

**SIERRA NEVADA**  
C O N S E R V A N C Y



**June 5, 2008**  
**Board Meeting**

Inter-mountain Fairgrounds  
McArthur, CA



**Board Meeting Agenda**  
**June 4 and 5, 2008**

**June 4, 2008**

**12:00 - 5:30 PM**

**Field Trip**

Members of the Board and staff will participate in a field trip focusing on issues and activities relevant to the Conservancy's mission in the North Subregion. The field trip will begin at Intermountain Fairgrounds, McArthur. Members of the public are invited to participate in the field trip but are responsible for their own lunch and transportation. Limited space on the bus may be available, please call (530) 823-4672 to determine availability. The public is welcome to attend a reception and dinner (modest fee for dinner) following the field trip at the Intermountain Fairgrounds, beginning at 5:30 PM.

---

**June 5, 2008**

**9:00 AM**

**Board Meeting**

**Intermountain Fairgrounds**  
**McArthur, CA**

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Oath of Office for New Board Members**

**III. Roll Call**

**IV. Approval of March 12, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

**V. Public Comments**

Provide an opportunity for the public to comment on non-agenda items.

**VI. Chairman's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**

Report from the Bureau of Land Management on key issues facing the North Subregion.

**VII. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**

- a. Budget/Staffing Update
- b. Climate Change Update
- c. Sierra Nevada License Plate Update
- d. Federal Managers Meeting
- e. October Sierra Event
- f. Review of Progress on 2007-08 Action Plan
- g. Review of Proposed 2008-09 Action Plan
- h. SNC Recognition by the Sierra Fund and the Sierra Nevada Alliance

**VIII. Deputy Attorney General's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**

Agenda Attachment A  
 RECOMMENDED COMPETITIVE GRANT APPLICATIONS  
 June 5, 2008

Reference #	County	Project Title	Grantee Organization	Total
SNC 070208	Placer	Alpine Meadows Community Consolidated Fuels Reduction Project	Alpine Springs County Water District/Alpine Meadows Fire Safe Council	\$ 176,375
SNC 070235	Mariposa	Mariposa County Chipping Program	Mariposa County Firesafe Council	\$ 115,787
SNC 070236	Nevada, Placer	Vegetation Management: Forest Thinning, Brush Mastication and Prescribed Burning	California State Parks, Department of Parks and Recreation	\$ 214,044
SNC 070245	Placer	US Hwy. 40 (Donner Pass Road) Shoulder Rehabilitation	Placer County Department of Public Works	\$ 500,000
SNC 070246	Placer	Hidden Falls Regional Park - Fuel Load Reduction and Related Fire Safe Activities	Placer County	\$ 506,207
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>\$ 1,512,413</b>

Sub-Region	Reference #	County	Project Title	Grantee Organization	Total
Region-Wide	SNC 070275	Alpine, Fresno, Inyo	Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative	Student Conservation Association	\$ 50,000
<b>Region-Wide Total</b>					<b>\$ 50,000</b>
North	SNC 070158	Modoc	Central Modoc River Center Capacity Building Project	Modoc River Center	\$ 23,500
North	SNC 070353	Lassen	Hulsman Ranch Conservation Easement	Lassen Land and Trails Trust	\$ 35,000
North	SNC 070356	Lassen	McClelland/Eagle Lake Ranch Appraisal	HoneyLake Valley Resource Conservation District	\$ 7,700
<b>North Total</b>					<b>\$ 66,200</b>
North Central	SNC 070201	Plumas	Developing a Working Landscapes Watershed Management Plan for the Almanor Basin	Sierra Institute for Community and Environment	\$ 92,329
North Central	SNC 070298	Plumas	Feather River College Hatchery - Project Fish - Education and Tourism	Feather River College Hatchery	\$ 26,875
North Central	SNC 070343	Plumas	Plumas County Trails Master Plan	Plumas Corporation and Trails for Plumas County	\$ 30,000
North Central	SNC 070345	Plumas	Grizzly Creek Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project	Plumas County Fire Safe Council	\$ 12,300
North Central	SNC 070354	Butte, Tehama	Tuscan Headwaters Project	Northern California Regional Land Trust (NCRLT)	\$ 146,640
<b>North Central Total</b>					<b>\$ 308,144</b>
Central	SNC 070125	El Dorado	Hangtown Creek Comprehensive Watershed Plan	City of Placerville	\$ 130,635
<b>Central Total</b>					<b>\$ 130,635</b>
South	SNC 070165	Fresno, Madera	Revive the San Joaquin, San Joaquin River Restoration Stewards Partnership Network	Revive the San Joaquin	\$ 69,769
South	SNC 070347	Tulare	Tule River Site Improvement Project II	Community Services & Employment Training, Inc. (CSET)	\$ 149,428
South	SNC 070364	Fresno, Kern, Tulare	Southern Sierra IRWMP Launch Project	Sequoia Riverlands Trust	\$ 49,950
South	SNC 070365	Fresno, Kern, Madera, Tulare	C.A.R.E. Environmental Ethics in the Sierra Nevada Video	Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council	\$ 50,000
<b>South Total</b>					<b>\$ 319,147</b>
East	SNC 070305	Mono	Mammoth Lakes Basin Interagency Collaborative Planning	Town of Mammoth Lakes	\$ 196,000
East	SNC 070346	Mono	Old Mammoth and Mill City Fuels Reduction Project	Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District	\$ 99,999
East	SNC 070357	Mono	Eastern Sierra IRWMP Launch Project	California Trout	\$ 49,663
East	SNC 070358	Mono	Mill City Fuels Reduction Project	Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Ranger District	\$ 99,999
East	SNC 070366	Mono	Swauger Creek Shaded Fuelbreak and Habitat Improvement	US Forest Service, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest	\$ 25,000
East	SNC 070367	Mono	Twin Lakes Drainage Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project	US Forest Service, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest	\$ 25,443
<b>East Total</b>					<b>\$ 496,104</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>					<b>\$ 1,370,230</b>

**IX. Permanent Headquarters Office Location (ACTION)**

The Board will review and may take action on a recommendation relating to the location of the SNC headquarters office.

**X. Grant Guideline Revisions (ACTION)**

The Board will review and may take action on the Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines for 2008-09.

**XI. Indicators and Performance Measures (ACTION)**

The Board will review and may take action on a list of performance measures that will be used for SNC activities, including Proposition 84 grants, beginning in Fiscal Year 2008-09. The Board will be updated on the status of the development of Sierra Nevada System Indicators.

**XII. Competitive Grants (ACTION)**

The Board will review and may approve Competitive Grants listed in Attachment A of this agenda.

**XIII. Strategic Opportunity Grants (ACTION)**

The Board will review and may approve Strategic Opportunity Grants listed in Attachment B of this agenda.

**XIV. Board Members' Comments**

**XV. Public Comments**

**XVI. Adjournment**

---

Meeting Materials are available on the SNC website at [www.sierranevada.ca.gov](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov). For additional information or to submit written comment on any agenda item, please contact Mrs. Burgess at (530) 823-4672 or [tburgess@sierranevada.ca.gov](mailto:tburgess@sierranevada.ca.gov). or 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205, Auburn CA 95603. If you need reasonable accommodations please contact Mrs. Burgess at least *five* working days in advance, including documents in alternative formats.

**Closed Session:** Following, or at any time during the meeting, the Conservancy may recess or adjourn to closed session to consider pending or potential litigation; property negotiations; or personnel-related matters. Authority: Government Code Section 11126(a), (c) (7), or (e).



## Board Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2008

The Pines Resort, Lakeview Room A

5449 Road 432

Bass Lake, CA 93604

### I. Call to Order

Chairman Chrisman called the meeting to order at 9:14 AM.

### II. Oath of Office for New Boardmembers

Deputy Attorney General Christine Sproul swore in new Boardmembers Steve Wilensky (South Central Subregion) and Rose Comstock (North Central Subregion) and alternate Boardmember Tom Wheeler (South Subregion).

### III. Roll Call

**Present:** Steve Wilensky, John Brissenden, Mike Chrisman, Brian Dahle, Byng Hunt, Tom Wheeler alternate for Jon McQuiston, Bob Kirkwood, John Lloyd, Byron Sher, Robert Weygandt, Carol Whiteside, Chris Iverson, Bill Haigh, and Mike Tollefson

**Absent:** BJ Kirwan

### IV. Approval of December 6, 2007 Meeting Minutes

There were no changes to the Meeting Minutes.

**Action: Boardmember Weygandt moved and Boardmember Hunt seconded a motion to approve the December 6, 2007 Board Meeting Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.**

### V. Public Comments

Olivia Diaz, Sierra Club stated that she is monitoring the unveiling of the SNC license plate, which she thinks is a lovely plate that is friendly, yet has the powerful symbol of the bear.

Brent Harper, Fire Chief, Mammoth Lakes Fire Department, spoke on behalf of a project the fire department submitted for grant funding. It was not recommended for funding, because the project did not have environmental documents completed at the time of the deadline. Mr. Harper stated that the fire department views this as an important project and that he has been meeting with interested parties on the project and all of the players are in place. He indicated he hoped to have the project before the Board in the future.

Paul Chapman stated that SNC publicly noticed a meeting in the Mariposa paper in September 2007 with an incorrect date and that the address for the December Board meeting was incorrect on the SNC Web site. Mr. Chapman also commented on three projects in Mariposa County, which he believes should not be approved by the Board.

## VI. Chairman's Report

### a. State Budget Update

Chairman Chrisman stated that the state budget situation is dire. The Administration instituted a 10% reduction for General Fund programs in the current fiscal year to begin to address a very large budget deficit. The SNC is a specially funded program and at this point is unaffected by the budget woes.

To address the General Fund deficit in the budget year, the Administration is recommending closure of 48 of the 278 park units, which has never been done before. The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's fire suppression activities are funded out of the General Fund, but receive additional funding out of the State's emergency fund when needed.

## VII. Election of Vice Chair

Chairman Chrisman explained that it was time for the annual election of Vice Chair, thanking Boardmember Dahle for serving as Vice Chair for the past year. Boardmember Dahle thanked the Board for electing him last year and nominated Boardmember Weygandt to be the new Vice Chair. There were no more nominations.

**Action: Boardmember Dahle moved and Boardmember Kirkwood seconded a motion to approve the election of Boardmember Weygandt as the Vice Chair of the Board. The motion passed unanimously.**

## VIII. Executive Officer's Report

### a. Budget/Staffing Update

Executive Officer Jim Branham indicated that the budget process has been smooth for SNC this year and that the budget proposed for SNC in the Governor's Budget is in a good position to be approved by the Legislature. Branham explained the budget document in the packet, stating that expenditures during the first seven months of the fiscal year reflect less-than-full staffing levels and one-time start up costs for the area offices. Branham stated that the amount spent on interagency agreements is expected to decrease next year while the cost of salaries and wages will increase, because the SNC is now almost fully staffed. He stated the only remaining unfilled position is for legal counsel. Boardmember Comstock asked about the need for the legal counsel. Branham explained that SNC borrows John Gussman from the Tahoe Conservancy and has Christine Sproul assigned from the Attorney General's Office. He indicated the while the SNC appreciates the cooperation of the Tahoe Conservancy, the extent of the workload now requires that the SNC fill our own legal counsel position.

Branham informed the Board that a number of new staff members have been hired since the last Board meeting, including: Pete Dufour, Administrative Services Manager; Shana Avalos Knott, Outreach & Partnership Coordinator; Lynn Campbell, Program Analyst, and; Jan Martell, Executive Assistant. The Mt. Lassen staff added Chris Dallas, Mt. Lassen Area Representative and Brittany Juergenson, Mt. Lassen Area Analyst, who was promoted from the receptionist position. The Mt. Whitney staff added Wendy Vittands and Liz Chatten as consultants in the Mariposa office.

Branham thanked Julie Leimbach of the Sierra Nevada Alliance for all of her assistance and welcomed Morgan Fessler, who has taken over Julie's previous position.

b. Climate Change Update

Branham noted that the SNC is partnering with the Tahoe Conservancy and the US Forest Service in the development of a Sierra Climate Change Action Plan. With the support of the Resources Legacy Fund, the group has engaged Steve Eubanks, who recently retired as Superintendent of the Tahoe National Forest to coordinate outreach and development of a proposal. Chairman Chrisman suggested having Mr. Eubanks contact Tony Brunello at Agency.

c. Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Team

Branham thanked and acknowledged the Department of Fish and Game and the Wildlife Conservation Board for working with SNC. He suggested that the SNC staff will be holding quarterly meetings with them. He indicated the SNC will continue to work with other agencies to determine opportunities for cooperation.

d. Permanent Headquarters Location Process

Branham noted that the initial search for an interim headquarters location concluded with a site in Auburn. The location has worked well since June 2007, but there are additional features that a permanent headquarters location would ideally provide. These would include having a "green" building, having the ability to have the office be more of a part of the community, and having some community space to tell the story of the Region. The SNC has released a notice requesting ideas for possible site locations that would meet our requirements (which include being within a half hour travel distance from our current location). To date, proposals have been received for sites in Colfax, Nevada City, Coloma and Auburn, including a proposal that would involve making changes to our current location. SNC will analyze the potential viability of the suggested sites and present a recommendation at the June meeting.

e. October Sierra Event

SNC is co-sponsoring a conference with the Sierra Business Council (SBC) at Mammoth Mountain in October. Both organizations agree that the conference should provide attendees with useful tools and information, which can immediately be applied to issues within the Region. Potential topics for the conference include:

- o Greening of the Sierra
- o Ecosystem services

Another important aspect of the conference will be the involvement of youth to engage them in conference discussions, particularly around how best to market the importance of the Sierra and Sierra issues to their generation.

Staff will share more specific information with the Board about the conference as it becomes available.

## **IX. Deputy Attorney General's Report**

Deputy Attorney General Christine Sproul reminded the Board to please complete and file their annual Conflict of Interest Statements with Theresa Burgess. Sproul noted the Board's obligation to renew ethics training, noting the link will be sent to them from Theresa. Boardmember Comstock asked if the Board of Supervisors training would satisfy the State's requirements. Sproul noted it would not and Supervisors would need to complete the State's ethics training. DAG Sproul complimented the CEQA documentation preparation.

