



## Board Meeting Minutes

June 1, 2023 – Chester Memorial Hall – 225 Gay Street, Chester, CA

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### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m.

### 2. Roll Call

Present:

- Terry O'Brien
- Heather Bernikoff
- John Brissenden
- Michele Perrault
- Jeff Griffiths
- Cindy Gustafson
- Jessica Morse
- Brian Oneto
- Susana Reyes
- Ed Valenzuela
- John Church
- Christopher Heppe
- Jim Richardson

Absent:

- Dwight Ceresola
- Bob Johnston
- Phillip Peters

### 3. Approval of March 2, 2023, Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

#### Public Comment

There was no public comment.

### **Action**

Boardmember Cindy Gustafson moved and Boardmember Ed Valenzuela seconded a motion to approve the March 2, 2023, Meeting Minutes.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

### **4. Board Chair's Report**

Board Chair Terry O'Brien acknowledged the hard work of Sierra Nevada Conservancy Area Representative Kristy Hoffman in putting together the tour. Chair O'Brien continued to comment on the tour activities saying "...sobering to see the destruction around us in the Dixie Fire, but heartening to see the resilience in the community and the ingenuity as represented by the buildings we saw going up in Greenville and the new mill." O'Brien also commented on the increased snowpack and expressed his gratitude for the extremely wet winters following the drought.

### **5. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**

#### **a. Executive Officer Update**

Executive Officer Angela Avery provided the Board with a brief state budget update stating that given the budget shortfall and with the release of the May Revise numbers, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) is slated to receive \$37 million in wildfire funding but nothing for Nature Based Solutions. Avery told the Board that bond funding opportunities are being tracked and updates will be provided to the Board as funding is confirmed.

Avery mentioned the proposed boundary expansion bill, Senate Bill (SB) 841 (Dahle), which would add an additional four million acres to the SNC boundary. This bill was held in committee this year, but it may return next session and staff will track its progress.

Avery announced Assemblymember Megan Dahle's recent appointment as an SNC Legislative Liaison. Dahle replaces Assemblymember Frank Bigelow.

Avery acknowledged SNC Legal Counsel Lisa Hightower and provided thanks for her years of service to the SNC. Avery informed the Board that Mary Akens will now be taking the lead role as Board Counsel.

#### **b. Administrative Update**

Chief Deputy Executive Officer Julie Alvis presented in place of Deputy Executive Officer, Administration, Amy Lussier. Alvis provided a review of the Administrative staff report.

Alvis stated that the SNC is on track to spend the SNC's entire baseline Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF) budget for 2022-23 and noted that staff is working on year-end operations. Alvis continued by recapping the May Revision highlights of expected ELPF and General Fund appropriations (including the expected reduction) and noted that the SNC has received reimbursement authority for the SNC Fund and the Federal Trust Fund. Alvis also touched on the three permanent full-time positions the SNC received, noting there is no funding associated with the positions as they will be funded by reimbursement agreements and the savings from exiting Retired Annuitants. Boardmembers were referred to page three of the Administration Staff Report for additional budget status details.

Alvis stated that April marked the completion of the SNC's first department-wide annual telework agreement review, which is required for all state agencies in compliance with the Department of General Services (DGS). The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) has also released telework requirements for Executive Team reporting and SNC Admin. Staff have provided a review of telework procedures and will adjust policies, as needed.

Alvis provided a brief HR update stating that Executive and Board Support Analyst Michele Bonk accepted a new position in another department; a replacement job announcement has been developed and advertised to fill this vacancy. Alvis also stated that Nick Fairney was hired as IT Support to the SNC.

c. Policy & Outreach Update

Policy & Outreach Division Chief Brittany Covich provided a brief legislative update stating that SB 39 (Laird), an SNC Subregion realignment bill, has now passed through the Senate and has moved on to the Assembly and it is anticipated that this bill will move forward. Two bond bills, Assembly and Senate, in the \$15 billion range, have passed out of their respective houses of origin and are moving on to the next house. Assembly Bill (AB) 338 (Curry) requiring prevailing wage for fuels-reduction work continues to move forward and has passed onto the Senate. Covich said that the SNC has been providing additional information to the CNRA to help frame the understanding of the impacts in the Region. AB 388 (Connolly) sets up a framework for landscape grants; the SNC will be tracking this bill, as well.

