



STRATEGIC LAND CONSERVATION GRANT GUIDELINES

March 2022



Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy initiates, encourages, and supports efforts that improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region, its communities, and the people of California.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

The mission of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) is to initiate, encourage, and support efforts that improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region, its communities, and the people of California. The SNC's primary initiative, the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP), is a large-scale, holistic effort to restore resilience to the watersheds, forested landscapes and communities of the Sierra Nevada. It is recognized by state policy and planning documents as a model program for addressing the growing challenges facing the Sierra Nevada Region in a changing climate. The SNC's Strategic Plan identifies a goal of conserving strategic lands: to permanently protect high-benefit lands, including agricultural lands, oak woodlands, mixed conifer forests, wildlife habitat, and wildlife corridors that are threatened with conversion, represent unique natural characteristics, or are critical for resilience to climate change. In addition, recent state policies have elevated the role that natural areas play in building climate resilience and reducing climate change impacts. These policies recognize that conserving natural areas will be essential for the continued growth and success of California's communities.

The watersheds of the Sierra Nevada Region (Region) provide multiple benefits that are critical to protect. The Region contains watersheds that provide water to more than 75 percent of Californians and are the primary source of fresh water flowing into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Healthy watersheds filter water, store snowpack, and slow runoff from winter storms, producing the high-quality and reliable water supply that Californians depend on. Many landscapes in the Sierra Nevada contain unique characteristics that support functional, healthy watersheds. However, the Region's watersheds, and communities, are facing unprecedented threats.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy recognizes land conservation as an important tool for achieving holistic watershed health. The Strategic Lands Conserved goal in the [SNC's Strategic Plan](#) focuses on protection of high-risk and/or high-priority lands. These lands provide a range of benefits including working landscapes; recreation opportunities; and protection of unique cultural and natural areas, as well as key wildlife habitat. Additionally, climate change is likely to have impacts yet unseen on the Region and strategically conserving land will become increasingly important as the Region adapts to further changes in the future.

The Strategic Land Conservation Grant Program is administered as a directed grant program. The focus of this Program is on land conservation through fee title or conservation easement acquisition projects to provide access for public use or to public lands, protect lands threatened by conversion, or lands providing critical resilience to climate change.

Program Funding

The 2021 Budget Act includes funding over three years to support investments that address the state's multi-faceted climate risks and related State Conservancy priorities.

SNC investments will support multi-benefit and nature-based solutions for improving climate and community resilience. The 2021 Budget Act allocates \$11.1 million General Fund to SNC, which will support multiple SNC grant programs. The Budget Act also sets aside funding for budget years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024; however specific allocations are yet to be determined. As additional funding allocations become available, the SNC may direct those allocations to support this grant program.

Additional Funding Sources

If additional funding sources become available, with purposes consistent with SNC's Strategic Plan and the Strategic Land Conservation Grant Program as described in these Guidelines, the SNC may direct those funding sources to the support of this grant program. Project requirements or limitations tied to specific funding sources or state budget allocations will be reflected in specific RFPs.

Program Priorities

The WIP Strategic Land Conservation Directed Grant Program conserves lands through the planning and implementation of fee title and conservation easement acquisitions.

Acquisitions should aim to protect, restore, or create one or more of the priorities below:

- Important natural lands and expand connectivity and potential for adaptation to climate change
- Climate resilience by protecting and stewarding key landscapes that store carbon, improve water availability, and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire
- Protect and steward water resources, including watersheds, riparian areas, wetlands, and headwaters
- Unique cultural and/or natural areas
- Land of special significance to a Native American tribe
- Working landscapes including farms, ranches, and forests to help local economies
- Access to public lands and recreation opportunities

II. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Applicant Eligibility

Grant funds may be authorized for:

- Public agencies: Any city, county, special district, joint powers authority, state agency, or federal agency.
- Qualifying 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations: "Nonprofit Organization" means a private, nonprofit organization that qualifies for exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of Title 26 of the United States Code, and whose charitable purposes are consistent with the purposes of the SNC.
- Eligible Tribal Entities: An Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, or a tribal agency authorized by a tribe, which is one or both of the following: (1) Recognized by the United States and identified within the most current Federal Register; (2) Listed on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission as a California Native American tribe.
 - Eligible tribal entities are encouraged to apply. On September 25, 2020, the governor released a Statement of Administration Policy on Native American Ancestral Lands to encourage every state agency, department, board, and commission subject to his executive control to seek opportunities to support California tribes' co-management of and access to natural lands that are within a California tribe's ancestral land and under the ownership or control of the State of California.

