

WILDFIRE AND FOREST RESILIENCE

GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

June 2026
DIRECTED GRANT PROGRAM

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I. INTRODUCTION

Background

This grant program responds to recent legislation and executive orders addressing California’s wildfire crisis.

In November of 2024, California voters approved Proposition 4, the *Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024*, commonly known as the “Climate Bond.” The Climate Bond was a law proposed by Senate Bill 867 to fund water, climate, wildfire, and natural resource projects across the state of California. The Climate Bond will, among other things, allocate \$1,500,000,000 for wildfire- and forest-resilience programs. (Pub. Resources Code, section 91500, et seq.) Of this amount, \$33,500,000 was made available to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) as follows: “... for watershed improvement, forest health, biomass utilization, chaparral and forest restoration, and workforce development that addresses needs related to this subdivision and is designed to create career pathways for individuals from disadvantaged communities, severely disadvantaged communities, or vulnerable populations.” (Pub. Resources Code, section 91520, subd. (h).)

In April 2025, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 100 (Gabriel), which allocates \$30.9 million from the 2024 Climate Bond to the SNC for the purposes of wildfire prevention and forest resilience, including improving local fire prevention capacity, improving forest health and resilience, and reducing the risk of wildfire spreading into populated areas from wildlands. The governor’s Forest Management Task Force identified these priorities in [California’s Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan: A Comprehensive Strategy](#). In addition, on March 1, 2025, Governor Newsom signed Executive Order N-25-25 to ensure that wildfire-safety projects funded under Assembly Bill 100 benefit from streamlining under the [Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan \(EPP\)](#).

The SNC’s role in the region is to initiate, encourage, and support efforts that improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra-Cascade region, its communities, and the people of California in general. The Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) is a large-scale restoration program designed to restore the health of California’s primary watershed and create resilient Sierra-Cascade communities. It is recognized by state policy and planning documents as a model program for addressing the growing challenges facing the Sierra-Cascade region in a changing climate. The [SNC’s 2024-2029 Strategic Plan](#) identifies a Healthy Forests and Watersheds regional goal. This goal continues the SNC’s priority focus on healthy forests and broadens efforts to better integrate watershed elements into its programs, reinforcing the SNC’s commitment to preserve, protect, and restore the health of the region’s watersheds, regardless of the threats they face.

Fires are becoming larger and more damaging and the SNC is taking significant steps to fund “ready projects” that can reduce wildfire risks. California’s Sierra-Cascade is home to over 600,000 residents and attracts more than 50 million visitors every year. The region is the source of more than two-thirds of the state’s water supply, stores half of California’s carbon in its forests, and is home to 60% of the state’s animal biodiversity. Investing in the Sierra-Cascade provides benefits to all Californians.

This Wildfire and Forest Resilience Grant Program (Program) seeks to create more resilient forest landscapes and watersheds and reduce wildfire risk. The climate and ecological benefits of forest-restoration treatments are well known. Ecologically sound forest management, including beneficial fire, and community protection are critical in securing the overall well-being of the Sierra-Cascade.

Program Priority

This Program is focused on high-impact forest-health projects that deliver strong, direct benefits to communities, critical infrastructure, or unique natural resources. Examples include constructing or improving fuelbreaks, protecting water supplies, improving safety along ingress/egress routes, and protecting hospitals, schools, giant sequoias, and other high-value resources and assets.

Special Considerations

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

- Are forest-health projects that result in a combination of multiple watershed, ecosystem, and community benefits. Examples of such benefits include reduced likelihood of high-intensity fire; protection and enhancement of natural resources, including habitat and recreation, improved air and water quality, increased carbon sequestration and reduced greenhouse gas emissions; workforce development; and stronger regional economies.
- Involve California Native American tribes, including grants directly to tribal entities or those to tribal or other entities that provide meaningful engagement with and support to tribal partners.
- Were identified in a collaboratively developed regional plan, such as a Regional Priority Plan created through the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program.
- Result in immediate implementation of a wildfire risk-reduction project.
- Directly benefit severely disadvantaged communities, disadvantaged communities, or vulnerable populations.
- Engage a workforce-development effort, including, but not limited to, tribal workforce programs, California Conservation Corps, or other training programs.
- Enable the equitable geographic distribution of SNC resources.