## **X. Sierra Nevada Conservancy License Plate**

Jim Branham gave an overview of the status on the development of the marketing plan developed by Velocity 7 (V7) under direction of The Sierra Fund. Staff distributed proto type plates, made by Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), for the Board and audience to view. Izzy Martin, The Sierra Fund, explained the process in moving forward with the marketing plan, and introduced Robert Trent, Pamela Biery, and Shawn Garvey from Velocity 7.

Robert Trent reviewed the marketing plan (distributed to the Board and audience), noting 7,500 prepaid registrations are required within one year of the first registration being collected. There are three phases in the marketing plan; 1) high level participation 2) media participation in the Region and 3) the ongoing marketing.

Chairman Chrisman asked for an accounting of the budget and an explanation of how the money will be used. Members of the V7 team provided an explanation of the various phases. Chairman Chrisman stated he felt that \$350,000 may not be adequate for the campaign. Izzy Martin noted the issue of raising funds is difficult and mentioned that she would like to create an advisory committee with Assemblymember John Laird and former Senator/Assemblymember Tim Leslie serving as co-chairs of the committee.

Boardmember Sher asked for clarification of the mechanics of obtaining signatures. Robert Trent responded that examples could be put online or printed forms distributed at meetings in the Region. Boardmember Sher asked about the plan to explain to interested plate purchasers, that the plate may not be available for a year. Trent explained that the vision is to have information on the Web site, stay in regular contact with them, and provide updates in different newsletters, to constantly keep people engaged. Boardmember Whiteside asked if the credit cards will be charged at the time of commitment or when the "approved" signatures are submitted to DMV. Izzy Martin replied is not possible to hold the transaction, DMV requires the funds upfront, however, funds would be returned if the plate is not created. She mentioned that one of the ideas is that once you make the payment, there could be a carbon offset. Boardmember Tollefson commented that it is a wonderful thing and there has to be a way to engage the auto dealers in the Region. Branham noted statute states once the funds are flowing then 25% of funds can be used for marketing and at that time the SNC can market additional plates.

Judy Hyatt, Supervisor McQuiston Office asked if there has been consideration of a performance bond to supplement the funds on this. Chairman Chrisman noted that he did not think this would be allowed.

**Action: Boardmember Hunt moved and Boardmember Willensky seconded a motion to approve the final design and direct staff to submit to Department of Motor Vehicles for formal approval. The motion passed unanimously with Boardmember John Brissenden recusing himself from voting.**

#### **XI. Strategic Opportunity Grants**

Branham introduced Bob Kingman, Kim Carr and Linda Hansen to present the Board with staff recommendations for Strategic Opportunity Grant (SOG) awards.

Kingman reported three adjustments to the exhibit shown in the Board packet were highlighted in orange and represented projects that had been withdrawn or removed for further CEQA review.

Kingman reported that three grants had been authorized by the Executive Officer since the last meeting. The total amount authorized was \$88,745. The Executive Officer also authorized a 10% augmentation of two grants authorized at \$44,530 in December 2007, to the California Fire Safe Council to cover administrative fees that had been accidentally omitted.

Kingman reported that the SNC received a total of 79 new, eligible applications by the December 31, 2007 deadline. These were added to 29 eligible applications, which were deferred from the first round of (SOG) awards, for a total of 108 applications reviewed by staff. The total dollar amount requested for all projects in this round of SOGs was \$12,985,089.

Kingman described briefly a list of projects being recommended for funding from the Region-wide allocation.

Kim Carr provided an overview of recommended SOG grant awards in the Mt. Lassen Area and Mt. Whitney Area Subregions.

Kingman suggested the appropriate language for Board authorization of a total of 55 grants for a total of \$4,305,320 in funding.

Staff further recommends the Board authorize the shifting of remaining funds from individual Subregion and Region-wide SOG allocations as necessary to facilitate additional grant recommendations in June.

**Action: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Dahle seconded a motion to authorize Strategic Opportunity Grants listed in Attachment A to the Agenda, and further authorize staff to enter into all necessary contracts or agreements and file the appropriate CEQA documentation with the State Clearinghouse for all projects, as well as authorizing staff to shift funds among all grant categories as necessary. The motion passed unanimously. *Attachment A provides a list of the Strategic Opportunity Grants approved by the Board.***

#### **XII. Competitive Grants**

Bob Kingman reported that a total of 32 applications requesting \$17,647,268 million were determined to be eligible for Proposition 84 Competitive Grant funding and were reviewed by staff. Six of the applications, totaling about \$1.8 million in requests, were found to be more suitable as Strategic Opportunity Grants and were moved into that category with concurrence from the grant applicants.

Kingman stated that staff recommended 13 grants, totaling \$6,831,922 million, for funding at this time. Staff plans to bring recommendations for the remainder of the competitive grant funds to the Board in June. In addition, in order to fully encumber SNC's FY 07-08 Proposition 84 funds by June 30, staff recommended that the Board authorize the use of any remaining funds from the Competitive Grant allocation for SOG projects, subject to Board approval at the June meeting.

Boardmember Sher asked about the status of the Wakamatsu project since it was pulled from the recommendation. Kingman noted the appraisal review came back with an unsupportable value of the property. He indicated that negotiations with the appraiser and Department of General Services (DGS) to reconcile the amount and it could come before the Board in June.

Boardmember Kirkwood, questioned applicants that did not have CEQA review completed prior to this meeting. Would they come before the Board in June? Kingman explained based on the current Guidelines the applicants did not meet the timeline for getting complete documentation submitted to SNC for review and therefore did not meet the requirements in the Guidelines. Kingman noted that due to this, there may be a small portion of funds leftover and staff is recommending authority to reallocate any remaining funds to SOG categories.

Boardmember Kirkwood questioned three projects which have project titles that may cause the public to question the connection to Proposition 84. Boardmember Whiteside commented clearly the passion of the applicant does not always convey the scientific and governmental purpose of the grant request and suggested the SNC provide assistance to applicants in determining project titles. .

Kingman then read the following recommendation, "Staff recommends a total of 13 grants and \$6,831,922 in funding. Staff further recommends the Board authorize the pooling of any remaining funds in the competitive allocation for grants in any other SNC grants categories."

**Action: Boardmember Wilensky moved and Boardmember Weygandt seconded a motion to: authorize Competitive Grants listed in Attachment A; adopt the Lower Owens River Project EIR/EIS and make findings concurrent with findings adopted by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, and direct staff to file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse; adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration and make findings concurrent with the recommendations previously adopted by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board for the Merrill Davies Stream and Meadow Restoration Project; and further authorize staff to enter into all necessary contracts or agreements and file the appropriate CEQA documentation with the State Clearinghouse for all projects. The motion passed unanimously. Boardmember Brissenden recused himself**

**from voting on The Sierra Fund application. *Attachment B provides a list of the Competitive Grants approved by the Board.***

#### Public Comment

Izzy Martin, Executive Director of The Sierra Fund, thanked the Board and staff for “saving the Yuba River”.

Chuck Peck, with the Sierra Foothill Conservancy, thanked the Board and the staff for approving their project, and introduced Cindey Bohna, the owner of the project property.

Cindey Bohna, Land owner, thanked the staff and Board and invited everyone to come out for a tour on her ranch.

### **XIII. Grant Guideline Revisions**

Jim Branham reviewed key policy issues associated with the proposed guidelines and noted that Ken Jones has worked to pull the issues together for Board review. Proposed changes include reducing the number of grant categories and modifying the grant fund limits for Competitive grants to \$250,000 minimum and \$1,000,000 maximum. For SOG 1 the minimum limit is proposed to be \$5,000 up to \$250,000; and SOG 2 grants (not acquisition or site improvements/restorations) up to \$500,000. A copy of the proposed guidelines for 2008-09 was included in the Board packet.

Boardmember Kirkwood asked why there would be a minimum under Strategic Opportunity Grants. Branham explained some projects are very straight forward and do not require CEQA or other review and that even a small amount can make a big difference for smaller organizations.

Boardmember Comstock asked why there is a higher cap on SOG 1s then SOG 2s. Branham explained that SOG 1 and Competitive Grants are similar in the types of projects they fund, creating an opportunity for projects up to \$1 million, while SOGs are capped at \$500, 000, consistent with a goal of focusing more resources on “on the ground” projects.

Branham indicated that staff is also proposing a revision to have the SOGs in two rounds and the Competitive grants will remain in one round. Lastly, he stated that it is recommended that the guidelines clearly state that grant funds may not be used to address regulatory violations non-compliance of any law or regulation.

Boardmember Kirkwood suggested that the Board give thought on how to provide guidance to people on the limitations of Proposition 84 funds to narrow down the scope of projects received.

Boardmember Wilensky commented on how the Competitive Grants are structured, stating that the best organized communities that are economically advantaged will do better, but some of the most degraded and challenging areas for restoration are least likely to come up with something that meets the standards we have set forth. He is concerned that they will not have the capacity to produce, and he’s not sure how to

reconcile this. Branham noted that staff works hard to ensure that it is not the best written application, but is the project with the most merit that receives funding. SNC staff has identified areas where this situation exists and works with communities and organizations to help create capacity.

Branham explained the next steps include six workshops in the Region and a public review draft will be posted on the SNC Web site on April 9<sup>th</sup> for a 30 day comment period. Chairman Chrisman appointed Boardmembers Kirkwood and Wilensky to serve as the Board committee to work with staff on the guidelines project.

#### **XIV. Indicators and Performance Measures Project Update**

Assistant Executive Officer Joan Keegan briefed the Board on the status of the Indicators and Performance Measures Project. She reminded the Board that we are developing the indicators and measurements on three levels: System Indicators, Program Performance Measures, and Project Performance Measures. Keegan explained that SNC has engaged a consultant team to work on the project. The team is led by ProPoint Technology and includes individuals from the Sierra Institute for Community and the Environment, Environmental Incentives, American Rivers and the Sierra Business Council.

Bill Foster of ProPoint Technology presented information on the team's approach to the project, which is occurring in four phases. The first two phases, which involved project planning and the development of conceptual lists of performance measures and indicators, are completed. The next phase will involve getting broad input through Subregional workshops and web conferences, a survey, and discussions with a Stakeholder Advisory Group. The fourth phase will involve developing the final draft set of indicators and performance measures for Board consideration along with an implementation plan.

Chairman Chrisman appointed Boardmembers Whiteside and Weygandt to serve on a Board committee to help guide the project.

#### **XV. Boardmembers' Comments**

Boardmember Dahle noted the next meeting is in the Fall River Valley in Shasta County (North Subregion) and is planned at the Intermountain Fairgrounds. The tour is expected to include a plug and pond project and a fuel reduction project. This will be a good time of year in the area.

Boardmember Willensky, wanted to comment on his experience at his first meeting, noting with the irate taxpayer this morning he was concerned, but after hearing all of the thank yous from the grant recipients it was very pleasing and obviously this Board is doing something good. The grant that the Board authorized to the Chips project, for clearing 100 foot clearances around senior's houses, is making it more fire safe in our area. Thank you for authorizing this grant, it has created all kinds of jobs and allowed the project to move from concept to implementation.

#### **XVI. Public Comments**

Joan Clayburgh, Sierra Nevada Alliance (SNA) Executive Director stated she did not attend December's meeting, but wanted to thank the Board for the grants awarded to SNA. Clayburgh commented that her staff and the 95 groups the SNA represents can't stop commending SNC staff on a job well done. Ms. Clayburgh then read a comment letter submitted by Lisa Wallace dated on March 10, 2008 (letter included in packet of materials).

Tom Esgate, Lassen County Fire Safe Council noted the Conservancy was highlighted in a recent presentation he did and will also highlight SNC in the Lassen County model, indicating Lassen County no longer builds fuel breaks they treat the community and one of the biggest challenges is the educating people living in the area.

Jay Watson, Student Conservation Association thanked the Board for the approved grant. It will allow the SCA to get another youth group out in the Inyo area. He indicated he had conveyed to Mr. Branham the SCA's willingness to work with SNC and the Board with ideas on youth involvement in the Region.

Dr. Carol Baird, California Institute for Biodiversity thanked the Board for honoring her group with a grant to bring The Sierra Nevada into the classroom. Dr. Baird also thanked Lynn Campbell, SNC staff for her assistance in the process.

Soapy Mulholland, Sequoia Riverlands Trust thanked the Board and staff. Ms. Mulholland stressed the importance of education, stating that if we don't get this generation out on the land, what we conserve will not matter. She noted a recent survey that showed only 4 out of 30 university students have been to one our national parks.

Izzy Martin, The Sierra Fund; Ms. Martin announced the Sierra Day at the Capitol, indicating that Sierra supporters will be requesting that the SNC budget be approved and will remind the legislature how wonderful the SNC is to the Region. The Sierra Fund's mission is to bring increased private and public investment to the Sierra. She noted that fire safety is an important issue that the SNC is addressing. She pointed out that another crucial issue is the impact of the gold rush 150 years ago -- abandoned mines, mercury in the water system, and mining toxins. The Sierra Fund's report on this issue was released last week at the State Assembly. The number one conclusion was that SNC needs to play a coordinating role as the clearing house on the mining toxins.

## **XVII. Adjournment**

Chairman Chrisman adjourned the meeting at 1:29 PM.

## **BUDGET**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy's base budget consists of funding from the California Environmental License Plate Fund (ELPF). Commencing with the 2007-08 fiscal year, funding for the implementation of the Conservancy's programs is also provided from Proposition 84 bond funds. Proposition 84 allocates \$54 million to the Conservancy, \$17 million of which was appropriated in the 2007 Budget Act for local assistance grants and \$500,000 to fund five positions and related expenses. At the December 2007 and March 2008 Board meetings, the Board approved more than \$14 million to fund various Proposition 84 projects.