NOTE: The SNC's governing statute does not allow grants to mutual water companies.

Project Eligibility

The SNC may make grants to eligible partners to acquire an interest in real property, fee interest or less than fee interest, from willing sellers only. Although the SNC is prohibited by statute (PRC 33347) from purchasing real property outright, it can fund fee title acquisition by other eligible entities.

To be eligible to receive a grant award from the SNC under this program, projects must meet all the following criteria:

- Be located within the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Region.
- Be consistent with the SNC mission and program areas as defined in the [SNC Strategic Plan](#) and the [Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program \(WIP\)](#).
- Result in a clear, demonstrable, and enduring public benefit.
- Engage willing sellers only.
- Be consistent with applicable city or county General Plan.

Project Categories

The Strategic Land Conservation Grant Program supports planning projects and implementation projects, as described below. Each project proposal must identify whether it is a planning or implementation project; the project types may not be combined.

Planning Projects

Planning projects are limited to pre-project activities necessary for a specific future land conservation acquisition. Activities include the required due-diligence to complete a specific land conservation acquisition as described under implementation projects. The property or rights to be acquired must be identified, and a letter of intent from the willing seller must be presented. Planning project proposals must demonstrate the feasibility and likelihood that the planning phase will lead to a completed future acquisition.

Examples of potential planning project activities include, but are not limited to:

- Completion of a property or easement fair market value appraisal and/or appraisal review.
- Completion of preliminary title report reviews, boundary surveys, environmental site assessments, mineral title reports, etc., that may be required to secure funding for an easement or fee title acquisition of rights or property for purposes that are consistent with objectives identified in these Guidelines and any additional restrictions included in the grant solicitation.
- Analysis required to support complete California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation for a specific acquisition. Lead agencies need to be identified and demonstrate a willingness to complete adoption of CEQA.
- Performance of necessary baseline studies, cultural resources, biological, botanical, aquatic, soil, hydrologic, wildlife, timber, or other studies/surveys.
- Preparation of habitat conservation plans or other management plans for a specific property or easement acquisition.

Implementation Projects

Implementation projects should complete a fee-title or conservation easement acquisition, including those which provide access for public use or to public lands. Grant deliverables should include a completed acquisition. Implementation projects should have all due diligence, including a current appraisal, complete at the time of application. However, the completion of a Baseline Conditions Report and Phase I Environmental Site Assessment are eligible activities under implementation grants, as well as planning grants.

Examples of potential implementation projects include but are not limited to:

- Fee title or easement acquisitions which facilitate access to public lands
- Fee title or easement acquisitions of forested property to protect watersheds or manage for greenhouse gas emission reductions
- Fee title or easement acquisitions to protect areas of cultural importance to Native Americans

- Fee title or easement acquisitions to protect working lands from detrimental land use changes
- Fee title or easement acquisitions to protect and improve water supply and water quality, protect wildlife habitat, or reduce wildfire impacts

Ineligible Projects

Examples of ineligible projects include:

- Grants to service or repay loans
- Projects dictated by a legal settlement or mandated to address a violation of, or an order (citation) to comply with, a law or regulation
- Projects for negotiations only
- Long-term management of conserved lands
- Research, education, outreach, or event-related projects, although these types of activities may be included as a small part of the overall implementation of a project eligible for SNC grant funds

This list is not exhaustive and is offered only as guidance to potential applicants. The SNC will make determinations of eligibility on a project-by-project basis. If an applicant has questions about the eligibility of their project, they should consult with their [SNC Area Representative](#).

Eligible Costs

Direct Project Costs

Direct Project Costs include staff time and all expenses directly related to the project. For project costs to be eligible for reimbursement, the costs must be within the scope of the project, supported by appropriate documentation, and completed by the required deadline as identified in the grant agreement. Costs related to project-specific performance measures, project reporting, and required signage are eligible costs, and, if being requested by the applicant, must be included in the project budget.

Planning project eligible costs include those associated with due diligence activities, such as the activities listed under Project Categories on page 6.