Funding Source and Requirements

The primary funding source for the Program is Proposition 4 Climate Bond funding appropriated to SNC under AB100. Approximately \$15,000,000 will be available.

If additional funding sources become available with purposes consistent with SNC's Strategic Plan, the Forest Management Task Force Action Plan, and the Program as described in these guidelines, SNC may allocate those funding sources to the support of this Program. Project requirements or limitations tied to specific funding sources or state budget allocations will be included in project selection criteria and grant agreements.

Immediate Action

All projects funded under the Program must be ready to proceed immediately upon award. The expectation is that projects will be completed by January 1, 2030.

Climate Benefits

The *Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024* is commonly known as the "Climate Bond" because funding is intended to confront climate change, protect California communities and nature from its impacts, and improve the lives of Californians. Projects funded through the Climate Bond must implement California's climate change goals, which are laid out in [California's Climate Adaptation Strategy](#) and California's [Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality](#). The SNC will report all Climate Bond funded project information to the Resources Agency Project Tracking and Reporting (RAPTR) system, including reporting on metrics toward California's [Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets](#).

Disadvantaged Communities, Severely Disadvantaged Communities, and Vulnerable Populations

The Climate Bond requires that at least 40 percent of the total funds available shall be allocated for projects that provide meaningful and direct benefits to vulnerable populations or disadvantaged communities. Of this 40 percent, at least 10 percent of the total funds available shall be allocated for projects that provide meaningful and direct benefits to severely disadvantaged communities. The SNC will follow these requirements for awards under the Program.

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 Native American 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. The SNC may give favorable consideration to projects that “assist California tribes with procurement, protection, or management of natural lands located within their ancestral territories, subject to available resources.”

Notes:

- The SNC’s governing statute does not allow grants to mutual water companies.
- Tribes should consult with SNC regarding the legal entity applying for and managing grant funds.

Project Eligibility

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

1. Result in a clear, demonstrable, and enduring public benefit.
2. Be located within the Sierra-Cascade as defined by current SNC governing legislation.
3. Must align with one of the Program priorities identified in these guidelines.
4. Be consistent with the SNC mission and program areas as defined in the [SNC Strategic Plan](#).
5. Be consistent with the requirements of the funding source and budget provisions.
6. Meet all California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, as applicable.

Project Categories

Planning Projects

Planning projects include project development and other pre-implementation activities that will result in a specific on-the-ground project(s). Future actions resulting from the planning activities should be described in the proposal. Lead agencies for CEQA/NEPA compliance for future actions should be identified, if applicable.

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

- Acquiring permits for a specific, future on-the-ground project(s)
- Analyses required to support CEQA and/or NEPA documentation for a specific, future on-the-ground project(s)
- Performing necessary cultural resources, biological, botanical, aquatic, soil, hydrologic, wildlife, timber, or other studies/surveys and/or developing necessary project designs related to a specific site or physical project(s)
- Preparing final project plans that will result in a specific project(s)

Implementation Projects

Implementation projects are the execution of on-the-ground projects.

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

- Removal of vegetation for community defensible space
- Create new or improve existing strategically located fuel-reduction projects that protect critical infrastructure or other valued resources and assets
- Removal of vegetation to create or improve strategic fuelbreaks identified in fire prevention plans, including CAL FIRE Unit Fire Plans or Community Wildfire Protection Plans
- Vegetation management on tribal lands
- Removal of vegetation along roadways, highways, and freeways for the creation of safer ingress and egress routes for the public and responders and/or to reduce roadside ignitions
- Hazard tree removal along trails, roads, or to protect resources

Ineligible Projects

Examples of ineligible projects include:

- 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 to comply with local or state defensible space regulations
- 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
- Fee title/easement acquisitions
- Any projects that do not align with the Program priorities described in these guidelines, such as meadow restoration or projects that develop wood-utilization infrastructure

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 applicants have questions about the eligibility of their project, they should consult with their [SNC Area Representatives](#).