As shown in Table 1(attached), the Conservancy has expended \$3.1 million or 70 percent of its \$4.5 million operating budget through April of this year. The SNC anticipates spending most of its current year budget by year's end. In part, this is due to two large items of expense: (1) funding for the Department of General Services to provide technical assistance for review of grant applications, primarily related to meeting CEQA requirements, and; (2) awarding of a contract to develop a grants management system for the SNC. Therefore, we anticipate a relatively small amount of funds to be reverted to the ELPF.

The Governor's Budget for 2008-09 maintains the current level of funding, including another \$17 million from Proposition 84 for local assistance grants. Currently, the SNC anticipates approval of this proposal by the Legislature. However, future actions dealing with the state's budget crisis may have an impact on us and we are preparing plans in the event this occurs.

## **STAFFING**

The SNC has not added any new employees since the March meeting. We continue to explore options to meet our legal counsel needs, but we are otherwise fully staffed. The SNC will continue to use retired annuitants, interagency agreements, contractors and students to carry out our duties.

	Budget	Actual Amount Expended & Encumbered as of 04/30/08	Full Year Projections	% Budget Projected to be Spent
<b>Personnel Services</b>				
Salaries and Wages	1,595,000	931,347	1,196,568	75%
Staff Benefits	480,000	287,196	365,512	76%
<b>Total Personnel Services</b>	<b>2,075,000</b>	<b>1,218,543</b>	<b>1,562,080</b>	<b>75%</b>
<b>Operating Exp. &amp; Equip.</b>				
General Expense	63,000	66,667	113,267	180%
Printing	20,000	1,584	1,584	8%
Communications	40,000	42,875	51,375	128%
Postage	10,000	1,910	1,910	19%
Travel: In-State	100,000	54,106	67,156	67%
Travel-Out-State	2,000	0	0	0%
Training	20,000	16,722	16,722	84%
Facilities Operations	187,000	214,309	234,309	125%
Utilities	15,000	10,650	15,150	101%
Consolidated Data Center (DTS)	5,000	998	998	20%
Data Processing (Internet Svc)	4,000	4,725	4,725	118%
Equipment	144,000	6,362	45,173	31%
Other Items of Expense	5,000	5,221	5,221	104%
Interagency Agreements	984,000	1,048,607	1,298,607	132%
External Contracts	740,000	376,787	811,787	110%
Pro Rata	44,000	44,254	44,254	101%
<b>Total OE &amp; E</b>	<b>2,383,000</b>	<b>1,895,776</b>	<b>2,712,238</b>	<b>114%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,458,000</b>	<b>3,114,319</b>	<b>4,274,318</b>	<b>96%</b>

**Amount**

\$	3,952,000	EPLF
\$	200,000	Reimbursement
\$	506,000	Prop 84
\$	<u>4,658,000</u>	07/08 Total Appropriation

**Projected**

\$	4,658,000	Current Year
\$	(200,000)	Reimbursements
\$	<u>4,458,000</u>	Total
\$	<u>4,274,318</u>	Projected Expenditures
\$	<u>183,682</u>	Projected Balance

### **Background**

The SNC held its first annual symposium on December 5, 2007, focused on Climate Change and the Sierra Nevada. The event was attended by more than 300 individuals representing a wide range of perspectives and organizations. Speakers and panelists presented information addressing issues specific to the potential effects of climate change on the Sierra Nevada, how the Region may contribute positively to reducing the impacts and how communities and individuals can adapt.

Symposium participants raised the idea of developing a program for Climate Change in the Sierra. At the March Board meeting, the SNC Board directed staff to continue working on this idea.

### **Current Status**

As reported in March, the SNC joined with the Resources Agency, the California Tahoe Conservancy and the US Forest Service in securing the services of Steve Eubanks (former Forest Supervisor on the Tahoe National Forest) to identify an approach for creation of a Sierra Nevada Climate Change Action Plan. Mr. Eubanks has been working with that team as well as other state and federal agencies and key stakeholders to identify opportunities and alternatives for such an effort.

Additional tasks completed to date:

- Created and launched a survey, initially distributed to almost 950 groups, agencies and individuals including invitees/registrants from last year's Symposium, California Resources Agency climate change group members, key stakeholders from both the Sierra Nevada and California Tahoe Conservancies, federal land managers, Fire Safe Councils, Resource Conservation Districts, and others – to solicit input on the kinds of services that would be useful to groups active in the Sierra and how such organizations might use and support a climate action-related program.
- Personal contact with “umbrella” organizations representing key stakeholder groups, including the Sierra Business Council, Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council, Regional Council of Rural Counties, federal land managers, the California Rangeland Trust, Forest Service research community, Sierra Nevada Alliance, The Sierra Fund, and others. Meetings are being scheduled with the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association, additional Sierra Business Council business members and the PG&E Stewardship Council.
- Staff is still in the process of developing modifications to the Strategic Plan to more accurately reflect the SNC's goals and objectives relating to climate change.

### **Next Steps**

Using input received from the outreach efforts described above, the committee and consultant will develop a concept paper describing alternative approaches to creating a climate change program, including potential roles and services, existing climate change efforts to coordinate with, potential partners, governance structures, and funding sources to support the effort. More specific information and proposals will be brought back to the SNC Board for consideration in October.

**Recommendation**

No action is needed from the Board at this time. Staff welcomes any suggestions or recommendations from the Board relative to our ongoing activities described above.

### **Background**

Beginning in October 2006 the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has taken steps towards applying to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for a specialized license plate. The plate would generate additional revenue for the SNC and would help create awareness of the need for additional investment in the Region.

To date, a design has been approved and the SNC has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Sierra Fund who is responsible for conducting the marketing campaign necessary to secure 7,500 prepaid applications. Following the collection of the first application, the SNC has one year to submit the 7,500 applications.

At the March 2008 Board meeting the Board was presented with a copy of a marketing plan prepared by Velocity 7 under the direction of The Sierra Fund and SNC staff. The Board also approved the final plate design at that time.

### **Current Status**

The Sierra Fund, in consultation with the SNC, is taking the steps necessary to implement the marketing plan. At this time, efforts are focused on securing funding commitments and developing key partners. It is anticipated that a more detailed report will be provided at the October Board meeting.

### **Next Steps**

Staff will continue to coordinate efforts with The Sierra Fund and keep the Board informed as to the progress. Boardmembers wishing to become actively involved with the effort should inform SNC staff or The Sierra Fund (Izzy Martin).

## **Background**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy exists, in part, to provide strategic direction for the environmental, economic and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region. As part of that mission, the Conservancy began hosting annual meetings of federal land managers from throughout the Sierra Region in 2007 for the purpose of identifying priority areas for joint action by the Conservancy and its federal partners.

## **Current Status**

The Conservancy held the second annual federal managers meeting at the SNC's headquarters office in Auburn on April 17-18, 2008. Various federal agencies were represented at the meeting, including: the Bureau of Land Management (Alturas, Bishop, Eagle Lake, Folsom), US Forest Service (Regional office, Humboldt-Toiyabe, Inyo, Plumas, Sierra, Stanislaus, Tahoe national forests), Devils Postpile National Monument, Sequoia National Park, Yosemite National Park, Lassen Volcanic National Park, USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station, and Natural Resources Conservation Service. Additional guests included: Tony Brunello, Deputy Secretary of the California Resources Agency; representatives from the Northern Sierra Partnership and the Southern Sierra Partnership, two collaborative groups working on land conservation in the Region; and the PG&E Stewardship Council.

Conservancy staff provided updates on and solicited input from federal managers on a number of topics of interest, including: SNC grants authorized to federal partners, the activities of the Sierra Nevada Strategic Investment Team (SNSIT), SNC's Indicators and Performance Measures project, the upcoming annual symposium SNC is co-sponsoring with Sierra Business Council at Mammoth Lakes in October, and the possible effort to pursue creation of a National Heritage Area in the Sierra Nevada.

The group together discussed other opportunities for future partnership, including the Northern and Southern Sierra Partnership conservation efforts, the PG&E Stewardship Council land disposition program, coordinating valuation and protection of ecosystem services especially as they relate to climate change, land use planning in the fast-growing foothill areas, and addressing the demographic changes and the relationship and connection between the Valley areas of the state and resources in the Sierra.

The group spent the second day engaged in a roundtable discussion and brainstorming exercise regarding creation of a climate change "center" or program specific to the Sierra. Discussion revolved around potential roles and activities that might be coordinated through such a center or program, specifically to address impacts of climate change in the Region and ways in which the Region can contribute to statewide climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

### Next Steps

The federal managers group and the Conservancy agreed on the following joint priority actions for the coming year:

- **SNC Priorities**

- CCC (Climate Change Center);
- Grants program;
- Consider opportunities for more organizational sharing between federal agencies and SNC, especially now that the SNC has area offices throughout Region.

- **Federal Managers Group Priorities**

- Continue convening annual meeting of this federal managers group; consider holding meetings in other locations and possibly inviting non-agency groups and/or agencies and other interests from adjacent areas (eg. Central/San Joaquin Valleys);
- Have SNC continue attending southern Sierra land managers meetings; Tahoe National Forest is considering convening similar forums in the North and Central Sierra also;
- For McArthur meeting in June, incorporate presentations from BLM on Sagebrush Steppe restoration strategy and wind energy issues, including what role SNC can plan in looking at landscape-level approaches;
- For next meeting, have agencies work with Mike Chapel and the SNC to bring large issues forward for group discussion [collective subject matter with individual agency examples];
- Also have SNC bring forward example(s) of SNC-funded projects that might address common issues of interest to agencies;
- Work together to develop stronger relationships with tribal interests, including inviting SNC representatives, when appropriate, to regular tribal meetings as part of the National Forest's intergovernmental coordination.
- Next year, consider focused discussion on tribal work, projects, tribal conservation districts (Central Valley with Tule River, other).

SNC staff is following up with individual federal managers on specific informational items and actions identified above and will schedule another annual meeting for next year.

### Recommendation

No action is needed by the Board at this time; however, staff welcomes any comments or input from Boardmembers on this item.

### **Background**

As previously discussed, the SNC is involved in planning a Sierra Nevada event for the first week of October of this year at Mammoth Mountain Resort. The SNC is sponsoring the event in partnership with the Sierra Business Council (SBC) and will be working with a number of other partners in conducting the event.

### **Current Status**

A tentative agenda is included with this item, describing the focus of the conference and a schedule. We will hold our October Board meeting at this location beginning with a field tour on Wednesday October 1 and our Board meeting on Thursday, October 2.

### **Next Steps**

Staff will continue to work with partners in the planning of this event and will work with Boardmembers Hunt and Sher in finalizing an agenda.

### **Recommendation**

No action is needed by the Board at this time.

COVER IMAGE: Dulaiti Devi's Resplend National Museum, 1946. Photograph by Ansel Adams  
Collection Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona ©The Ansel Adams Publishing Rights Trust

 **SIERRA BUSINESS COUNCIL**  
Po Box 2428 Truckee, CA 96160

 **Register Now**  
*Save on registrations fees until August 8!*

**SIERRA SOLUTIONS**  
**Tools for Sustainable Communities, Economies and Environment**  
**MAMMOTH LAKES, CA**  
**OCTOBER 3-4, 2008**  
Be inspired to help form the future. This year's Conference will highlight solution-based tools, processes and opportunities for Ensuring Sustainable and Vibrant Sierra Communities, Landscapes and Local Economies. Don't miss this fabulous opportunity to network with other leaders in the region.

To register or find out more visit *Discounted registration until August 8!*  
[WWW.SBCOUNCIL.ORG](http://WWW.SBCOUNCIL.ORG)  
or call 530.582.4800

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
PERMIT #20  
Truckee, CA

 POSTCARD CREATED WITH RECYCLED PAPER

### **Background**

For the past two fiscal years the SNC staff has prepared and the Board approved action plans designed to implement the actions identified in the SNC Strategic Plan. Staff has provided progress reports to the Board at each meeting.

### **Current Status**

Included with this staff report is the final progress report of the 2007-08 Action Plan and a the Action Plan for 2008-09. As you will note, a great deal of progress has been made in the current fiscal year and a majority of the actions have been completed. The complexity and time commitment involved with implementation of the grants program did result in a number of items not being completed. Those items have been included in the 2008-09 Plan. In addition, our experience over the past year has made it clear that a number of the actions identified are ongoing in nature and as such, won't be "completed."

### **Next Steps**

For 2008-09, it is proposed that the Action Plan be viewed as an annual workplan, so that may be modified as new opportunities are identified or factors suggest a change in priorities. For this reason, staff is recommending that the plan not be "approved" by the Board, allowing for a less formal process for necessary modifications. Staff will continue to provide updates to the Board at each meeting and will be prepared to discuss any modifications made during the course of the year.

### **Recommendation**

No action is needed by the Board at this time, however staff welcomes any comments or direction from the Board.

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
2007-08 Action Plan Update  
May 21, 2008**

Description	Status
Award \$17 million in Proposition 84 funds	<b>Completed:</b> Pending award of final grant funds by SNC Board at June 5 <sup>th</sup> meeting
Develop a list of resources with skills, expertise and knowledge to assist communities with projects	<b>Completed:</b> Initial information has been compiled and will be posted to the SNC Web site by June 30 <sup>th</sup> . Adding to the information and keeping it up-to-date will be ongoing.
Identify specific funding sources that may complement SNC activities	<b>Completed:</b> Initial information has been compiled and will be posted to the SNC Web site by June 30 <sup>th</sup> . Adding to the information and keeping it up-to-date will be ongoing.
Develop environmental, economic and social well-being indices to monitor progress in the various program and geographic areas	<b>Partially Completed – Remainder will be part of 2008-09 Action Plan:</b> Performance Measures and Indicators Project is underway. Recommended performance measures will be presented to the SNC Board on June 5 <sup>th</sup> ; recommended system indicators will be presented to the Board on October 2 <sup>nd</sup> .
Determine location of a permanent headquarters location	<b>Completed:</b> Pending approval of staff recommendation by SNC Board at June 5 <sup>th</sup> meeting
Identify critical information needs at the Regional and community levels to assist in assessing resource protection needs	<b>Ongoing:</b> While the SNC has identified and worked to address critical information needs through surveys, workshops, grants, and other outreach efforts, we will continue to identify and address these needs as an ongoing part of SNC's mission.
Develop a strategy to work in partnership with other agencies and organizations to identify information, assistance and resources needed to support community projects	<b>Ongoing -- Will be part of 2008-09 Action Plan:</b> The SNC has already begun to identify these needs through surveys, workshops, grants, and other outreach efforts. During 2008-09, we will continue with Regional and Subregional outreach efforts targeted at further identifying these needs.