Implementation project eligible costs include the purchase cost of the acquisition, as well as escrow and other appurtenant costs of closing. Additionally, costs associated with developing a Baseline Conditions Report and Phase I Environmental Site Assessment are eligible direct project expenses for implementation grants, as well as planning grants. A Baseline Conditions Report and Phase I Environmental Site Assessment are required before the transaction can occur.

For both planning and implementation projects, legal costs associated with specific workplan activities necessary for the transaction are eligible.

Expenses for California Native American tribes and tribal entities to support their leadership of and participation in local and regional planning, project development, and implementation activities, including cultural monitoring, are eligible costs.

Traveling expenses directly related to the project are eligible but may not exceed the current state traveling expenses reimbursement rates. Please note that travel and related costs as part of a subcontract for project implementation are not subject to these limitations.

Administrative Costs

Administrative costs are shared overhead expenses rather than direct costs. For planning grants, administrative costs may not exceed 15 percent of the SNC-funded direct project costs. For implementation grants, administrative costs are limited to actual pro-rated overhead costs, not to exceed \$10,000. In the event of an audit, projects with budgets that include administrative costs must be able to document the appropriateness of these expenses. A typical method for documentation of administrative overhead expenses is a Cost Allocation Plan (CAP). A CAP is a formal accounting plan used to calculate and document the method for recovering overhead costs. The SNC strongly recommends that grantees consult with an accounting professional to develop an appropriate method for calculating overhead rate and prepare a CAP.

Ineligible Costs

Examples of ineligible costs include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing or increasing a legal defense fund or endowment
- Monetary donations to other organizations
- Food or refreshments not part of traveling expenses
- Costs associated with fundraising
- Grant writing expenses
- Any expenses incurred before a grant agreement is executed or after the project completion deadline, as identified in the grant agreement

NOTE: If a proposal contains ineligible costs, SNC will consult with the applicant to confirm viability of project if those costs are removed from the budget.

Additional Considerations

Any additional requirements or restrictions, including those specific to state budget requirements, will be communicated through updated program guidance documents.

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Requirements

A grant proposal for funds to acquire an interest in real property is required to specify all the following:

- The intended use of the property
- A description of how the acquisition will directly result in a clear, demonstrable, and enduring public benefit
- The manner in which the land will be managed
- Considerations to reduce potential impacts on local property tax revenue
- How the cost of ongoing management will be funded
- Expected timeline through completed acquisition
- For implementation projects, an appraisal completed within the past 12 months – If the appraisal is older than one year, the applicant must consult with SNC staff prior to submission
- The status of Phase I or Phase II Environmental Site Assessments (toxics report) and plans to complete them, as necessary
- The status of technical documents or other agreements – implementation projects that have completed all applicable planning (appraisals; CEQA; necessary resolutions; agreed-upon terms of the sale, option to purchase, or easements; Phase I/II Environmental Assessments; etc.) will be scored higher.
- How CEQA compliance has been or will be achieved – If not exempt and CEQA is not yet complete, the Lead Agency for CEQA must be identified in the full proposal with a letter of support or other documentation from the Agency stating that they are eligible and willing to serve as Lead. In cases where a project proponent does not have standing to act as Lead Agency, the SNC will consider acting as Lead Agency. The SNC requires that all proposals comply with CEQA at the time the Board authorizes any grants.
- Disclosure of known plans to transfer ownership of the property after acquisition

SNC may request additional documents, as needed.

Agreement Requirements

In the case of a grant to acquire an interest in real property, including but not limited to a fee interest, the agreement between the SNC and the recipient shall require all of the following:

1. The purchase price of an interest in real property acquired shall not exceed fair market value as established by an appraisal reviewed and approved by the California Department of General Services (DGS) and SNC.
2. The easement conditions and/or terms of sale for the easement or property acquisition under the grant shall be subject to SNC's approval.

3. Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) are a required deliverable for all implementation projects (fee-title and easement acquisitions) prior to completing the transaction. Based on the results of the Phase I ESA, SNC will determine the level of risk associated with the property. SNC will work with the grantee to determine best steps forward once the Phase I ESA is complete but cannot commit to paying for a Phase II ESA or remediation/mitigation activities. If SNC determines the risk is not acceptable and cannot be reduced to an acceptable level within a reasonable amount of time, then SNC may choose to terminate the grant agreement and not move forward with the purchase.
4. An interest in real property to be acquired under the grant shall not be used as security for a debt unless the lien is subordinate to the easement acquired or SNC approves the transaction.
5. A deed or instrument by which the grantee acquires an interest in real property under the grant shall include a power of termination on the part of the SNC. The deed or instrument shall provide that the SNC may exercise the power of termination by notice in the event of the grantee's violation of the purpose of the grant through breach of a material term of condition thereof, and that, upon recordation of the notice, full title to the interest in real property identified in the notice shall immediately vest in the SNC or in another public agency or a nonprofit or tribal organization designated by the SNC to which the SNC conveys or has conveyed its interest.

Landowner Permission

Applicants must submit a letter from all property owners/managers indicating their awareness of and willingness to implement the project being planned. Applicants must obtain written permission from the land owner(s) to access property to conduct pre-project due diligence or other necessary activities.

Environmental Compliance Documents

The SNC requires all proposals to comply with CEQA at the time the Board authorizes a grant. If a project involves activities that require CEQA analysis, applicants must consult with SNC staff as early as possible to discuss which documents may be required. In cases where a project proponent does not have standing to act as Lead Agency, the SNC will consider acting as Lead Agency.

NOTE: When projects have previously completed CEQA documentation and the baseline environmental conditions of the project area have significantly changed (due to fire, tree mortality, etc.), applicants must provide confirmation from the lead agency responsible for preparing the original CEQA documents that the documents remain valid.

Long-term Management and Monitoring of Implementation Projects

The implementation project site shall be maintained, operated, and used in a manner consistent with the purposes of the project. Additionally, the grantee and/or property owner shall not use any portion of the project site for mitigation or as security for any debt. The grantee shall develop a long-term Management and Monitoring Plan appropriate to the property and/or easement and consistent with state regulations. The plan must include a

description of how the project area will be managed/maintained over time, a process and schedule for monitoring site conditions, by whom, and how funding will be provided for such work. SNC does not provide a specific template for the plans, allowing grantees to use plans that may be developed based on other funding requirements.

SNC Monitoring of Implementation Projects

Implementation projects shall be subject to monitoring for general site conditions. SNC and its officers, employees, agents, and representatives shall have access to monitor the project site for a minimum of ten (10) years following completion of the project. This requirement will be addressed through the grant agreement with the grantee; SNC will not enter into a separate agreement with private landowners. SNC will coordinate with the grantee whenever possible when requesting access.

Performance Measures and Reporting

Performance measures are used to track progress toward project goals and desired outcomes. They provide a means of reliably measuring and reporting the outcomes and effectiveness of a project and how it contributes to the SNC achieving its programmatic goals. Detailed information and recommended performance measures can be found on the [SNC Performance Measures](#) webpage.

SNC requires all grantees consider four specific quantitative performance measures:

1. Number and type of jobs created
2. Number and value of new, improved, or preserved economic activities
3. Resources leveraged for the Sierra Nevada
4. Number of people reached

In addition, each grantee will be required to report on one to three additional project-specific performance measures that will help describe project outcomes in a measurable way. Examples of additional performance measures can be found on the [SNC Performance Measures](#) webpage.

Applicants may also propose alternative performance measures, which will be subject to the approval of SNC staff if the grant is authorized. The proposed measures will be finalized in consultation with SNC staff prior to grant agreement approval.

All grantees will be required to provide progress reports and a final report for the entire project timeline. The final report must include data associated with the project performance measures.

The SNC may request reporting on additional metrics.

Engagement with California Native American Tribes

Recognizing that Native Americans have inhabited and cared for the land of present-day California since time immemorial, the SNC strongly encourages engagement with Native American tribes as early as possible in the development, planning, and implementation of

projects. The SNC staff can assist project proponents with identifying Native American tribes whose ancestral homelands may be in the project area and provide contact information for those tribes. The SNC will notify the appropriate tribal contacts regarding all eligible grant projects being considered for funding in their area. The SNC may prioritize projects in which tribal representatives or communities are actively involved in project development. Please refer to [SNC's Tribal Relations Policy](#) for additional information.

Cooperation with Local Agencies

In compliance with the SNC's governing statute, local government agencies, such as counties, cities, and local water districts, are notified of eligible grant projects being considered for funding in their area. SNC encourages applicants to obtain a letter of support from a County representative such as the Board of Supervisors, a Supervisor, the Planning Department, or other applicable department. The SNC Boardmembers representing each geographic Subregion within the SNC boundary will also be notified of project proposals in their respective Subregions.

