reimbursement funding has gone from zero to 8.3 million, and we have recently added federal funding. The increased funding requires additional staff to implement projects. To support the increased workload, SNC’s position authority has increased by 45 percent since its creation. Some of these additional positions were received with the passage of Proposition 68 and the National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC) Grant. Filling vacant positions had been on hold until the Strategic Plan and Action Plan was finalized to identify where resources were most needed. The current SNC organization chart reflects vacancies and current staff and can be viewed on page five of this report.

On April 11, 2019, Brian Bose joined the SNC team as a Communications and Outreach Writer. Brian has a bachelor’s degree in Natural Resources/Forestry from UC Berkeley, and a master’s degree in Environmental Journalism from the University of Colorado at Boulder. He has vast experience as a reporter and copywriter, and his most recent position was Vice President in charge of Content Development at Ridgeline Entertainment. As a journalist in Tahoe, Brian gained experience reviewing complex political and scientific data and turning it into layman’s terms that a reader would find enlightening and informative. In his recent position, he also took complex information and translated it to clear, coherent content to sell network executives new ideas for television shows. Brian’s skills will be essential in developing fact sheets, web pages, social media campaigns, videos, news releases, and other reports on the great work that SNC is doing.

On May 31, 2019, Jamie Sammut will join the SNC team as a full-time Attorney. Throughout the years SNC has relied on part-time attorney services, but the workload has now increased to a
level that full-time services are required. Lisa Hightower will continue to serve as a part-time retired annuitant Attorney for SNC. Jamie has a bachelor’s degree in Accounting and a master’s degree in Elections and Campaign Management from Fordham University in NY, and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law. Jamie most recently served as an Attorney for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), where he has worked since 2014. Prior to that, Jamie worked as an Attorney for the Board of Parole Hearings and at the California Public Employees’ Retirement System as an Investment Officer. While working at CAL FIRE, Jamie gained valuable experience that directly relates to SNC’s work, including serving on the Tree Mortality and Forest Management task forces. Jamie advised on a variety of forestry and natural resource programs at CAL FIRE including prescribed fire, working forest conservation easements, landowner assistance, and urban forestry. He also served as the attorney for both the California Climate Investments and Fire Prevention grant programs and for the Environmental Protection program. Jamie assisted with developing Good Neighbor Authority agreements at CAL FIRE, and worked with regional and national policy groups on the topic.

In April 2019, SNC advertised a Limited Term analyst position to assist with the National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC) Grant. This position will be fully funded by NDRC grant funding and will focus on the Forest and Watershed Health Pillar. On-the-ground work for this project has begun, and this position will perform regular site visits as well as report critical information regarding grant deliverables. At the time this report was written, interviews had been conducted but a candidate had not yet been selected. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

In May 2019, SNC released an advertisement to fill the Policy and Outreach Manager position that was vacated by Angela Avery when she became SNC’s Executive Officer. A verbal update on the status of this recruitment will be provided at the Board meeting.

The next positions to be advertised this summer will be two new manager positions in the Field Operations and Grants Branch. One will oversee the Area Representatives and one will oversee Grants and Reimbursements.
## 2018-19 SNC Budget

### Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF) Support Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Expended thru Mar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Services</td>
<td>$3,536,425</td>
<td>$2,488,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expenses &amp; Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSE</td>
<td>$181,975</td>
<td>$113,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAVEL</td>
<td>$95,000</td>
<td>$55,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRAINING</td>
<td>$31,214</td>
<td>$19,302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACILITIES</td>
<td>$349,159</td>
<td>$230,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTILITIES</td>
<td>$25,665</td>
<td>$9,715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTRACTS - INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT (includes SCO $2,067, CalHR $7,100, Legal $1,975, SCIF monthly fees $3,794; SPB Compliance Review $4,576)</td>
<td>$20,153</td>
<td>$16,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTRACTS - EXTERNAL (includes IT Services $60,300, Landmark Environmental Svcs $9,900, UEI $40,500)</td>
<td>$115,700</td>
<td>$39,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</td>
<td>$156,770</td>
<td>$73,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EQUIPMENT - New Vehicles</td>
<td>$280,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VEHICLE OPERATIONS &amp; MAINTENANCE</td>
<td>$28,778</td>
<td>$14,736</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Operating Expenses & Equipment** $1,284,414 ≈ $572,699

### Total Personal Services & OE&E Budget

$4,820,839 ≈ $3,061,424

### Federal Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Projected</th>
<th>Received thru Mar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>US FOREST SERVICE - WIP</td>
<td>$50,118</td>
<td>$50,118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US FOREST SERVICE - Plumas NF Good Neighbor Authority</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$15,128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Federal Funding** $75,118 ≈ $65,246

### Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Awarded thru Mar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL ASSISTANCE</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Prop 1 Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Expended thru Mar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL ASSISTANCE</td>
<td>$4,700,000</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROGRAM DELIVERY</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td>$148,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLANNING &amp; MONITORING</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Prop 1 Budget** $5,000,000 ≈ $148,582

### Prop 68 Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Expended thru Mar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL ASSISTANCE - Conservancy Allocation</td>
<td>$10,675,000</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL ASSISTANCE - Forest Restoration Allocation</td>
<td>$20,625,000</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROGRAM DELIVERY - Conservancy Allocation</td>
<td>$342,000</td>
<td>$10,839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROGRAM DELIVERY - Forest Restoration Allocation</td>
<td>$418,000</td>
<td>$8,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLANNING &amp; MONITORING - Conservancy Allocation</td>
<td>$2,000,000</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLANNING &amp; MONITORING - Forest Restoration Allocation</td>
<td>$2,285,000</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Prop 68 Budget** $36,345,000 ≈ $19,256

### Prop 84 Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Expended thru Mar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL ASSISTANCE</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>$20,034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROGRAM DELIVERY</td>
<td>$52,000</td>
<td>$51,748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLANNING &amp; MONITORING</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>$51,876</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Prop 84 Budget** $422,000 ≈ $123,659

### Reimbursements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Projected</th>
<th>Invoiced/Received thru Mar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CALFIRE GRANT 2017-18 (GGRF)</td>
<td>$307,548</td>
<td>$85,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALFIRE GRANT 2018-19 (CCI)</td>
<td>$17,886</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$1,804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDRC</td>
<td>$253,755</td>
<td>$77,980</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Reimbursements** $584,189 ≈ $165,674

---

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
June 6, 2019
Page 3
Sierra Nevada Conservancy Governing Board
May 2019

Natural Resources Agency
Wade Crowfoot
Secretary
Keely Bosler
Director

Department of Finance

Governor's Appointments
Terrence O'Brien
Public Member
Board Chair
Danny Wan
Public Member

Legislative Appointments
Susana Reyes
State Assembly
Robert Johnston
State Senate

Non-Voting Liaison Advisor Appointments
Barnie Gyant
US Forest Service
Jim Richardson
US National Park Service
Este Stifel
US Bureau of Land Mgmt.

Local Government Appointments

North Subregion
Mary Rickert
Shasta County Supervisor
Paul Roen
Sierra County Supervisor

North Central Subregion
Richard Anderson
Nevada County Supervisor

Central Subregion
Sherri Brennan
Tuolumne County Supervisor Board Vice-Chair

South Central Subregion
Tom Wheeler
Madera County Supervisor

South Subregion
Stacy Corless
Mono County Supervisor

East Subregion
Aaron Albaugh
Lassen County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Sherrie Thrall
Plumas County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Lori Parlin
El Dorado County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Rosemarie Smallcombe
Mariposa County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Nathan Magsig
Fresno County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Ron Hames
Alpine County Supervisor Alternate Representative

Board Vice-Chair
Richard Anderson
Nevada County Supervisor

Alternate Representative
Sherrie Thrall
Plumas County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Lori Parlin
El Dorado County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Rosemarie Smallcombe
Mariposa County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Nathan Magsig
Fresno County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Ron Hames
Alpine County Supervisor Alternate Representative
Background
When the SNC Governing Board approved the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan in December 2018, the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) was expanded to become SNC’s overarching program. This expansion broadened the focus of the WIP from primarily a forest health program to incorporate all the following Regional Goals: Healthy Forests and Watersheds, Vibrant Recreation and Tourism, Strategic Lands Conserved, Resilient Sierra Nevada Communities, and cultivation of an Impactful Regional Identity for the Sierra Nevada Region. SNC’s policy and outreach activities support all of the Regional Goals but focus heavily on the cultivation of an impactful regional identity for the Sierra Nevada Region.

At SNC Governing Board direction, SNC policy and outreach activities focus on educating legislators and other key decision makers about the importance of the Sierra Nevada Region to the health and well-being of the state; to ensure sound, science-based policy decisions are supported; and appropriate investment is made in the Sierra Nevada Region. This is done by understanding the latest scientific studies on forestry, watershed health, and other relevant issues, utilizing the recommendations and outcomes of that research to inform policy recommendations, and sharing those recommendations and outcomes through SNC’s outreach efforts. Developing and maintaining relationships with legislators and their staff, state and federal agencies, local governments, Regional partners, the research community, and traditional and non-traditional media contacts are also key to the success of the SNC’s policy and outreach efforts.

Current Status
SNC Board Legislative Liaisons
Signed in 2015, AB 985 gave the SNC the statutory ability to seek appointment of two senators and two assembly members to serve as liaisons to the SNC, providing insight, guidance, and leadership on issues important to the Region. In September 2018, Governor Jerry Brown signed AB 2849 into law which expands on AB 985 by requiring that at least one of each house’s legislative liaisons come from a district outside the Sierra Nevada Region.

Senator Andreas Borgeas has been appointed to be SNC’s in-Region Senate legislative liaison. At the time of this report, staff is working through the appointment process to identify and confirm the additional legislative liaisons. Staff will meet with each liaison as they are appointed to introduce the SNC and discuss possible roles for the liaison moving forward.

Current Legislation
Staff continues to track legislation that could have an impact on the programs and activities of the SNC and, where appropriate, engage in discussions with proponents and partners to inform the development of legislation. Staff has identified the following bills of interest, with the caveat that specific bill language may change significantly as the legislative session unfolds:
• SB 45 “Wildfire, Drought, and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2020” (Allen, Los Angeles). This bill would authorize the issuance of bonds to finance projects to restore fire damaged areas; reduce wildfire risk; create healthy forest and watersheds; reduce climate impacts on urban areas and vulnerable populations; protect water supply and water quality; protect rivers, lakes, and streams; reduce flood risk; protect fish and wildlife from climate impacts; improve climate resilience of agricultural lands; and protect coastal lands and resources. This bill currently includes the WIP as a funded program in the bond.

• AB 343 “Forestry: fuels transportation program: grant program” (Patterson, Fresno, Tulare). This bill would require the CNRA to develop and implement a fuels transportation program that provides competitive grants or other financial incentives, using the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, for projects in communities to offset the costs of transporting fuels to a biomass facility, an innovative forest products facility, or a mass timber facility. This bill could provide needed funding for partners to remove biomass from project sites in the Sierra Nevada Region and support local bioenergy facilities.

• AB 839 “Climate adaptation strategy: strategic resiliency framework: Adaptation through Resiliency, Economic Vitality, and Equity Account” (Mullin, San Mateo). This bill would require the Secretary of the CNRA, by July 1, 2021, to develop, adopt, and implement a strategy for the state to adapt to the impacts of climate change. This bill aims to turn the Safeguarding California Plan into an action plan and provides for a grant program that would allocate at least 10 percent of the money to the Wildlife Conservation Board and state conservancies for climate resiliency projects.

• SB 168 “Climate change: Chief Climate Resilience Officer” (Wieckowski, Alameda, Santa Clara). This bill would establish the Chief Climate Resilience Officer in the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to serve as the statewide lead for planning and coordination of climate adaptation policy and implementation in California. The bill would make the chief officer the chair of the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program Technical Advisory Council. Per the bill analysis by the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Water, “creating a Chief Climate Resilience Officer within OPR could help to improve coordination and avoid duplication of effort between all entities involved in climate adaptation and resiliency work statewide.”

• SB 462 “Community colleges: Forestland Restoration Workforce Program” (Stern, Los Angeles, Ventura). This bill would require the Chancellor’s Office of the California Community Colleges to establish a model curriculum for a forestland restoration workforce program that could be offered at campuses of the community colleges by January 1, 2021, with the goal of enabling community colleges to offer the course beginning with the 2021–22 academic year. This bill could help build workforce capacity to perform vegetation management activities in the Sierra Nevada Region that improve forest and watershed health and resilience.
CAL FIRE Report and Governor’s State of Emergency

On February 22, 2019, CAL FIRE released the “Community Wildfire Prevention & Mitigation Report” (commonly referred to as the CAL FIRE 45-Day Report) in response to Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-05-19. In the report, CAL FIRE identified 35 priority projects to be immediately implemented to reduce the public safety risk from wildfires for over 200 communities. CAL FIRE worked with over 40 governmental and non-governmental entities and stakeholders to identify administrative, regulatory, and policy actions that can be taken in the near term (next 12 months), mid-term (completed by the end of the year), and long term (actions that will take more than a year to complete) to address community vulnerability and wildfire risk.

On March 22, 2019, Governor Newsom followed up on the Community Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Report by issuing a state of emergency. The emergency proclamation provides state agencies the discretion to suspend state environmental permitting requirements on a case-by-case basis, including suspending requirements to prepare CEQA documents, so that work on the 35 projects identified in CAL FIRE’s 45-Day Report can start immediately. Thirteen of the 35 projects identified are in or adjacent to the SNC’s Region. It is SNC’s understanding that these projects will be completed in close coordination with the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife and Regional Water Quality Control Boards to protect natural and cultural resources and that CAL FIRE will employ a set of best management practices designed to identify and avoid sensitive natural and archaeological resources. The emergency proclamation by the governor demonstrates this administration’s understanding of the sense of urgency that exists in many forested communities and represents a great first step towards making many Sierra communities more resilient to future wildfire.

Governor Newsom’s “Wildfires and Climate Change: California’s Energy Future” Report

In the State of the State address on February 12, 2019, the governor called for the development of a strategy to address wildfire mitigation and resiliency efforts and outline the state’s commitment to protecting ratepayers and addressing utility liability. The "Wildfires and Climate Change: California’s Energy Future" report was released in mid-April, and recommended improving vegetation management and forest health, (which the report cites has been addressed through the $1 billion allocated to fuel reduction projects in SB 901 and by deploying the National Guard to support fire prevention efforts) and supporting regional projects, (which the report identified as being addressed through the California Natural Resources Agency and Department of Conservation’s award of $20 million in block grants for regional projects to improve forest health and increase fire resiliency, under which the SNC received $2 million – see Agenda Item VIII). Additionally, the report recommends exploring public-private partnerships and capital investment in biomass facilities and other facilities that use forest waste and increase fuel reduction, such as mills that create cross laminated timber, wood chips or pellets, etc. Lastly, the report calls on the federal government to double the investment in managing federal forestlands in California due to the high risk of wildfires.
WIP Partnerships and Community Support Update
The Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan (SNSIP) and the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) Block grant awarded to the SNC have been key focus areas for the newly formed WIP Partnerships and Community Support team over the last three months. Those efforts are detailed in agenda items VII and VIII respectively. In addition to the SNSIP and the RFFCP block grant, staff have provided support for the following regional partnership efforts:

• Southern Sierra Leadership Forum: SNC Staff continue to support the Southern Sierra Leadership Forum (SSLF), who met on April 9-10 in Fresno to discuss approaches to advancing their “Southern Sierra Strategy,” the goals of which largely align with the SNC’s Watershed Improvement Program. The SSLF expects to sign an MOU in the next few months and has approved an organizational Charter. SSLF objectives for 2019/20 include identifying and cataloguing impediments to large-landscape prescribed burns, capitalizing on California funding programs to implement NEPA-ready projects, and working with partners to strategically plan future efforts in the context of an adaptive management framework.

• Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI): The SNC hosted the TCSI Steering Committee’s quarterly meeting on April 29. The group discussed communication and outreach needs, and received an in-depth update on the status of the TCSI science components, including estimated timelines for completion, which are:
  o Framework for Resilience (identifies the fundamentals of resilience—basically, what you want on the landscape): Late June/early July 2019
  o Restoration Assessment (Current conditions and Resilience Assessment): October 2019
  o Blueprint for Progress (Scenarios and evaluation—basically, what can be done on the landscape): mid-late June 2020
  o Project Planning and Design (Actions informed by the blueprint—basically, what will be done): will begin in late 2019/early 2020

The Steering Committee’s next meeting will be held in late summer 2019.

Great Sierra River Cleanup
This September, SNC will host the eleventh annual Great Sierra River Cleanup (GSRC), the volunteer event that SNC coordinates in conjunction with California Coastal Cleanup Day to encourage stewardship of California’s waterways from the Sierra to the sea. This year’s event will be held on Saturday, September 21, 2019, from 9 a.m. to noon. Cleanups are scheduled throughout the Region. Board participation in the Great Sierra River Cleanup is always welcome and Boardmembers interested in supporting or participating in this year’s event can contact GSRC Project Coordinator Theresa Burgess for additional information.
The GSRC also kicks off the Fourth Annual Sierra Nevada Watershed Protection Week, which was designated by the legislature in 2015 to highlight the benefits the Region provides to the state. Staff will be working to develop an outreach plan for Sierra Nevada Watershed Protection Week that builds on the Great Sierra River Cleanup event. Last year, staff worked with legislators on a “selfie campaign” where legislators shared photos of themselves with a caption about their connection to the Sierra Nevada Region on social media and tagged SNC’s social media platforms.

Communication Partnership Activities
SNC relies on partners to help get work done both on the ground and in the communications and outreach world. During the past quarter, the staff has been working with several partners to produce materials, coordinate communications strategies, and participate in events that elevate the profile of the Sierra Nevada Region. Staff is working with the California Forest Watershed Alliance (CAFWA) on a one-page informational handout highlighting projects that successfully stopped or slowed progression of the 2018 Camp Fire in Paradise, CA, including a project funded by SNC that protected a school. At the time of this report, staff was also working with other state conservancies on a handout outlining the value of conservancies as Regional experts for implementing state programs, with partners in the TCSI on summer media and outreach opportunities, with the communications workgroup for the Fire MOU partnership on communication plan updates, and with the Forest Management Task Force communications workgroup on messaging, website, and social media content, among other efforts.