Covich told the Board that the SNC has been receiving record investment from the state, noting that the two-year total, including today's approved projects, will bring Regional investment to over \$100 million for 100 projects. In addition, demand for funds remains high. Covich shared that the \$9.6 million in Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program funds the SNC has been administering has

leveraged \$91.5 million in additional state, federal, and private investment. The SNC continues to share all these numbers to educate policy- and decision-makers.

Boardmembers acknowledged the hard work and success of the SNC.

Covich also acknowledged the hard work that has taken place during unprecedented times in the Region. Covich provided an animation slide to illustrate the climatic trends taking place in the Region. Covich also told the Board that the Communications unit is tracking the impacts of these events on communities and ecosystems.

## **6. Consent Agenda**

### **Directed Grant Program Award Recommendations**

#### **a. #1465-RT**

Almanor Rail Trail Planning project in Plumas County in the amount of \$232,491 to Almanor Recreation and Park District with a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Notice of Exemption.

#### **b. #1581-RT**

Kennedy Meadows Area Planning Grant project in Tulare County in the amount of \$59,248 to Friends of the Inyo with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

#### **c. #1586-RT**

Eastern Sierra Campground Improvements project in Inyo and Mono counties in the amount of \$209,588 to Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

#### **d. #1589-RT**

The Stockton Creek Preserve Recreation and Resilience Enhancements Master Plan Project in Mariposa County in the amount of \$438,150 to Sierra Foothill Conservancy with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

#### **e. #1592-RT**

Mountain Meadows Trail Planning project in Lassen County in the amount of \$142,359 to Mountain Meadows Conservancy with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**f. #1597-LC**

Sierra Buttes O’Gara-Currens Parcels 33, 34 Acquisition project in Sierra County in the amount of \$158,100 to Sierra County Land Trust with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**g. #1600-LC**

Upper Sacramento River Headwaters Forest Conservation Easement Planning Project in Siskiyou County in the amount of \$75,000 to Siskiyou Land Trust with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**h. #1613-LC**

Morrissey Conservation Easement Development Project in Mariposa County in the amount of \$57,500 to Sierra Foothill Conservancy with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**i. #1622-LC**

Kótasim Kódo Chenúkãm Bomó: Greenville Rancheria Stewardship Project in Plumas County in the amount of \$399,750 to Greenville Indian Rancheria with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

Kay Ogden, Eastern Sierra Land Trust on behalf of Bridget Fithian, Sierra Foothills Conservancy: Provided public comment in support of the Stockton Creek Preserve Recreation and Resilience Enhancements Master Plan Project (#1589-RT) and the Morrissey Conservation Easement Development Project (#1613-LC).

**Action**

Boardmember John Brissenden moved and Boardmember Jeff Griffiths seconded a motion to:

- a.** Authorize the Executive Officer to file Notices of Exemption for the Almanor Rail Trail Planning project (#1465-RT), Kennedy Meadows Area Planning Grant project (#1581-RT), the Eastern Sierra Campground Improvements project (#1586-RT), The Stockton Creek Preserve Recreation and Resilience Enhancements Master Plan Project (#1589-RT), the Mountain Meadows Trail Planning project (#1592-RT), the Sierra Buttes O’Gara-Currens Parcels 33, 34 Acquisition project (#1597-LC), the Upper Sacramento River Headwaters Forest Conservation Easement Planning Project (#1600-LC), the Morrissey Conservation Easement Development Project (#1613-LC), the

Kótasim Kódo Chenúkám Bomó: Greenville Rancheria Stewardship Project;  
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 agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

## 7. **Wildfire Recovery and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program Award Recommendations (ACTION)**

Field Operations Manager Luke Hunt provided the Board with a PowerPoint presentation that included brief program background followed by a review of the project summary and staff recommendation for each grant. Staff recommended nine Wildfire Recovery and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program projects totaling \$14,428,993.