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
2007-08 Action Plan Update**  
*May 21, 2008*

<p>Develop a strategy to partner with local governments to identify information, technical assistance and resources that would be of value in local land use decision making</p>	<p><b>Partially Completed -- Ongoing:</b> A preliminary information assessment was conducted with the counties in the Region. Evaluating local government needs in this area can best be accomplished by continuing to engage with local governments as an ongoing part of SNC's mission.</p>
<p>Identify and support incentive-based programs that complement and enhance regulatory efforts to achieve environmental protection and sustainability</p>	<p><b>Completed:</b> Initial information has been compiled and will be posted to the SNC Web site by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Adding to the information and keeping it up-to-date will be ongoing.</p>
<p>Develop and make available a comprehensive guide to recreational and tourism opportunities in the Sierra</p>	<p><b>Will be part of 2008-09 Action Plan:</b> The SNC has awarded a grant for the development of an online tool to provide information about recreational opportunities on public lands, which will be posted to the SNC's Web site next year. The SNC will assess how to build on this effort to provide more comprehensive information.</p>
<p>Identify incentives to private and public landowners to manage the upper watershed to increase natural water storage and groundwater recharge</p>	<p><b>Partially Completed -- Ongoing:</b> The SNC has awarded a grant for a research project in the American River Basin, which will identify incentives for managing the upper watershed in this way. The SNC will continue to look for opportunities to address this issue in the grant program and other activities.</p>
<p>In cooperation with local governments, identify strategies to reduce fire risk created by building structures that are within or encroach upon adjacent wildlands.</p>	<p><b>Will be part of 2008-2009 Action Plan:</b> The SNC will consult with local governments and others to determine how best to identify these strategies.</p>

**SIERRA NEVADA**  
C O N S E R V A N C Y



**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**

**Action Plan**

**July 2008 – June 2009**

## **Introduction**

In order to successfully implement the 2008 – 2009 Action Plan, the SNC will use a combination of full time staff, retired annuitants and consultants. We will continue to work collaboratively with a variety of state, federal and local agencies, as well as non-governmental partners in carrying out the actions called for in the Plan.

The Executive Officer is primarily responsible for overseeing the effective completion of the 2008-09 Action Plan. The Assistant Executive Officer and Program and Area Managers will have responsibility for coordinating and monitoring implementation of the 2008-09 Action Plan. All SNC staff will consider the implementation of the action plan as a top priority.

Progress on implementing the Action Plan will be regularly reported to the Board and on the SNC website.

## **2008-09 Actions**

### **Overarching Actions**

1. Engage in a process to update the SNC's Strategic Plan, which considers lessons learned during the SNC's first years in operation, emerging issues and opportunities, and input from partners and stakeholders throughout the Region. (March 2009)
2. Successfully award \$17 million in Proposition 84 funds for projects that will contribute to the implementation of the SNC mission and the objectives of Proposition 84. (July 2008 – June 2009)
3. Produce an annual report identifying the activities and accomplishments of the past year. (October 2008)

### **Organizational Actions (Continued from 2006-07)**

4. Develop, in collaboration with other organizations, environmental, economic and social well being indices to monitor the progress in the various program and geographic areas. The indices will identify the key indicators to be monitored and measured. (December 2008)

### **Programmatic Actions**

5. Determine how the SNC can best collaborate with others in the Region to address potential effects of climate change. (March 2009)

6. Implement appropriate portions of the SNC Education and Communications Plan, consistent with available resources. (June 2009)
7. Develop a strategy to work in partnership with other governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties to identify information, assistance and resources needed to support community projects consistent with the SNC mission. (April 2009)
8. Develop and make available a comprehensive guide to recreational and tourism opportunities in the Sierra, in cooperation with other organizations within the Region. (June 2009)
9. In cooperation with local governments, identify strategies to reduce the wildland-urban interface fire risk created by building structures that are within or encroach upon adjacent wildlands. (April 2009)

# # # #

## Background

In December 2005, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Board approved a process for the selection of a Headquarters Office. A set of specific criteria was approved and a committee of the Board was appointed to work with staff and the Department of General Services in developing a recommendation to the full Board. In February 2006, the SNC Board selected Auburn as the location for the interim Headquarters Office. At that time, the Board directed the Executive Officer to continue to explore options for a permanent Headquarters Office within roughly a 30 minute drive of Auburn.

Since June 2006, SNC staff has been housed at Creekside Business Park in Auburn. The Auburn office generally meets the organization's needs and presents a positive work environment. The location has proven to provide good access to the major transportation corridors and generally meets the criteria established. The current lease extends through May 2009.

Last year, the SNC opened and staffed its offices in Mariposa, Susanville and Bishop. While these offices will allow the SNC to more effectively cover the area within the Region, their presence does not significantly affect the criteria established for the headquarters office. A decision to relocate from our current location will be based on an opportunity to improve organizational efficiency and more fully meet the selection criteria, including the items described below:

## Basic Requirements

- Located within a 30 minute drive of Auburn;
- Provides a minimum of 8,000 – 10,000 square feet of usable office space available by June 2009;
- Meet all state office-building requirements (ADA, etc.);
- Access to high speed internet.

## Preferences

- Access to major north-south and east-west transportation corridors (I-5, Hwy 99, Hwy 395, I-80, Hwy 99 and Hwy 49);
- Access to meeting facilities for SNC meetings beyond conference room capacity;
- Convenient access for employees to schools, affordable housing, alternative transportation and other services;
- Opportunity for the SNC to contribute to the economic well-being of the community;
- The opportunity for a "green building" that is in keeping with the State's efforts to increase energy efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and generally reduce the impact on the environment;

- The opportunity to utilize the facility for Regional educational and interpretive activities, consistent with our mission;
- The opportunity for the SNC to contribute to the local community through public use of the SNC facility.

**Current Status**

Consistent with the Board's direction, the SNC solicited Preliminary Proposals following the March Board meeting. A total of five proposals were received from the following communities: Auburn (2), Colfax, Coloma and Nevada City. Staff has visited each of the sites and discussed options with proposal sponsors. The purpose of this phase was to gain a basic understanding of the potential opportunities and how well they met our criteria and did not involve substantial analysis as to feasibility.

Each of the sites proposed offer positive attributes consistent with our criteria. In two of the proposals, the site is currently bare land and the landowner is interested in entering into an agreement with the State of California to construct an office building to meet the SNC's needs (Nevada City and Coloma). Another site offers a similar opportunity (Auburn), where the plan is for multi-agency building including local and federal agencies. The Colfax location offers an existing building that would be refurbished to meet the SNC's needs (although it is unclear as to the desires of the current owner). The final proposal comes from the owners and managers of our current office location in Auburn.

If the SNC is to pursue the search for a new facility, it would require the full involvement of the Department of General Services (DGS), the agency responsible for securing and managing the State's building assets. Based on discussions with DGS, it appears that this process would take more than 6 months at a moderate cost to the SNC. It is also unlikely that the DGS would enter into any agreement with the landowner that commits the State prior to construction occurring. In other words, a "build to suit" option does not appear feasible.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Board direct the Executive Officer to pursue the extension of the lease at the current location, and in doing so, seek to achieve progress towards additional criteria, including "greening" of the building and increasing the availability of education and interpretative opportunities at the site.

This recommendation is made, recognizing that a number of the sites identified would be attractive alternatives to the existing facility. However given the complexity of the process, staff does not believe the benefits outweigh cost, time and effort associated with securing a new location.

If the SNC is not successful with the negotiation of a longer term lease at the current location, exploring other options in the future should remain an option.

## **Background**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has completed the first year of awarding Proposition 84 Grants. While the process was certainly successful -- as the SNC will have awarded nearly \$17 million for more than 146 projects -- we have all learned a great deal about the process. The experience of the past year has guided us in proposing changes to the Grants Guidelines and Grant Application Packets for 2008-09. As part of our review, staff has analyzed the grants awarded in the past year (including those recommended to the Board at this meeting). Attachment A to this agenda item provides an overview of our analysis.

In March 2008, the SNC Board was presented information that identified the need to review and revise SNC Grants Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2008-09. The Chair appointed Boardmembers Steve Wilensky and Bob Kirkwood as a committee to guide staff in review and development of Guidelines changes, clarifications and additions. On April 9, 2008 a public review draft of the 2008-09 Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines was made available to the public. Basic information relating to the process and some of the major areas of modification was provided at six workshops held throughout the Region. In addition, the SNC conducted two interactive web conferences dedicated exclusively to Guidelines revisions. The public was encouraged to provide comment on the draft Guidelines at the meetings and in writing through May 9. Public comment was minimal, and along with staff comments, was reviewed and considered in development of the final draft that is before the Board today.

## **Current Status**

A number of policy level changes are being recommended by the Board committee and staff, as described below and included in the final draft:

### **Allocating Funds Among Grant Categories**

An allocation formula for 08/09 is proposed as follows:

- Competitive Grants -- \$7M
- Subregional SOGs -- \$1 million per Subregion
- Region-wide SOGs -- \$1 million
- Unallocated -- \$3 million (to be allocated at a later date by the Board, most likely at the October or December 2008 meeting).

As a reminder, the initial draft Guidelines for 08/09 (as with the current year) proposed allocations as follows: Competitive -- \$9 million; SOGs -- \$1 million per Subregion and \$2 million for Region-wide. The proposed change in allocation would allow flexibility to address the areas of greatest need based on project application submittals. In addition,

because we are proposing to raise the limit for SOG 1s (acquisition and site improvement) from \$100,000 to \$250,000, it is anticipated that more projects will be submitted in the SOG categories next year. This flexibility will also allow us an opportunity to achieve greater success in our goal of equitable distribution among the Subregions.

Allocating SOG Funding by Grant Round (page 4)

Roughly half of the SOG funds would be awarded in each of the two rounds. This will allow us to take advantage of strategic opportunities, as the name suggests, while at the same time not setting strict limits that would prevent approval of high priority projects.

Changes to Scoring and Evaluation Criteria (page 16-22 and 25)

A number of modifications to the evaluation criteria for all types of projects have been made to strengthen and clarify the basis on which projects will be evaluated. SOG 1s and Competitive Grants (both are for site improvement and acquisition) will be scored utilizing the same criteria. Competitive grants will be awarded solely on the basis of the score, whereas SOG 1s will be ranked using the score and other identified factors (such as geographic and project type distribution and organizational capacity). Both SOG 1s and SOG 2s will be placed in one of three ranks (high, medium, and low benefit) for each Subregion and Region-wide.

Competitive and SOG 1 Scoring Values (page 16-21)

Consistent with the changes described in the item above, scoring values have been adjusted to provide greater emphasis on the Proposition 84 and SNC Program Goals criteria. These two items account for 60% (currently 50%) of the total score. The "Model Project" item has been collapsed into Project Management, Design and Sustainability.

CEQA/Appraisal Requirements at Time of Application (page 15)

The guidelines require that CEQA documentation and completed appraisals must be submitted as a part of the application. This requirement will result in a more complete and timely evaluation by staff, avoiding the need for last minute adjustments that occurred this year. This change has evoked concerns from a number of parties who had indicated that the requirement may result in the delay of some projects being submitted.

Repayment of Loans (page 12)

The SNC has recently been made aware of a pending Attorney General opinion that concludes that Proposition 84 does not allow the use of funds for the repayment of loans. Given this fact, the guidelines now make clear that such projects are not allowable.

“On the Ground” Project Preference (page 4)

To reflect the Board’s sentiments expressed at the March meeting, a preference for “on the ground” projects has been stated along with an understanding of the importance of other types of projects (educational, planning, etc.). The SNC will strive to achieve an appropriate balance between these types of projects.

Disclosure of Project Scores/Ranks (page 25)

Staff recommendations will include information relative to a project’s score and ranking, as well as a narrative description of the basis for the recommendation. This information will be made public at the time that recommendations are posted on the SNC website two weeks prior to the Board meeting.

**Next Steps**

Subject to the Board’s action today, staff will post the approved Grant Guidelines for FY08/09 along with the Grant Application Packets and Performance Measures information on the SNC Web site by no later than June 27.

First round applications will be accepted July 1 - September 2 for SOGs with awards at the December 2008 Board meeting and July 1 - September 15 for Competitive Grants with awards at the March 2009 Board meeting. The second round of SOG applications will be accepted through February 27, 2009 with awards at the June 2009 Board meeting.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Board approve the final draft of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy 2008-09 Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines included as Attachment B with this agenda item. Staff is further directed to take the actions necessary to implement the Grants Guidelines as adopted, including making necessary non-substantive modifications.

