



Board Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2022 — North Subregion — Lakehead, CA

Board Meeting

September 8, 2022
9:00 a.m. – 2:09 p.m.

Lakehead Lions Club – 20814 Mammoth Drive, Lakehead, CA 96051

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Present:

- Terry O'Brien
- Aaron Albaugh
- Heather Bernikoff
- Ron Hames
- Bob Johnston
- Brian Oneto
- Susana Reyes
- Alan Olson
- Christopher Heppe
- Jessica Morse (present after roll call)

Absent:

- John Brissenden
- Dwight Ceresola
- Richard Gillihan
- Lori Parlin
- Phillip Peters
- Jim Richardson

3. Approval of June 2, 2022, Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Action

Boardmember Brian Oneto moved and Boardmember Aaron Albaugh seconded a motion to approve the June 2, 2022, Meeting Minutes.

After a Board vote the results were: Aye – 8, Nay – 0. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Board Chair's Report

Board Chair Terry O'Brien provided thanks to speakers who participated in the previous day's tour. O'Brien noted the recent boundary expansion and welcomed the newest counties, Trinity and Siskiyou.

O' Brien acknowledged the critical situation taking place right now with wildfires in the Region. O'Brien stated that California needs to continue to do more to achieve the goals to address 1 million acres a year by 2025.

5. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL)

a. Executive Officer Update

Executive Officer Angela Avery provided a welcome to the Board and a current budget update.

Boardmember Jessica Morse shared the current status of state funding for the Forest and Fire Recovery and Climate Resilience budget packages. Morse announced the CalMAPPER mapping system will include Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) projects, which will allow people to see where fuel reduction work is being done.

Avery shared that SNC will co-host the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force meeting on September 27-28 in Grass Valley.

Boardmember Susana Reyes asked about workforce development allowances with the budget funding so as to recruit and support on-the-ground workers. Boardmembers engaged in discussion on this topic.

b. Administrative Update

Deputy Executive Officer, Administration Amy Lussier reviewed the Administrative Staff Report provided in the Board materials, which included a high-level overview of the SNC budget and Human Resources updates. Lussier directed the Board to the budget outline provided in the complete package and highlighted the expected spending allocations, with a note that it is too early in the fiscal year to report on expenditures.

Lussier also reported on allocated funding for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24 in Senate Bill 128.

Boardmember Aaron Albaugh questioned SNC staff about the budget allocation for Plumas National Forest. Lussier explained the origin of the funds and provided a brief history; Executive Officer Angela Avery responded to a follow-up question on the future status of federal agreements.

Lussier provided an update on the agreement with the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council and the establishment of an account in the Special Deposit Fund. The balance of the Special Deposit Fund was provided.

Boardmember Jessica Morse provided information on an additional funding potentially coming to conservancies, of which SNC would get a portion.

Lussier commended all SNC staff involved in the hiring process on a job well done meeting SNC's hiring needs.

Lussier responded to Boardmember Aaron Albaugh's question about the upcoming retirement of Barbara Harriman and provided a brief update on the plan to fill the position behind Harriman.

Boardmembers acknowledged the outstanding job that the Administrative Division is doing during the recruitment process. Boardmembers agreed that the SNC hires and maintains quality staff.

c. Policy & Outreach Update

Policy & Outreach Division Chief Brittany Covich began her presentation by providing a 2022 wildfire update. Covich provided a Power Point (PPT) presentation highlighting various accomplishments in the Policy & Outreach Division. Covich also provided the Board with an update on other relevant programs poised to receive funding in the state budget, an overview of relevant federal policy, and legislative updates detailed in the Policy & Outreach report in Board packet.

Boardmembers and staff discussed several bills.

Covich showed a video that spoke to outcomes of the recently completed Scotts Flat Reservoir project.

Executive Officer Angela Avery complimented Covich and her team and thanked them for all their work.

Public Comment

Laurel Harkness, Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development spoke to AB 1717 and offered a potential longer-term solution in terms of grant programs. Harkness suggested building in a way to measure the economic benefit for local communities for the grant programs. Analysis tools and support can be explored.

d. Field Operations & Grants

Field Operations & Grants Division Chief Andy Fristensky reviewed details in the Field Operations & Grants staff report included in the Board packet and provided the Board with a brief update about ongoing activities within the Field Operations & Grants Branch. Fristensky stated that staff is currently in the site visit phase of the grant application process.

Boardmembers and staff discussed the amount of money needed versus the amount provided, and project maintenance. Further discussion took place regarding land use planning and area mills.