### a. **#1505**

Camptonville Bio-energy Facility Project in Yuba County in the amount of \$2,000,000 to the Camptonville Community Partnership and authorize the filing of a CEQA Notice of Determination as a responsible agency.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### 1. **Action- CEQA Requirements**

Boardmember Brian Oneto moved and Boardmember Susana Reyes seconded a motion to:

- Certify that it reviewed and considered the information in the Mitigated Negative Declaration; and
- Find that it concurs with the Mitigated Negative Declaration.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

#### 2. **Action – Project Determination**

Boardmember Jessica Morse moved and Boardmember Cindy Gustafson seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as a responsible agency for the Camptonville Bio-energy Facility Project (#1505), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$2,000,000 to the Camptonville Community Partnership, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**b. #1516**

Caldor Fire Restoration Project, Phase One, in El Dorado County in the amount of \$5,250,951 to the Great Basin Institute and authorize the filing of a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

Jerry Keir, Forestry Program Administrator, Great Basin Institute: Keir provided a written statement providing project benefits and thanking the Board for support of the Caldor Fire Restoration Project. These comments were read into the record.

**Action**

Boardmember Brian Oneto moved and Boardmember Cindy Gustafson seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Caldor Fire Restoration Project, Phase One (#1516), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$5,250,951 to the Great Basin Institute, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**c. #1528**

Bullskin Ridge Fuel Break project in Shasta County in the amount of \$608,720 to Shasta County Fire Safe Council and authorize the filing of a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

Jim Chapin, Shasta County Fire Safe Council: Chapin spoke to address a Board question regarding herbicides and other Boardmember concerns. Chapin provided location and description of the use of the herbicides. Chapin also spoke in support of the project and provided thanks to the SNC staff for assistance with this project and developing the grant.

**Action**

Boardmember Ed Valenzuela moved and Boardmember Brian Oneto seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Bullskin Ridge Fuel Break project, authorize a grant award in the amount of \$608,720 to Shasta County Fire Safe Council, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**d. #1542**

Upper Yuba Headwaters Forest Restoration Project in Nevada and Sierra counties in the amount of \$1,274,000 to the Nevada Irrigation District and authorize the filing of a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

Neysa King, Nevada Irrigation District on behalf of Jennifer Hanson, General Manager, Nevada Irrigation District: Submitted written public comment, a copy was provided to the Board and a public viewing copy was available at the sign-in table. King also made in-person comments and addressed the Board to express excitement and enthusiasm for this project. King spoke of the benefits of this project and stated that this is a key-source watershed for most of Nevada County.

**Action**

Boardmember Cindy Gustafson moved and Boardmember Jessica Morse seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Upper Yuba Headwaters Forest Restoration Project, authorize a grant award in the amount of \$1,274,000 to the Nevada Irrigation District, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**e. #1544**

Sarah Priest Fuels Reduction Project (#1544) in Mariposa County in the amount of \$862,176 to the American Indian Council of Mariposa County and authorize the filing of a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

Tara Fouch Moore, Southern Sierra Miwok Nation & American Indian Council of Mariposa County: Fouch Moore provided thanks to the Board for consideration of this project. She also spoke about the benefits of this project stating that the project is taking place in an area where work is desperately needed due to the high fuel loads. Fouch Moore also stated that this is a tremendous opportunity for the tribal community since it will provide job opportunities and economic and cultural enrichment.

Fouch Moore also provided information in response to Boardmember comments and questions.



### **Action**

Boardmember Heather Bernikoff moved and Boardmember Jessica Morse seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Sarah Priest Fuels Reduction Project, authorize a grant award in the amount of \$862,176 to the American Indian Council of Mariposa County, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

#### **f. #1547**

Magalia Forest and Wildfire Resilience Project in Butte County in the amount of \$999,636 to Butte County Fire Safe Council and authorize the filing of a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

### **Public Comment**

Taylor Nelson, Butte County Fire Safe Council: Provided thanks to the Board for consideration of this project. Nelson also thanked SNC staff for their support in the development of this project.