		GRANT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED		FY 07-08 BOARD AUTHORIZATIONS <small>*(includes June 08 recommendations)</small>	
GRANT TYPE SUMMARY		Applications received	Amount Requested	Applications Authorized*	Amount Authorized*
	Competitive	36	\$22,414,968	18	\$8,344,335
	SOG 1	46	\$3,522,880	24	\$1,793,285
	SOG 2	79	\$2,636,969	58	\$1,972,250
	SOG 3	69	\$12,279,686	46	\$4,854,698
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>\$40,854,503</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>\$16,964,568</b>

GRANT TYPE BY SUBREGION		Applications received	Amount Requested	Applications Authorized*	Amount Authorized*
Region-Wide	SOG 1	2	\$152,550	2	\$141,300
	SOG 2	13	\$412,982	10	\$348,145
	SOG 3	16	\$4,118,526	12	\$1,509,704
	<b>Region-Wide Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>\$4,684,058</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>\$1,999,149</b>
North	Competitive	2	\$1,556,000	2	\$1,546,000
	SOG 1	8	\$713,816	5	\$450,217
	SOG 2	8	\$267,790	6	\$211,290
	SOG 3	6	\$723,897	4	\$356,897
	<b>North Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>\$3,261,503</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>\$2,564,404</b>
North Central	Competitive	8	\$6,809,700	2	\$1,152,000
	SOG 1	10	\$808,444	6	\$413,225
	SOG 2	16	\$563,011	11	\$297,806
	SOG 3	4	\$679,427	3	\$288,969
	<b>North Central Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>\$8,860,582</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>\$2,152,000</b>
Central	Competitive	16	\$9,867,072	10	\$4,572,426
	SOG 1	7	\$553,080	0	\$0
	SOG 2	16	\$506,804	11	\$398,999
	SOG 3	12	\$2,152,396	7	\$720,271
	<b>Central Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>\$13,079,352</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>\$5,691,696</b>
South Central	Competitive	5	\$2,929,994	2	\$705,787
	SOG 1	4	\$290,226	4	\$290,226
	SOG 2	8	\$263,273	7	\$258,473
	SOG 3	9	\$899,879	6	\$451,301
	<b>South Central Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>\$4,383,372</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>\$1,705,787</b>
South	Competitive	3	\$779,480	1	\$211,500
	SOG 1	5	\$320,590	1	\$93,776
	SOG 2	13	\$433,691	10	\$344,439
	SOG 3	15	\$2,676,743	7	\$724,196
	<b>South Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>\$4,210,504</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>\$1,373,911</b>
East	Competitive	2	\$472,722	1	\$156,622
	SOG 1	10	\$684,174	6	\$404,541
	SOG 2	5	\$189,418	3	\$113,098
	SOG 3	7	\$1,028,818	7	\$803,360
	<b>East Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>\$2,375,132</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>\$1,477,621</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>\$40,854,503</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>\$16,964,568</b>

PROJECT TYPE SUMMARY		Applications received	Amount Requested	Applications Authorized*	Amount Authorized*
Acquisition	Acquisition	19	\$14,757,950	8	\$5,141,250
	<b>Acquisition Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>\$14,757,950</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>\$5,141,250</b>
Site Improvement/Restoration	Site Improvement/Restoration	63	\$11,120,898	35	\$5,034,370
	<b>Site Improvement/Restoration Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>\$11,120,898</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>\$5,034,370</b>
Other	Appraisal Services	7	\$216,200	5	\$121,200
	Assessments	16	\$1,772,267	14	\$1,270,192
	Capacity-building	29	\$4,661,952	19	\$1,851,535
	Educational Efforts	32	\$1,775,137	20	\$1,062,980
	Environmental Review	15	\$1,179,380	12	\$925,750
	Equipment Procurement	4	\$650,617	0	\$0
	Events	2	\$38,000	2	\$38,000
	Monitoring	3	\$183,805	3	\$139,056
	Multiple Types	2	\$119,609	2	\$119,609
	Other	4	\$293,478	2	\$199,378
	Project Planning	21	\$1,337,553	17	\$705,931
	Publications	1	\$45,000	1	\$45,000
	Research	12	\$2,702,657	6	\$310,317
	<b>Other Total</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>\$14,975,655</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>\$6,788,948</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>\$40,854,503</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>\$16,964,568</b>

		GRANT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED		FY 07-08 BOARD AUTHORIZATIONS *(includes June 08 recommendations)	
ACQUISITION SUMMARY		Applications received	Amount Requested	Applications Authorized*	Amount Authorized*
Acquisition	Easement	6	\$3,996,000	4	\$2,174,000
	Fee Title	13	\$10,761,950	4	\$2,967,250
<b>Acquisition total</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>\$14,757,950</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>\$5,141,250</b>

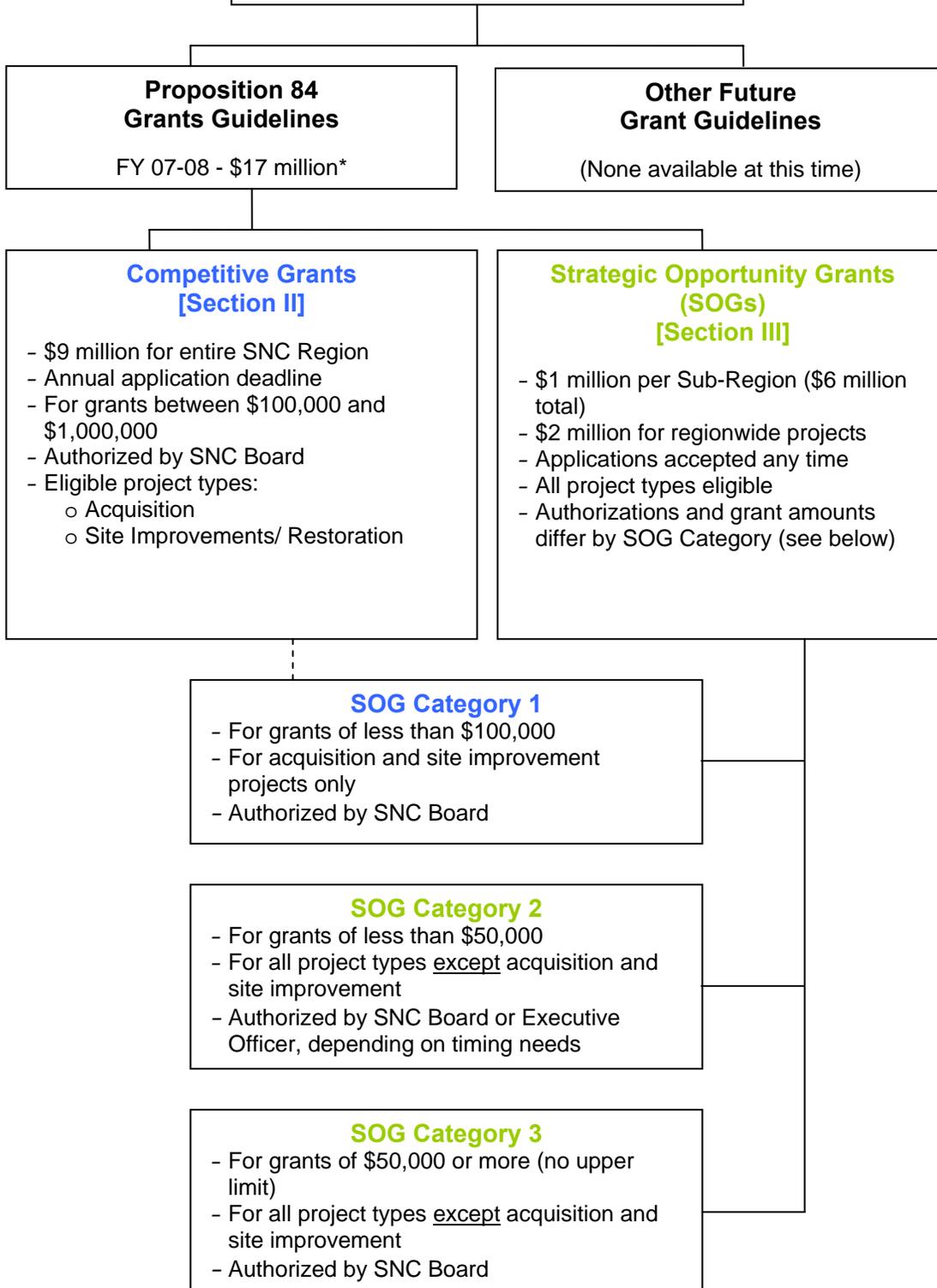
		Applications received	Amount Requested	Applications Authorized*	Amount Authorized*
<b>SITE IMPROVEMENT AND RESTORATION PROJECTS</b>					
Site Improvement and Restoration	Fuels Reduction	30	\$4,191,546	15	\$2,222,217
	Historic Site Improvement and Restoration	2	\$304,608	2	\$304,608
	Rangeland Improvement	2	\$398,500	2	\$398,500
	Habitat Improvement	3	\$722,553	1	\$70,000
	Watershed Improvement and Restoration	26	\$5,503,691	15	\$2,039,045
<b>Site Improvement and Restoration Total</b>		<b>63</b>	<b>\$11,120,898</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>\$5,034,370</b>

		Applications received	Amount Requested	Applications Authorized*	Amount Authorized*
<b>OTHER PROJECTS</b>					
Other	Appraisal Services	7	\$216,200	5	\$121,200
	Assessments	16	\$1,772,267	14	\$1,270,192
	Capacity-building	29	\$4,661,952	19	\$1,851,535
	Educational Efforts	32	\$1,775,137	20	\$1,062,980
	Environmental Review	15	\$1,179,380	12	\$925,750
	Equipment Procurement	4	\$650,617	0	\$0
	Events	2	\$38,000	2	\$38,000
	Monitoring	3	\$183,805	3	\$139,056
	Multiple Types	2	\$119,609	2	\$119,609
	Other	4	\$293,478	2	\$199,378
	Project Planning	21	\$1,337,553	17	\$705,931
	Publications	1	\$45,000	1	\$45,000
	Research	12	\$2,702,657	6	\$310,317
<b>Other Total</b>		<b>148</b>	<b>\$14,975,655</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>\$6,788,948</b>

		Applications received	Amount Requested	Applications Authorized*	Amount Authorized*
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>					
Acquisition Total		19	\$14,757,950	8	\$5,141,250
Restoration and Site Improvement Total		63	\$11,120,898	35	\$5,034,370
Other Total		148	\$14,975,655	103	\$6,788,948
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>230</b>	<b>\$40,854,503</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>\$16,964,568</b>

# SNC Grants Program Structure

## SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY PROGRAM GUIDELINES



\* Subject to legislative approval



[www.sierranevada.ca.gov](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov)

**SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY PROPOSITION 84 GRANTS  
PROGRAM**

**FUNDED BY**

**Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River  
and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006**

**PROPOSITION 84**

**GRANTS GUIDELINES**

**FINAL DRAFT 5-21-08**

**Fiscal Year 2008/09**

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

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. Introduction</b>	4
<b>II. General Program Information</b>	7
A. Grant Program Requirements	7
B. Eligible Applicants	7
C. Eligible Projects	7
D. Eligible Costs	8
E. Ineligible Costs	8
F. Grant Provisions	8
G. Consultation and Cooperation with Local Agencies	9
<b>III. Grant Program Categories</b>	10
A. Competitive Grants	10
B. Strategic Opportunity Grants	11
C. Block Grants	12
<b>IV. Specific Requirements for Acquisition and Site Improvement / Restoration Projects</b>	12
A. Acquisition Projects	12
B. Site Improvement/Restoration Projects	14
<b>V. Applying for a Grant</b>	15
A. General Information	15
B. Acquisition and/or Site Improvement/Restoration Projects	16
C. Other Projects	16
<b>VI. Competitive and SOG 1 Grant Proposals Evaluation and Criteria</b>	17
A. Project Quality and Readiness (Maximum of 20 points)	17
B. Land and Water Benefits (Maximum of 30 Points)	19
C. SNC Program Goals (Maximum of 30 points)	19
D. Cooperation and Community Support (Maximum of 10 points)	20
E. Project Design, Management, and Sustainability (Maximum of 10 points)	21
F. Additional Factors and Final Ranking	21
<b>VII. How SOG 2s are Evaluated</b>	22
A. Project Quality and Readiness	22
B. Land and Water Benefits	23

C.	SNC Program Goals .....	24
D.	Cooperation and Community Support .....	24
E.	Project Management .....	25
F.	Additional Factors and Final Ranking .....	25
<b>APPENDIX A</b>	.....	<b>26</b>
	Program Geographic Area .....	26
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	.....	<b>27</b>
	Glossary of Terms.....	27

## I. Introduction

California voters passed Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coast Protection Bond Act of 2006 (the Act) on November 7, 2006. Proposition 84 added Section 75050 to the Public Resources Code (PRC), authorizing the State to issue bonds, and the Legislature to appropriate the proceeds, for the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. Section 75050 (j) allocates \$54 million of these funds for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC).

The Laird-Leslie Sierra Nevada Conservancy Act, enacted in 2004 and commencing with PRC Section 33300, established the SNC, and Sections 33343 and 33346 set forth the authority for the SNC to award grants of funds in order to carry out the purposes of the Act. The SNC has adopted a Strategic Plan and Program Guidelines in accordance with the Act; these provide general direction for the SNC's activities and serve as the basis for these Grants Guidelines.

These Grants Guidelines establish the process used by the SNC to solicit applications, evaluate proposals, and authorize grants under the SNC Grants Program from Proposition 84. A [Glossary of Terms](#) is provided at the end of this document.

Grant funds will be allocated in two grant categories, Competitive Grants and Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs). These guidelines explain the scope of, and the requirements for, each type of grant.

In Fiscal Year 2007-08, \$17 million from Proposition 84 was appropriated to the SNC for grant purposes. Subject to enactment of the state budget, for Fiscal Year 2008-09 the funds will be allocated as follows:

- Approximately \$7 million will be allocated through Competitive Grants across the SNC Region to meet the purposes of the SNC.
- Approximately \$6 million will be allocated as SOGs to eligible applicants to address needs across the six Subregions (\$1 million will be allocated for each Subregion).
- Approximately \$1 million in SOGs will be allocated to projects that have Region-wide significance.
- Approximately \$3 million will be allocated by the SNC Board among the grant categories, based on a determination of the greatest opportunity to achieve the SNC mission. This allocation will occur following the initial processing of grant applications in September 2008.

SOGs will be awarded in two rounds, with the intent to award roughly half of the funding in each of the two rounds for each Subregion and the Region-wide allocation.

The SNC will award grants with the primary aim of achieving tangible "on the ground" impacts, consistent with the terms of Proposition 84 (see above) and the SNC's program

goals. It is expected that the grants will include a variety of site improvement/restoration and acquisition projects. At the same time, the SNC recognizes the value of activities which prepare for, or create the context for, other natural resource protection and restoration efforts. In specific cases, such activities may include educational efforts and community capacity-building within the Region. The SNC will strive to achieve a balance of projects best suited to further the SNC mission and the goals of Proposition 84.