Social Media Outreach
Staff continues to utilize SNC’s social media platforms to share relevant science, promote and connect with current events, and amplify the reach of SNC’s “voice.” On March 6, 2019, SNC streamed the 2019 WIP Summit live on Facebook and received positive engagement during the streaming, including a comment thanking the Conservancy for making the summit available online.

In addition to the Summit, SNC’s social media platforms have been utilized to roll out the SNC’s new strategic plan, promote local events, recognize International Forest Day and World Water Day, notify the public of SNC and other grant opportunities, advertise SNC job announcements, and post news articles and information about Regional issues and projects that SNC has funded.

Traditional Media Outreach
The SNC continues to receive inquiries from media outlets about Regional issues, like wildfire and forest management, and projects that SNC supports. During the last quarter, staff contributed information to a CALMatters video & news story about wildfire in California, and has been participating in the development of forest health and climate change projects initiated by KQED and Capital Public Radio.
Next Steps
The SNC staff will continue to explore partnership, communication, and policy opportunities that will support the implementation of the WIP. Staff will engage in discussions with partners and policy makers on legislative bills which could affect the SNC or its partners from a planning, financial, and/or regulatory perspective, and will continue to identify opportunities to highlight Regional issues and needs to key policy and decision makers and the media.

Recommendation
This is an informational item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments.
Agenda Item VIc
Policy and Outreach Update

Presented by:
Brittany Covich
Legislative Update

- Bill updates
- Creation of the Senate Select Committee on wildfires and climate change
- SNC Legislative Liaison’s update
Policy Update

- Water Resilience Portfolio for California
- Forest Management Task Force
Communications Update

Wildfire Preparedness Week

@CAL_Fire @utfs_r5 and @CAL_FIRE, at McClellan Air Force Base, discussing how state and federal agencies are preparing, and how you can prepare, for wildfire season. – at CAL FIRE Aviation Headquarters
Questions?
Background
The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) administers multiple grant programs supported by several funding sources to support Regional Goals identified in the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan. Several of these programs are funded through bond acts approved by California voters. Current bond funding sources include: Proposition 68, the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018; Proposition 1, the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014; and Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006.

In 2017, CAL FIRE awarded SNC a $5 million Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund grant for forest health-related activities including fuel-reduction, pest management, and reforestation on three priority landscape management units within the Tahoe-Sierra macro-landscape area. In 2018, CAL FIRE awarded SNC a $10.72 million California Climate Investment grant to implement five separate forest health projects, planning and environmental review for six future restoration projects, and three research projects in the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI) landscape. These funds are being administered through sub-grants and agreements with partner organizations.

In June 2018, the Board authorized the execution of a Good Neighbor Agreement with the Plumas National Forest to accept and administer approximately $7.2 million of Fire Settlement Funds for restoration projects in the Moonlight Fire area. In March 2019, the Board authorized a grant, supported with these funds, to the Feather River Resource Conservation District to implement restoration work.

The SNC was allocated $1 million from the state Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund (TRFRF) in the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 State Budget. The intent of the allocation was to fund grants to implement key recommendations of the Forest Carbon Plan as well as Executive Order B-52-18 to improve the health of California's forests and strengthen their resiliency to tree mortality and wildfire.

During the March 2019 Board Meeting, Vice Chair Sherri Brennan requested information about the distribution of SNC grant funds throughout the Region. Staff has compiled SNC grant information from 2007-2019 showing the number of SNC grant applications received and subsequent awards. (Please see Attachment A.) The distribution of SNC grants awarded correlates closely to the number of grant applications received. Differences in the number of applications submitted between Subregions appears to be the result of several factors including but not limited to the number of eligible grantee organizations in each Subregion and the capacity of existing organizations to prepare grant applications and manage grants. Since Proposition 1 did not allow for federal applicants, it is also likely that there is some correlation to the number of applications received and the amount of land owned and managed by the federal government in each Subregion. It should also be noted that in response to emergent needs associated with drought and climate change, the Board directed staff to focus the majority of grant funds on forest health projects, which may not necessarily be uniform across all Subregions.
SNC staff continues to provide technical assistance and resources to build capacity throughout all Subregions and is continually exploring opportunities to diversify and grow the amount of financial support that benefits the SNC Region.

**Current Status**
The SNC is currently administering over 50 active grants throughout the Region. Since the March 2019 Board meeting, staff has prepared, or is in the process of preparing, an additional 30 Board-authorized grant agreements. This includes: 23 Forest Health grants, one Resilient Sierra Nevada Communities grant, one Vibrant Recreation and Tourism grant, one grant for the TCSI Project Lead and Conservancy Engagement Project, five TRFRF grants, and one Fire Settlement Fund grant.

In March 2019, SNC announced a request for pre-applications for the Strategic Land Conservation Grant Program. The pre-application deadline was May 6. Currently, staff are conducting field site visits to all Category One project sites. The final application deadline is July 19, 2019.

Project implementation activities continue from the CAL FIRE Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund grant and are just beginning for the California Climate Investment grant.

The SNC is working in partnership with Plumas National Forest and the Feather River Resource Conservation District to begin implementation activities related to the Moonlight Fire Settlement Funds grant.

**Next Steps**
In late summer and early autumn of 2019, SNC staff will evaluate final applications for the Strategic Land Conservation Grant Program. Staff anticipate making first recommendations for Board consideration at the December 2019 Board meeting.

In the summer of 2019, SNC plans to announce a request for pre-applications for the ongoing Forest Health Grant Program.

**Recommendation**
This is an informational item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments.
Geographic Distribution of Funds Requested and Awarded

Notes:

1) Includes awards from 2007 through March 2019.
2) Includes all applications from the Pre-Application stage.
3) Considers if agreement was entered into or not. Does not filter by eligibility, declined by applicant, or deficient in environmental compliance.
4) Includes both competitive and directed grants.
5) Does not include grant awards required by other agreements, such as the federal Moonlight Fire Settlement Funds, CAL FIRE GGRF/CCI agreements, and Proposition 68 pass-through funds to the California Tahoe Conservancy.
Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan

**Background**
At the March 2018 annual Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) Summit, CAL FIRE Chief Ken Pimlott urged the SNC to convene a meeting of state agencies to discuss the development of a Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan (SNSIP). The purpose of the plan is to develop a more effective way for state agencies to invest funds in a strategic, coordinated, and impactful manner. Given the substantial amount of funding currently available, there is a unique opportunity to significantly move Sierra Nevada watersheds towards health and resilience and to achieve a number of state policy objectives. The initial meeting with key partners was held on May 24, 2018, in Sacramento, establishing a foundation of agreement. The SNSIP partners continue to meet regularly to discuss potential opportunities for strategic alignment of funds through existing programs. SNC Staff regularly meet one-on-one with SNSIP partners to coordinate this effort as well.

**Current Status**
A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formalizing the intentions of the group was established in November 2018. While additional partners are being added, signatories presently include:

- California Natural Resources Agency
- California Environmental Protection Agency
- Sierra Nevada Conservancy
- California Tahoe Conservancy
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- California Wildlife Conservation Board
- California Department of Conservation
- California Air Resources Board
- California Conservation Corps
- California Department of Parks and Recreation

Caltrans and the US Forest Service (USFS) Region 5 also participate in SNSIP meetings. The USFS is currently reviewing the MOU to determine whether they can become the newest signatory.

SNSIP partners have committed to working collaboratively to develop and implement a state-coordinated investment strategy and plan, and have begun taking the following actions:

- Identify the various state funding sources available to support work identified in the WIP and identify best opportunities to align funding programs.
- Identify geographic focus areas in which to fund and implement coordinated, place-based restoration and conservation on the ground and pilot the mechanisms for implementing the SNSIP for expansion to other areas in the future.
• Compile and compare SNSIP partners’ existing assessments and datasets that capture common regional knowledge and priorities in the Sierra Nevada and where complementary program implementation, including increasing capacity and infrastructure, is necessary to move the landscape towards resilience.
• Determine the best process and mechanism/s to combine funding sources for the greatest effect.
• Develop and implement a coordinated monitoring methodology for restoration programs funded by SNSIP partners.
• Engage federal agencies and stakeholders with shared objectives in the development and implementation of the SNSIP.
• Utilize the annual WIP Summit in Sacramento and the Governor’s Forest Management Task Force to support and coordinate SNSIP implementation.

Next Steps
The SNSIP partners recognize the values the Sierra provides to the state, as well as the risks to those benefits. The SNSIP brings these agencies together to discuss common goals, identify needs, and discuss potential future possibilities of collaboration. Three possible stages of work that SNC will lead to support SNSIP goals:

• Identification and quantification of forests, resources, and infrastructure at risk to better understand the funding needs moving forward.
• Help connect potential grant funds to collaboratives or other local groups with capacity to implement the grants as well as to help build capacity where risk exists but capacity to solicit and implement grants may be a limiting factor.
• Increase collaboration across agency grant awards to build on previous work done or tie projects together to build efficiencies and effectiveness.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy staff has completed several high-level analyses with the intent of helping SNSIP partners better understand and quantify needs in the Sierra Nevada Region so that they can invest and leverage resources more effectively in the Region in the short term. The outcome of those high-level analyses was presented to SNSIP partners via this draft Sierra Nevada Dashboard: http://dashboard-snc.opendata.arcgis.com/. Additional analyses are in process and will be added and shared with the partners at future meetings.

There is a strong intersection between the SNSIP, the Governor’s Forest Management Task Force, the Forest Carbon Plan, and the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program block grant recently awarded to the SNC, just to name a few. The SNC will continue to utilize the SNSIP to ensure maximum leverage and coordination between these various efforts to further the objectives of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program and the Strategic Action Plan.

Recommendation
This is an informational item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments.
Agenda Item VII
Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan

Presented by:
Alex Vance
Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan (SNSIP)

Presented by: Alex Vance
Partnerships and Community Support Manager
Why here, and why now?

• The Sierra Nevada Region is of critical importance to the state, but is at high risk, and our window for protecting it is narrowing quickly.

• We have the opportunity to create a much-needed model of how agencies can work beyond silos and effectively protect regions critical to the well-being of California as a whole.

• SNSIP provides agencies a means to better understand and quantify needs in the Sierra Nevada, so that they can invest and leverage resources more effectively in the region.

• Thoughtful, strategic coordination between our SNSIP partners’ resources will result in a balance of short- and long-term restoration and resilience results.
How the SNSIP regions were developed:

- The 25-million-acre Sierra Nevada Region was broken down into seven actionable geographic areas, based on SNC’s experience with the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI) and similar in size to TCSI.
- Boundaries are based on watershed boundaries, grouped by biogeography and where water flows.
- Boundaries are based on the boundaries of existing collaboratives mapped as part of current and previous SNC efforts, to build on already successful and productive on-the-ground efforts.
Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan (SNSIP)
Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan (SNSIP)

Initial Data Considered

- Forest Health
- Water Supply
- Habitat
- Infrastructure
Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan (SNSIP)

Upcoming Data – Next steps

• Carbon
• Insect Damage Treatment Modeling
• Recreation
• Social and Biomass Capacity
An Example of Opportunity and Risk Across the Sierra

The dashboard below gives an overview of a few key data sets and high-level analysis used to understand the way that opportunity and risks spread down across the SNSIP regions.

Hydro Power: 186 MW Capacity
Forest to Faucet: 37.599 Score
Biodiversity: 903,679.771 Acres
Highway mi: 105
High Fire Risk

20 yr Burned: 191,771 Total Acres
High Severity: 105,398.827 Fire Acres
Forest Treatment: 210,886 Acres Needed

Select a SNSIP Region to Activate Rankings
(East Side is the Default)
- East Side
- Eldorado South
- North East
- North West - Pit
- Sacramento - Feather
- Southern
- TCSI Plus

Map of California showing regions East Side, San Francisco, Sacramento, Los Angeles, etc.
TCSI Plus

An Example of Opportunity and Risk Across the Sierra

The dashboard below gives an overview of a few key data sets and high-level analysis used to understand the way that opportunity and risks spread down across the SNSIP regions.

- **Hydro Power**: 1,661 MW Capacity
- **20 yr Burned**: 233,662 Total Acres
- **Forest to Faucet**: 87.693 Score
- **High Severity**: 85,067,065 Fire Acres
- **Biodiversity**: 512,998,453 Acres
- **Highway mi**: 440
- **Forest Treatment**: 1,605,734 Acres Needed

Select a SNSIP Region to Activate Rankings (East Side is the Default)

- East Side
- Eldorado South
- North East
- North West - Pit
- Sacramento - Feather
- Southern
- TCSI Plus

Content may not reflect...
Eldorado South

An Example of Opportunity and Risk Across the Sierra

The dashboard below gives an overview of a few key data sets and high-level analysis used to understand the way that opportunity and risks spread down across the SNSIP regions.

- **Hydro Power**: 1,913 MW Capacity
- **Forest to Faucet**: 82,001 Score
- **Biodiversity**: 805,925.142 Acres
- **Highway mi**: 382
- **High Fire Risk**: 1,315,876 Acres Needed
- **20 yr Burned**: 629,707 Total Acres
- **High Severity**: 225,413.887 Fire Acres

Select a SNSIP Region to Activate Rankings
(East Side is the Default)

- East Side
- North East
- North West - Pit
- Sacramento - Feather
- Southern
- TCSP Plus

Content may not reflect...
Sacramento – Feather

An Example of Opportunity and Risk Across the Sierra

The dashboard below gives an overview of a few key data sets and high-level analysis used to understand the way that opportunity and risks spread down across the SNSIP regions.
Sierra Nevada Region

An Example of Opportunity and Risk Across the Sierra

The dashboard below gives an overview of a few key data sets and high-level analysis used to understand the way that opportunity and risks spread down across the SNSIP regions.
Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Plan (SNSIP)

Thank You

More Info

http://dashboard-snc.opendata.arcgis.com/
Background
In early March, the California Natural Resources Agency and Department of Conservation awarded $18 of $20 million available for block grants for local and Regional projects to improve forest health and increase fire resiliency. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) received $2 million. There is an additional unawarded $2 million to implement AB 2551 for which recipient(s) have yet to be identified.

Funded by Cap-and-Trade revenues through California Climate Investments, the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) is modeled after the SNC's Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) and aims to help communities prioritize, develop, and implement projects to strengthen fire resiliency, increase carbon sequestration, and facilitate greenhouse gas reductions. The program will be administered by the Department of Conservation on behalf of the California Natural Resources Agency and is one element of the state's efforts to improve forest health, protect communities from wildfire risk, and implement the California Forest Carbon Plan and Executive Order B-52-18. Projects funded through the program will build on priority projects identified by the Forest Management Task Force and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection through Executive Order N-05-19.

Six regional block grants, ranging from $1.5 million to $4.25 million, were awarded on a noncompetitive basis to support project implementation in the North Coast, Central Coast, Sierra Nevada, Klamath-Cascade, and Southern California regions. In addition, the Watershed Research and Training Center, in partnership with the California Fire Safe Council, were awarded $3 million to assist in implementing statewide efforts. Block grant recipient(s) for the $2 million in AB 2551 implementation funding will be made at a later date.

Current Status
At the time of writing this report, SNC staff is working with the Department of Conservation to develop a scope of work and grant agreement for these funds, though funding will not be encumbered by the SNC until the start of the state's new fiscal year.

Staff is currently assessing needs and opportunities in the Sierra Nevada Region to develop a specific plan for the most strategic and effective deployment of these funds consistent with the key goals of the RFFCP, which include: to restore health and resilience to forests at the Regional scale for multiple benefits, including climate adaptation; and increase Regional capacity to prioritize, develop, and implement landscape-level forest health and wildfire resiliency projects that have broad support by stakeholders in and affected by the Region.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Promote and support collaborative planning and implementation of wildfire resiliency and forest health protection, management, and restoration efforts at the landscape or watershed level.
• Coordinate and integrate management of wildfire resiliency and forest health protection, management, and restoration efforts at the regional scale.
• Identify, prioritize, and implement forestry and wildfire protection projects that meet regional and statewide public safety, ecosystem, and public resource goals, and that are consistent with the Forest Carbon Plan.

SNC responsibilities under this block grant include:
• Distribute necessary funds to subgrantees to create Regional plans, develop and permit projects, and implement demonstration projects consistent with grant guidelines and the Forest Carbon Plan.
• Ensure execution of all project deliverables and requirements within the grant term.
• Coordinate and integrate management of wildfire resiliency and forest health protection, management, and restoration efforts within the Region.
• Coordinate activities with the relevant Regional Prioritization Group of the Governor’s Forest Management Task Force to ensure activities are consistent with Forest Carbon Plan and Executive Order B-52-18.

Required block grant deliverables are:
• **Regional Priority Plans** for forestry, fire protection, and forested watershed improvements to achieve public safety, climate resiliency, and ecosystem goals in EO B-52-18 and the CA Forest Carbon Plan
• **Project Development and Permitting** to generate implementation-ready forest and fire protection projects for funding consideration by programs represented in the CA Forest Management Task Force
• **Demonstration Projects** that showcase scalable models for forest management, funding, and quantifying multiple benefits
• **Outreach, Education, and Training** as needed to build capacity for implementing the above activities

Staff is requesting that the Board grant the Executive Officer the delegated authority to enter into grants and contracts in the distribution of this funding. This funding has a strict timeline which will not allow SNC to wait for quarterly Board meetings to get approval. Staff is recommending that all grants authorized under this delegated authority meet the following criteria: 1) align with all RFFCP requirements; 2) meet the goals and objectives of the WIP; and 3) be reported at regularly scheduled Board meetings.

The SNC staff will also fulfill mandated outreach and communication requirements for tribes, local governments, and water agencies prior to executing grants under this authority. Any grants requiring CEQA environmental review and documentation beyond a Categorical Exemption would be brought to the Board for authorization.
Next Steps
Staff will continue to develop a plan for the most strategic and effective investment of RFFCP funding in the Sierra Nevada Region and analyze potential grant opportunities that address the criteria listed above and prepare recommendations for consideration by the Executive Officer.

