

Sierra Nevada Conservancy

2024 – 2025

ACTION PLAN

Contents

Introduction	2
Healthy Forest and Watersheds	2
Resilient Sierra-Cascade Communities	3
Sustainable Recreation and Tourism, and Equitable Outdoor Access	4
Conservation and Stewardship of Natural and Working Lands.....	4
Organizational Goals.....	5
Tracking and Reporting Progress	6

Introduction

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Strategic Plan guides the operations of the SNC, and the annual Action Plans identify specific activities that will be of particular focus over the corresponding fiscal year. The Action Plan is intended to keep staff efforts in alignment with the SNC's five-year Strategic Plan. It is developed in a way that considers current issues and fiscal health, so as to identify actions with the best potential to be carried out in the context of a given year, while still advancing the broader vision of the Strategic Plan. This means that some years may be heavily oriented to administering program funding when budgets are robust, whereas other years may focus on staff assistance, communications, and partnership development SNC staff can provide through its baseline operations.

This Action Plan is the first plan corresponding to the 2024 – 2029 Strategic Plan. It covers the period from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025. The actions identified herein advance the SNC's four Regional goals, as well as its internal organizational goals. For this Action Plan, the goals referenced below have been condensed. For a complete description of each Regional and organizational goal, and their supporting objectives, please refer to the [Sierra Nevada Conservancy 2024-2029 Strategic Plan](#).

Healthy Forest and Watersheds

The Strategic Plan identifies four primary objectives that support the Healthy Forests and Watersheds Regional goal: to build capacity of Regional partners; to support partners' readiness for and implementation of large-landscape programs of work; to administer grant programs and support other funding opportunities through which partners may access SNC funding; and to support the planning and development of infrastructure to process and utilize woody biomass generated by forest health and restoration projects.

To further this goal and these objectives, the SNC commits to the following actions over the next fiscal year:

- a.) Continue the management of active subgrants (Rounds 1 and Round 2) awarded via the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) and provide status updates to the Governing Board as projects are implemented and completed.
- b.) Award and administer the next round (Round 3) of RFFCP subgrants, which will include the launch of the Tribal Empowerment and Mentoring pilot program.
- c.) Support the success of the Department of Conservation's RFFCP efforts; demonstrate SNC's effectiveness as a Regional implementor and track the potential for additional funding opportunities for SNC and our partners, should RFFCP receive future funding through the state budget.

- d.) Share lessons learned from the Landscape Investment Strategy, and Landscape Grant Pilot Program, with interested partner agencies to set foundation for future funding alignment efforts.
- e.) Continue work on developing the Regional Priority Plan, a deliverable under SNC's RFFCP block grant, recognizing that the project crosses over with other actions related to the RFFCP and Landscape Investment Strategy work.
- f.) Participate in a post-fire landscape reforestation pilot effort with researchers from the Pacific Southwest Research Station, the U.S. Forest Service Region 5, and other partners.
- g.) Manage existing reimbursement and grant work from recent funding rounds through to project completion and continue to perform required monitoring work on closed projects.
- h.) Engage in policy and funding conversations to position SNC for future appropriations through the state budget process and seek out other reimbursement opportunities, so the SNC continues to fund watershed health, meadows restoration, forest resilience, and wildfire-recovery projects within the Region.
- i.) Provide technical assistance to, and continue participation in, collaborative workgroups (such as the Tahoe-Central Sierra Initiative and the National Disaster Resilience Competition Biomass Utilization Workgroup) to support community-scale biomass utilization and wood processing opportunities.

Resilient Sierra-Cascade Communities

The Strategic Plan identifies two primary objectives that support the Resilient Sierra-Cascade Regional goal: to deepen relationships and expertise regarding the social and economic challenges facing the Region; and to administer funding for projects and plans that advance community resilience.

To further this goal and these objectives, the SNC commits to the following actions over the next fiscal year:

- a.) Deepen relationships, build new partnerships, and expand understanding about the social and economic challenges facing the Region. Begin with scoping what expertise may be needed, and what questions we should explore to more fully understand how the SNC can adapt and improve its services to make SNC's work more equitable and impactful.
- b.) Review/assess SNC's current performance measures and other metrics it could use for storytelling and identify socio-economic data that might be useful to that effort.
- c.) Manage existing reimbursement and grant work from recent funding rounds through to project completion, and continue to perform required monitoring work on closed projects.

- d.) Track the efforts of, and participate in, the Jobs First collaborative groups, to support increased investment for projects and economic vitalization within the Sierra-Cascade Region.
- e.) Engage in policy and funding conversations to position the SNC for future appropriations, and seek out other reimbursement opportunities, so that it continues to fund partners and projects that support Regional economic resilience.