If there are any privacy concerns related to information contained in a proposal, please notify SNC staff before submission.

Funding Acknowledgement

Projects will be required to acknowledge SNC support of the project in any publications, studies, or reports that are made possible by the SNC grant, and any news articles, brochures, seminars, or other promotional materials or media through which it publicizes the project. To the extent practicable, implementation projects will be required to include onsite signage indicating that the project was funded by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the applicable funding source. Reasonable costs associated with creation and installation of the sign are eligible expenses and should be included in the project budget.

The required acknowledgement language is included in the grant agreement and SNC will provide logo graphics.

IV. PROGRAM PROCESS

Project Proposals

As the Strategic Land Conservation program is a directed grant program, proposals are developed in conjunction with SNC. To initiate consideration of a project, an applicant must contact the appropriate SNC Area Representative. The Area Representative will assist the applicant to determine if the potential project meets the intent of the guidelines and is eligible for consideration. If it is determined that SNC will consider the project, the Area Representative will share the SNC concept proposal form with the applicant and assist in developing the project.

The SNC proposal process involves a concept proposal and full proposal phase. Concept proposals are mandatory. If a complete concept proposal is not received by the specified deadline, the applicant will not be eligible to submit a full proposal. Proposals must be submitted through the SNC online application system.

After submission of a concept proposal, a mandatory site visit will be conducted for every eligible implementation project. The purpose of the concept proposal and site visit is to provide the applicant an opportunity to clarify any questions that may assist with proposal development. If the applicant is not a tribal entity and does not already have tribal representation on their team, they are strongly encouraged to invite tribal representatives who have been contacted through outreach efforts to participate in this site visit.

Details specific to individual grant cycles, including schedules, deadlines, and funding available, will be described in proposal solicitation documents.

Evaluation Process

All grant proposals will be reviewed for completeness and eligibility following submission. Any proposal determined to be incomplete and/or ineligible may not be considered for funding.

After a submitted proposal is determined to be complete and eligible, the SNC will initiate the following evaluation process:

1. Proposals will be reviewed by an environmental compliance expert.
2. Proposals will undergo legal review.
3. Appraisals will be submitted to the California Department of General Services for review.
4. Proposals will be shared with appropriate county/city planning, water agency (if applicable), and tribal representatives, as well as the SNC Boardmember representing the Subregion in which the project is located. If there are any privacy concerns related to information in a proposal, please discuss them with SNC staff before submission.
5. The Evaluation Team will score the proposals based on the evaluation criteria described in the following section.
6. Proposals scoring 80 or more points may be eligible for a recommendation for award.

7. After the evaluation process is complete, including all due diligence and analysis by the SNC, funding recommendation(s) will be placed on a future Board meeting agenda at the discretion of SNC's Executive Officer.

Special Considerations

Consistent with provisions of the program funding and objectives of the proposed project, the SNC may give favorable consideration to projects which:

- Directly benefit severely disadvantaged communities (SDAC) or disadvantaged communities (DAC).
- Assist California tribes with procurement, protection, or management of natural lands located within their ancestral territories.
- Enable a balanced geographic distribution of SNC resources.
- Include funding from other sources to support long-term stewardship obligations.
- Consider overall impacts on local tax revenue and include mechanisms to minimize potential decreases in revenue.

Evaluation Criteria

The Evaluation Team will score the proposals based on the evaluation criteria described below. Proposals scoring 80 or more points may be eligible for a recommendation for award:

1. Natural Resource and Public Benefits, and Alignment with Funding and Program Goals (35 points)

The degree to which the project aligns with program priorities and results in multiple tangible, enduring, public benefits. How strong is the need for the specific project? How critical are the public benefits, including natural resource, economic, and community outcomes?

2. Project Design & Budget (20)

Clarity on the project purpose, goals, deliverables, schedule, and budget. Will the tasks identified lead to a completed acquisition? Will a proposed planning project prepare all needed planning elements for the future acquisition? Will natural resources be protected, and public values be sustained? Is the budget adequate and reasonable to complete the project, with costs clearly defined and supported?