Recommendation
Staff is recommending that the Board delegate authority to the Executive Officer to approve and execute grants and contracts consistent with the above stated criteria for the expenditure of RFFCP funds and to report all new grants approved to the Board.
Agenda Item VIII
Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program Block Grant

Presented by:
Amy Lussier: Chief, Administrative Services Division
Alex Vance: Partnerships and Community Support Manager
Grant Program Background

• Modeled on the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program

• Funded by Cap-and-Trade revenues through California Climate Investments

• Administered by Department of Conservation on behalf of the California Natural Resources Agency

• One element of state’s efforts to improve forest health, protect communities from wildfire risk, and implement the California Forest Carbon Plan and Executive Order B-52-18
Grant Program Goals

• Restore health and resilience to forests at the Regional scale for multiple benefits, including climate adaptation.

• Increase regional capacity to prioritize, develop, and implement landscape-level forest health and wildfire resiliency projects that have broad support by stakeholders in and affected by the Region.
Grant Program Objectives

• Promote and support collaborative planning and implementation of wildfire resiliency and forest health protection, management, and restoration efforts at the landscape or watershed level.

• Coordinate and integrate management of wildfire resiliency and forest health protection, management, and restoration efforts at the Regional scale.

• Identify, prioritize, and implement forestry and wildfire protection projects that meet Regional and statewide public safety, ecosystem, and public resource goals, and that are consistent with the Forest Carbon Plan.
Grants Awarded

Sierra and Klamath Cascade
• Sierra Nevada Conservancy - $2 million
• Assembly Bill 2551 implementation - $2 million (not yet awarded)

North Coast
• The North Coast Resource Partnership - $4.25 million

Central California
• California State Coastal Conservancy - $4.25 million

Southern California
• Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy - $1.5 million
• Inland Empire Resource Conservation District - $1.5 million
• Greater San Diego Resource Conservation District - $1.5 million

Statewide
• Watershed Research and Training Center in partnership with the California Fire Safe Council - $3 million
SNC Responsibilities

• Distribute necessary funds to subgrantees to create Regional plans, develop and permit projects, and implement demonstration projects consistent with grant guidelines and the Forest Carbon Plan.

• Ensure execution of all project deliverables and requirements within the grant term.

• Coordinate and integrate management of wildfire resiliency and forest health protection, management, and restoration efforts within the Region.

• Coordinate activities with the relevant Regional Prioritization Group of the Governor’s Forest Management Task Force to ensure activities are consistent with Forest Carbon Plan and Executive Order B-52-18.
Block Grant Deliverables

• **Regional Priority Plans** for forestry, fire protection, and forested watershed improvements to achieve public safety, climate resiliency, and ecosystem goals in EO B-52-18 and the CA Forest Carbon Plan.

• **Project Development and Permitting** to generate implementation-ready forest and fire protection projects for funding consideration by programs represented in the CA Forest Management Task Force.

• **Demonstration Projects** that showcase scalable models for forest management, funding, and quantifying multiple benefits.

• **Outreach, Education, and Training** as needed to build capacity for implementing the above activities.
Next Steps

• Staff is requesting the Board authorize the Executive Officer the delegated authority to enter into grants and contracts in the distribution of this funding, and that all grants authorized under this general delegated authority:
  • Align with all RFFCP requirements.
  • Meet the goals and objectives of the WIP.
  • Be reported at regularly scheduled Board meetings.

• The SNC staff will also fulfill mandated outreach and communication requirements for tribes, local governments, and water agencies prior to executing grants under this authority.

• Any grants requiring CEQA environmental review and documentation beyond a Categorical Exemption, would be brought to the Board for authorization.
Recommendation

Staff is recommending that the Board delegate authority to the Executive Officer to approve and execute grants and contracts consistent with the above stated criteria for the expenditure of RFFCP funds and to report all new grants approved to the Board.
Questions?
Background
The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) administers the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) Grant Program. This program provides local assistance bond funds to partners to plan and implement projects consistent with SNC’s mission across the Sierra Nevada Region. In recent years, the program has focused on Forest Health needs in the Region.

The SNC’s local assistance grant program originated with Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006. Proposition 84 provided just under $50 million dollars for local assistance, and SNC awarded grants for a variety of activities that support the SNC mission.

The grant program evolved into the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program Grant Program with the passage of Proposition 1, The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Bond Act of 2014, approved by California voters on November 4, 2014. Proposition 1 added Section 79731 to the California Water Code, authorizing the state to issue bonds, and the legislature to appropriate the proceeds, for multi-benefit water quality, water supply, and watershed protection and restoration projects for watersheds of the state. The bond measure included an allocation of $25 million for the SNC. The SNC administered these funds through the WIP grant program with a focus on Forest Health and coordinated with other Proposition 1 funding agencies to maximize the investment of bond funds in the Region.

Between Fiscal Years (FY) 2015 and 2018, the state budget included appropriations of $18 million to SNC for local assistance. The SNC administered four cycles of proposal submission and review for Proposition 1 funds. During those cycles, the SNC received 101 proposals requesting $28,242,944. The Board authorized 55 grant awards totaling $16,837,289.

On June 5, 2018, California voters passed Proposition 68, the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018. Proposition 68 added Section 79772.5 to the California Water Code, authorizing the state to issue bonds, and the legislature to appropriate the proceeds, to finance a drought, water, parks, climate, coastal protection, and outdoor access for all program. Section 80135(c) of Proposition 68 allocated $25 million for competitive grants towards implementation of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) for projects related to climate resiliency. The FY2018-19 state budget appropriated $20,625,000 for local assistance from this section.

In June 2018, the Board approved updated FY2018-19 Grant Guidelines which incorporated the new Proposition 68 WIP funds into the WIP grant program. Coupled with $5,819,507 in Proposition 1 funding from the FY2017-18 and 2018-19 state budget appropriations, $26,444,507 was available for current and future grant cycles.
The SNC released a request for proposals in June 2018 and received 67 Pre-Applications requesting a total of $30,649,857. SNC staff worked closely with applicants after the submission of Pre-Applications, including site visits to all proposed implementation projects. By the deadline for Full Applications, SNC received 41 proposals requesting a total of $20,877,350. After the evaluation process, 26 applications totaling $14,449,544 in requests scored above the 80-point threshold for possible funding.

In March 2019, the Board authorized 21 projects totaling $11,830,183. Staff continued the required due diligence and CEQA compliance on the remaining five projects that scored above the evaluation point threshold. Staff currently recommends the authorization of projects totaling $2,528,201. The SNC is completing the required due diligence and CEQA compliance on the remaining project that scored above the threshold, and it may be recommended to the Board at a future meeting.

In addition to the competitive Forest Health grants, in March 2019 the Board also authorized a grant in the amount of $1,954,590 to the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) for Forest Health projects within the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI) region. This grant was made to fulfill direction in section 80135(c) of Proposition 68 which states that the SNC may allocate funds to the California Tahoe Conservancy.

In summary, since the establishment of SNC’s WIP Grant Program with Proposition 1, and later Proposition 68 funds, the total value of grant requests received was $49,120,294, plus the $1,954,590 requested by the CTC, for the $43,325,000 in available funding. If the Board authorizes the grants recommended at this meeting, a total of 81 grant awards for $33,150,263 will have been authorized as follows:

- 10 in the North Subregion
- 26 in the North Central Subregion
- 20 in the Central Subregion
- 17 in the South-Central Subregion
- 4 in the East Subregion
- 3 in the South Subregion
- 54 are Category One Implementation Projects, 26 are Category Two Planning Projects
- Plus 1 grant to the California Tahoe Conservancy for the TCSI

Please note that when projects cross Subregion boundaries, they are attributed to the primary Subregion for the purposes of this report.

**Current Status**
Evaluation has concluded for all 41 applications received in the 2018 cycle that were determined to be complete and eligible. Fifteen projects scored below the 80-point threshold and will have the opportunity to consult with SNC staff regarding possible reapplication in a future grant cycle. Of the 26 projects that scored above the 80-point threshold...
threshold, 21 were authorized at the March 2019 Board Meeting, four have necessary environmental compliance in place, and one project is still undergoing CEQA analysis by SNC staff and consultants.

Staff currently recommends adoption of CEQA findings and authorization of four projects worth $2,258,201. Brief project descriptions are included below. Please refer to the following attachments for additional information and links in the Project Descriptions for more project details.

**Attachments**
- **Attachment A**: Table of applications received
- **Attachment B**: Table of projects currently recommended with links to CEQA documents
- Project Details, Map, and CEQA Documents
  - Project #1053 - ‘Inimim Forest Restoration Project – Phase 1
  - Project #1056 - The Sagehen Forest Project – Pushing the Larger Landscape into Resiliency Through Fire
  - Project #1063 - Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project
  - Project #1082 - Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan

**Next Steps**
Upon approval by the Board, staff will file all adopted CEQA documentation and prepare agreements for each authorized grant.

Staff will continue to work with project proponents to complete compliance requirements for the remaining project that scored above the threshold and, depending on successful completion of all requirements, may bring this project to the Board for authorization at a future meeting.

Staff will continue consultation with proponents of projects that did not meet the scoring threshold regarding reasons for the score received and the potential for reapplication in a future grant cycle.

**Project Descriptions and Staff Recommendations**
Begin on next page.
Yuba Watershed Institute  
**Category One Site Improvement Project**  
$300,000

This project is Phase 1 of a 1,200-acre forest resilience plan for the 'Inimim Forest. The 'Inimim Forest is approximately 2,000 acres of BLM-managed federal forest lands located across the top of the San Juan Ridge between the South and Middle Forks of the Yuba River. This landscape is extremely vulnerable to wildfire coming from either of the two canyons, and a catastrophic fire would create adverse impacts to both watersheds. The project site is about six miles north of Nevada City. The project will implement 402 acres of forest treatments, funded through a combination of SNC Proposition 68 funds and CAL FIRE Fire Prevention funds. SNC funding will pay for 82.5 acres of treatments, including removal of hazardous beetle-killed trees on 9.5 acres along roadways and 73 acres of shaded fuel breaks along roads on BLM land. For the shaded fuel breaks, understory brush and ladder fuels within 100 feet of roads will be hand cut, chipped, and hauled to a staging on nearby private land to be utilized for soil remediation on a former hydraulic mine site. Within 100 feet to 200 feet of roadways, understory and ladder fuels will be reduced by hand thinning and piling. SNC previously funded biological and cultural studies to complete environmental compliance decisions covering this project. These treatments will complement several treatment projects on private land within the Forest, including the adjacent 700-acre Ananda Village. The Fire Access Road Committee, a neighborhood group, is currently working with CAL FIRE to maintain a fuel break on private land. CAL FIRE has worked with private landowners within the 'Inimim Forest and provided a $402,640 grant for the Phase 1 project. BLM is also contributing $28,000 in-kind staff time to this project. The project is scheduled for completion by January 2022.

CEQA Compliance: The project is Exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05 for projects to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

- To access the complete application package, [click here](#).
- To access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption, [click here](#).

**Recommendation IXa**
Staff recommends the Board authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for *The 'Inimim Forest Restoration Project - Phase 1 (1053)*, authorize a grant award in the amount of $300,000 to Yuba Watershed Institute, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.
IXb
Project #1056
The Sagehen Forest Project –
Pushing the Larger Landscape Into Resiliency Through Fire

*Regents of the University of California, Berkeley - Sagehen Creek Field Station*
Category One Site Improvement Project
$1,000,000

The project is located in and around the 9,000-acre Sagehen Experimental Forest; a designated Treasured Landscape on Tahoe National Forest lands in Sierra and Nevada counties approximately eight miles due north of Truckee, California, in the Truckee River watershed. Project areas include the Sagehen Experimental Forest and outlying units of the Tahoe National Forest’s Truckee and Sierraville Ranger Districts within the boundaries of SNC’s Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative. The project is designed to protect forest resources from devastating wildfires while conserving rare and keystone species and restoring ecosystem function. It will build 15+ miles of necessary fire line, monitor weather and fuel moisture conditions, coordinate with the California Air Quality Control Board for fire burn windows, and procure resources needed to complete a minimum of 1,100 acres of under- and pile-burning, up to 4,906 acres if time and resources allow. Sagehen is an active partner in several California efforts including the goals and objectives within the Human Right to Water, California Water Action Plan, 2012 Bioenergy Action Plan, and Safeguarding California. Tahoe National Forest, the California Wildlife Conservation Board, and the National Forest Foundation have contributed earlier funding to complete forest thinning activities in the units within the Sagehen project’s boundaries in preparation for broadcast burning. Other supporters include County Boards of Supervisors, The Nature Conservancy, The California Forestry Association, The Sierra Forest Legacy, The Center of the Study of the Force Majeure, Ruth Chase - Nevada County “Belonging Project,” the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Truckee River Watershed Council. The project is scheduled for completion by January 2022.

CEQA Compliance: The project is Exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05 for projects to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

- To access the complete application package, click here.
- To access the Project Details and the Notice of Exemption, click here.

**Recommendation IXb**
Staff recommends the Board authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire (1056), authorize a grant award in the amount of $1,000,000 to The Regents of the University of California, Berkeley, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.
The Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project will restore and enhance 250 acres of forestland in Mariposa County. The Sierra Foothill Conservancy holds a conservation easement on the 1,295-acre Von Der Ahe property, managed for habitat, grazing, recreation, and aesthetic value. The property is located ten miles southeast of the town of Mariposa, nestled between multiple rural communities. It is in the Chowchilla River watershed which flows into Eastman lake and provides water to communities and irrigation districts in the San Joaquin Valley. The property supports a diverse mosaic of forest types managed under a Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan. Recent tree mortality resulted in high fuel loading throughout the property, and many plantations are overstocked and in need of thinning to promote tree growth and forest resiliency. The project will remove drought and beetle-killed pine trees, thin trees under eight inches diameter in natural stands, and thin overstocked plantations to approximately 150 trees per acre. Slash will be masticated and spread on site or burned. These treatments will be followed by pruning to raise the canopy and create a more fire-safe setting. The project connects and strengthens a series of completed and planned fuel breaks installed by the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council, CAL FIRE, and the Sierra National Forest. The project will leverage resources from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) cost-share contracts and benefit from in-kind contributions from Point Blue Conservation Science avian monitoring. The property has been managed extensively with assistance from publicly funded programs such as NRCS’ Healthy Forests Reserve Program and CAL FIRE’s California Forest Improvement Program. The project is scheduled for completion by January 2023.

CEQA Compliance: The Sierra Foothill Conservancy holds Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan N4-99-6, approved by CAL FIRE. The SNC may file a Notice of Determination on the Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan as a Responsible Agency.

- To access the complete application package, click here.
- To access the Project Details and the Notice of Determination, click here.
- To access the Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan, click here.

Recommendation IXc
Staff recommends the Board approve findings concurring with the Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan, authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency for the Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project, authorize a grant award in the amount of $721,487 to the Sierra Foothill Conservancy, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.
IXd
Project #1082
Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan

Plumas Audubon Society
Category One Site Improvement Project
$506,714

The Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Project is in the Upper Feather River Watershed in Plumas County, California. The project footprint is within the Genesee Valley in a steep, thickly forested area along the banks of Indian Creek, an important contributor to the North Fork of the Feather River. The Upper Feather River Watershed drains to the Oroville Reservoir of the State Water Project which provides drinking water for 25 million Californians and irrigation for 750,000 acres. The project was established as a priority through the Genesee Valley Wildfire Restoration Plan planning process. Genesee Valley has a high fuel load in the mixed conifer forest, creating an imminent threat to residents and jeopardizing the overall health of the watershed. The project will complete underburning on 355 acres, including 222 acres in Plumas National Forest and 133 acres on Feather River Land Trust’s Heart K Ranch. Partner organization Plumas County Fire Safe Council, using CAL FIRE Climate Change Initiative funding, will implement thinning and piling to precede the prescribed underburning to be completed through this project. The project meets objectives of the Sierra Nevada WIP and SNC Strategic Plan by mitigating drought impacts and reducing wildfire risk in a sensitive watershed and to nearby ranches and residences through prescribed fire forest treatments that will clear dense fire-susceptible stands, open canopies to deeper seasonal snow packs, and encourage botanical diversity and wildlife habitat. The project is scheduled for completion by January 2022.

CEQA Compliance: The Feather River Resource Conservation District is Lead Agency on an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). The SNC may file a Notice of Determination on the IS/MND as a Responsible Agency.

- To access the complete application package, click here.
- To access the Project Details and the Notice of Determination, click here.
- To access the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration, click here.