Eligible Costs

Direct Project Costs

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 cultural monitoring are eligible costs; they must be included in the project budget if requested by the applicant.

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

Staff salaries and benefits directly related to project management and project implementation are eligible costs, but hourly rates billed to SNC and specified in the project budget must be equal to the actual compensation paid by the grantee to employees and cannot include administrative costs. Administrative costs must be calculated separately.

Costs for travel and lodging directly related to the project are eligible, but may not exceed the current state lodging, per diem, and mileage reimbursement rates. Food and entertainment are not eligible expenses under this Program. Please note that travel and

related costs as part of a subcontract for project implementation are not subject to these limitations.

Grantees will be required to issue a press release and/or a short video to highlight the bond funded project and acknowledge SNC's support and the state funding source.

Implementation projects will be required, as feasible, to install one or more project signs at the project location acknowledging SNC's support and the state funding source. Costs associated with media and signage are eligible direct project costs; they must be included in the project budget if requested by the applicant.

Eligible project costs include payment and administration of prevailing wage as required by Division 47 to the Public Resources Code, which generally requires that work done to reduce fuel for wildfires, when that work is publicly funded, must meet several labor standards beginning July 1, 2026.

Administrative (Indirect) Costs

For grants awarded for projects under this Program, SNC will reimburse the grantee's indirect costs. The grantee may request one of the following indirect cost rates, not to exceed 20 percent of direct project costs:

- The grantee's federal negotiated indirect cost rate, pursuant to its Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)
- The 15 percent de minimis indirect cost rate specified in Part 200 of Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations
- A rate negotiated by the grantee with another state agency within the last five years
- A rate proposed by the grantee in the grantee's Program application with the administering state agency if the grantee does not have an existing state rate

Under special circumstances, with justified, documented need, the SNC executive officer may approve an indirect cost rate above 20 percent of direct project costs.

All indirect costs must be real, incurred costs. For example, if an organization is billing 20 percent in indirect costs, all of those funds need to be paying for indirect costs, and not for any other costs that are ineligible or unrelated. In the event of an audit, grantees will need to be able to demonstrate that reported indirect costs were real incurred expenses.

In the event of an audit, projects with budgets that include administrative costs must be able to document the appropriateness of these expenses. If the applicant does not have an existing NICRA, 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 a negotiated subcontract related to project implementation
- 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

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Right of Access

If the applicant does not own the property on which the project will occur, full proposals must include letters from all property owners/managers indicating their awareness of and willingness to allow the project to occur on their property.

Additional Requirements for Implementation Projects

Before a grant agreement is executed, the applicant must enter into a land tenure agreement with the landowner assuring access for project implementation, 10 years of maintenance after project completion, and 25 years of SNC monitoring after project completion. The land tenure agreement between the applicant and the landowner should be executed within 30 days of award of a grant by the SNC.

Implementation projects may be subject to monitoring for general site conditions. The SNC and its officers, employees, agents, and representatives shall have access to monitor the project site for 25 years following completion of the project. This requirement will be addressed through the grant agreement with the grantee; the SNC will not enter into a separate right-of-entry agreement with project landowners. The SNC will coordinate with the grantee whenever possible when requesting access.

Environmental Compliance Documents

Since the complexity of CEQA compliance will vary depending on the proposed project activities and the type of applicant, it is very important that applicants consult with SNC staff as early as possible to discuss the CEQA and/or NEPA review that will be required.

The concept proposal must identify the lead agency for environmental compliance, and a plan to complete environmental compliance if not yet complete. In cases where the applicant and partners do not have standing to act as lead agency, the applicant must request in the concept proposal that SNC consider acting as lead agency under CEQA.

The majority of planning projects are likely exempt from CEQA, but applicants should consider if this is the case for any proposed planning projects.

At the time of full proposal, projects that are not exempt from CEQA must have environmental compliance complete, approval under the EPP, or SNC agreement to act as lead agency.