3. Landscape-Level Context or Unique Site-Specific Value (15)

The degree to which the proposed project is part of a larger plan, coordinated effort, promotes landscape connectivity, or is proximate to other projects with similar goals, protected lands, or recreational amenities. Is the project part of a larger plan and/or does the site have unique intrinsic value? Does the project support a broader, cumulative effort to restore/protect strategic conservation goals?

4. Community and Tribal Support and Collaboration (15)

The degree to which the project has public and institutional support at the local, Regional, or larger scale and the local community or other stakeholders are engaged in project planning or delivery. Was the project developed as part of collaborative efforts? Is there clear and demonstrable community outreach and support for the

project? Is there evidence of tribal support and potential tribal participation in the project if the applicant is not a tribal entity, or if the applicant is a tribal entity in an area where lands will be stewarded by multiple tribes? Is there evidence of local government support?

5. Likelihood of Success (10)

Does the applicant have the necessary experience, sufficient capacity, and a successful track record implementing and maintaining similar projects? Are all funds secured, or is there a plan in place to obtain funding, to complete the planning or implementation project? Are there funds secured or a plan in place to obtain funding for long-term management?

6. Leveraging (5)

The degree to which a project provides in-kind services and/or secured federal, state, private, or local cost share funding. Have non-monetary and/or funding resources of agencies and organizations other than the SNC been identified and secured?

Grant Awards and Agreements

For each awarded grant, the SNC develops an individual grant agreement with detailed provisions and requirements specific to that project. The SNC will provide assistance to the grantee to ensure the grantee's clear understanding and interpretation of the terms and conditions of the grant.

For applicants interested in more information about the standard grant agreement clauses and administrative requirements once a grant is authorized, please contact SNC for a sample grant agreement.

V. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Act	Laird-Leslie Sierra Nevada Conservancy Act
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CALCC	California Association of Local Conservation Corps
CAP	Cost Allocation Plan
CCC	California Conservation Corps
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CWAP	California Water Action Plan
CWC	California Water Code
DGS	Department of General Services
DOC	Department of Conservation
DWR	Department of Water Resources
GG	Grant Guidelines
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HRTW	Human Right to Water
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
Plan	Sierra Nevada Conservancy Strategic Plan
PRC	Public Resources Code
RFP	Request for Proposals
RPF	Registered Professional Forester
SDAC	Severely Disadvantaged Community
SNC	Sierra Nevada Conservancy
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
USFS	United States Forest Service
WIP	Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program

VI. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Unless otherwise stated, the terms used in these Grant Guidelines shall have the following meanings:

Acquisition – To obtain fee title ownership of real property. Leaseholds and rentals do not constitute acquisition.

Administrative Costs – Administrative costs include any expense which is not directly related to project implementation. Similar to the traditional definition of ‘overhead,’ administrative costs include shared costs such as rent, utilities, travel, per diem, office equipment, services such as internet and phone, shared bookkeeping costs, etc.

Applicant – The entity applying for an SNC grant pursuant to these Guidelines.

Authorized Representative – The officer authorized in the Resolution to sign all required grant documents including, but not limited to, the grant agreement, the proposal form, and payment requests.

Biological/Other Survey – An evaluation or collection of data regarding the conditions in an area using surveys and other direct measurements.

Board – The governing body of the SNC as established by PRC Section 33321.

Bond or Bond Act – Proposition 1, Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 (PRC Section 79700 et seq.).

Capital Improvement Projects – Projects that utilize grant funds for site improvement and/or restoration.

CEQA – The California Environmental Quality Act as set forth in the PRC Section 21000 et seq. CEQA is a law establishing policies and procedures that require agencies to identify, disclose to decision makers and the public, and attempt to lessen significant impacts to environmental and historical resources that may occur as a result of a proposed project to be undertaken, funded, or approved by a local or state agency. For more information: <http://www.resources.ca.gov/ceqa/>.

CEQA Compliance – Activities an entity performs to meet the requirements of CEQA.

Collaborative Process – Cooperation between stakeholders with different interests to solve a problem or make decisions that cut across jurisdictional or other boundaries; often used when information is widely dispersed and no single individual, agency, or group has sufficient resources to address the issue alone.

Condition Assessment – Characterization of the current state or condition of a particular resource.

Conservation Easement – A conservation easement, as defined by [Section 815.1 of the Civil Code](#) that is perpetual.