Recommendation IXd
Staff recommends the Board approve findings concurring with the Mitigated Negative Declaration, authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency for the Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan, authorize a grant award in the amount of $506,714 to the Plumas Audubon Society, and authorize staff to enter into the necessary agreements for project implementation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SNC ID#</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Subregion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1053</td>
<td>Yuba Watershed Institute</td>
<td>Inimim Forest Restoration Project – Phase 1</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1056</td>
<td>UC Regents – UC Berkeley – Sagehen Creek Field Station</td>
<td>The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Sierra and Nevada</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1063*</td>
<td>Sierra Foothill Conservancy</td>
<td>Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project</td>
<td>$721,487</td>
<td>Mariposa</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1082</td>
<td>Plumas Audubon Society</td>
<td>Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan</td>
<td>$506,714</td>
<td>Plumas</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Projects recommended for authorization at this meeting**

**Projects scored above the 80 point threshold, CEQA compliance in process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SNC ID#</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Subregion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1109</td>
<td>Bear Yuba Land Trust</td>
<td>Clear Creek Preserve Ecological Resilience and Forest Health Project</td>
<td>$91,160</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IN PROCESS SUBTOTAL** $91,160

**Projects authorized at the March 7, 2019 meeting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SNC ID#</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Subregion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1054</td>
<td>Nevada Irrigation District</td>
<td>Scotts Flat Reservoir Fuels Treatment Phase 4</td>
<td>$981,000</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1061</td>
<td>Resource Conservation District of Tehama County</td>
<td>Tramway Road Fuel Break Network</td>
<td>$235,858</td>
<td>Tehama</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1065</td>
<td>Lassen County Fire Safe Council</td>
<td>Diamond Mountain Forest &amp; Watershed Restoration Project</td>
<td>$882,087</td>
<td>Lassen</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1067</td>
<td>Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions</td>
<td>South Fork Mokelumne River Watershed Restoration Phase 3 Treatment</td>
<td>$865,835</td>
<td>Calaveras</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1068</td>
<td>Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions</td>
<td>South Fork Mokelumne River Watershed Restoration Phase 4 Planning</td>
<td>$89,125</td>
<td>Calaveras</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1069</td>
<td>The Nature Conservancy</td>
<td>Independence Lake Forest Health &amp; Resiliency</td>
<td>$99,688</td>
<td>Sierra and Nevada</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1070</td>
<td>Sierra County Land Trust</td>
<td>Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Properties Fuel Reduction</td>
<td>$167,200</td>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1074</td>
<td>Truckee Donner Land Trust</td>
<td>Webber Lake Little Truckee Headwaters Forest Management Phase 2</td>
<td>$419,250</td>
<td>Sierra</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1075</td>
<td>Truckee Donner Land Trust</td>
<td>Serene Lakes/Royal Gorge Headwaters Forest Health Improvements</td>
<td>$364,510</td>
<td>Placer</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1081</td>
<td>Plumas Audubon Society</td>
<td>Quincy Watershed Improvement Project</td>
<td>$99,997</td>
<td>Plumas</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1088</td>
<td>USDA Forest Service, Plumas National Forest</td>
<td>Lakes Basin</td>
<td>$995,995</td>
<td>Plumas and Sierra</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1089</td>
<td>Placer County</td>
<td>French Meadows Forest Restoration – Biomass Project</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Placer</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1091</td>
<td>Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority</td>
<td>Black Springs Restoration Project</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Calaveras</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1094</td>
<td>Mammoth Lakes Fire Safe Council</td>
<td>Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project - Phase 1</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Mono</td>
<td>East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1096</td>
<td>Amador Fire Safe Council</td>
<td>Tiger Creek Fuel Break Watershed Protection</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>Amador</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1099</td>
<td>Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council</td>
<td>Blue Rush Forest Restoration Project</td>
<td>$999,960</td>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In order to meet SNC requirements, #1063 Amount Requested reduced from $722,235 originally requested.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SNC ID#</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Subregion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1124</td>
<td>Modoc Resource Conservation District</td>
<td>Dry Creek Ecological Site-Watershed Restoration Plan</td>
<td>$97,400</td>
<td>Modoc</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1126</td>
<td>Butte County Fire Safe Council</td>
<td>Big Chico Creek Forest Health Management Plan</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>Butte</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1130</td>
<td>The Nature Conservancy</td>
<td>French Meadows Prescribed Fire Project</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Placer</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1131</td>
<td>USDA Forest Service, Stanislaus National Forest</td>
<td>Rim Fire Invasive Plant Control and Eradication</td>
<td>$332,400</td>
<td>Tuolumne</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1146</td>
<td>USDA Forest Service, Plumas National Forest</td>
<td>Valley Creek Botanical Special Interest Area and Watershed Protection</td>
<td>$999,978</td>
<td>Plumas</td>
<td>North Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED SUBTOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$11,830,183</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Projects scored below the 80 point threshold, not recommended for authorization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SNC ID#</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Subregion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1055</td>
<td>Amador Fire Safe Council</td>
<td>Antelope Watershed Protection</td>
<td>$96,485</td>
<td>Amador</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1057</td>
<td>Auburn Fire Department</td>
<td>The First Step in a Comprehensive Fuel Treatment/Reduction Strategy for the Auburn Shaded Fuel Break</td>
<td>$822,320</td>
<td>Placer</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1078</td>
<td>Placer County Department of Public Works and Facilities</td>
<td>Priority Fuels Management and Watershed Improvement Project</td>
<td>$850,000</td>
<td>Placer</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1097</td>
<td>Modoc Fire Safe Council</td>
<td>Upper Rush Creek Forest and Watershed Restoration</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>Modoc</td>
<td>North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1098</td>
<td>USDA Forest Service, Sierra National Forest</td>
<td>Jose Basin Pre-Treatment for Landscape Projects</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1101</td>
<td>USDA Forest Service, Sierra National Forest</td>
<td>Musik Survey Project</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1106</td>
<td>Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council</td>
<td>Fence Meadow Site Preparation Planning Project</td>
<td>$99,997</td>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1110</td>
<td>Bear Yuba Land Trust</td>
<td>Ruth Working Forest Preserve Landscape Resiliency Planning Project</td>
<td>$63,070</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1113</td>
<td>Sierra Foothill Conservancy</td>
<td>Bean Meadow Forest Treatment and Water Storage/Watershed Restoration Planning</td>
<td>$99,980</td>
<td>Mariposa</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1119</td>
<td>USDA Forest Service, Stanislaus National Forest</td>
<td>Arnoldi-Avery Healthy Forest Restoration</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Calaveras</td>
<td>South Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1132</td>
<td>USDA Forest Service, Stanislaus National Forest</td>
<td>South Groveland Plantation Resiliency Project</td>
<td>$96,350</td>
<td>Tulare</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1136</td>
<td>Bureau of Land Management, Bakersfield Field Office</td>
<td>Case Mountain Forest Health Project</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1142</td>
<td>National Park Service, Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park</td>
<td>Cedar Grove Restoration Project Planning</td>
<td>$99,604</td>
<td>Fresno</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1143</td>
<td>USDA Forest Service, Sierra National Forest</td>
<td>Cal Project</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>Madera</td>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOT RECOMMENDED SUBTOTAL $ 6,427,806

TOTAL REQUESTS $ 20,877,350

Projects not scored, considered under alternate funding source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SNC ID#</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Amount Requested</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Subregion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1059</td>
<td>Camptonville Community Partnership, Inc.</td>
<td>Integration Engineering for the Forest Biomass Business Center Bioenergy Plant</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td>Yuba</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNC ID#</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Project Title</td>
<td>Amount Recommended</td>
<td>County</td>
<td>Links to Project Details and CEQA Documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1053</td>
<td>Yuba Watershed Institute</td>
<td>Inimim Forest Restoration Project - Phase 1</td>
<td>$ 300,000</td>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td><a href="#">Project Details and Notice of Exemption</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1056</td>
<td>UC Regents – UC Berkeley – Sagehen Creek Field Station</td>
<td>The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire</td>
<td>$ 1,000,000</td>
<td>Sierra and Nevada</td>
<td><a href="#">Project Details and Notice of Exemption</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1063</td>
<td>Sierra Foothill Conservancy</td>
<td>Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project</td>
<td>$ 721,487</td>
<td>Mariposa</td>
<td><a href="#">Project Details and Notice of Determination (Responsible Agency)</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="#">Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1082</td>
<td>Plumas Audubon Society</td>
<td>Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan</td>
<td>$ 506,714</td>
<td>Plumas</td>
<td><a href="#">Project Details and Notice of Determination (Responsible Agency)</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="#">Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION** $ 2,528,201
Agenda Item IX

Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program
Proposition 1 and Proposition 68
Grant Award Recommendations

June 6, 2019

Presented by:
Andy Fristensky
Regional Manager
Funding Sources

Proposition 1: The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Bond Act of 2014

- Allocates $22,700,000 to the SNC for local assistance

Proposition 68: The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access For All Act of 2018

- Allocates $20,625,000 to the SNC WIP for local assistance
- Combined with Proposition 1 funds to support the current WIP Forest Health grant cycle
Previous Grant Cycles

• Between Fiscal Years (FYs) 2015-2018 the state budget included $18 million to SNC for local assistance

• Four grant cycles

• 101 applications requesting $28,242,944

• SNC Governing Board authorized 55 grant awards totaling $16,837,289
FY 2018-2019 Grant Cycle

- $26,444,507 available from Propositions 1 and 68 for current and future grant cycles
- Focus on Forest Health
- 41 proposals requesting $20,877,350
- 26 applications totaling $14,449,544 scored above the 80 point threshold for potential funding
• 21 projects totaling $11,830,183 were authorized in March 2019.

• In addition, a grant of $1,954,590 was authorized to the CTC for projects in the TCSI area.

Staff recommends four projects totaling $2,528,201 for authorization at this meeting.

Staff is completing CEQA compliance on the remaining project that scored above the threshold. It may be recommended to the Board at a future meeting.
Recommended Grant Projects

1082 - Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan
- Plumas Audubon Society
- $506,714

1056 - The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire
- UC Regents, UC Berkeley, Sagehen Creek Field Station
- $1,000,000

1063 - Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project
- Sierra Foothill Conservancy
- $721,487

1053 - 'Inimim Forest Restoration Project
- Yuba Watershed Institute
- $300,000
IXa #1053 ‘Inimim Forest Restoration Project

Yuba Watershed Institute
$300,000
CEQA Notice of Exemption

Nevada County
Category One
Recommendation IXa

Staff recommends the Board

- authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for *The ‘Inimim Forest Restoration Project - Phase 1 (1053)*,

- authorize a grant award in the amount of $300,000 to Yuba Watershed Institute, and

- authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.
IXb #1056 The Sagehen Forest Project
pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire
UC Regents, UC Berkeley
$1,000,000
CEQA Notice of Exemption

Sierra & Nevada Counties
Category One
The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire
The Regents of the University of California, Berkeley

www.SIERRANEVADA.ca.gov
Recommendation IXb

Staff recommends the Board

• authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire (1056),

• authorize a grant award in the amount of $1,000,000 to The Regents of the University of California, Berkeley, and

• authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.
IXc  #1063 Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project

Sierra Foothill Conservancy
$721,487
CEQA Notice of Determination as Responsible Agency

Mariposa County
Category One
Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project
Sierra Foothill Conservancy
Recommendation IXc

Staff recommends the Board

- approve findings concurring with the Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan and authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency for the Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project,

- authorize a grant award in the amount of $721,487 to the Sierra Foothill Conservancy, and

- authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.
IXd #1082: Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan

Plumas Audubon Society
$506,714
CEQA Notice of Determination as a Responsible Agency

Plumas County
Category One
Recommendation IXd

Staff recommends the Board

- 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 Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan,

- authorize a grant award in the amount of $506,714 to the Plumas Audubon Society, and

- authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.
Next Steps

SNC staff will

• File all adopted CEQA documentation.

• Prepare agreements for each authorized grant award.

• Work with project proponents to complete environmental compliance requirements for the remaining project that scored above the threshold.

• Continue consultation with proponents of project that did not meet the scoring threshold regarding project development and alternate funding sources.
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program

SNC ID Number: 1053

Applicant: Yuba Watershed Institute

Project Title: ‘Inimim Forest Restoration Project – Phase 1

SNC Subregion: Central

County: Nevada

Funding Amount Requested: $300,000

Funding Amount Recommended: $300,000

Total Project Cost: $730,640

Final Score: 82.0

PROJECT SCOPE / DESCRIPTION

The ‘Inimim Forest Restoration Project – Phase 1 will implement 402 acres of forest treatments on public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Phase 1 work will be funded through a combination of SNC Proposition 68 (82.5 acres) and CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Grant (320 acres) funding. The ‘Inimim Forest is approximately 2,000 acres of BLM-managed federal forest lands on the San Juan Ridge in Nevada County, between the South and Middle Yuba Rivers. The project site is about six miles north of Nevada City.

The SNC funding will pay for removal of hazardous beetle-killed trees on 9.5 acres along roadways and provide an additional 73 acres of shaded fuel breaks along roads on BLM land. Of the 73 acres, understory brush and ladder fuels within 100 feet of roads, totaling 12 acres, will be hand cut, chipped, and hauled to a staging on nearby private land to be utilized for soil remediation on a former hydraulic mine site. The remaining 61 acres, within 100 feet to 200 feet of roadways, will have understory and ladder fuels reduced by hand thinning and piling. This material will either be chipped and distributed on site or pile burned during a later project phase, depending on specific site circumstances.

This project is Phase 1 of a 1,200-acre forest resilience plan for the ‘Inimim Forest on BLM land. This BLM land is located within a matrix of private, state, and other federal lands. This project will complement several treatment projects on private land within the Forest, including the adjacent 700-acre Ananda Village. The Fire Access Road Committee, a neighborhood group, is currently working with CAL FIRE to maintain a fuel break on private land.
The Yuba Watershed Institute (YWI) has managed the forest in partnership with the BLM since 1991, based on a cooperative management agreement and collaborative management plan, which was updated in 2018. The SNC funded a Proposition 1 grant to complete biological and cultural studies for the 1,200-acre project site to complete the necessary environmental compliance decisions.

CAL FIRE has worked with private landowners within the ‘Inimim Forest and provided a $402,640 grant for the Phase 1 project. BLM is also contributing $28,000 in-kind staff time to this project.

The ‘Inimim Forest lies across the top of the San Juan Ridge between the South and Middle Forks of the Yuba River. This landscape is extremely vulnerable to wildfire coming from either of the two canyons, and a catastrophic fire on this ridge of historic mining disturbance could create adverse impacts to the rivers in either or both watersheds. This project is one of BLM’s “unplanned but needed” restoration projects in the Yuba River Watershed Assessment that was submitted to the SNC for the Watershed Assessments program.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project management</td>
<td>August 2019 – January 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract for hazard tree removal</td>
<td>August 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracts for fuels thinning</td>
<td>April 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazard tree removal (9.5 acres)</td>
<td>September – October 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understory fuels reduction along Lake City Road – hand cut, chip, and haul (12 acres)</td>
<td>May – October 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understory fuels reduction along other major roads – hand cut and chip in place (61 acres)</td>
<td>May 2020 – October 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Reporting and Performance Measures</td>
<td>February 2020 – December 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated Project Completion Date</strong></td>
<td><strong>January 1, 2022</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## PROJECT COSTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET CATEGORIES</th>
<th>SNC FUNDING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Costs:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project management and reporting</td>
<td>$16,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field supervision</td>
<td>$17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazard tree removal</td>
<td>$44,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand cut, chip, and haul</td>
<td>$36,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand cut and track chipped in place</td>
<td>$156,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials and supplies, mileage</td>
<td>$4,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrative:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Costs</td>
<td>$26,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$300,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT / OPPOSITION

**SUPPORT:**
- Bureau of Land Management, Mother Lode Field Office
- CAL FIRE, Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit
- Yuba Water Agency
- Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe
- Fire Safe Council of Nevada County
- San Juan Ridge Taxpayers Association
- South Yuba River Citizens League

**OPPOSITION:**
- None known

## PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to identify one to three project specific Performance Measures in their application. Please note, Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified before the grant agreement is executed.
- Acres of Land Improved or Restored
Inimin Forest Restoration Project – Phase 1
Yuba Watershed Institute

www.SIERRANEVADA.ca.gov
‘Inimim Forest Restoration Project – Phase 1
Yuba Watershed Institute

www.SIERRANEVADA.ca.gov
SNC #: 1053

Project Title: ’Inimim Forest Restoration Project – Phase 1

Applicant: Yuba Watershed Institute

CEQA Compliance:

Exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05 for projects to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

- **Notice of Exemption**: See below.
Notice of Exemption

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

County Clerk
County of Nevada
100 Courthouse Square
Downieville, CA 95936

Project Title: ‘Inimim Forest Restoration Project – Phase One (SNC 1053)

Project Location - Specific:
The project is located in Nevada County; U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)-owned land in the ‘Inimim Forest and centered at approximately 39°22'15.47"N and 120°59'45.54"W.

Project Location – City: East of North San Juan
Project Location – County: Nevada County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide $300,000 in funding to the Yuba Watershed Institute for forest and watershed improvements on 402 acres of federal land in the ‘Inimim Forest. The treatments used to implement these improvements include stand thinning, removal of beetle-killed trees, reduction of fuels, creation and maintenance of roadside fuel breaks, and prescribed fire. These treatments will reduce the risk of wildfire and increase forest ecosystem resilience.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Yuba Watershed Institute

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: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)
☒ Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:
CEQA does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. SNC would provide funding to for fuel reduction on 402 acres of federal lands managed by BLM. The project activities in these areas have been analyzed by BLM pursuant to NEPA. NEPA analysis found that the project would not result in a significant adverse effect. NEPA Environmental Assessments and Finding of No Significant Impacts were prepared for the various elements of the project.

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
☐ Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: ________________________

Revised 2005
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program

SNC ID Number: 1056
Applicant: University of California, Berkeley
Project Title: The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire.

SNC Subregion: North Central
County(ies): Sierra, Nevada

Funding Amount Requested: $1,000,000
Funding Amount Recommended: $1,000,000
Total Project Cost: $1,000,000

PROJECT SCOPE / DESCRIPTION

“The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire” takes place in and around the 9,000-acre Sagehen Experimental Forest which is a designated Treasured Landscape on Tahoe National Forest (TNF) lands in Sierra and Nevada counties, approximately eight miles due north of Truckee, California. Project areas include the Sagehen Experimental Forest (Sagehen) and outlying units of the Tahoe National Forest’s Truckee and Sierraville Ranger Districts. This project area is in the Truckee River watershed and falls within the boundaries of SNC’s Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI).

Resulting from a 2010 SNC-facilitated collaborative NEPA process, Sagehen and surrounding TNF forest treatments have already contributed to improving health and resiliency to overgrown forest infrastructure. This project will build 15+ miles of necessary fire line, monitor weather and fuel-moisture conditions, coordinate with the CA Air Quality Management District for fire burn windows, and procure resources needed to complete a minimum of 1,100 acres of under- and pile-burning. If time and resources allow, up to 4,906 acres may be treated.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy has funded previous planning and implementation projects within the Sagehen and other partner-owned neighboring landscapes. These projects improved dangerous and overgrown forests through thinning and mastication methods, contributing to and connecting to other large landscape forested watersheds that contribute drinking water to downstream communities. The SNC’s funding contributions in the greater-TCSI forested landscapes have helped to improve the pristine nature of these upper elevation watersheds.
Sagehen Experimental Forest is cooperatively and collaboratively managed through an MOU by the University of California, Berkeley; the US Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station; and the (landowner) Tahoe National Forest, to foster and conduct applied and basic research on the function and operation of the natural and managed ecosystems of the Sierra Nevada and implement this learning using resource management techniques. Sagehen is an active partner in several California efforts including the goals and objectives within the Human Right to Water, California Water Action Plan, 2013 California Water Plan Update, 2012 Bioenergy Action Plan, and Safeguarding California.