If the project is subject to NEPA, a NEPA decision must be in effect at the time the full proposal is submitted.

NOTE: When projects have previously completed CEQA or NEPA documentation and the environmental conditions of the project area have significantly changed (due to fire, tree mortality, species protections, the passage of time, etc.), applicants must provide confirmation from the federal and/or lead agency responsible for preparing the original environmental compliance documents that the analysis and determinations remain valid.

Operation and Maintenance of Implementation Projects

Implementation projects receiving support through this Program must demonstrate a clear and enduring public benefit. All project sites shall be maintained, operated, and used in a manner consistent with the purposes of the project for 10 years after project completion. Additionally, the grantee and/or property owner shall not use any portion of the project site for mitigation or as security for any debt.

Performance Measures, Activity Tracking, and Reporting

All grantees will be required to provide six-month progress reports and a final report for the entire project timeline. These reports must include select tracking metrics, as identified in the grant agreement.

SNC Performance Measures

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.

The 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-Cascade region
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.

The final report must include data associated with the project's performance measures.

Vegetation Treatment Tracking

All grantees will be required to track progress of acres and types of vegetation treatments; this tracking will be included in the six-month progress reports.

Grantees will be required to provide geospatial files of treatment locations before a grant agreement is signed, and at project completion.

The SNC will provide vegetation treatment information to CNRA and the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force.

Climate Bond Reporting Requirements

The SNC is required to report all Climate Bond funded project information to the CNRA RAPTR system, including reporting on climate-related metrics toward California's [Nature-Based Solutions Climate Targets](#). Metrics to be tracked will be identified in the grant agreement, and the final report must include data associated with the project's climate-related metrics.

California Conservation Corps and Certified Community Conservation Corps – *Implementation Projects Only*

The Climate Bond, as codified in Public Resources Code § 90150, states: "To the extent feasible, a project whose application includes the use of services of the California Conservation Corps or Certified Community Conservation Corps, as defined in Section 14507.5, shall be given preference for receipt of a grant under this division."

Applicants shall be given preference, in the form of additional scoring points, if their implementation project includes the use of the services of the California Conservation Corps or Certified Community Conservation Corps (hereafter collectively referred to as Corps).

If you would like to receive preference by including the use of the Corps in your application, submit your project details via the [California Conservation Corps webpage](#). The Corps will review the project application for feasibility within 14 business days and respond with evidence of consultation to include in the application.

The Corps cannot guarantee a compliant review process for applicants who submit the required form and attachments fewer than 14 business days before an application deadline.

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.

For all proposals under consideration, SNC staff will notify the county and/or city and public water agency affected (when appropriate), and request comments within one month of notification. The SNC will make all reasonable efforts to address concerns raised by local governments.

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

Registered Professional Foresters

In compliance with the [Professional Foresters Law](#) (Pub. Resources Code, Sections 750-753, et seq.), projects that directly impact the management and treatment of the forest resources and timberlands of this state are required to use Registered Professional Foresters. Projects implemented on federally managed lands will be permitted to use "qualified but exempt" federal staff to satisfy this requirement.

Additional Requirements

Any additional requirements or restrictions, including those specific to additional funding sources or new state budget requirements, will be included in updated Program guidance documents.

IV. PROGRAM PROCESS

Proposal Development

As the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program is a directed grant program, proposals are developed in conjunction with the SNC. The SNC proposal process involves concept proposal and full proposal phases.

To initiate consideration of a project, an applicant must contact the appropriate SNC Area Representative. The SNC has dedicated [Area Representatives](#) for each county in [the service area](#). The Area Representative will work with the applicant to determine if the project meets SNC eligibility criteria and priorities. If it is determined that SNC will consider the project, SNC will share the concept proposal form with the applicant and assist in developing the project. Concept proposals are mandatory.

After concept proposals are submitted, the evaluation team will review them based on the first three evaluation criteria described in the evaluation criteria section below. These criteria are:

- 1) Public and Natural Resource Benefits, and Alignment with Funding and Program Goals,
- 2) Project Design and Budget, and
- 3) Landscape Context.