Sustainable Recreation and Tourism, and Equitable Outdoor Access

The Strategic Plan identifies objectives that support the Resilient Sierra-Cascade Regional goal: to build the capacity of partners to plan, prioritize and implement projects; to administer grant programs and support other funding opportunities through which partners may access SNC funding for plans and projects; to support increased access to nature for communities that have not traditionally had equitable access; and to support partners' readiness for and implementation of large-landscape programs of work.

To further this goal and these objectives, the SNC commits to the following actions over the next fiscal year:

- a.) Provide technical assistance and support by holding grant-writing workshops and project-funding consultations.
- b.) Participate in Regional and statewide recreational collaboratives to inform policy and foster support for increased investment in the Region.
- c.) Manage existing reimbursement and grant work from recent funding rounds through to project completion and continue to perform required monitoring work on closed projects.
- d.) Engage in policy and funding conversations to position the SNC for future appropriations, and seek out other reimbursement opportunities, so it continues to fund partners and projects that support recreation and outdoor access.

Conservation and Stewardship of Natural and Working Lands

The Strategic Plan identifies four primary objectives that support the Conservation and Stewardship of Natural & Working Lands Regional goal: to build the capacity of partners to plan, prioritize, and implement projects; to administer grant programs and support other funding opportunities through which partners may access SNC funding for plans and projects; to support conservation and stewardship efforts by partners that have not historically participated in or benefitted from traditional land conservation actions; and to support partners' readiness for and implementation of large-landscape programs of work.

To further this goal and these objectives, the SNC commits to the following actions over the next fiscal year:

- a.) Provide technical assistance and support to partners, such as holding grant-writing workshops and project-funding consultations.
- b.) Build relationships with state policymakers and funding agencies to inform on Regional needs and projects that advance the State's 30x30 goal, and other strategic priorities.
- c.) Participate in the development of the state's tribal co-management and land back strategy to ensure Regional needs and issues are adequately addressed.
- d.) Connect to conservation and stewardship objectives through launch of the Tribal Empowerment and Mentoring pilot program, within the RFFCP.
- e.) Manage existing reimbursement and grant work from recent funding rounds through to project completion, and continue to perform required monitoring work on closed projects.
- f.) Engage in policy and funding conversations to position the SNC for future appropriations, and seek out other reimbursement opportunities, so it continues to fund partners and projects that support conservation and stewardship of natural and working lands.

Organizational Goals

As the Strategic Plan states, “for the SNC to be successful in implementing its Regional goals and advancing its mission, it must also set organizational goals that support SNC staff, sustain and improve operations, and set a solid foundation for delivering quality work into the Region.” To build and maintain a strong organizational culture, the Strategic Plan identifies primary goals that executive leadership uses as a foundation for its priority setting and decision-making. Among these goals are: to secure consistent, reliable, and diverse funding to ensure long-term organizational health and the ongoing ability to provide needed resources across the Region; to focus on equity in support of fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment, and in the way the SNC approaches its work with external partners; to maintain strong internal operations, and to support staff as the SNC's greatest asset.

To further SNC's organizational goals, the Executive and Division Management teams commit to the following actions over the next year:

- a.) Communicate regularly with SNC staff through a variety of channels to share important and timely information, provide opportunities for discussion and understanding amongst all levels of the organization, recognize achievements, and build supportive networks and relationships within and between SNC teams.

- b.) Generate legislative/administrative support for future funding for the SNC and/or Regional priorities through relationship-building, tours, communications, and other activities.
- c.) Increase SNC science-communication activities (via science-based Spotlight posts, sharing of research, and engagement with policymakers).
- d.) Improve tracking and reporting of SNC project impacts by beginning to scope out the development of a new process for cross-division information sharing and management.
- e.) Describe and formalize the various ways SNC staff support the Region through technical assistance by developing a Technical Assistance Program.
- f.) Launch and implement the SNC Learning and Development Program, a comprehensive approach to training and developing employees within the department.
- g.) Support SNC's Executive Advisory committees and internal working groups that elevate equity in the organization [Justice, Equity, Diversity & Equity (JEDI); Disability Awareness Committee (DAC); and Tribal Engagement] and welcome and consider ideas shared as result of their efforts.

Tracking and Reporting Progress

Within each Regional goals' area, the Strategic Plan presents progress measurements that can serve as metrics for reporting outcomes in future years. staff will track the corresponding metric for each of the activities provided in this Action Plan that is tied to an identified progress measurement in the Strategic Plan. At the end of each Action Plan year cycle, staff will report to the Governing Board on the overall success or challenges to the actions as proposed, including any associated metric. For this current Action Plan (July 2024 through June 2025), it is anticipated that staff will present on Action Plan outcomes at the Governing Board's June 2025 Board meeting.