Tahoe National Forest, CA Wildlife Conservation Board, and the National Forest Foundation have contributed earlier funding to complete forest thinning activities in the units within the Sagehen project’s boundaries in preparation for broadcast burning. Other supporters include County Boards of Supervisors, The Nature Conservancy, The California Forestry Association, The Sierra Forest Legacy, The Center of the Study of the Force Majeure, Ruth Chase - Nevada County “Belonging Project,” the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the Truckee River Watershed Council.

This project is, by design, a protection of forest resources from devastating wildfires while conserving rare and keystone species and restoring ecosystem function. The reduction of fuel load will reduce extreme wildfire risk, which not only impacts the local economy and air quality but also makes forests susceptible to destructive erosion, sedimentation of streams, and subsequent reduction of water quality. The collaborative efforts with multiple stakeholders will provide working landscapes in the years to come.
PROJECT SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadcast/pile burning</td>
<td>Fall/Winter; Spring 2019-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(documentation: minimum of 1,100-acres and up to 4,906 acres treated)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Reports</td>
<td>Every six months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Project Completion Date</td>
<td>January 1, 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROJECT COSTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET CATEGORIES</th>
<th>SNC FUNDING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Costs:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Implementation (USFS, CCC, other subcontractors)</td>
<td>$869,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Costs</td>
<td>$130,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT / OPPOSITION

SUPPORT:
- Sierra Business Council
- Sierra Forest Legacy
- USFS/TNF: Sierraville District
- USFS/TNF: Truckee Ranger District
- The Nature Conservancy
- Truckee River Watershed Council
- University of California, Berkeley

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to identify one to three project specific Performance Measures in their application. Please note, Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified before the grant agreement is executed.
- Acres of Land Improved or Restored
The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire

The Regents of the University of California, Berkeley

www.SIERRANEVADA.ca.gov
The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire

The Regents of the University of California, Berkeley

www_SIERRANEVADA.ca.gov
SNC #: 1056

Project Title: The Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire

Applicant: Regents of the University of California, Berkeley - Sagehen Creek Field Station

CEQA Compliance:

Exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05 for projects to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, under specified circumstances.

- 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

County Clerk  
County of Nevada  
100 Courthouse Square  
Downieville, CA 95936

Project Title: Sagehen Forest Project – pushing the larger landscape into resiliency through fire (SNC 1056)

Project Location - Specific:
The project is located in Sierra and Nevada Counties; in the Tahoe National Forest and centered at approximately 39°27'53.75"N and 120°15'23.19"W.

Project Location – City: Between Truckee and Loyalton  
Project Location – County: Sierra and Nevada Counties

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide $1,000,000 in funding to the UC Regents – UC Berkeley – Sagehen Creek Field Station for broadcast burning and pile burning on 1,100 to 4,906 acres of lands in the Tahoe National Forest. These prescribed burning treatments will increase water resources for the ecosystem and downstream water users and enhance key reproductive and foraging habitat for wildlife. Restructuring the forest through low-intensity landscape level burning benefits wildlife and human communities and increases forest resiliency and resistance to destructive wildfire, climate change, and disease and insect infestation.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: UC Regents – UC Berkeley – Sagehen Creek Field Station

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: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Reasons why project is exempt:
CEQA does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. SNC would provide funding to treat 1,100 to 4,906 acres of forest through broadcast and pile burning on federal land in the Tahoe National Forest. The project activities in these areas have been analyzed by the U.S. Forest Service, including surveys and analysis of biological resources and cultural and archaeological resources. Those evaluations found that the project would not result in a significant adverse effect. NEPA Environmental Assessments and a Categorical Exclusion were prepared for various elements of the project.

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
Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR:

Revised 2005
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program

**SNC ID Number:** 1063

**Applicant:** Sierra Foothill Conservancy

**Project Title:** Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project

**SNC Subregion:** South Central

**County(ies):** Mariposa

**Funding Amount Requested:** $722,235

**Funding Amount Recommended:** $721,487

**Total Project Cost:** $742,235

**Final Score:** 80.50

**PROJECT SCOPE / DESCRIPTION**

The Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project (Project) will restore and enhance 250 acres of forestland within the Chowchilla watershed in Mariposa County. The Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC) holds a conservation easement on the 1,295-acre Von Der Ahe Property (Property) which is managed for wildlife habitat, grazing, recreation, and aesthetic value. The Property is located approximately 10 miles southeast of the town of Mariposa and nestled between multiple rural communities.

The Property lies at approximately 3000’-3200’ in elevation and supports a diverse mosaic of forest types including Sierran Mixed Conifer forests, hardwood forests, grasslands, and thirty-plus-year-old plantations including Douglas fir, giant sequoia, ponderosa pine, and sugar pine. The Property has been managed extensively in the past with assistance from publicly funded programs such as Natural Resources Conservation Service’s (NRCS’s) Healthy Forests Reserve Program and CAL FIRE’s California Forest Improvement Program and is currently managed under the direction of a Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan. The property has experienced elevated levels of tree mortality in recent years, resulting in high fuel loading throughout the property. Additionally, many of the plantations on the property are overstocked and in need of thinning to promote tree growth and forest resiliency. The Project will remove the majority of the drought and beetle-killed pine trees. It also aims to thin the overstocked plantations to approximately 150 trees per acre and thin trees under 8 inches diameter in natural stands. Slash will be masticated and spread on site or burned. The Project will follow up these treatments with a pruning operation that will raise the canopy and create a more fire safe setting.
The Project is surrounded mainly by private property but also connects to Sierra National Forest lands. Many surrounding landowners actively manage their properties and reduce fuel around their ingress/egress routes in addition to any structures. The Project connects and strengthens a series of completed and planned fuel breaks installed by the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council, CAL FIRE, and the Sierra National Forest.

The Sierra Foothill Conservancy is a non-profit land trust active between and near Yosemite and Sequoia-Kings Canyon national parks. Their focus is to preserve the natural and cultural heritage of the Sierra Nevada foothills for future generations. The Property has been owned and managed by the Von Der Ahe family for many decades, and the family has worked extensively with CAL FIRE and the NRCS to maintain and steward the property. The Property has been co-managed with the SFC since the placement of a conservation easement in 2003.

The Project will leverage resources from NRCS in cost-share contracts and will benefit from in-kind contributions from Point-Blue Conservation Science for pre- and post-avian monitoring. The SFC will utilize this SNC funding to leverage future funding through NRCS.

The Project falls in line with the goals of Proposition 1 and the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program. The forest treatments will create a more-resilient landscape better suited to withstand future wildfires, droughts, or pest outbreaks and protect multiple rural communities. The Project is in the upper watershed of the Chowchilla River which flows into Eastman Lake and supports multiple communities and irrigation districts in the San Joaquin Valley.
## PROJECT SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Site Preparation            | January – Mar 2020  
                              | January – Mar 2021 
                              | January – Mar 2022 |
| 250 Acres of Forest Treatments through: | January – June 2020  
1. Non-Commercial Thinning | November 2020 – June 2021  
2. Dead Tree Removal        | November 2021 – June 2022  
3. Slash Mitigation         | November – December 2022 |
| Project Tour                | September 2019  
                              | December 2020  
                              | December 2021  
                              | December 2022 |
| Six-Month Progress Report   | December 2019  
                              | June, December 2020  
                              | June, December 2021  
                              | June, December 2022 |
| SNC Final Report            | January 2023 |
| Estimated Project Completion Date | January 2023 |

## PROJECT COSTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET CATEGORIES</th>
<th>SNC FUNDING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Costs:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>$45,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinning/Pruning/Slash Disposal</td>
<td>$554,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Professional Forester</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Monitoring</td>
<td>$6,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Costs</td>
<td>$94,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>$721,487</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT / OPPOSITION

SUPPORT:
- Miles Menetry, District 5 Supervisor, Mariposa County
- Chowchilla Water District

OPPOSITION:
- None

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to identify one to three project specific Performance Measures in their application. Please note, Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified before the grant agreement is executed.
- Acres of Land Restored or Improved
Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project
Sierra Foothill Conservancy

www.SIERRANEVADA.ca.gov
Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project
Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Project Location
1 Miles

Sacramento
Fresno
Bakersfield
Susanville
Bishop

Project Boundary
North Subregion
North Central Subregion
Central Subregion
East Subregion
South Central Subregion
South Subregion

www.SIERRANEVADA.ca.gov
CEQA Documentation

SNC #: 1063

**Project Title:** Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project

**Applicant:** Sierra Foothill Conservancy

**CEQA Compliance:**

The Sierra Foothill Conservancy holds Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan N4-99-6, approved by CAL FIRE. The SNC may file a Notice of Determination on the Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan as a Responsible Agency.

- **Notice of Determination:** See below.
- **Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan:** Click here
SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resource Code.

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): 

Project Title: Von Der Ahe Forest Enhancement Project (SNC 1063) 

Project Applicant: Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Project Location (include county): Mariposa, Mariposa County

Project Description:
The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide $721,487 in funding for forest management activities on 250 acres of forested lands in southern Mariposa County near the communities of Triangle Park, Lush Meadows, Ponderosa Basin, Jerseyclade, and Bootjack. The treatments would restore the property’s forest which has been heavily impacted by drought, pest infestation, tree mortality and dense overgrown vegetation. The property is in a high severity wildfire zone and a potential threat to the surrounding communities and forests. Specific treatments would include hand and mechanical thinning to achieve 150 trees per acre in plantations and to establish 15 feet between crowns of oak trees, dead trees will be removed to a density not to exceed five per acre, and pruning will occur to limb trees to 10 feet. All work will be performed in compliance with the California Forest Practices Act and an adopted Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan (NTMP) prepared for the property (No. N-4-99-6; Von Der Ahe NTMP), which was approved by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) on July 20, 1999.

This is to advise that the Sierra Nevada Conservancy has approved the above project on June 6, 2019 and has made the following determinations regarding the above described project.

1. The project [will X will not] have a significant effect on the environment.

2. A Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan (No. N-4-99-6; Von Der Ahe NTMP) was adopted by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Chapter 8, commencing with section 4511 of Part 2 of Division 4 of the Public Resources Code. The Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan meets the requirements of a Substitute Document pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15252. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is using the substitute document in its approval of the project as a Responsible Agency, consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15253 (a) and (b).

3. Mitigation Measures [were X were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.

4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [was X was not] adopted for this project.

5. A statement of Overriding Considerations [was X was not] adopted for this project.

6. Findings [were X were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final Nonindustrial Timber Management Plan is available to the General Public at:
Sierra Nevada Conservancy, 11521 Blocker Drive Suite 205, Auburn, CA 95603

Signature (Public Agency): ____________________________ Title: ____________________________ 
Date: ____________________________ Date Received for filing at OPR: ____________________________

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program

SNC ID Number: 1082
Applicant: Plumas Audubon Society
Project Title: Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan
SNC Subregion: North Central
County(ies): Plumas
Funding Amount Requested: $506,714
Funding Amount Recommended: $506,714
Total Project Cost: $1,025,214

PROJECT SCOPE / DESCRIPTION

The Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Project (Project) is in the Upper Feather River Watershed in Plumas County, California. The Project footprint is located within the Genesee Valley in a steep, thickly forested area along the banks of Indian Creek, an important contributor to the North Fork of the Feather River. All tributaries within the upper Feather River Watershed drain to the Oroville Reservoir of the State Water Project, which provides drinking water for 25 million Californians and irrigation for 750,000 acres of agricultural land.

The Project builds on Plumas Audubon Society’s (PAS’s) recent SNC-funded project #899, the Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan – CEQA/NEPA Compliance, by implementing projects in areas identified in the collaboratively based Genesee Valley Wildfire Restoration Plan (GVWRP). The Project location was established as a priority through the GVWRP planning process and by analyzing FlamMap and Forest Research Institute maps. Partner organization Plumas County Fire Safe Council, using CAL FIRE Climate Change Initiative funding, will implement thinning and piling to precede prescribed under-burning. The Project includes 133 acres of under-burning on Feather River Land Trust’s Heart K Ranch and 222 acres within Plumas National Forest, totaling 355 acres. The Project meets multiple GVWRP objectives, including reducing the threat of wildfire to nearby ranches and residences.

The proposed Project is part of the larger 33,000-acre Genesee Valley Wildfire Restoration Plan: a stewardship strategy encompassing Genesee and Franks Valleys, the Wheeler Peak Unit of Mud Lake Research Natural Area, and adjacent areas. Genesee Valley has a high fuel load in the mixed conifer forest, creating an imminent threat to the residents and jeopardizing the overall health of the watershed. Throughout
the GVWRP planning process and previous SNC-funded CEQA/NEPA planning project, PAS and Plumas National Forest are working to address an urgent need for forest restoration in this upper watershed.

For decades, the non-profit Plumas Audubon Society has been promoting understanding, appreciation, and protection of the biodiversity of the Feather River watershed through education, research, and the restoration and conservation of natural ecosystems. Plumas Audubon has a successful track record of managing projects within the Upper Feather River Watershed with an average operating budget of $318,500 over the past five years. This Project is a part of PAS’s long-term goal of increasing resiliency of forested avian habitat across the upper Feather River watershed. PAS has partnered with project landowners PNF and the FRLT throughout the planning stages of the restoration project as well as through the collaboration process while developing the GVWRP.

Because of Plumas Audubon’s efforts with the GVWRP, Genesee Valley has been a focus of forest health restoration efforts for more than a decade. Wildfire Restoration Plan partners include Feather River Land Trust, Plumas National Forest, Feather River Resource Conservation District, Greenville Rancheria, Plumas Fire Safe Council, and private landowners who work together to restore forest and watershed health through forest thinning, under-burning, and riparian enhancement. Plumas County FSC will implement a $500,000 fuels reduction program in the Project area prior to under-burning. Feather River Land Trust will provide monitoring and in-kind surveys throughout the Project term and into the future.

With implementation of this Project, the upper Feather River Watershed will increase water quality and quantity and contribute to carbon sequestration, making it a case study in adaptation in the face of California’s changing climate. The Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Project meets the objectives of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program and SNC Strategic Plan by mitigating the impacts of ongoing drought and reducing the risk of future wildfires in a sensitive watershed through prescribed fire forest treatments that will clear dense fire-susceptible stands, open canopies to deeper seasonal snow packs, and encourage botanical diversity and wildlife habitat.
PROJECT SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT TASKS / DELIVERABLES</th>
<th>TIMELINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Meetings (agendas, meeting notes)</td>
<td>August 2019 – December 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract for thinning, burning, and resource monitoring (RFP/contracts)</td>
<td>September 2019 – December 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-burning conducted (pre- and post-photo point documentation; mapping)</td>
<td>September 2019 – December 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress Reports</td>
<td>Every six months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Project Completion Date</td>
<td>January 1, 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROJECT COSTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET CATEGORIES</th>
<th>SNC FUNDING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Costs:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>$83,840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Implementation</td>
<td>$366,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials and Supplies</td>
<td>$1,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications, Printing, Public Relations</td>
<td>$6,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting, Performance Measures</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Costs</td>
<td>$46,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$506,714</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROJECT LETTERS OF SUPPORT / OPPOSITION

SUPPORT:
- Feather River Land Trust
- Genesee Woods Recreation Association
- Greenville Rancheria
- Gordon Keller, Geotechnical engineer - Genesee resident
- Sierra Institute
- Plumas National Forest, Mt. Hough Ranger District

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to identify one to three project specific Performance Measures in their application. Please note, Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified before the grant agreement is executed.

- Number of Acres Improved or Restored
Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan (GVWIP)
Plumas Audubon Society

Project Location
Project Boundary
North Subregion
North Central Subregion
Central Subregion
East Subregion
South Central Subregion
South Subregion
CEQA Documentation

SNC #: 1082

Project Title: Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Plan

Applicant: Plumas Audubon Society

CEQA Compliance:

The Feather River Resource Conservation District is Lead Agency on an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). The SNC may file a Notice of Determination on the IS/MND as a Responsible Agency.

- Notice of Determination: See below.
- Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration: Click here
To:  
Office of Planning and Research  
U.S. Mail:  
P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044  
Street Address:  
1400 Tenth St., Rm 113  
Sacramento, CA 95814

☐ County Clerk  
County of:  
Address:  

From:  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
Public Agency:  
Address:  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Contact:  
Auburn, CA 95603  
Phone:  
(530) 823-4689

Lead Agency (if different from above):  
Feather River Resource Conservation District  
Address:  
159 Lawrence Street, Quincy, CA 95971  
Contact:  
Brad Graevs  
Phone:  
(530) 283-7513

SUBJECT: Filing of Notice of Determination in compliance with Section 21108 or 21152 of the Public Resource Code.

State Clearinghouse Number (if submitted to State Clearinghouse): 2019029109

Project Title: Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Project (SNC 1082)

Project Applicant: Plumas Audubon Society

Project Location (include county): The project area is located between 4 and 11 miles east of Taylorsville, CA and geographically divided into three separate areas or “project units”: Genesee Woods, Heart K Northwest, and Heart K Southeast. The respective legal location of each of these areas is: Township 25N Range 11 E Sect. 5-8; Township 25 N Range 11 E Sect. 2-3 and Township 26 N Range 11 E Sect. 34-35; Township 25 N Range 11 E Sect. 1, 11-12. USGS 7.5 quads Genesee and Taylorsville. Mount Diablo Base Meridian (MDBM).

Project Description:
The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) would provide $506,714 to the Plumas Audubon Society (PAS) for the Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement project (project). This project is a collaborative effort between the Plumas Audubon Society (PAS), the Feather River Resource Conservation District (FRRCD) and U.S. Forest Service aimed at reducing the risk of high-severity wildfire as well as taking steps toward restoring watershed and forest health through hand-thinning, hand piling, pile burning and broadcast burning of approximately 879 acres of forested National Forest and adjacent private land. The purpose of the project is to reduce fuel loading within the project area to the point that fuels would burn at low to moderate severity during future wildfires. This reduction of fuel loads would help to reduce the threat of future wildfires from burning at high severity, therefore potentially protecting residents adjacent to the project area, protecting the watershed from degradation, and improving habitat values including late seral forest. Reintroducing fire to the landscape through controlled broadcast burning will also ensure that these areas are protected from high-severity wildfire for longer periods of time post-implementation and creates the opportunity to manage fuel loads with regular fire return intervals into the future. This project is a continuation of a 33,000-acre stewardship strategy which encompasses Genesee and Franks Valleys, the Wheeler Peak Unit of Mud Lake Research Natural Area, and adjacent areas.