Based on the funding available, top scoring proposals may be invited to submit a full proposal. The SNC only anticipates inviting full proposals totaling twice the amount of funding available. The SNC will notify applicants not invited to submit a full proposal and provide the rationale and results of the concept proposal evaluation.

If it is determined that the SNC will consider partnering on the project, the applicant will be asked to submit a full proposal. The SNC will share the full proposal form with the applicant and assist in developing the project.

A site visit may be conducted for implementation projects invited to submit a full proposal. The purpose of the site visit is to provide the applicant an opportunity to clarify any questions that may assist with full proposal development. The SNC recommends that the landowner be represented at the site visit. If the applicant is not a tribal entity and does not already have tribal representation on its team, they are strongly encouraged to invite tribal representatives who have been contacted through outreach efforts to participate in this site visit.

Schedule

Request for Concept Proposals: June 8, 2026.

Concept Proposals Due: No later than July 27, 2026.

Full Proposals Due: No later than November 2, 2026.

First Grant Awards: March 2027.

Additional Grant Awards: June and September 2027.

Evaluation Process

There will be two evaluation phases. First a concept proposal will be evaluated, as described above. Full proposals will proceed through the following five-step evaluation and notification process:

1. The project proposal will be reviewed by an environmental compliance expert.
2. At the appropriate time, proposals will be shared with applicable county/city planning departments, water agencies, tribal representatives, and SNC Board subregional representatives. If there are any privacy concerns related to information in the proposal, please discuss them with SNC staff before submission.
3. The SNC evaluation team will independently review and meet to discuss the proposals based on the evaluation criteria described in the following section.
4. The evaluation team will prepare a recommendation for SNC's executive team.
5. 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.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation team will score concept proposals based on the first three evaluation criteria below and full proposals based on all of the applicable criteria described below. Full proposals scoring 80 or more points may be eligible for a recommendation for award:

#1 Public and Natural Resource Benefits, and Alignment with Funding and Program Goals (30)

The degree to which the project aligns with funding program goals, improves wildfire resilience, addresses immediate needs, and results in multiple, tangible benefits. How strong is the need for the specific project? How critical are the proposed public benefit outcomes?

#2 Project Design and Budget (20)

Clarity on the project purpose, goals, deliverables, treatment approach, schedule, and budget. Is the approach well designed and appropriate for meeting the objectives of the project and adequately described to ensure methods and technologies are understood? Are the proposed deliverables appropriate for the project? Is the budget adequate and reasonable to implement the project, with costs clearly defined and supported? If the project is a planning effort, what additional steps will remain after completion of the grant before implementation can occur?

#3 Landscape Context (15)

The degree to which the proposed project is part of a larger plan or coordinated effort. Does the project support a broader, cumulative effort to restore/protect strategic goals? Does the project build on, connect to, or enhance existing projects?

#4 Likelihood of Success (10)

Can the project meet funding expenditure expectations? Is all funding identified or secured? Does the project organizer and any identified project partner(s) have the necessary experience and sufficient capacity to implement the project as described? Has the project team successfully completed projects of similar complexity, scale, and budget? If the project is a planning project, will the planning result in an implementable project? Will the project be completed by January 1, 2030?

#5 Long-Term Management (10)

Is a plan, funding, and the responsible entity in place for carrying out long-term management? How will public benefits be sustained?

#6 Community and Tribal Support and Collaboration (10)

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? Is there clear and demonstrable community outreach and support for the project and any community economic benefits? Is there tribal leadership or participation in the project? If the applicant is not a tribal entity, is there evidence of this support? Is there evidence of local government support?

#7 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?

#8 California or Certified Community Conservation Corps – Implementation projects only (3)

The degree to which a project utilizes the California or Certified Community Conservation Corps.