The SNC will make every effort, subject to the programmatic limitations of Proposition 84, to ensure that, over time, funds are spread equitably across each of the Subregions and among the program areas, with adequate allowance for variability of costs among the various Subregions and types of projects. In doing so, the SNC recognizes the focus of Proposition 84 may result in some program areas receiving a disproportionate share of resources.

Three Grants Application Packets (GAPs) accompany these Grants Guidelines, and include information and forms needed for each category of grant application. Sample grant agreements for each of the Proposition 84 project types are provided at: <http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/grants.html> for applicants who want more information about the administrative requirements once a grant is authorized.

**SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY  
Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines  
FY 08-09**

**Competitive Grants**

- \$7 million for entire SNC Region
- Application deadline September 15, 2008
- For grants between \$250,000 and \$1,000,000
- Eligible project types include acquisition and site improvement/restoration
- Authorized by SNC Board in March 2009

**Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs)**

- \$1 million per Subregion (\$6 million total)
- \$1 million for projects of Region-wide significance
- Application deadlines September 2, 2008 and February 27, 2009
- Authorized by SNC Board in December 2008 and June 2009

**SOG Category 1 (SOG 1)**

- For grants \$5,000 to \$250,000
- For acquisition and site improvement/restoration projects only
- Authorized by the SNC Board

**SOG Category 2 (SOG 2)**

- For grants up to \$500,000
- For projects that do not include acquisition or site improvement/restoration
- Authorized by the SNC Board (or by Executive Officer for time-sensitive grants up to \$50,000)

**NOTE: Approximately \$3 million will be allocated by the Board among grant categories following the initial processing of grant applications in September 2008.**

## II. General Program Information

### A. Grant Program Requirements

The funding available for grants by the SNC under Proposition 84 is to be used for the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. Consistent with its statutory authority and the terms of Proposition 84, the SNC will fund projects that address one or more of the program areas listed below:

- Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation
- Protect, conserve, and restore the Region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources
- Aid in the preservation of working landscapes
- Reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfires
- Protect and improve water and air quality
- Assist the Regional economy through the operation of the SNC's program
- Undertake efforts to enhance public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public

All grants must provide direct benefits for the Sierra Nevada Region, as defined by PRC Section 33302 (f); see [Appendix A](#) for definition.

### B. Eligible Applicants

Grant funds may be authorized for:

- **public agencies** (any city, county, district, or joint powers authority; state agency; public university; or federal agency);
- **qualifying nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations** (includes any private, nonprofit organization that qualifies for exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of Title 26 of the United States Code, and that has among its principal charitable purposes preservation of land for scientific, educational, recreational, scenic, or open-space opportunities; or protection of the natural environment or preservation or enhancement of wildlife; or preservation of cultural and historical resources; or efforts to provide for the enjoyment of public lands); and
- **eligible tribal organizations** (includes any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, or a tribal agency authorized by a tribe, which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and is identified on pages 52829 to 52835, inclusive, of Number 250 of Volume 53 (December 29, 1988) of the Federal Register, as that list may be updated or amended from time to time).

### C. Eligible Projects

Funds will be authorized for the planning or implementation of projects that are consistent with the provisions of these guidelines. The SNC Program Guidelines

contain examples of potential projects that may be helpful in creating proposals; however, these examples are not meant to be comprehensive. The SNC Program Guidelines are available on the SNC Web site at:

<http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/proguidFINWEB.pdf>.

Eligible projects must contribute to the protection or restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. The projects must also address one or more of the SNC's Program areas.

Generally, funds must be expended within the statutory boundaries of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to be eligible for funding. Certain types of projects outside the legal boundaries may also be eligible if they meet all guideline requirements of the SNC and have a direct benefit to the Region. Applicants should consult with SNC when such projects are being considered. Examples of these projects might include educational efforts or physical projects which result in tangible benefits to resources within the boundaries of the SNC.

Language concerning project eligibility, and any determinations of eligible costs (see below), are subject to applicable conditions and limitations which may later be set forth in the State Budget Act or other official guidance.

#### **D. Eligible Costs**

Only direct project costs for items within the scope of the project and within the time frame of the project agreement are eligible. To determine the amount of eligible administrative costs, the applicant must first determine the cost of implementing the project. Once the project implementation cost has been determined, the applicant may include administrative costs as a portion of the total grant request. Eligible administrative costs must be directly related to the project and may not exceed 15 percent of the project implementation cost. Indirect expenditures billed as a percentage of implementation costs are not eligible for reimbursement.

#### **E. Ineligible Costs**

Grant funding may not be used to address a violation of, or an order to comply with, any law or regulation. Grant funding may not be used to implement required mitigation measures unless it facilitates the implementation of a project that would itself be eligible for SNC Proposition 84 grant funding. In addition, grant funding may not be used to pay for food or refreshments.

#### **F. Grant Provisions**

Grant-eligible costs may be incurred by a recipient entity only after the entity has entered into an agreement with the SNC on the terms and conditions specified by the SNC. Only costs incurred after a grant agreement is fully executed will be

eligible for reimbursement. After approving a grant, the SNC may provide technical assistance to the grantee to ensure efficient administration of the grant.

Work on projects funded by grants authorized in FY 08-09 must be completed and fully invoiced by no later than April 1, 2013.<sup>1</sup>

If a project is approved for funding the grantee will be required to provide periodic progress reports and a final report. See Exhibit B of the sample grant agreements for additional information on the required contents of these reports. As part of this reporting, the grantee will be required to report on project-specific performance measures developed in consultation with SNC prior to grant agreement approval. A listing of potential performance measures can be found on the SNC Web site, although other performance measures may be mutually determined to be appropriate for a particular project.

SNC may request that grantees provide public recognition to the SNC's Proposition 84 grant program through signage or written materials for public distribution, as appropriate.

#### **G. Consultation and Cooperation with Local Agencies**

As required by PRC 33342, *"the SNC shall cooperate with and consult with the city or county where a grant is proposed or an interest in real property is proposed to be acquired; and shall, as necessary or appropriate, coordinate its efforts with other state agencies, non-profit organizations, and other interested parties. The SNC shall, as necessary and appropriate, cooperate and consult with a public water system that owns or operates facilities, including lands appurtenant thereto, where a grant is proposed or an interest in land is proposed to be acquired."* The SNC will provide notification to the appropriate local government entities at the point at which a project is deemed eligible and is being considered for funding.

For all grants less than \$50,000 for projects other than acquisition or site improvement/restoration, the SNC will notify the affected county and/or city of the proposed project and request comment within 10 business days of receipt of such notification.

For all other grants, the SNC will notify the county and/or city affected and public water agency (where appropriate), and request comments within 15 business days following notification. The Subregional Board representative will also be notified at this time and may wish to communicate with the affected entities as well.

Applicants are encouraged to seek support of, or at a minimum, consult with affected local governments. The SNC will make all reasonable efforts to address

---

<sup>1</sup> This time limit is subject to final control language in the state's budget. Specific time limits for individual projects will be addressed in the project grant agreements.

concerns raised by local governments. Applications that include a project-specific resolution of support from the affected city and/or county and, if appropriate, water agency, may be deemed to have met the “cooperate and consult” requirement.

### **III. Grant Program Categories**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy offers Proposition 84 grants in two categories: (1) Competitive Grants and (2) Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs). When deciding which category of grant to apply for, applicants should consider the following:

1. Type of project (acquisition or site improvement/restoration vs. other types)
2. Amount of grant request
3. Timing factors or other special needs

An applicant may not combine requests for planning, acquisition, or site improvements/restoration in a single grant request. However, applicants can break a large project into phases and submit applications for each phase, such as one application for an appraisal and a subsequent application for an acquisition. Applicants are encouraged to consult with SNC staff to determine the most appropriate type of grant opportunity for potential projects.

#### **A. Competitive Grants**

Competitive Grants are authorized for acquisition or site improvement/restoration projects between \$250,000 and \$1,000,000. Applications for Competitive Grants are solicited, reviewed, and authorized by the SNC Board on an annual cycle. Examples of potential Competitive Grant projects include:

- Prevention or amelioration of current or anticipated adverse impacts to natural resources
- Preservation and/or enhancement of agricultural, forest, rangeland, or other working landscapes
- Reduction or prevention of soil erosion
- Reduction of fuel hazards or other disaster risks with potential to detrimentally affect natural resources
- Control and elimination of invasive species
- Elimination, conversion, relocation, and/or rehabilitation of roads and trails to protect natural resources
- Improvement or construction of physical structures or facilities to protect natural resources
- Improvement of natural recharge/storage of water
- Protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat

Note: all projects must address one or more of the SNC Program goals and meet the requirements of Proposition 84 described above.

## **B. Strategic Opportunity Grants**

SOGs are intended to provide the SNC flexibility to address various needs and time-sensitive opportunities for all project types in all program areas. SOGs are available in two annual filing periods, subject to available funding. SOGs can be authorized by either the Board or the Executive Officer, depending on dollars requested and timing needs. Under certain circumstances multiple SOG grants may be treated as a block grant.

Eligible applications for SOGs are valid throughout the fiscal year in which they are submitted. An application filed but not funded in the first application cycle of the fiscal year will be deferred by the SNC for consideration in the second application cycle of the same fiscal year. Applicants may modify or add information to deferred applications, in consultation with SNC staff, until the deadline for the second application cycle. If not funded in the fiscal year in which the application was received, the applicant may submit a new application in a subsequent fiscal year.

There are two types of SOGs:

1. SOG 1 grants are available for the same project types as Competitive Grants for projects between \$5,000 and \$250,000. They must be authorized by the Board.
2. SOG 2 grants may be used for activities other than acquisition and site improvement/restoration including, but not limited to:
  - Initial project planning and development
  - Pre-acquisition activities (appraisal services, surveys, preliminary title reports, environmental review and site assessments, etc.)
  - Pre-site improvement/restoration activities (environmental review, site assessments, surveys, etc.)
  - Monitoring and assessments
  - Educational or interpretive activities, publications, and events
  - Research
  - Planning (for example: community plans, watershed plans, local fire plans, and natural disaster plans)

Note: all projects must address one or more of the SNC Program goals and meet the requirements of Proposition 84 described above.

SOG 2 requests may be any amount not to exceed \$500,000. All requests exceeding \$50,000 require Board approval. Grants of less than \$50,000 may be authorized by the Board, or by the Executive Officer in instances where there are extenuating circumstances or time constraints, and the project is ranked as high benefit by the SNC staff. The total amount of such authorizations by the Executive Officer will be limited to a maximum of

\$150,000 between scheduled Board meetings, and any authorizations shall be reported to the Board at the next scheduled Board meeting.

### **C. Block Grants**

For SOGs only, an applicant may submit grant applications for “block” funding of like projects proposed by multiple eligible entities (potential subgrantees), with the object of managing the grant funding for all of the projects under a single umbrella. This approach can significantly reduce administrative cost and effort for both the SNC and the applicant, since only one SNC grant agreement would be required. Project “blocks” may include, but are not limited to, activities such as: fire safe projects, habitat protection/enhancement efforts, mapping or other information technology projects, invasive species eradication, or educational efforts. Applicants are required to contact SNC staff in advance if they wish to pursue a block grant.

Such projects, in addition to being similar in nature, must meet Guideline requirements and must collectively fall within the applicable funding limits for an individual project in that category of grants. A summary sheet listing all of the projects, the rationale for grouping them, and the proposed managing agency must be provided along with the individual applications. Each individual project application will still be subject to review, and the SNC will reserve the right to fund a portion of the overall package.

No block grant may exceed \$500,000, inclusive of administrative costs. Administrative costs may not exceed 15 percent of eligible project implementation costs for the entire block grant (see II.D., Eligible Costs, for additional information). The 15 percent limit applies to total administrative expenses for both the grantee and subgrantees.

## **IV. Specific Requirements for Acquisition and Site Improvement / Restoration Projects**

### **A. Acquisition Projects**

#### **1. Overview**

The SNC may make grants to public agencies, qualifying nonprofit organizations, and eligible tribal organizations to acquire an interest in real property, either fee title or a less-than-fee interest, from willing sellers only. Although the SNC is prohibited by statute (PRC 33347) from purchasing real property outright (i.e., fee title), it can fund the acquisition of fee title by other eligible entities. The SNC may also award grants for the acquisition of water rights from willing sellers. All interests to be acquired must be in perpetuity (permanent); thus, no grants will be awarded for acquisition of temporary easements, leaseholds, or the like.

Proposition 84 funds may not be used to retire debt previously incurred by an eligible applicant in connection with the applicant's acquisition of a real property interest.<sup>2</sup>

2. Requirements

A grant application to acquire an interest in real property shall specify all of the following:

- (a) The intended use of the property
- (b) The manner in which the land will be managed
- (c) How the cost of ongoing management will be funded

The SNC may require applicants to provide a Phase I or Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (toxics report) on any property proposed for acquisition. Applicants are encouraged to consult with SNC staff to determine if this requirement is applicable.

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

- (a) The purchase price of an interest in real property acquired shall not exceed fair market value as established by an appraisal which meets state standards and which is approved by the SNC. Appraisals may require more than one pre-approval review if the appraised value of the property is based on the presence of resources such as timber, mineral rights, water rights, carbon sequestration potential, and/or historic values, or the inclusion of both real and personal property.
- (b) The terms under which the interest in real property is acquired shall be subject to the SNC's approval.
- (c) An interest in real property to be acquired under the grant shall not be used as security for a debt unless the SNC approves the transaction.
- (d) The transfer of an interest in the real property shall be subject to approval of the SNC, and a new agreement sufficient to protect the public interest shall be entered into between the SNC and the transferee.

The deed or instrument by which the grantee acquires an interest in real property under the grant shall include a power of termination on the part of the SNC. The deed or instrument shall provide that the SNC may exercise the power of termination by notice in the event of the grantee's violation of the purpose of the grant through breach of a material term or condition

---

<sup>2</sup> Inclusion of this sentence is subject to a final opinion by the California Attorney General's Office on these types of projects.

thereof, and that, upon recordation of the notice, full title to the interest in real property identified in the notice shall immediately vest in the SNC, or in another public agency or a nonprofit organization or tribal organization designated by the SNC to which the SNC conveys or has conveyed its interest.