### **Action**

Boardmember Susana Reyes moved and Boardmember Ed Valenzuela seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Magalia Forest and Wildfire Resilience Project, authorize a grant award in the amount of \$999,636 to Butte County Fire Safe Council, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

#### **g. #1550**

1. Proposed Adoption of a PSA/Addendum to the California Vegetation Treatment Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Report and make specific findings.
2. Hoyt-Purdon Fuel Reduction and Prescribed Fire Implementation Project in Nevada County in the amount of \$2,363,035 to American Rivers.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

## **1. Action – CEQA Requirements**

Boardmember Heather Bernikoff moved and Boardmember Ed Valenzuela seconded a motion to make the following findings:

- That all of the effects of the proposed project have been covered in the CalVTP PEIR;
- That all applicable Standard Project Requirements and mitigation measures identified in the CalVTP PEIR will be implemented;
- That the proposed project is within the scope of the CalVTP PEIR and that no additional CEQA documentation is required;
- That the elements of the proposed project that would be implemented in project areas within the CalVTP treatable landscape are within the scope of the CalVTP PEIR consistent with CEQA Guidelines, section 15168, subdivision (c)(2), as documented in the PSA;
- That the elements of the proposed project that would be implemented in areas outside the CalVTP treatable landscape will not result in substantial changes in the project;
- That no substantial changes in circumstances have occurred, no new information of substantial importance has been identified, and the proposed project revisions will not result in any new or substantially more severe significant impacts;
- That none of the conditions described in State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR have occurred;

And in reliance on those findings, to adopt the following items:

- The PSA Addendum to address the proposed project revisions presented in the PEIR;
- The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; and
- The Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

## **2. Action – Project Determination**

Boardmember Heather Bernikoff moved and Boardmember Susana Reyes seconded a motion to authorize a grant award for the Hoyt-Purdon Fuel Reduction and Prescribed Fire Implementation Project (#1550) in the amount of \$2,363,035 to American Rivers, to authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation, and to:

- Authorize the Executive Officer to execute the PSA/Addendum;
- Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as Lead Agency for the Hoyt-Purdon Fuel Reduction and Prescribed Fire Implementation Project (#1550); and
- Authorize staff or the SNC's delegate to submit completed data to the Board of Forestry;

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**h. #1564**

Antelope Creek WUI Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project in Sierra County in the amount of \$452,650 to the Sierra Valley Fire Safe and Watershed Council and authorize the filing of a CEQA Notice of Exemption and Notice of Determination as a responsible agency.

**Public Comment**

Rodd Rummel, Sierra Valley Fire Safe and Watershed Council: Rummel addressed the Board to provide highlights and benefits of this project. He also provided thanks to the Board for considering this project.

**1. Action – CEQA Requirements**

Boardmember Brian Oneto moved and Boardmember Jessica Morse seconded a motion to:

- Certify that it reviewed and considered the information in the Initial Study/Negative Declaration prepared by CDFW; and
- Find that it concurs with the Initial Study/Negative Declaration.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**2. Action – Project Determination**

Boardmember Brian Oneto moved and Boardmember Heather Bernikoff seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as a responsible agency for the Antelope Creek WUI Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project, authorize a grant award in the amount of \$452,650 to the Sierra Valley Fire Safe and Watershed Council, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**i. #1567**

American Valley Community Services District Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project in Plumas County in the amount of \$617,825 to Plumas County Fire Safe Council and authorize the filing of a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

Boardmembers engaged in conversation about this project. Field Operations Manager Luke Hunt and Area Representative Kristy Hoffman addressed the Boardmember questions.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Action**

Boardmember John Brissenden moved and Boardmember Jessica Morse seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the American Valley Community Services District Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project (#1567), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$617,825 to the Plumas County Fire Safe Council, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 9, Nay – 1. The motion passed.

**8. Vibrant Recreation and Tourism Directed Grant Program Grant Award Recommendation (ACTION)**

Field Operations & Grants Division Chief Andy Fristensky provided the Board with a brief overview of the Vibrant Recreation and Tourism Directed Grant Program followed by a review of the project summary, a discussion of public comments received during the public comment period, a summary of the SNC's response to California Department of Fish and Wildlife's comment, discussion of CEQA's findings requirements, and staff recommendation for one grant for a total of \$747,445.