6. SB 208 Boundary Expansion Recommendation (ACTION)

Field Operations & Grants Division Chief Andy Fristensky provided the Board with an overview of the SB 208 Boundary Expansion recommendations as outlined in the Board staff report.

Board Chair Terry O'Brien asked the members of the Boundary Expansion Board Committee, Boardmember Ron Hames and Boardmember Heather Bernikoff, if they had any further comments regarding this issue, and they noted that a thorough discussion had taken place at the previous meeting and that there was no further need to discuss at this time.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Action

Boardmember Brian Oneto moved and Boardmember Ron Hames seconded a motion to approve staff to include in the SNC's 2022 Annual Report and recommendation to the Legislature for legislation to amend and realign Sierra Nevada Conservancy Subregions to be:

- Northwest Subregion (Siskiyou, Trinity, Shasta, and Tehama counties);
- Northeast Subregion (Modoc, Lassen, Plumas, and Sierra counties);
- North Central Subregion (Butte, Yuba, Nevada, and Placer counties);
- South Central Subregion (El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras, and Tuolumne counties);
- Southeast Subregion (Alpine, Mono, Inyo, and Kern counties); and
- Southwest Subregion (Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, and Tulare counties);

and to direct staff to take the necessary actions for its successful implementation.

After a Board vote the results were: Aye – 8, Nay – 0. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Sierra Nevada Landscape Investment Strategy Update (ACTION)

Executive Officer Angela Avery introduced Elliott Vander Kolk who is SNC's Senior Forest and Climate Advisor. Avery advised the Board that the Landscape Investment Strategy is a proposal to pilot how SNC, as a regional entity, can work with state and federal partners to pool money, create efficiencies for local stakeholders trying to get work done quickly, and advance restoration work at scale. Avery emphasized that the goal is to help partners on the ground do more work faster.

Vander Kolk provided a PowerPoint presentation which provided a review of the staff report included in the Board package. This presentation also gave a high-level review of the Sierra Nevada Landscape Investment Strategy DRAFT document presented to the Board in the complete board package.

Boardmembers engaged in conversation around the proposal, potential private funding, and funding parameters.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Action

Boardmember Bob Johnston moved and Boardmember Heather Bernikoff seconded a motion to delegate authority to the Executive Officer to act as administrator for a Landscape Grant Pilot Program consistent with the attached Sierra Nevada Landscape Investment Strategy; to accept funding from CAL FIRE; to seek and accept additional funding for the pilot program; to approve and execute grants and contracts to implement a pilot program; and to recommend project award(s) for Board approval.

After a Board vote the results were: Aye – 7, Nay – 1. The motion passed.

8. Pacific Forest Trust Science Presentation (INFORMATIONAL)

Executive Officer Angela Avery introduced Laurie Wayburn, President of the Pacific Forest Trust, who presented its “Climate Resilience Planning for California’s Key Source Watersheds” modeling and analysis PowerPoint presentation. The presentation was a high-level review and summary of the Pacific Forest Trust’s document titled, “Planning for Species Adaptation and Climate Resilience in California’s Primary Source Headwaters – Final Report for WCB Grant WC-1835JG.” A copy of the attachment was provided to the Board and public.

Boardmembers and Ms. Wayburn engaged in conversation related to the topic.

9. Sierra Business Council Sierra Nevada Climate Vulnerability Assessment Presentation (INFORMATIONAL)

Kaeleigh Reynolds and Erika Harvey from the Sierra Business Council presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Board on the high-level results of the SNC-funded Sierra Nevada Climate Vulnerability Assessment that was funded with a \$191,655 Resilient Sierra Nevada Communities Program grant awarded in March 2020. The presentation provided a review of the project goals and key findings, the [full report](#) can be viewed on SBC’s website.

Boardmembers and presenters engaged in conversation related to the presentation.

10. Building Capacity and Funding Projects in the Southern Sierra (INFORMATIONAL)

Regional Scientist Sarah Campe and United States Forest Service Forest Supervisors (USFS) Lesley Yen and Dean Gould jointly presented on opportunities to build capacity and increase the pace and scale of landscape restoration in the Southern Sierra.

Board Chair Terry O'Brien provided thanks to the presenters and encouraged increased capacity and urged all to view this as a catastrophe situation.

Boardmembers and presenters engaged in conversation related to the presentation.

Public comment

Dale MacDougall – State Project Director of the California Deer Association spoke in favor of the work that the USFS is doing in the Southern Sierra and their vision for the future.

11. Boardmembers' Comments

Boardmembers thanked SNC staff.

12. Public Comments

No public comment.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 p.m.

Additional Board Materials

- Key Meetings and Presentations
- Letters of Support
- Sierra Spotlight