Grant Awards and Agreements

For each awarded grant, the SNC develops an individual grant agreement with detailed provisions and requirements specific to that project. Please be aware that if an entity is awarded a grant from the SNC, the provisions listed below will apply:

- Grant-eligible costs may be incurred by the grantee only after the grantee has entered into a fully executed agreement with the SNC.
- All grantees will be required to provide six-month progress reports and a final report for the entire project timeline.
- To the extent practicable, implementation projects will be required to include onsite signage indicating that the project was funded by the SNC under the Proposition 4 Climate Bond. The required acknowledgement language is included in the grant agreement. Reasonable costs associated with creation and installation of the sign are eligible expenses and should be included in the project budget.
- The SNC's standard grant agreement includes language that incorporates a limited waiver of a grantee's sovereign immunity related only to the purposes of the grant agreement, as the grant is governed by and shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the state of California. If this is a point of concern, the applicant should contact the SNC for further discussion. The SNC is committed to working collaboratively with California Native American tribes on determining when a limited waiver of sovereign immunity may or may not be required, and tailoring limited waiver of sovereign immunity terms to support tribal priorities while also meeting the state's legal obligations in administering bond funds and funds derived from public tax dollars.

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.

V. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CAP	Cost Allocation Plan
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
Climate Bond	2024 Proposition 4 Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Act
DAC	Disadvantaged Community
EPP	2025 Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NICRA	Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
PRC	Public Resources Code
Program	Wildfire and Forest Resilience Grant Program
Proposition 4	2024 Proposition 4 Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Act
SDAC	Severely Disadvantaged Community
SNC	Sierra Nevada Conservancy
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:

Administrative Costs – Administrative costs, also called indirect 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 a SNC grant pursuant to these guidelines.

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

CEQA – The California Environmental Quality Act as set forth in the PRC Section 21000 et seq. The 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.

CEQA/NEPA Compliance – Activities an entity performs to meet the requirements of CEQA and/or NEPA.

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.

Critical infrastructure – the systems, facilities, and services that a community depends on for core functions, economic security, public health or safety, or any combination of these.

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

Disadvantaged Community (DAC) – a community with a median household income of less than 80% of the area average or less than 80% of statewide median household income.

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

Enhancement – Modification of a site to increase/improve the condition of streams, forests, habitat, and other resources.

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.

Forest Health – A healthy forest is a forest that possesses the ability to sustain the unique species composition and processes that exist within it. Forest health occurs when resilience, recurrence, persistence, and biophysical processes lead to sustainable ecological conditions.

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.

Grant / Project Scope – Description of the items of work to be completed with grant funds as described in the application form and cost estimate.

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

Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) – A legal agreement of the indirect cost rate negotiated between the federal government and an organization that reflects the indirect costs (facilities and administrative costs) and fringe benefit expenses incurred by the organization under a grant. In the absence of a NICRA, the grantee can use the de minimis rate of 15 percent of modified total direct costs.

NEPA – [The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969](https://ceq.doe.gov/), as amended. NEPA (<https://ceq.doe.gov/>) is a federal law requiring consideration of the potential environmental effects of a proposed project whenever a federal agency has discretionary jurisdiction over some aspect of that project.

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 Pub. Resources Code Section 33302, subd. (e).

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.

Project – The work to be accomplished with grant funds.

Proposal – The individual grant application 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.

Region-wide – The overall breadth of the SNC region or multiple subregions within the region.

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

Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC) – A community with a median household income of less than 60% of the area average or less than 60% of statewide median household income.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) – The Sierra Nevada Conservancy as defined in PRC Section 33302 (b).

Statewide Fuels Reduction Environmental Protection Plan – The Environmental Protection Plan (EPP) developed to fulfill Governor Newsom’s State of Emergency Proclamation signed on March 1, 2025, seeking to expedite fuels-reduction projects that protect communities and reduce severe risks of catastrophic wildfire. This EPP enables critical wildfire-safety projects to proceed expeditiously while protecting public health and the environment. It does so by identifying the protective measures that will be followed by projects that have received suspension from state permitting requirements.

Tribal Entities – Includes any Native American 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.

Vulnerable Population - A subgroup population within a region or community that faces a disproportionately heightened risk or increased sensitivity to impacts of climate change and that lacks adequate resources to cope with, adapt to, or recover from the changes.