Copies of all public comments received during the public comment period were provided to the Board, as well as to members of the public.

**a. #1482-RT**

1. Proposed adoption of the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and authorization of the filing of a Notice of Determination as Lead Agency.
2. Lost Sierra Route: EZ Verdi Ridge Segment project in Sierra and Nevada counties in the amount of \$747,445 to the Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship:

### **Public Comment**

Trinity Sterling, Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship: Provided in-person comments and was able to respond to Boardmember inquiries around motorized multiple use vehicles and usage. Sterling also stated that the Adopt-a-Trail program has been included as part of the grant, which will assist with maintenance and care. Sterling also stated that these are United States Forest Service (USFS) trails and enforcement of care, etc. would be the responsibility of the USFS.

Greg Williams, Executive Director Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship: Submitted written public comment in support of the LOST Sierra Route: EZ Verdi Ridge Segment project, a copy was provided to the Board and a public viewing copy was available at the sign-in table.

### **1. Action CEQA Requirements**

After review and consideration of the IS/MND and all comments received on the IS/MND, Boardmember Cindy Gustafson moved and Boardmember Jeff Griffiths seconded a motion to make these findings under CEQA:

- That the Board has considered the proposed IS/MND along with any public comments prior to project approval;
- That on the basis of the IS/MND and the comments received, there is no substantial evidence in the record before it that the project will have a significant effect on the environment;
- That the Board reviewed and analyzed the IS/MND for the proposed project and the IS/MND for the proposed project reflects the Board's independent judgement and analysis;

and to:

- Adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program; Adopt the IS/MND as final; and Authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Determination as lead agency for the Lost Sierra Route: EZ Verdi Ridge Segment project.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

### **2. Action – Project Determination**

Boardmember Cindy Gustafson moved and Boardmember Brian Oneto seconded a motion to authorize a grant award in the amount of \$747,445 to the Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**9. Strategic Land Conservation Directed Grant Program Grant Award Recommendations (ACTION)**

Field Operations & Grants Management Division Chief Andy Fristensky provided the Board with a PowerPoint presentation that included a brief program background, followed by a review of the project summary and staff recommendation for each grant. Staff recommended nine Strategic Land Conservation Directed Grant Program projects totaling \$6,287,737 (including those on Consent Agenda).

**a. #1593-LC**

Wildflower Ridge Preserve Acquisition Project in Nevada County in the amount of \$735,500 to Bear Yuba Land Trust with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Action**

Boardmember Ed Valenzuela moved and Heather Bernikoff seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Wildflower Ridge Preserve Acquisition Project (1593-LC), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$735,500 to the Bear Yuba Land Trust, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**b. #1603-LC**

Moy Acquisition & Protection Project in Placer County in the amount of \$592,099 to Placer Land Trust with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Action**

Boardmember Susana Reyes moved and Boardmember Cindy Gustafson seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Moy Acquisition & Protection Project (1603-LC), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$592,099 to the Placer Land Trust, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**c. #1610-LC**

Tribal Land Back Purchase to Conserve Cultural and Natural Resources project in Mono County in the amount of \$2,032,048 to Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Indian Community Cultural Preservation Association with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

Kay Ogden, Executive Director/CEO of Eastern Sierra Land Trust, Vice Chair of California Council of Land Trusts, and serves on the CNRA Partnership Coordinating Committee: Representing multiple agencies, provided a statement in firm support of this project and thanked the Board for its support and consideration.

Tara Fouch Moore, Southern Sierra Miwok: Addressed the Board to express her gratitude for consideration of the project.

**Action**

Boardmember Jeff Griffiths moved and Boardmember Heather Bernikoff seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Tribal Land Back Purchase to Conserve Cultural and Natural Resources (1610-LC), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$2,032,048 to the Mono Lake Kutzadika'a Indian Community Cultural Preservation Association, subject to receiving a property appraisal approved by the Department of General Services, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**d. #1619-LC**

Tahoe Forest Gateway – The Leidesdorff Project in Placer County in the amount of \$750,000 to 40 Acre Conservation League with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

Darrel Lucien on behalf of the 40 Acre Conservation League: Lucien addressed the Board and responded to Boardmember questions and comments in support of the grant.