## **B. Site Improvement/Restoration Projects**

### **1. Overview**

As described in the “[Eligible Projects](#)” section earlier in this document, a wide array of potential projects will be considered by SNC. Applicants are encouraged to consult with SNC staff in determining the appropriateness of potential projects.

### **2. Land Tenure**

Applicants must demonstrate and document to the SNC that they have adequate tenure to, and site control of, the properties to be improved or restored.

Adequate land tenure includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Fee title ownership.
- An easement or license agreement, sufficient for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.
- Other agreement between the applicant and the fee title owner, or the owner of an easement in the property sufficient to give the applicant adequate site control for the purposes of the project.<sup>3</sup>

If the land tenure requirement is met through fee title ownership or other deeded interest, the applicant shall include the recordation number(s) on the application form or on a separate sheet attached to the application form. Recordation numbers are found on the deed or may be obtained through the applicable county recorder’s office. If property is not owned in fee title, the applicant shall provide supporting documentation (copy of lease, easement deed, or agreement, etc.) with the application in order to verify that the land tenure requirement has been met.

### **3. Land Tenure Requirements – Alternate Process**

When an applicant does not have tenure at the time of application, but intends to establish tenure via an agreement that will be signed upon grant authorization, the applicant must follow the alternate land tenure process by:

---

<sup>3</sup> Adequate site control is the power or authority to conduct activities that are necessary for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

- Submitting a copy of the proposed agreement at the time of application, as well as letters from the applicant and the prospective landlord in which each commits to sign the proposed agreement should the application be successful.

Once a project has been authorized for funding, the applicant must submit a fully-executed agreement which meets the land tenure requirements within 30 days of SNC Board authorization to execute the grant agreement.

## V. Applying for a Grant

### A. General Information

All application materials and forms will be available from the SNC Web site or SNC offices by request (also refer to the checklist in the appropriate GAP). All application materials are due and must be delivered to the SNC headquarters office in Auburn by 5:00 PM on the application due date or postmarked no later than the due date. Please contact SNC staff to coordinate submittal and ensure receipt.

#### 1. Pre-Application

Applicants are encouraged to consult with SNC staff at least 30 days prior to the filing deadline to receive pre-application assistance. Applicants seeking assistance should provide a pre-project description of no more than one page in length (See pre-application template in Exhibit B of any GAP). Staff feedback can help the applicant develop a more successful application.

#### 2. Application

Applications submitted by the deadline will be evaluated by SNC staff for completeness and compliance with program requirements. An applicant may submit applications for more than one project; however, each type of project must have its own application.

**NOTE: Appraisals (acquisition only) and CEQA compliance documents must be completed and submitted with the application.**

All information submitted becomes property of SNC and part of the public record. These materials may be viewed by the public. In the SNC's effort to conduct business in an open and transparent manner, application content may also be posted to the SNC website.

In some instances, applicants may request that certain information submitted in an application be considered confidential. Upon request of the applicant, SNC staff will determine if the information can legally be treated as confidential, and if so, will not share that information publicly.

By submitting application materials, the applicant agrees to give SNC permission to use them for not-for-profit governmental purposes including,

but not limited to, education and awareness. Examples of materials that may be used by the SNC are photographs, maps, text, graphics, and forms. This permission to SNC includes publication of printed material, television broadcasts, Web sites, or intranet. Applicant will not be compensated for such use.

## **B. Acquisition and/or Site Improvement/Restoration Projects**

The SNC offers grants for acquisition and/or site improvement/restoration projects under the Competitive Grant program and the SOG 1 program. This section outlines the process for all acquisition or site improvement/restoration funding.

To maintain fairness for all competitors, SNC staff will be able to provide information and assistance in developing Competitive Grant and SOG 1 applications only to the point of application submission. SNC staff may contact applicants after the submission deadlines to seek clarification of previously submitted items.

Performance measure information and the most current application process schedule will be provided on the SNC Web site at: <http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/grants.html>. The GAPS for Competitive and SOG 1 Applications are available at: <http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/application.html>.

### **1. Competitive Grants**

Project applications will be solicited, reviewed, and authorized on an annual cycle.

Competitive Grants will be authorized by the SNC Board for two types of projects between \$250,000 and \$1,000,000:

- (a) Acquisition or
- (b) Site improvement/restoration

### **2. Strategic Opportunity Grant 1s**

SOG 1s will be authorized by the SNC Board for acquisition and site improvement/restoration projects between \$5,000 and \$250,000. These applications may be submitted in either of the two annual filing cycles.

## **C. Other Projects**

SOG 2s are available for projects other than acquisition and site improvement/restoration projects. The application process for SOG 2s is similar to that for SOG 1s described above. Performance measure information and the most current application process schedule are located at: <http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/grants.html>. The GAP for SOG 2 Applications is located at: <http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/application.html>.

## VI. Competitive and SOG 1 Grant Proposals Evaluation and Criteria

As stated previously, in order to be eligible for Proposition 84 funding a project must:  
a) contribute to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources; AND b) address one or more of the seven SNC program areas.

Applicants will need to provide a written answer to each question or respond to each statement in the evaluation criteria as it pertains to the project. The criteria headings should be included in each response, i.e. Project Quality and Readiness, Land and Water Benefits, SNC Program Goals, etc., but not the questions or directions themselves.

Projects will be evaluated on the following criteria in order to determine which projects will provide the greatest contribution to achieving the SNC's mission, consistent with the requirements of Proposition 84.

The total number of points possible for each application is 100.

### A. **Project Quality and Readiness** (Maximum of 20 points)

The level of detail included in the project description should allow a person unfamiliar with the project to understand the purpose, goals, and outcomes of the project. The project description should allow for review of consistency with site plans, budget items, and maps.

#### 1. General Description

Describe the proposed project in detail, including purpose, goals and deliverables. Stipulate specifically what work will be completed utilizing SNC grant funding. Describe methods to be used to accomplish the project and the role of applicant and all partners/contractors. Explain if implementation of the project is part of a larger plan and how it relates to other projects. Describe related activities that have been completed to date and how the project supports these efforts. Describe what steps of the project are already complete or in progress.

#### 2. Workplan and Schedule

- (a) In the workplan, describe the specific tasks and schedule needed to complete the project.
- (b) Describe the factors affecting the project's timeline and completion, and how these factors will be addressed. Describe how the project will be implemented in a timely manner.

#### 3. Budget

NOTE: The Budget section needs to be consistent with the Project Summary located in the appropriate GAP at:

<http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/application.html>.

- (a) Describe any monetary and/or in-kind support that is a part of the project, including the source(s) of funds already committed to the project. Cite specific dollar amounts for cash contributions or in-kind services, such as volunteer effort, technical expertise, etc. Other contributions to the project are not required for it to receive a grant; however, projects that include other sources of funds may receive higher scores.
  - (b) Clarify what specific portions of the project are requested to be funded by the SNC grant and what funds will be contributed by the applicant and/or others. Explain the timing of availability of all funding.
  - (c) If a project depends on other funding sources, describe what has been done to date and future actions that will be taken to secure the remaining funding.
  - (d) If a project does not depend on other funding sources, include a statement that funding from SNC will be sufficient to complete the project.
  - (e) Describe the cost-effectiveness of the project. For example, describe how costs compare to similar projects, how the project may use existing data and resources, and how the project will save costs in the future.
4. Status of technical documents and agreements  
Describe the status of the following and provide documentation as appropriate:
- (a) Agreements and commitments from project partners. Partnerships or collaborations deemed essential for the implementation of the grant project must be firmly established at the time of application.
  - (b) Preliminary title report and negotiations of terms of sale, option to purchase, or easement with a willing seller (**acquisitions only**).
  - (c) Property restrictions and/or encumbrances, easements, mineral rights (**acquisitions only**).
  - (d) Necessary permits and description of land tenure held (**site improvement/restoration projects only**).

5. Long-Term Management

Properties acquired with grant funds, including less than fee title acquisitions, must be maintained to protect the value of the resource. Long-term management plans for acquired properties shall be consistent with the purposes for acquisitions. Interests in real property acquired with Proposition 84 grant funding must be in perpetuity.

Site improvements must be maintained to protect the value of the resource. Long-Term Management Plans for site improvement/restoration projects shall be for a minimum of 10 years or for a period determined to be necessary by the SNC for successful project implementation.

- (a) Describe the long-term management plan and how it will ensure that the benefits will be realized, including:
  - i. What is planned for the long-term management?
  - ii. Who will perform the long-term management? Describe the individual's or organization's experience in managing this type of resource.
  - iii. How will the ongoing management be funded?
- (b) What, if any, future modifications/improvements may be considered for the resource (e.g., habitat improvement/restoration, recreation, public access, etc.)? How would the property continue to meet the SNC program requirements with these improvements?
- (c) For conservation easements, describe who will hold the easement, the plan for stewardship, and address ongoing funding to support the terms and conditions of the stewardship plan (**acquisitions only**).
- (d) For working landscapes, describe the economic activity that would occur and the effect the acquisition will have on that activity (**acquisitions only**).

Points will be awarded based on the degree of project quality and readiness.

**B. Land and Water Benefits (Maximum of 30 Points)**

1. Describe how the project contributes to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. Include how the project provides direct, indirect, and long term benefits; avoids adverse impacts; and addresses existing or potential threats to water and watersheds and other natural resources.
2. Describe the sustainability of the project in the context of the surrounding watershed and land uses, including the potential impacts to the surrounding watershed and lands, and the potential impact that future activities on the surrounding watershed and lands may have on the project area.

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project benefits the resources described above.

**C. SNC Program Goals (Maximum of 30 points)**

1. Describe how the project addresses one or more of the SNC program goals listed below. Identify the primary goal(s), as well as any secondary goals, addressed by the project:
  - (a) Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation.
  - (b) Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources.
  - (c) Aid in the preservation of working landscapes.

- (d) Reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfires.
- (e) Protect and improve water and air quality.
- (f) Assist the regional economy through the operation of the SNC's program.
- (g) Undertake efforts to enhance public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project provides direct benefits consistent with one or more SNC program goals. Projects that provide direct benefits to multiple program goals will be awarded higher scores.

**D. Cooperation and Community Support (Maximum of 10 points)**

1. Describe demonstrated community support and project partners. Letters of support or other indications of support are encouraged, but optional. However, to be considered for the purpose of scoring they must be included in the application and written on the supporting agency's or organization's letterhead.
2. Describe the efforts to include various stakeholders in planning and/or implementation of the project.
  - (a) Consultation and cooperation with local, state, and federal agencies, including methods used to solicit participation.
  - (b) The use of stakeholders in designing and/or implementing the project, including methods used to solicit participation. Describe the involvement of youth in the project, if appropriate.
3. Describe any known project opposition with an explanation of the nature of the concerns, and any efforts that have been taken to address the concerns.
4. Explain how the project will provide educational opportunities about the Sierra Nevada, the SNC, and the project area for children, schools, and communities.
5. Describe the compatibility of the project with plans including, but not limited to, general plans, recreation plans, urban water management plans, integrated regional water management plans, community wildfire protection plans, and resource conservation plans, as well as the potential impact these plans may have on the long-term sustainability of the project.
6. Explain how the benefits of the completed project would be communicated to local and regional media; elected and agency officials from within the region; elected and agency officials from outside the region; non-governmental and business partners; and others.

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project exhibits cooperation, community support, compatibility with existing plans, and potential for educational benefits.

**E. Project Design, Management, and Sustainability (Maximum of 10 points)**

1. Describe the capability of applicant and/or partners to provide for all relevant aspects of an integrated management process that includes project planning, acquisition, restoration, monitoring, operation, and maintenance. This should include a description of your organization's structure, longevity, staffing, capability, and experience. The applicant should demonstrate that staff or partners involved in the project will utilize all the applicable basic elements of a project management process. Provide information on the following:
  - (a) Fiscal partners and their roles in the project as related to the workplan Applicant's or partners' demonstrated ability or type of training received to implement the proposed project
  - (b) All elements of a management process, including:
    - i. The appropriate up-front planning that demonstrates the project need
    - ii. The expertise needed to complete the project within the applicant's or its partners' organization
    - iii. Utilizing appropriate design to obtain maximum sustainability of the proposed project
    - iv. A demonstrated ability to design the project to minimize impact to the natural and cultural resources
    - v. Construction techniques that utilize aesthetic design and compatible or renewable material resources (for site improvement/restoration projects)
    - vi. A monitoring and maintenance process that keeps the proposed project at intended standards
2. Describe how the project is sustainable (can be continued over a long period of time without causing damage to the environment and community). Include a description of what is occurring or planned for the surrounding watershed and lands, and the effect it may have on the project's sustainability.
3. Describe how the project is useful as a model in the program area(s) or in other parts of the Region, if appropriate (i.e. innovative partnerships, approaches, problem-solving, or research).

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project demonstrates adequate design, management capacity, sustainability, and utilizes innovative approaches.

**F. Additional Factors and Final Ranking**

Competitive grants will be recommended for authorization by the SNC Board based solely on the points received using the evaluation criteria and without regard to geographic location.

For SOG 1s, the evaluation score will be used with other factors listed below in determining a final ranking for projects:

- Geographic distribution of projects across the Subregions
- Distribution of projects across program areas
- Organizational and community capacity

For the purposes of final rankings, SOG 1 projects will be considered together and placed in one of three ranks: High Benefit, Medium Benefit, and Low Benefit. Based on these rankings, recommendations for authorization by the SNC Board will be made for each Subregion as well as the Region-wide area, in consultation with Board committees.

Scoring summary information will be made public at the time recommendations are publicly noticed, usually two weeks prior to the Board meeting at which action is proposed. This information may include scores, rankings, and a narrative justification for recommendations.