Project activities would include forest hand thinning, hand piling, pile burning, and prescribed broadcast burning. Thinning of small diameter trees under 10 inches DBH, clearing ladder fuels, hand piling, and pile burning will take place in the Genesee Woods project unit (506 acres). Broadcast burning will take place on the two Heart K project units (134 acres NE; 239 acres SE) as a follow-up to previous thinning and pile-burning. Underburning is planned to be utilized where topographic features and project design allow. No forest projects will be removed during this project. This project may also use either hand pulling and/or intensive grazing of noxious weeds in an effort to control weed populations on the project footprint.

The entire project area and all proposed activities were evaluated in the final Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) adopted on May 13, 2019 (SCH# 2019029109). All mitigation measures specified in the IS/MND to minimize impacts related to biological resources and cultural resources will be implemented by FRRCD and through contractual obligations with its contractor. SNC has reviewed the IS/MND prepared by FRRCD and has independently determined that the project would not result in significant adverse environmental impacts.

This is to advise that the Sierra Nevada Conservancy has approved the above (☐ Lead Agency or ☑ Responsible Agency) and has made the following determinations regarding the above described project. (date)

1. ☐ The project [ ☑ will not] have a significant effect on the environment.
2. ☑ An Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
   ☐ A Negative Declaration was prepared for this project to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation Measures [☑ were ☐ were not] made a condition of the approval of the project.

4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan [☑ was ☐ was not] adopted for this project.

5. A statement of Overriding Considerations [☐ was ☑ was not] adopted for this project.

6. Findings [☐ were ☑ were not] made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final EIR with comments and responses and record of project approval, or the Negative Declaration, is available to the General Public at:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy, 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205, Auburn, CA  95603

Signature (Public Agency): __________________________________ Title: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________ Date Received for filing at OPR: ______________________________

Authority cited: Sections 21083, Public Resources Code.
Background
In March 2019, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) successfully applied for and was awarded a $10.72 million California Climate Investment (CCI) grant from CAL FIRE to implement five separate forest health projects, planning and environmental review for six future restoration projects, and three research projects in the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI) landscape.

The forest health projects will be implemented through sub-grants and contracts to the Eldorado National Forest (ENF) and Placer County. The planning and environmental review work for future projects will be implemented through an inter-agency agreement with the El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation Districts (RCD). The research projects will be conducted through sub-grants to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (USFS) Region 5, the Remote Sensing Laboratory, and the State Department of Conservation California Geological Survey (CGS).

Pursuant to SNC governing statute, staff must seek Board authorization to expend funds at the amounts necessary to implement the CCI grant received.

Grant Agreement 8GG18601 between CAL FIRE and the SNC requires that all California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) responsibilities be completed before any project work can begin. All implementing partners are prepared to execute contracts and commence project work pending execution of contracts and agreements and completion of remaining CEQA requirements. At the March 2019 Board Meeting, the SNC Governing Board (Board) authorized a sub-grant for Project #CCI003: Tobacco Gulch with the ENF in the amount of $150,000 and approved SNC, as a Lead Agency, to file a CEQA Notice of Determination on the previously adopted Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND).

Furthermore, at the March 2019 Board Meeting, the Board approved filing CEQA Notices of Exemption and authorized staff to enter into all necessary agreements to implement five additional Projects:

- Project #R1831015: Planning and Environmental Review with El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide RCD in the amount of $200,000.
- Project #R1833016: French Meadows Project with Placer County in the amount of $3,500,000.
- Project #CCI005: Landscape-Scale Carbon Accounting with USDA Forest Service Region 5, Remote Sensing Laboratory in the amount of $350,000.
- Project #CCI006: Completion of LiDAR on ENF in the amount of $250,000. At the March Board Meeting, SNC staff thought the Agreement would be with the ENF. However, since that meeting, it has been determined that the ENF would not be able to complete the LiDAR acquisition per the Grant Agreement requirements so SNC staff has prepared a subsequent draft Agreement with CGS to keep this project on schedule.
• Project #CCI007: HRV Studies in TCSI Area with USDA Forest Service Region 5 in the amount of $150,000.

**Current Status**
Staff prepared a draft sub-grant agreement for review and approval with the Eldorado National Forest to implement the Blacksmith project (description below) worth $594,350.00. A CEQA Notice of Exemption has been prepared for the Blacksmith Project within the ENF by the SNC.

**Attachments**
- Attachment A: Projects Map

**Next Steps**
Upon approval by the Board, staff will file the CEQA Notice of Exemption and finalize and execute the sub-grant agreement to fulfill obligations of the CalFire CCI Grant agreement.

**CCI Project Descriptions**

**Project #CCI001: Blacksmith**  
_Eldorado National Forest – $594,350.00_

This project includes biomass removal of 500 acres during commercial and non-commercial mechanical thinning treatments that will be yarded to landings and then to a biomass facility. Tractor piling of surface fuels or mastication is planned for all mechanical thinning areas. The funding will cover 500 acres of piling and an additional 142 acres of mastication of small shrubs and small trees. In addition, funding will cover mastication in 145 acres of younger plantations with follow-up shrub control on 26 acres using foliar herbicide application to reduce shrub competition with these trees and maintain lower flame lengths in the event of a wildfire.

CEQA Compliance: The project is Exempt under Public Resources Code Section 4799.05 for projects to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act.

- To access the Notice of Exemption, [click here.](#)

**Recommendation**
Staff recommends the Board:

(a) authorize the Executive Officer to file Notice of Exemption for the **Blacksmith** project (CCI001); and

(b) authorize staff to enter into the necessary agreement to implement the project described in this report, pursuant to CAL FIRE - SNC grant agreement 8GG18601.
Agenda Item X:
CAL FIRE California Climate Investments (CCI) Agreement Authorizations

Attachment A:
Projects Map
TCSI 2018 CCI Projects

CCI Agreement 8GG18601

www.SIERRANEVADA.ca.gov
Notice of Exemption

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

County Clerk
County of: El Dorado
360 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Project Title: Blacksmith Ecological Restoration Project

Project Location - Specific:
The project area is situated on National Forest System lands in the Georgetown Ranger District northeast of the town of Georgetown in El Dorado County; in the vicinity of Ralston Ridge and Nevada Point Ridge, between the Middle Fork of the American River and the Rubicon River.

Project Location – City: Northeast of Georgetown
Project Location – County: El Dorado County

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide California Climate Investments (CCI) funding in the amount of $594,350 to Eldorado National Forest to remove 500 acres of biomass yarded to landings during commercial and non-commercial mechanical thinning treatments and to a biomass facility. Tractor piling of surface fuels or mastication is planned for all mechanical thinning areas. The funding will cover 500 acres of piling and an additional 142 acres of mastication of small shrubs and small trees. In addition, funding will cover mastication in 145 acres of younger plantations with follow-up shrub control on 26 acres using foliar herbicide application to reduce shrub competition with these trees and maintain lower flame lengths in the event of a wildfire.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: U.S. Forest Service, Eldorado National Forest

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: Public Resources Code Section 4799.05(d)(1)

Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:
CEQA does not apply to prescribed fire, thinning, or fuel reduction projects undertaken on federal lands to reduce the risk of high-severity wildfire that have been reviewed under the federal NEPA if the primary role of a state or local agency is providing funding or staffing for those projects. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy would provide CCI funding to conduct fuel reduction activities on federal lands within the Eldorado National Forest. The full project, including the project activities receiving CCI funding, have been analyzed by the U.S. Forest Service pursuant to NEPA, including surveys and analysis of biological resources and cultural and archaeological resources. Those evaluations found that the project would not result in a significant adverse effect. A NEPA Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision was prepared for the project.

Lead Agency
Contact Person: Andrea N. Williams, PMP
Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 823-4682

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: [Signature] Date: [Date] Title: [Title]

☒ Signed by Lead Agency
☐ Signed by Applicant

Date received for filing at OPR: [Date]

Revised 2005
**Background**

Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC) is a collaborative effort involving multiple state agencies, the USDA Forest Service (USFS), and Tuolumne County. The project consists of three separate but related pillars:

- The Community Resilience Center (CRC) will provide resources and community protection from future fires. (Budget: ~$20 million)
- The Forest and Watershed Health Program (FWHP) will restore forests and watersheds to be healthy and resilient to future disturbances. (Budget: ~$28 million)
- A Biomass Utilization Facility (BUF) will utilize woody biomass and support ongoing forest restoration efforts. (Budget: ~$22 million)

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) was the formal applicant on the NDRC grant and executed a grant agreement with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the funder, in January 2017. As the grantee, HCD is the responsible entity for National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance and the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

On December 10, 2015, the SNC Governing Board authorized the Executive Officer to enter into necessary and appropriate agreements to administer the FWHP and BUF activities. The SNC serves as project coordinator for these two programs by ensuring that the goals of the grant are achieved, maintaining compliance with HUD requirements, and engaging with stakeholders to encourage meaningful, public engagement in the project. As project coordinator, the SNC’s role is ministerial in nature, i.e., the SNC is not taking discretionary actions.

The USFS is the implementing partner for the FWHP and is responsible for contracting, overseeing projects on the ground, and completing all of the following activities:

- **Fuels Reduction and Biomass Removal** – Removing dead material from forests that act as fuel for the next fire on up to 4,600 acres.
- **Reforestation** – Replanting a diverse and resilient mixed conifer forest on up to 4,500 acres.
- **Fuel Breaks** – Creating and enhancing strategic fuel breaks to reduce future fire risk throughout Tuolumne County.
- **Noxious Weed Abatement** – Controlling and minimizing the spread of noxious weeds on up to 3,500 acres.
- **Rangeland Infrastructure** – Rebuilding rangeland infrastructure such as fencing, troughs, and cattleguards.

Based upon extensive public outreach conducted by HCD, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, and the California Environmental Protection Agency from January - October 2015, these activities were proposed to HUD in the NDRC grant application. Final acreages and project sites were selected by USFS following
numerous stakeholder meetings in 2016 and 2017, and two public meetings were hosted by USFS and SNC in June 2017. For more information on public outreach efforts for these projects, see Appendix D of the NDRC Grant Memo sent to SNC board members on June 21, 2018.

The BUF will utilize woody biomass from forest restoration activities and complement existing wood processing infrastructure in Tuolumne County. Putting forest waste to use will create jobs and minimize air quality impacts compared to burning onsite. This facility will prove the concept that small-scale biomass utilization can be a model for creating economic opportunity in the Sierra Nevada Region while contributing to forest restoration efforts.

The BUF program consists of two phases. In the first phase, a consultant completed a detailed feedstock supply report and feasibility study to inform the scale and design of the facility. The second phase includes providing financial assistance to project developers to design, build, and operate at least one facility. The Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) is the implementing partner for the second phase of the BUF and is responsible for providing financial assistance to project developers.

**Current Status**

At the time of this writing, staff is preparing to host a tour of the Rim Fire area for SNC Board Members and the public on May 30, 2019. The SNC procured Gina Bartlett from the Consensus Building Institute to facilitate dialogue during the tour. Bartlett will prepare a summary report from the field trip to be delivered to the SNC Board at the June meeting.

As of April 2019, the USFS has awarded over $9 million in contracts for noxious weed abatement (on 1,693 acres), reforestation site preparation (on 1,311 acres), and fuels reduction and biomass removal (on approximately 4,300 acres) activities to be funded by the grant. Implementation of these activities began in mid-April and will continue through the 2019 and 2020 field seasons. USFS will award more contracts for future field seasons to complete the goals of the grant.

Staff is also coordinating the environmental review process for the approximately 1,940-acre network of strategic fuel breaks in Tuolumne County with HELIX Environmental Services on behalf of USFS, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and HCD. Surveys are expected to begin in May 2019 with a goal of providing final environmental review documents for USFS, BLM, and HCD review prior to the 2020 field season.

In addition to contracting with private contractors this season, USFS, SNC, and HCD are also partnering with the California Conservation Corps (CCC) to repair and construct over three miles of rangeland fencing in the Rim Fire footprint. CCC is expected to begin work in September 2019.
The SNC continues to coordinate the BUF program under the NDRC grant. The SNC and HCD are partnering with the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) to implement Phase 2 of the program by providing financial assistance to developers constructing biomass utilization infrastructure in Tuolumne County. RCAC is expecting to release a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in early summer 2019 for pre-development grants to support due diligence efforts for potential project developers. RCAC will begin marketing their services and accepting applications for funding by the end of 2019 to meet the grant’s deadline in 2022.

Next Steps
The SNC will continue to serve as project coordinator for the FWHP and BUF programs as implementation progresses to ensure successful completion of the grant by the grant’s deadline in September 2022.

Recommendation
This is an informational item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments.
Agenda Item XI
National Disaster Resilience Competition Grant Update

Presented by:
Elliott Vander Kolk
Grant Progress

- USFS Forest and Watershed Health Projects implementation to date

- Progress on Biomass Utilization Facility Phase II
Rim Fire Tour

• Takeaways from tour and summary document

• Board member reflections on the tour?

• Questions?
Sierra Nevada Conservancy Governing Board awards over $26 million for forest health projects

By Sierra Nevada Conservancy - March 12, 2019, 04:21:13 PM

CAMERON PARK, Calif. March 12, 2019 – The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Governing Board recently authorized over $26 million in funds for 35 projects that will reduce wildfire risk, protect water supply, and restore forest and watershed health in the Sierra Nevada region. The projects awarded support the goals and objectives of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program, a large-scale restoration program designed to improve ecosystem and community resilience in the Sierra Nevada. This program is coordinated by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and implemented through a strong network of state and federal agencies, local government, and tribal, private, and nonprofit partners.

"Building resilience in the Sierra Nevada is our primary focus, and the funding authorized by our board demonstrates the SNC's commitment to increasing the pace and scale of restoration across the region," says Angela Avery, Executive Officer for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. "We're proud to be supporting these projects and the partners who will be implementing them on the ground:"

Funding for these projects come from Proposition 1, The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014; Proposition 68, The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018; the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund; Fire Settlement Funds; and the California Climate Investments program. Funding awards were made by the SNC Governing Board at the quarterly board meeting on March 7, 2019 in Cameron Park, CA.

Approximately $14.4 million in Proposition 1 and Proposition 68 funds were authorized for 23 projects in Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Fresno, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra, Tehama, and Tuolumne counties. One additional project, funded by Proposition 68 for $163,405, will complete a land conservation assessment across all 22 counties within the Sierra Nevada region.

Four projects were authorized for funding through the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund for a total of $750,000. These four projects support innovative wood product manufacturing and increase rural economic development around wood product manufacturing across the 22-county Sierra Nevada region. One project was authorized for just over $6 million in funding through Fire Settlement Funds. This project will complete reforestation activities in the Moonlight Fire burn footprint in the Plumas National Forest.

Approximately $4.6 million was authorized for subgrants and contracts to complete components of the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI) All-Lands Regional Restoration Program Eldorado Projects/French Meadows Project. The TCSI All-Lands Regional Restoration Program is funded by a $10.7 million grant from CAL FIRE's California Climate Investments grant program and will implement five separate forest health projects, planning and environmental review for six future restoration projects, and three research projects in Placer, El Dorado, Yuba, and Sierra counties. This project is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing GHG emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantaged communities. The Cap-and-Trade program also creates a financial incentive for industries to invest in clean technologies and develop innovative ways to reduce pollution. California Climate Investments projects include affordable housing, renewable energy, public transportation, zero-emission vehicles, environmental restoration, more sustainable agriculture, recycling, and much more. At least 35 percent of these investments are located within and benefit the residents of disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and low-income households across California. For more information, visit the California Climate Investments website at: www.climatetransitionboard.ca.gov.

Additional information about each of these projects and the programs that fund them can be found at www.sierranevada.ca.gov in the March 2019 Board Meeting materials.
SNC awards grant for NID’s phase 4 fuels treatment project at Scotts Flat Reservoir

NEVADA CITY, Calif. March 13, 2019 – Good news for Cascade Shores residents and recreationists alike. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) awarded a $981,000 grant to NID to complete Phase 4 of their fuels reduction program. This phase is located on the north and east shores of the Scotts Flat Reservoir, will be initiated during Summer 2019, and will be completed by January 2022.

The project description submitted to SNC reads, in part: The project will treat 300 acres and will significantly reduce catastrophic fire risk and promote healthy and functional forest and watershed conditions, improve carbon sequestration, and protect an existing water storage facility. This project sits within a larger fuels reduction program aimed at significantly reducing fire risk in partnership with the Cascade Shores and Banner Mountain Firewise Communities and CAL FIRE, and expands the Nevada County Community Shaded Fuel Break.

According to Neysa King, NID Environmental Resources Administrator, "This project is the fourth phase of a larger effort that began on District owned properties in 2013. In 2016, NID partnered with SNC and the CCC to implement a similar fire fuels reduction project at Scotts Flat Reservoir, near Pasquaile Road and adjacent to the dam. Subsequently NID selectively thinned and treated fire fuels throughout the Gate 1 Campground at Scotts Flat, also extending the fuel break on the northeast side of the reservoir. Lessons learned through implementation of these projects have informed the development and budgeting of this project. This year, in a separate but complimentary project, NID will complete approximately 30 acres of mechanical mastication in partnership with CAL FIRE in a California Forest Improvement Program project on the north shore of Scotts Flat."

Said King, "NID will coordinate with the Scotts Flat and Cascade Shores Homeowners Associations during project implementation. We will advertise green waste collection and chipping days to encourage residents to bring green waste for processing, as an alternative to burning on private lands. We will chip these materials and spread within the project boundary. We will host at least one community meeting, and will also develop educational materials and a sign to be displayed at three locations adjacent to Scotts Flat Reservoir on District property to promote an increased understanding and awareness about wildfire risk, forest health and ecology, water resource management and climate change."
$3M Grant for California Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program

The California Fire Safe Council in partnership with the Watershed Research and Training Center has been awarded a $3 million grant, part of which is to help improve wildfire resiliency.

The Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program aims to help communities develop and implement projects to strengthen fire resiliency, increase carbon sequestration, and facilitate greenhouse gas emissions.

The California Fire Safe Council in partnership with the Watershed Research and Training Center, will deploy and facilitate community involvement and capacity building investments modeled after the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Program approach in priority watersheds in need of forest-health activities across the state with a special focus on those at-risk from catastrophic wildfire.

“With California facing unprecedented wildfire risk, we need every tool available to put the state on a path toward long-term wildfire prevention and forest health,” California Secretary for Natural Resources Wade Crowfoot said in a statement.

The California Fire Safe Council has been mobilizing Californians to protect their homes, communities and environments from wildfires for over 25 years.

More from Insurance Journal

Today's Insurance Headlines | Most Popular | West News
Mammoth Lakes Fire Council receives grant for Lakes Basin

by News Staff on March 19, 2019 in Fire, General, Gov, Public Event

The Mammoth Lakes Fire Safe Council (MLFSC) has received approval from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) on a grant application for the Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project in the amount of $1,000,000 to conduct mechanical and hand thinning, fuel breaks, roadside and campground fuels reduction, forest restoration, and meadow aspen release treatments on a minimum of 560 acres and up to 632 acres on Inyo National Forest land over a two- to three-year period.

These activities will protect public infrastructure, recreational access, and forest and watershed resources. The project lies within the headwaters of Mammoth Creek which provides municipal water to the Town of Mammoth Lakes and flows into the Owens River.

The award was authorized by the Governing Board of the SNC at a recent quarterly meeting. Funding for this project comes from Proposition 1, The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014, and Prop 68, The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018.

The application for the grant was initiated by the MLFSC with support by the Mammoth Community Water District, Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District, United States Forest Service, Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County Board of Supervisors, and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

The MLFSC is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization of local residents whose purpose is to provide information, education, and resources to the community and serve as a liaison between the community members, agencies and authorities to mitigate the threat and severity of wildfire. There are over 50 Fire Safe Councils in California with the mission of sponsoring this kind of community based interagency collaboration.

###
The SNC is a California State agency created by bi-partisan legislation (AB 2600) and signed into law in 2004. The SNC was created with the understanding that the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada and its communities are closely linked and that the Region and the State of California would benefit from an organization providing a strategic direction.

###

From the Sierra Nevada Conservancy

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Governing Board recently authorized over $26 million in funds for 35 projects that will reduce wildfire risk, protect water supply, and restore forest and watershed health in the Sierra Nevada region.

The projects awarded support the goals and objectives of the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program, a large-scale restoration program designed to improve ecosystem and community resilience in the Sierra Nevada. This program is coordinated by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and implemented through a strong network of state and federal agencies, local government, and tribal, private, and nonprofit partners.

“Building resilience in the Sierra Nevada is our primary focus, and the funding authorized by our board demonstrates the SNC’s commitment to increasing the pace and scale of restoration across the region,” says Angela Avery, Executive Officer for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. “We’re proud to be supporting these projects and the partners who will be implementing them on the ground.”

Funding for these projects come from Proposition 1, The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014; Proposition 68, The California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act of 2018; the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund; Fire Settlement Funds; and the California Climate Investments program. Funding awards were made by the SNC Governing Board at the quarterly board meeting on March 7, 2019 in Cameron Park, CA.

Approximately $14.4 million in Proposition 1 and Proposition 68 funds were authorized for 23 projects in Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Fresno, El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra, Tehama, and Tulalumne counties. One additional project, funded by Proposition 68 for $163,405, will complete a land conservation assessment across all 22 counties within the Sierra Nevada region.

Four projects were authorized for funding through the Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund for a total of $750,000. These four projects support innovative wood product manufacturing and increase rural economic development around wood product manufacturing across the 22-county Sierra Nevada region.

One project was authorized for just over $6 million in funding through Fire Settlement Funds. This project will complete reforestation activities in the Moonlight Fire burn footprint in the Plumas National Forest.

Approximately $4.6 million was authorized for subgrants and contracts to complete components of the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI) All-Lands Regional Restoration Program/French Meadows Project. The TCSI All-Lands Regional Restoration Program is funded by a $10.7 million grant from CAL FIRE’s California Climate Investments grant program and will implement five separate forest health projects, planning and environmental review for six future restoration projects, and three research projects in Placer, El Dorado, Yuba, and Sierra counties.

This project is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing GHG emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment - particularly in disadvantaged communities.

The Cap-and-Trade program also creates a financial incentive for industries to invest in clean technologies and develop innovative ways to reduce pollution. California Climate Investments projects include affordable housing, renewable energy, public transportation, zero-emission vehicles, environmental restoration, moresustainable agriculture, recycling, and much more.

At least 35 percent of these investments are located within and benefit the residents of disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and low-income households across California.
For more information, visit the California Climate Investments website at:
www.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov.

Additional information about each of these projects and the programs that fund them can be found at www.sierranevada.ca.gov in the March 2019 Board Meeting materials.

About the Sierra Nevada Conservancy 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 Sierra Nevada Region spans 25 million acres, encompasses all or part of 22 counties, and runs from the Oregon border in the north to Kern County in the south.

The Region is the origin of more than 60 percent of California’s developed water supply.
Truckee Donner Land Trust awarded more than $750,000 for forest health work

Submitted to the Sierra Sun

March 20, 2019

As wildfires become a greater and greater concern with each passing year, the Truckee Donner Land Trust has been awarded $783,760 in funding for critical forestry work on its properties, a news release states.

Two grants — one totaling $364,510 for forestry work at Royal Gorge on Donner Summit, and another for $419,250 for work at Webber Lake — will allow the Land Trust to undertake significant forest health projects that will not only improve the local ecology on its protected lands, but also improve resiliency and help reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

"We're extremely grateful that the Sierra Nevada Conservancy chose to fund our projects," Brita Tryggvi, chair of the Land Trust Stewardship Committee, said in the release. "We take the stewardship of our lands seriously, and work hard to maintain forest health so that these beautiful places stay pristine for generations to come."

The forestry project at Royal Gorge would thin the forest primarily around Serene Lakes. Serene Lakes has roughly 600 lots, making this project important for wildland-urban interface wildfire management, the release states. Historic fire suppression has led to overstocking of trees and declining forest health. This project will thin nearly 200 acres. Beyond wildfire risk management, the project will also benefit the North Fork of the American and South Yuba River, as the headwaters of each originate in the Royal Gorge area.

The second project will thin 185 acres of forest surrounding Webber Lake and Coppins Meadow, eliminating encroaching lodgepole pines in the meadow, and thinning overly dense, wildfire-prone thickets in the area. With the Webber Lake Campground open to the public, fire mitigation is key, the release states, and reducing pine encroachment on the meadow will improve meadow habitat and function for water quality and storage.

Both projects will take place from 2019 to 2021. This work builds on numerous other forest health projects completed across Land Trust properties in the past. These grants are among a total of $26 million awarded by Sierra Nevada Conservancy across the Sierra for wildfire, forest health and watershed restoration.

"Building resilience in the Sierra Nevada is our primary focus, and the funding authorized by our board demonstrates the SNC's commitment to increasing the pace and scale of restoration across the region," said Angela Avery, executive officer for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. "We're proud to be supporting these projects and the partners who will be implementing them on the ground."

Source: Truckee Donner Land Trust

LAND TRUST WELCOMES DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, BOARD MEMBER

The Truckee Donner Land Trust is excited to announce Kate Frankfurt as its new development director, and Sidney Scott as a new board member.

"We are thrilled to have Kate joining us to steward the financial health of our organization and to fundraise for the numerous campaigns falling into place in 2019," Perry Norris, executive director of the Land Trust, said in a news release.

Frankfurt joins the Land Trust as the organization joins forces with Squaw Valley Public Service District on the acquisition of Olympic Meadow, a 30-acre property in the heart of Olympic Valley.

"I am deeply honored to join the Truckee Donner Land Trust at this pivotal moment," Frankfurt said. "My family was drawn to the Sierra for the same reason many people are — this land has a way of getting into your soul."

Scott joins the board of directors in 2019 bringing a diverse background in the sciences and with a personal passion for the region. Scott, her husband and two kids have lived in the Truckee area since 2004, and on Donner Summit since 2012, climbing and skiing the lands preserved by the Land Trust.

Frankfurt steps in for former Development Director Kathy Englar, who the release states has been vital to the success of the Land Trust over the last few years, and to landmark acquisitions like Lower Carpenter Valley. Also retiring from the board of directors are Anne Chadwick, Tom Van Berkem and Jim Hoelter, all of whom played vital roles in the growth and strength of the Land Trust.

"We would like to thank Kathy for all her incredible work — she set a high bar for the organization and we are eternally grateful," Norris said. "And Anne, Jim and Tom will also be missed — they brought so much to our organization, we cannot thank them enough."

The Land Trust has protected more than 36,000 acres of open space in the Truckee-Donner region, preserving their natural resources for future generations and opening them to the public for recreation. Much of this work is funded by private fundraising — the generous contributions of donors who value the unique landscapes of the Northern Sierra.
Truckee Donner Land Trust Awarded More than $750,000 for Forest Health Work

By Truckee Donner Land Trust - March 20, 2019, 09:01:41 AM

TRUCKEE, Calif. March 20, 2019 – As wildfires become a greater and greater concern with each passing year, the Truckee Donner Land Trust is excited and grateful to be awarded $783,760 in funding for critical forestry work on its properties.

Two grants – one totaling $364,510 for forestry work at Royal Gorge on Donner Summit, and another for $419,250 for work at Webber Lake – will allow the Land Trust to undertake significant forest health projects that will not only improve the local ecology on its protected lands, but also improve resiliency and help reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

“We’re extremely grateful that the Sierra Nevada Conservancy chose to fund our projects,” said Brita Tryggvi, chair of the Land Trust Stewardship Committee. “We take the stewardship of our lands seriously, and work hard to maintain forest health so that these beautiful places stay pristine for generations to come.”

The forestry project at Royal Gorge would thin the forest primarily around Serene Lakes. Serene Lakes has roughly 600 lots, making this project important for wildland-urban interface wildfire management.

Historic fire suppression has led to overstocking of trees and declining forest health. This project will thin nearly 200 acres. Beyond wildfire risk management, the project will also benefit the North Fork of the American and South Yuba River, as the headwaters of each originate in the Royal Gorge area.

The second project will thin 185 acres of forest surrounding Webber Lake and Coppins Meadow, eliminating encroaching lodgepole pines in the meadow, and thinning overly dense, wildfire-prone thickets in the area. With the Webber Lake Campground open to the public, fire mitigation is key, and reducing pine encroachment on the meadow will improve meadow habitat and function for water quality and storage.

Both projects will take place from 2019 to 2021. This work builds on numerous other forest health projects completed across Land Trust properties in the past. These grants are among a total of $26 million awarded by Sierra Nevada Conservancy across the Sierra for wildfire, forest health and watershed restoration.

“Building resilience in the Sierra Nevada is our primary focus, and the funding authorized by our board demonstrates the SNC’s commitment to increasing the pace and scale of restoration across the region,” said Angela Avery, executive officer for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. “We’re proud to be supporting these projects and the partners who will be implementing them on the ground.”

About Truckee Donner Land Trust
The Truckee Donner Land Trust preserves and protects scenic, historic and recreational lands with high natural resource values in the greater Truckee Donner region and manages recreational activities on these lands in a sustainable manner. Learn more at www.tdlandtrust.org
The California Natural Resources Agency and Department of Conservation Announce $20 Million Block Grant Awards for the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program

Mar 21, 2019 Updated Mar 21, 2019

SACRAMENTO – The Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program aims to help communities prioritize, develop, and implement projects to strengthen fire resiliency, increase carbon sequestration, and facilitate greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy and improving public health and the environment.

The California Fire Safe Council in partnership with the Watershed Research and Training Center (WRTC), will deploy and facilitate community involvement and capacity building investments modeled after the Sierra Nevada Conservancy’s successful Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) approach in priority watersheds in need of forest-health activities across the state with a special focus on those at-risk from catastrophic wildfire and ripe for capacity building.

“With California facing unprecedented wildfire risk, we need every tool available to put the state on a path toward long-term wildfire prevention and forest health,” California Secretary for Natural Resources Wade Crowfoot said.

“The California Fire Safe Council (CFSC) will receive approximately $1.7 million over three years to build community and institutional capacity for community wildfire resiliency,” said Tracy Katelman, Executive Director of CFSC. “Working with The Watershed Center, CFSC will place three coordinators and staff in key locations around the state to build local and regional capacity to improve forest health and help Californians learn to live safely with wildfire.”

“Our mission is to create and sustain healthy lands and healthy communities through local workforce training and development,” said Nick Goulette, Executive Director of The Watershed Center. “We look forward to working with CFSC and the other block grant recipients to deploy community capacity building approaches that we’ve honed over the last two decades to support natural resource management, economic development, and community resilience to wildfire.”

The Watershed Research and Training Center, headquartered in Trinity County, has been facilitating the development and implementation of watershed-based forest conservation for over 25 years. Over the last 20 years, we have been a national leader in mentoring, training, and peer network development in support of community and landscape resilience to wildland fire, most recently through our leadership with the Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network.
The California Fire Safe Council has been mobilizing Californians to protect their homes, communities and environments from wildfires for over 25 years. Along with our grant-making and our past liaising for the Firewise USA recognition program, we have a deep history of providing capacity building and technical assistance for local Fire Safe Councils, and in facilitating cross-sectoral investments in wildfire resilience.
SYRCL receives funding for Forest Health Partnership in the Yuba River Watershed

By South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) - March 22, 2019, 04:35:28 PM

Nevada City, CA – On March 21, 2019, the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL), in partnership with the Tahoe National Forest (TNF), the Camptonville Community Partnership (CCP), and Yuba Water Agency received competitive funding from the California Department of Conservation to lead a groundbreaking, collaborative forest health program in the Yuba River watershed.

The funding was matched 1:1 from Yuba Water Agency, totaling $470,000 to plan forest health projects and develop a forest product industry to address ecosystem resiliency and watershed health concerns in the Yuba River watershed. This funding complements additional recent investments in forest health from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC).

SYRCL Executive Director Melinda Booth said, “This is a tremendous win for SYRCL, but really for the Yuba River watershed. We hope this funding and increased collaboration will address longstanding concerns of high severity wildfire risk in our community, while promoting overall watershed health with diverse partnerships and stakeholders.”

This program will use Department of Conservation funding and matching funds from Yuba Water Agency to hire two Watershed Coordinators for up to four years to work on developing forest health projects and an economically viable and environmentally sustainable forest products industry in the Yuba River watershed. The Watershed Coordinators will work with partners and regional stakeholders to provide technical support and promote community engagement to successfully implement health forest projects in the Yuba River watershed. Their first project will be to plan and implement forest health projects in the North Yuba watershed.

This partnership will support the expansion of the Forest Resilience Bond, a public-private partnership designed to increase the pace and scale of forest health treatments, which launched as a pilot program in this watershed on the Tahoe National Forest in 2018.

“The Yuba watershed is an incredibly important resource. I am excited to work with project partners to restore forest health in the Yuba watershed,” noted Tahoe National Forest Supervisor Eli Ilano.

SYRCL River Science Director Rachel Hutchinson also noted that, “This grant is the beginning of a new endeavor by SYRCL to support forest health work that will focus on increasing ecosystem and community resiliency. We are thankful to our regional partners and the Department of Conservation for providing us with funding to move this work forward.”

About SYRCL

The South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL) is the leading voice for the protection and restoration of the Yuba River watershed. Founded in 1983, SYRCL envisions a future in which the Yuba River watershed thrives and is resilient in the face of climate change. We envision a free-flowing Yuba and healthy ecosystems that support wildlife and people—from the ridges to the canyons and the summit to the sea. We envision a community that reflects the relationship between a healthy watershed and human quality of life; one that values a sustainable water future; one that celebrates the Yuba River’s natural and cultural heritage. We envision a vibrant, science-based community organization that serves as a leader for environmental stewardship and activism in the Yuba River watershed—and that inspires others to make a difference in their communities. See: www.yubariver.org.
Plumas Audubon awarded $100,000 grant

March 28, 2019  Staff

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Governing Board approved $11.8 million in grants for projects that will reduce wildfire risk, protect water supplies and restore forest and watershed health in the Sierra Nevada region.

The projects 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 coordinated by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy in close partnership with other federal, state, and local agencies, as well as diverse stakeholders, and aims to increase the pace and scale of restoration across the Sierra by increasing funding, addressing policy barriers, and increasing infrastructure needed to support restoration.

Funding for these projects comes from Proposition 1, The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014.

The Plumas Audubon Society has been awarded $100,000 for the Quincy Watershed Improvement Project (QWIP). This project will complete the necessary planning and environmental compliance to implement a Watershed Improvement Plan in the upper Feather River watershed, near Quincy.

QWIP will create a 665-acre firebreak near the southern border of Quincy, north of the footprint of the Minerva fire on Forest Service lands and on American Valley.
Community Services District property.

Initial planning will require wildlife, archaeology, soils, hydrology, botany, and forestry surveys in addition to preparation of NEPA and CEQA documents. Plumas Audubon Society is currently seeking consultants for archaeology, soils, hydrology, botany and forestry surveys.

Partners for this project include Feather River Resource Conservation District, American Valley Community Services District, Plumas National Forest, Plumas County Fire Safe Council, Plumas County and private landowners.

With support of $99,996.76 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to complete this planning project, the QWIP will be ready for implementation in fall 2020.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy 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 has awarded over $68 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 large, damaging wildfires.

Funding for these projects came from Prop. 84 passed by voters in 2006 and Prop. 1 passed by voters in 2014. The Sierra Nevada region spans 25 million acres and encompasses all or part of 22 counties.

Plumas Audubon Society

Plumas Audubon Society was founded in 1991 and promotes understanding, appreciation and protection of the biodiversity of the Feather River region through education, research and the restoration and conservation of natural ecosystems.