Data – A body or collection of facts, statistics, or other items of information from which conclusions can be drawn.

Design – Preliminary project planning or identification of methodologies or processes to achieve project goals.

Easement – For the purposes of this document, refers to a Conservation Easement.

Eligible Costs – Expenses incurred by the grantee during the performance period of an approved agreement which may be reimbursed by the SNC.

Environmental Site Assessment – Phase I, Phase II, or other reports which identify potential or existing contamination liabilities on the underlying land or physical improvements of a real estate holding.

Executive Officer – Executive Officer of the SNC appointed by the Governing Board, pursuant to PRC Section 33328, to manage the SNC.

Fee Title – The primary interest in land ownership that entitles the owner to use the property subject to any lesser interests in the land and consistent with applicable laws and ordinances.

Forests – For the purposes of these Guidelines, forests are defined as areas of the Sierra Nevada Region that are characterized by predominantly conifer and mixed-conifer forests.

Grant – Funds made available to a grantee for eligible costs during an agreement term.

Grant Agreement – An agreement between the SNC and the grantee specifying the payment of funds by the SNC for the performance of the project scope according to the terms of the agreement by the grantee.

Grantee – An entity that has an agreement with the SNC for grant funds.

In-kind Contributions – Non-monetary donations that are utilized on the project, including materials and services. These donations shall be eligible as “other sources of funds” when providing budgetary information for proposal purposes.

Land Tenure – Legal ownership or other rights in land, sufficient to allow a grantee to conduct activities that are necessary for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement. Examples include fee title ownership, an easement for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement, or agreements or a clearly defined process where the applicant has adequate site control for the purposes of the project.

Multibenefit – For the purposes of these Guidelines, the term ‘Multibenefit’ when pertaining to Forest Health may include but is not limited to reduction in wildfire risk, improved air quality, improved water quality and quantity, increased carbon sequestration, and biomass utilization. Multibenefits pertaining to the SNC mission and program areas, the SNC Strategic Plan, and WIP may include, but are not limited to, increased economic resilience, increased or enhanced use of public lands, and increased or enhanced recreational benefits

Nonprofit Organization – A private, nonprofit organization that qualifies for exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of Title 26 of the United States Code, and whose charitable

purposes are consistent with the purposes of the SNC as set forth in PRC Section 33300 et seq.

Other Sources of Funds – Cash or in-kind contributions necessary or used to complete the site improvement/restoration project beyond the grant funds provided by this program.

Outreach Materials – Audio, visual, and written materials developed to help explain a topic or subject.

Performance Measure – A quantitative measure used by the SNC to track progress toward project goals and desired outcomes.

Permitting – The process of obtaining any necessary regulatory approvals from appropriate governmental agencies to implement the project.

Plan – A document or process describing a set of actions to address specific needs or issues, or to create specific benefits.

Pre-Project Due Diligence – The analysis necessary to prepare a future on-the-ground project for implementation.

Preservation – Protection, rehabilitation, stabilization, restoration, development, and reconstruction, or any combination of those activities.

Project – The work to be accomplished with grant funds.

Proposal – The individual grant proposal form and its required attachments, pursuant to the SNC Grant Program.

Public Agencies – Any city, county, district, joint powers authority, or state agency.

Region – The Sierra Nevada Region as defined in PRC Section 33302 (f).

Resilience – The ability of an ecosystem to regain structural and functional attributes that have suffered harm from stress or disturbance.

Restoration – Activities that initiate, accelerate, or return the components and processes of a damaged site to a previous historical state.

Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC) – A community with a median household income less than 60 percent of the statewide average. To view maps of SDAC areas, visit <http://www.parksforcalifornia.org/communities>.

Site Improvements – Project activities involving the physical improvement or restoration of land.

SNC – Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Solicitation – A publicly available document that requests grant proposals for a specific program and may also specify deadlines, program priorities, limits to eligibility, and other requirements.

Study/Report – Research or the detailed examination and analysis of a subject.

Total Cost – The amount of the Other Sources of Funds combined with the SNC Grant request amount that is designated and necessary for the completion of a project

Tribal Entities – Includes any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, or a tribal agency authorized by a tribe which is one or both of the following: (1) Recognized by the United States and identified within the most current Federal Register; (2) Listed on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission as a California Native American tribe.