**Action**

Boardmember Cindy Gustafson moved and Boardmember Jessica Morse seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Tahoe Forest Gateway – The Leidesdorff Project (1619-LC), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$750,000 to the 40 Acre Conservation

League, subject to receiving a property appraisal approved by the Department of General Services, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**e. #1621-LC**

Conserving the Trinity Headwaters Forest for Watershed & Community Benefit Project in Trinity County in the amount of \$1,487,740 to The Pacific Forest Trust, Incorporated, with a CEQA Notice of Exemption.

**Public Comment**

Paul Mason, Vice President, Pacific Forest Trust, Incorporated: Addressed the Board to provide additional information about this project, including benefits of a landscape-scale project.

Russell Henly, Boardmember, The Watershed Research and Training Center: Addressed the Board to provide answers to Boardmember questions and concerns around tribal engagement, grazing, and USFS partnership. Henly also provided project benefits and provided thanks to the Board for consideration of the project.

**Action**

Boardmember Ed Valenzuela moved and Boardmember Heather Bernikoff seconded a motion to authorize the Executive Officer to file a Notice of Exemption for the Conserving the Trinity Headwaters Forest for Watershed & Community Benefit (1621-LC), authorize a grant award in the amount of \$1,487,740 to the Pacific Forest Trust, Incorporated, subject to receiving a property appraisal approved by the Department of General Services, and authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for project implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**10. Sierra Nevada Landscape Grant Pilot Program (ACTION)**

Senior Forest and Climate Advisor Elliott Vander Kolk presented the Board with a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the staff report materials presented in the June 1, 2023, Board meeting materials. Vander Kolk presented the results of the Landscape Grant Pilot Program (LGPP), including initial lessons learned. The Board approved staff's recommendation to award funding under the pilot program to the Great Basin Institute on behalf of the Healthy Eldorado Landscape Partnership (HELP) for work to be completed in the Crystal Basin area on the Eldorado National Forest.



Boardmembers engaged in conversation around the Landscape Grant Pilot Program.

### **Public Comment**

Paul Mason, Pacific Forest Trust, Incorporated: Mason addressed the Board to provide thanks for the development of this program to assist with funding burdens and make it easier to deliver projects with organizational stability.

Jerry Keir, Forestry Program Administrator, Great Basin Institute: Keir provided a written statement thanking the Board for their support of the HELP LGPP program.

### **Action**

Boardmember John Brissenden moved and Boardmember Susana Reyes seconded a motion to:

- a) Authorize the Executive Officer to formally recommend the Healthy Eldorado Landscape Partnership (HELP) to CAL FIRE and other funders to initiate the Landscape Grant Pilot Program.
- b) Delegate authority to Executive Officer to authorize a grant award to the Great Basin Institute on behalf of HELP in the amount of \$2 million to complete recreation and tourism planning activities once HELP identifies proposed planning activities and conditioned on compliance with CEQA.
- c) Delegate authority to the Executive Officer to make determinations as Lead Agency under CEQA and, if approved, file Notices of Exemption necessary for Landscape Grant Pilot Program implementation.
- d) Authorize staff to enter into agreements necessary for Landscape Grant Pilot Program implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 10, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

Boardmember Cindy Gustafson left the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

## **11. Action Plan Update (ACTION)**

Chief Deputy Executive Officer Julie Alvis provided the Board with a report on work completed under the 2022-23 Action Plan and presented the draft 2023-24 Action Plan for Board consideration and approval.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Action**

Boardmember John Brissenden moved and Boardmember Heather Bernikoff seconded a motion to approve the draft 2023-24 Action Plan and direct staff to take the necessary actions for its successful implementation.

After a Board vote, the results were: Aye – 9, Nay – 0. The motion passed.

**12. Boardmembers' Comments**

There were no Boardmember comments.

**13. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**14. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.