Click here to submit a letter to the editor about this post that will be published in our newspaper.
April 5, 2019 - By Jeannette E. Warnert - Four months have passed since the Camp Fire, the worst wildfire in California history, ravaged bucolic communities in the Butte County foothills, including Paradise, Concow, Butte Creek Canyon, Cherokee, Yankee Hill and Magalia. Eighty-five people died, many of them elderly and unable to safely evacuate from an area where a wind-driven fire raced from home to home.

(Left) Fire resilient forests have the benefit of offering greater access for recreation. (Photo: Butte County Fire Safe Council)

The unspeakable loss of human life and the serious challenges being faced by survivors has dominated the Camp Fire conversation. Now, UC Cooperative Extension is beginning a dialog with many agencies involved to understand how such tragedies can be prevented in the future.

UC Cooperative Extension fire scientists and representatives of many California organizations conduct fire behavior research, study forest treatments – such as prescribed burns, timber harvest and mastication – and share best practices for home and community preparation. In the Butte County area where the Camp Fire took place, cooperating agencies include CalFIRE, the U.S. Forest Service, the Butte County Fire Safe Council, the Yankee Hill Fire Safe Council, Sacramento River Watershed Program, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, the Bureau of Land Management, and others.
While the Camp Fire was devastating, it could have been far worse. Working together for decades, the partner agencies have improved community safety and resilience.

They have educated the public about defensible space, fire resistant homes, and evacuation plans. They have coordinated fuels treatments along evacuation routes and around the communities. Through their actions, they saved many lives and structures, protected the town's drinking water supply, and in some cases, provided access for hiking in areas that had been overgrown by brush.

“When you drive for miles through blackened, burned trees and then arrive in a thinning project area full of green tree tops, you know that these efforts are worth it, we are having success and we can make a difference together,” said Calli-Jane DeAnda, executive director of the Butte County Fire Safe Council.

Because of the Camp Fire tragedy, the partner agencies learned many lessons that can inform future maintenance and treatments to improve fire resilience in Butte County and other wildland areas. Kate Wilkin, the UC Cooperative Extension fire advisor for Sutter, Yuba, Butte, and Nevada counties, is able to point to projects implemented in the Camp Fire zone that saved lives and structures.

For example, one family in Paradise was featured by the news media for their successful advance fire planning, which even included the installation of sprinklers on top of the house.

“When I think about what saves a house, a sprinkler is a cherry on top of the cake,” Wilkin said. “If a house is constructed with a combustible roof and siding, if unprotected vents allow embers to get into the attic, or the landscape is not maintained, a sprinkler isn't going to save the house. The sprinkler's power from the grid or a generator will likely fail. High winds may even prevent the sprinkler's mist from hitting the house.”

Rather, passive resistance to fires through better building design, materials and maintenance greatly reduce structure loss.

“Maintenance is an unsung hero of fire resilience,” Wilkin said. “Individual actions at our homes matter.”

First 5 feet around a structure

State law requires homeowners in wildfire areas to clear 100 feet of defensible space around their structures. Most towns in wildfire-prone areas also have their own defensible space codes. Wilkin said where she lives in Grass Valley, anyone with less than an acre of land must maintain their entire property as defensible space.

This guideline is a start, but there is more that people who live in wildfire-prone areas can do to make their homes resilient to fire. UC Cooperative Extension scientists recommend creating a five-foot buffer immediately surrounding the home almost completely devoid of plants and anything that can burn - including wooden fences, firewood, deck chairs and pillows, brooms and other wooden tools.
This extra precaution is important as embers from a distant wildfire can land on or adjacent to a house and ignite combustible items which in turn ignite the home. It was evident in the Camp Fire that the first five feet around homes was a critical factor in the survivability of structures.

The zone can include noncombustible materials such as rock mulch, stone pavers, cement, bare earth, gravel or sand. Low combustibility materials, such as irrigated and maintained lawn or herbaceous plants less than five inches high, are okay. All leaves, needles or other vegetation that falls in this five-foot zone must be removed during the fire season.

“The non-combustible space adjoining the house may be the difference between losing it and all the contents to a wildfire versus returning to the property with the home unscathed,” Wilkin said.

**Community fire resilience**

Fire survival measures can also be taken at the community level.

In Paradise, the Butte County Fire Safe Council funded CalFIRE crews to thin a number of areas in the watershed below Paradise Lake in 2013 and 2014. Taking these actions allowed an area for firefighters to start a defense and start putting out the flame front, Wilkin said.

“A CalFIRE chief told residents, ‘You provide the offense, we provide the defense.’ Homeowners and communities need to get everything set up for successful firefighting,” she said.

Forest thinning has the added benefit of improving recreational opportunities. Near Magalia Pine Ridge School, an 11-acre mastication project in 2018 funded with $30,000 from the Butte County Fire Safe Council cleared overgrown vegetation around the school. This helped strengthen the area's public assembly location, which was identified on the community's evacuation map, and opened up access to a forest hiking trail that was blocked by tangled brush.

The open space dramatically slowed the raging Camp Fire when it approached the school, which is now one of the only schools open in the Paradise Ridge community.

Note the No. 9 marker in the lower left corner of each photo. (Click the photo to see a higher resolution version.) The image on the right was taken after mastication, which opened up the forest for recreation and made the forest more resilient before the Camp Fire. (Photos: Butte County Fire Safe Council)
Forest thinning also protected the drinking water for the town of Paradise. A combination of projects undertaken by U.S. Forest Service, Sierra Pacific Industries and the Butte County Fire Safe Council aligned to allow fire fighters to combat the fire and ensure that the source of drinking water was protected.

**Concow wildfire safety zone**

In 2013 and 2014, the Butte County Fire Safe Council and Yankee Hill Fire Safe Council created a wildfire public assembly safety zone in Concow. The work was completed by inmate crews. During the Camp Fire, dozens of lives were saved when sheriff deputies, firefighters and citizens were able to shelter in the area.

“Wildfire safety zones are pretty uncommon and we may want to create more in wildfire prone areas,” Wilkin said. “But there is a hitch.”

CalFIRE is reluctant to designate temporary refuges because they don't want people to rely on them in place of evacuation. During a quick-moving firestorm, it could be an area where people can shelter if they cannot get out.

“It's a complex and dangerous puzzle,” Wilkin said. “In Australia, they had a similar idea and some places where people sheltered in a fire caused them to die.”

Wilkin is working with Paradise parks to identify areas ahead of time with enough space to meet new national firefighter standards to protect people's lungs from superheated air.

“Historically, we thought sufficient space was four times as great as the flame heights. If you have a Ponderosa pine that's torching 150 feet high, you would need 800 feet around the people,” Wilkin said. “New research has found that the safety zone calculation must also consider potential wind speed and slope. Significantly more space may be needed.”

A wildfire safety zone at Camelot Meadow.

(Photo: Butte County Fire Safe Council)
Source: UC ANR
Tour NID’s Recent Forestry Project at Scotts Flat Reservoir on April 17

By Susan Lauer, Nevada Irrigation District - April 15, 2019, 08:35:51 AM

April 15, 2019 – Join Nevada Irrigation District (NID) staff on a tour at Scotts Flat Reservoir to learn more about the Scotts Flat Fire Fuels Reduction and Healthy Forest Project. The tour is featured as part of Know Your Watershed month, and is free of charge and open to everyone.

NID has initiated the third year of its healthy forest project at Scotts Flat Campground to address many factors that affect wildfire risk, watershed and forest health, and long-term water security. The Sierra Nevada region is facing significant threats, such as catastrophic wildfire, that are linked to decades of fire suppression, increasing human presence and development into rural areas, overcrowded forests, and a changing climate.

In partnership with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and CAL FIRE, NID has responded to this situation by initiating a program on District-owned lands to accelerate fire fuels reduction and selective forest thinning projects in portions of the Bear and Yuba River watersheds. Projects like this one within the Deer Creek sub-watershed will restore and maintain healthy, fire-resilient landscapes, while protecting water supply and quality in central Nevada County.

Event Details:
Date: April 17 Location: Scotts Flat Campground Gate 1, Scotts Flat Campground Road, Nevada City, 95959
Time: 10 am
Duration: ~2 hours
Please bring water, comfortable shoes, clothing layers, and binoculars.

Event Registration:
Register online here.
Or contact NID's Watershed Resources Division (M-F; 8am – 5pm): (530) 273-6185, Extension #337.
(Note: registration for this event is not required for attendance)
Conservancy receives $1.95M to restore forest and watershed resilience

Submitted by paula on Mon, 04/22/2019 - 6:00am

At its Board meeting in Sacramento on Thursday, the California Tahoe Conservancy accepted a $1.95 million grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to co-manage the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI), a pioneering landscape-level effort to restore forest and watershed resilience to more than 2.4 million acres.

“If we have learned nothing else from the recent wildfires in California, increasing our pace and scale of forest management is essential to protecting Tahoe and Central Sierra communities,” said Jeff Marsolais, forest supervisor for the U.S. Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit, and ex officio member of the Conservancy Board. “Efforts funded by this grant will advance critical landscape-scale restoration.”

This Proposition 68 grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) will enable the Conservancy to provide strategic direction to forest health and watershed restoration across the entire TCSI landscape, which extends from the North Yuba River to the American River watershed, and encompasses the Lake Tahoe Basin. Conservancy staff will also plan restoration projects, coordinate restoration crews, and conduct research to speed up large-scale restoration.

The Conservancy and the SNC collaboratively lead the TCSI, along with 12 other partners including three National Forests. The TCSI partners have committed to:

- restore resilience to the landscape using a science-based approach;
- integrate research to guide development of climate and fire-resilient forests and fire-adapted communities;
- accelerate planning, permitting, and implementation of high priority projects;
- increase the use of resulting biomass and wood products; and
- increase and leverage funding for large scale restoration.

At the same meeting, the Conservancy Board approved a $99,100 grant to the Tahoe Resource Conservation District (Tahoe RCD) to address five recently-identified aquatic invasive plant infestations in Lake Tahoe. Aquatic invasive species pose one of the most significant threats to Lake Tahoe's delicate ecology. The Tahoe RCD will remove infestations at Baldwin Beach, Emerald Bay, General Creek, Camp Richardson, and Timber Cove Marina. Funds for this grant come from the Lake Tahoe Science and Lake Improvement Account, Senate Bill 630.
Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has hired Julie Alvis as its next Deputy Executive Officer. With an extensive background and knowledge of finance, administration, policy, as well as a long history of California state service, Alvis brings the ideal experience to successfully fill this vital management role.

“All of us at Sierra Nevada Conservancy are thrilled that Julie accepted the position,” said SNC Executive Officer Angela Avery. “She brings such a wealth of knowledge and expertise from her days at the California Natural Resources Agency, not to mention a unique perspective having served in the past as a board member for us.”

For the past ten-plus years, Alvis has worked as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration and Finance with the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA). In her position, she helped manage and coordinate more than $30 billion in bond funding for natural resource programs throughout the Golden State. In this key position, Alvis served on the Strategic Growth Council, providing policy direction and updating legislators and the public to the council’s activities and goals.

Over the years, she has also served as a board member for the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, San Joaquin River Conservancy, the SNC, and the Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel for the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Adding to her substantial professional career, Alvis managed communications and logistics for the California Bay-Delta Authority, Bay-Delta Public Advisory Committee, Delta Blue Ribbon Task Force, and the Delta Vision Stakeholder Coordination Group.

While at the California Bay-Delta Authority, she developed and presented a series of watershed stewardship trainings for nonprofit organizations and local, state, and federal agencies.

Alvis’ resume of work runs almost as deep as her passion for the outdoors.

“I am delighted to join the staff of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. I bring a deep love for the Sierra and am a committed public servant to issues regarding our natural resources,” Alvis said. “The Conservancy has built a stellar reputation for coordinating and delivering critical work that improves watershed health and promotes the well-being of communities throughout the region. I look forward to working with the staff, the board, and key partners as we look to achieve broader regional and statewide goals.”

Alvis steps into the position departed by Bob Kingman who is set to retire June 7 after many years as a dedicated SNC employee.

Source: SNC
March 6 - 7, 2019 – Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) 2019 Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) Summit & Governing Board Meeting
The SNC quarterly Board meeting was held on March 6 - 7, 2019, in Cameron Park. The two-day Board meeting included the 2019 WIP Summit on March 6. The following day, March 7, the SNC Governing Board took action to approve several SNC grants totaling over $23 million. For detailed Board meeting information, please visit our March 2019 Board Agenda Page.

March 13, 2019 – Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Planning Group
The monthly meeting of the Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Planning Group took place on Wednesday, March 13, 2019. Meeting participants included representatives from CAL FIRE, Wildlife Conservation Board, Department of Conservation, the Tahoe Conservancy, the Department of Finance, and representatives for the California Natural Resources Agency. This is a coordinated effort to strategically and holistically invest state resources to move our Sierra watersheds to a state of health and resilience.

March 15, 2019 – Camp Fire Tour
Executive Officer Angela Avery, along with several SNC staff, participated in a tour of the Camp Fire burn area. The tour was organized by the Feather River Stewardship Coalition and the Plumas County Fire Safe Council. Tour stops included the Concow Area, Magalia, and Paradise Lake Fuels Treatment areas treated prior to the Camp Fire. Planned clean-up, maintenance treatments, and future management to change the trend of repeat high-severity fire events were also a topic of discussion.

April 9 - 10 – Southern Sierra Leadership Forum meeting in Fresno
The SNC hosted the 2019 Southern Sierra Leadership Forum. Invitees included the United States Forest Service Deputy Regional Forester, superintendents of three national parks, supervisors of five national forests, regional leaders from Bureau of Land Management, three county supervisors, the Wildlife Conservation Director, the SNC Executive Officer, California Department of Fish and Wildlife employees, and CAL FIRE employees. The purpose of the meeting was to pursue a Memorandum of Understanding to document the cooperation between the parties and to recognize and agree to collaboratively develop and coordinate programs to help improve the health and resilience of ecosystems of Central and Southern Sierra Nevada.

April 18, 2019 – Tahoe Conservancy Board Meeting Panel
Executive Officer Angela Avery participated in a Forest Health and Fire Protection panel discussion at the April Tahoe Conservancy Board Meeting. Panel presenters included Susan Britting of the Sierra Forest Legacy; Jennifer Eberlien, Deputy Regional Forester, USFS; Helge Eng, Deputy Director CAL FIRE; and Jennifer Montgomery, Director, California Forest Management Task Force.
May 13, 2019 – Forest Management Task Force
Executive Officer Angela Avery and Deputy Executive Officer Julie Alvis attended the first Forest Management Task Force Meeting under the new direction of Jennifer Montgomery. This meeting was considered an “All State” meeting and provided an opportunity for state agencies to identify immediate, short-term, and long-term goals and discuss science-based outcomes and approaches.

May 20, 2019 – California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA)
Executive Officer Angela Avery and Deputy Executive Officer Julie Alvis met with the Secretary for CNRA, Wade Crowfoot. Avery and Alvis provided the Secretary an update on the SNC Strategic Plan and the Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Planning (SNSIP) group. This discussion also highlighted SNC budget, future funding, and partnering opportunities.

May 21, 2019 – Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Planning Group
The monthly meeting of the Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Planning Group took place on Tuesday, May 21, 2019. Meeting participants include representatives from CAL FIRE, Wildlife Conservation Board, Department of Conservation, the Tahoe Conservancy, the Department of Finance, and representatives for the California Natural Resources Agency. This is a coordinated effort to strategically and holistically invest state resources to move our Sierra watersheds to a state of health and resilience.

May 30, 2019 – Rim Fire Forest Resilience Tour
Sierra Nevada Conservancy Staff and members of the Board participated in the Rim Fire Forest Resilience Tour to discuss current conditions and restoration needs in the Rim Fire burn area. The goals of the tour were to educate SNC Board on current conditions and restoration needs in the Rim Fire burn area and help SNC Boardmembers understand forest succession and related issues in post-fire Sierra Nevada forests using the Rim Fire as an example.

Executive Officer Subregion Site Visits
Executive Officer Angela Avery worked with area staff to coordinate Subregion site visits. Site visits included meetings and project stops with in-Region partners.

- March 27 - 28, 2019 – South Central Subregion
- April 8 - 10, 2019 – South Subregion
- April 23 - 24, 2019 – Central Subregion
- May 8 - 9, 2019 – North Central Subregion
- May 15 - 16, 2019 – East Subregion
March 2019 – May 2019
Letters of Support
April 26, 2019

Re: SNAPP 2019 Proposal: “Integrating conservation practices to decrease health risks from wildfires”

Dear SNAPP Selection Committee,

On behalf of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, I am writing to convey support for The Nature Conservancy’s SNAPP proposal: Integrating Conservation Practices to Decrease Health Risks from Wildfires.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) is a state agency created with a mission to initiate, encourage, and support efforts that improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada region. Many Sierra Nevada forests are overly dense, unhealthy, and at serious risk for large, damaging wildfires. These conditions threaten not only life and property in the Sierra, but a wide range of benefits enjoyed by virtually all Californians. Forest restoration activities, such as ecologically sound thinning and prescribed burning, are key strategies that create healthy ecosystems and reduce the size and severity of wildfires.

The proposal submitted by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) complements several programs and projects that SNC is currently implementing. The Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) is focused on increasing the pace and scale of holistic forest and watershed restoration across the area. The Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI) is the first large landscape pilot effort under the WIP and will serve as a testing ground for innovative partnerships and approaches going forward. Sharing lessons learned through the WIP and the TCSI is a high priority, and TNC’s proposed work should provide a nice roadmap for similar efforts throughout the Golden State.

In addition, the SNC is a signatory on California’s Fire Memorandum of Understanding – an agreement between state and federal agencies and the environmental community to increase the use of prescribed fire as a restoration and wildfire prevention tool. For these efforts to be successful, they must be balanced with efforts to protect public health from wildfire smoke
exposure, and TNC's efforts will provide a framework for how to incorporate human health into future project-planning efforts.

Thank you for your consideration of TNC's SNAPP proposal.

Sincerely,

Angela Avery
Executive Officer