## **VII. How SOG 2s are Evaluated**

In evaluating proposals for SOG 2 funding, Project Quality and Readiness, Land and Water Benefits, and SNC Program Goals (Paragraphs A, B, and C) are primary considerations. Cooperation and Community Support, Project Management, and Additional Ranking Factors (Paragraphs D, E, and F) are secondary considerations. A point system is not used for SOG 2 applications.

### **A. Project Quality and Readiness**

The level of detail should allow a person unfamiliar with the project to understand the purpose, goals, and outcomes of the project. The project description should allow for review of consistency with any site plans, budget items and maps.

#### **1. General Description**

Describe the proposed project in detail including purpose, goals and deliverables. Stipulate specifically what work will be completed utilizing SNC grant funding. Describe methods to be used to accomplish the project and the role of applicant and all partners/contractors. Explain if implementation of the project is part of a larger plan and how it relates to other projects. Describe related activities that have been completed to date and how the project supports these efforts. Describe what steps of the project are already complete or in progress.

#### **2. Workplan and Schedule**

In the workplan, describe the specific tasks and schedule needed to complete the project. Describe the factors affecting the project timeline

and completion such as availability of labor and materials, and how these factors will be addressed. Describe how the project will be implemented in a timely manner.

3. Budget

NOTE: This section needs to be consistent with the Project Summary located in the appropriate GAP at:

<http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/application.html>.

- (a) Describe any monetary and/or in-kind support that is a part of the project, including the source(s) of funds already committed to the project. Cite specific dollar amounts for cash contributions and in-kind services, such as volunteer effort, technical expertise, etc. Other contributions to the project are not required to receive a grant; however, projects that include other sources of funds will be more competitive.
- (b) Clarify what portions of the project are requested to be funded by the grant and what funds will be contributed by the applicant and/or others. Explain the timing of availability of all funding.
- (c) If a project depends on other funding sources, describe what has been done to date and future actions that will be taken to secure the remaining funding.
- (d) If a project does not depend on other funding sources, include a statement that funding from SNC will be sufficient to complete the project.
- (e) Describe the cost-effectiveness of the project. For example, describe how costs compare to similar projects, how the project may use existing data and resources, and how the project will save costs in the future.

4. Status of technical documents and agreements

Describe the status of the following and provide documentation as appropriate:

- (a) Agreements and commitments from project partners. Partnerships or collaborations deemed essential for the implementation of the grant project must be firmly established at the time of application.
- (b) Indication of the land tenure held (as applicable).

**B. Land and Water Benefits**

Describe how the project contributes to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. Include how the project provides direct, indirect and long term benefits; avoids adverse impacts; and addresses existing or potential threats to water and watersheds and other natural resources.

**C. SNC Program Goals**

1. Describe how the project addresses one or more of the SNC program goals listed below. Identify the primary goal(s), as well as any secondary goals, addressed by the project. Projects that provide multiple benefits will be given priority.
  - (a) Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation.
  - (b) Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources.
  - (c) Aid in the preservation of working landscapes.
  - (d) Reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfires.
  - (e) Protect and improve water and air quality.
  - (f) Assist the regional economy through the operation of the SNC's program.
  - (g) Undertake efforts to enhance public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

**D. Cooperation and Community Support**

1. Describe demonstrated community support and project partners. Letters of support or other indications of support are encouraged, but optional. However, to be considered for the purpose of evaluation they must be included in the application and written on the supporting agency's or organization's letterhead.
2. Describe the efforts to include various stakeholders in planning and/or implementation of the project.
  - (a) Consultation and cooperation with local, state, and federal agencies, including methods used to solicit participation.
  - (b) The use of stakeholders in designing and/or implementing the project, including methods used to solicit participation. Describe the involvement of youth in the project, if appropriate.
3. Describe any known project opposition with an explanation of the nature of the concerns, and any efforts that have been taken to address the concerns.
4. Explain how the project will provide educational opportunities about the Sierra Nevada, the SNC, and the project area for children, schools, and communities.
5. Describe the compatibility of the project with plans including, but not limited to, general plans, recreation plans, urban water management plans, integrated regional water management plans, community wildfire protection plans, and resource conservation plans, as well as the potential impact these plans may have on the long term sustainability of the project.
6. Explain how the benefits of the completed project would be communicated to local and regional media; elected and agency officials from within the region; elected and agency officials from outside the region; non-governmental and business partners; and others.

**E. Project Management**

Describe the capability of applicant and/or partners to provide for all relevant aspects of an integrated management process that ensures successful project planning, implementation, and maintenance. This should include a description of your organization's structure, longevity, staffing, capability, and experience. The applicant should demonstrate that staff or partners involved in the project will utilize all the applicable basic elements of a project management process. Provide information on the following:

1. Fiscal partners and their roles in the project as related to the workplan
2. Applicant's or partners' demonstrated ability or type of training received to implement the proposed project

**F. Additional Factors and Final Ranking**

The following additional evaluation factors may be taken into consideration in project ranking:

- Geographic distribution of projects across the Subregions
- Distribution of projects across program areas
- Organizational and community capacity

For the purposes of final rankings, SOG 2 projects will be considered together and placed in one of three ranks: High Benefit, Medium Benefit, and Low Benefit. Based on these rankings, recommendations for authorization by the SNC Board will be made for each Subregion as well as the Region-wide area, in consultation with Board committees. Ranking summary information will be made public at the time recommendations are publicly noticed, usually two weeks prior to the Board meeting at which action is proposed. This information may include project rankings and a narrative justification for recommendations.

## APPENDIX A

### Program Geographic Area

Project must be located in, or partly in, the boundaries of the Sierra Nevada Region to be eligible. PRC Section 33302 (f) defines the Sierra Nevada Region as the area lying within the Counties of Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba, bounded as follows:

On the east by the eastern boundary of the State of California; the crest of the White/Inyo ranges; and State Routes 395 and 14 south of Olancho; on the south by State Route 58, Tehachapi Creek, and Caliente Creek; on the west by the line of 1,250 feet above sea level from Caliente Creek to the Kern/Tulare County line; the lower level of the western slope's blue oak woodland, from the Kern/Tulare County line to the Sacramento River near the mouth of Seven-Mile Creek north of Red Bluff; the Sacramento River from Seven-Mile Creek north to Cow Creek below Redding; Cow Creek, Little Cow Creek, Dry Creek, and the Shasta National Forest portion of Bear Mountain Road, between the Sacramento River and Shasta Lake; the Pit River Arm of Shasta Lake; the northerly boundary of the Pit River watershed; the southerly and easterly boundaries of Siskiyou County; and within Modoc County, the easterly boundary of the Klamath River watershed; and on the north by the northern boundary of the State of California; excluding both of the following:

- (1) The Lake Tahoe Region, as described in Section 66905.5 of the Government Code, where it is defined as "Region."
- (2) The San Joaquin River Parkway, as described in Section 32510.

See: [http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/map\\_of\\_the\\_region\\_sub\\_regions.html](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/map_of_the_region_sub_regions.html) for general map of the Region; however applicants should contact staff to verify whether project is located in an eligible area.

## APPENDIX B

### Glossary of Terms

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

Acquisition – To obtain ownership of the fee title or any other permanent interest in real property, including easements and development rights. Leaseholds and rentals do not constitute Acquisition.

Agreement Performance Period – The period of time during which the eligible costs may be incurred under the grant, and in which the work described in the grant scope must be completed.

Agreement Term – The period of time that includes the Agreement Performance Period, plus time for all work to be billed and paid by the state. This period is the same as the beginning and ending dates of the agreement.

Applicant – Eligible entities as defined by the SNC program.

Application – The individual application form and its required attachments for grants pursuant to the SNC Program.

Authorized Representative – The officer authorized in the Resolution to sign all required Grant documents including, but not limited to, the Grant agreement, the application form, and payment requests. The authorized representative may designate an alternate by informing SNC in writing.

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

Bond or Bond Act - Proposition 84, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coast Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Public Resources Code Section 75001 et seq.).

Capacity Building – Increasing the ability of a community, local government, or organization to design, develop, and carry out programs or projects.

Capital Improvement Projects that utilize grant funds for acquisition of land or site improvement/restoration.

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

Competitive – A process whereby projects are ranked and selected on the basis of program-specific criteria.

Conservancy – The Sierra Nevada Conservancy as defined in Public Resources Code Section 33302 (b).

Conservation Easement - Any limitation in a deed, will or other instrument in the form of an easement, restriction, covenant or condition which is or has been executed by or on behalf of the owner of the land subject to such easement and is binding upon the successive owners of such land, and the purpose of which is to retain land predominantly in its natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, forested or open-space condition. (Civil Code Section 815.1)

Easement - An interest in land entitling the holder thereof to a limited use or enjoyment of the land in which the interest exists, or to restrict the use or enjoyment of the land by the owner of the fee title.

Executive Officer – The person appointed the manager of the SNC.

Fair Market Value - The value placed upon property as supported by an appraisal that has been reviewed and approved by the California Department of General Services or other designated authority.

Eligible Costs – Expenses incurred by the Grantee during the Agreement Performance Period of an approved Agreement, which may be reimbursed by the SNC.

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

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 within the agreement performance period by the grantee.

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

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

Historical Resource – Includes, but is not limited to, any building, structure, site, area, place, artifact, or collection of artifacts that is historically or archaeologically significant from a statewide perspective.

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

NEPA – The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. NEPA is a federal law requiring consideration of the potential environmental effects of proposed project whenever a federal agency has discretionary jurisdiction over some aspect of that project. For more information, refer to: <http://ceq.eh.doe.gov/nepa/nepanet.htm>.

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 that has among its principal charitable purposes preservation of land for scientific, educational, recreational, scenic, or open-space opportunities; or protection of the natural environment or preservation or enhancement of wildlife; or preservation of cultural and historical resources; or efforts to provide for the enjoyment of public lands.

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

Preservation - Rehabilitation, stabilization, restoration, development, and reconstruction, or any combination of those activities.

Project – The work to be accomplished with grant funds.

Project Coordinator – An employee of the SNC who acts as a liaison with the applicants or grantees and administers grant funds, ensuring compliance with guidelines and the grant agreement.

Proposition 84 - See Bond.

Protection - Those actions necessary to prevent harm or damage to rivers, lakes, and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources, or those actions necessary to allow the continued use and enjoyment of property or natural resources and includes acquisition, restoration, preservation and education.

Public Agencies – Any city, county, district, or joint powers authority; State agency; public university; or federal agency.

Region – The Sierra Nevada Region as defined in Public Resources Code Section 33302 (f).

Region-wide – Providing benefits that affect the overall breadth of the SNC Region or multiple Subregions within the Region.

Restoration - The improvement of physical structures or facilities and, in the case of natural systems and landscape features includes, but is not limited to, projects for the control of erosion, the control and elimination of invasive species, prescribed burning, fuel hazard reduction, fencing out threats to existing or restored natural resources, road elimination, and other plant and wildlife habitat improvement to increase the natural system value of the property.

Site Improvements/Restoration - Project activities involving the physical improvement or restoration of land.

SNC – Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Stewardship Plan - A plan to provide ongoing implementation and management associated with the acquisition of a conservation easement or site improvement/restoration project.

Subgrantee – An entity that enters into a contractual or grantor/grantee relationship with another entity receiving a block grant from the SNC for the purpose of carrying out a portion of the scope of work of the block grant.

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

Trail – A thoroughfare or track for pedestrian (including assistive mobility devices), skating or skateboarding, equestrian, skiing, canoeing, kayaking, bicycling or off-highway vehicle activities.

Tribal Organization – An Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, or a tribal agency authorized by a tribe, which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and is identified on pages 52829 to 52835, inclusive, of Number 250 of Volume 53 (December 29, 1988) of the Federal Register, as that list may be updated or amended from time to time.

Working Landscape(s) - Lands producing goods and commodities from the natural environment (such as farms, ranches, and forests in timber production). For many communities, these lands are an important part of the local economy, culture, and social fabric.

## Background

The Strategic Plan identifies the need to develop Performance Measures and Indicators to measure the success of SNC projects and programs, as well as progress toward improving the environmental, economic and social well-being of the Region. Indicators and measures are generally described as follows:

- **System Indicators** to measure the well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region. Examples include per capita income of Sierra residents, measures of water turbidity or ppb of mercury, and percentage of home ownership within the Region. **Indices** are groups of Indicators.
- **Program Performance Measures** to track progress in achieving program goals and meeting the SNC's overall mission. Examples include the total number of acres protected by SNC-funded conservation easements, recreational visitor days on public lands, and measures of increased collaboration resulting from SNC-funded projects.
- **Project Outcome Performance Measures** to track project efforts against the expected outcomes. Examples include miles of trails constructed, tons of carbon sequestered/avoided, and number of archeological sites protected as a result of a project.

At the July, 2007 meeting, the Board approved an overall process for the development and use of Indicators and Performance Measures at three levels:

At the December, 2007 meeting, the Board approved an interim list of Performance Measures specifically for projects awarded during the 2007-08 grant cycle through Proposition 84 funding. This comprised the initial stage of the overall effort.

At the March, 2008 meeting, the Board was provided an overview of project accomplishments at that time, including a preliminary 'conceptual' lists of system indicators and performance measures, as well as an approach to completing the analysis. The Chairman appointed Boardmembers Carol Whiteside and Robert Weygandt to serve as members of a committee to guide this project.

## Current Status

- **System Indicators require further analysis:** The team conducted a series of public workshops, web-conferences and stakeholder interviews, which were valuable for obtaining public input regarding the types and use of System Indicators for SNC consideration. The analysis of this input is ongoing as of the date of this staff report and is expected to continue through September. The team will prepare a final initial set of System Indicators for presentation to the Board in October. This will also include a presentation to the Board of a final Governance and Implementation Plan describing the communications, systems

and processes needed to gather and report performance information, integrate it into SNC decision-making, and make it available for use by others in the Region.

- ***Program and Project Performance Measures have been finalized:***  
Attachment A of this Staff Report presents the final initial set of 20 performance measures (PMs) for implementation by SNC contingent on Board approval. These PMs have undergone a four step development process as follows:

Step 1. *Develop Interim PM List (October, 2007)* – The SNC staff and additional subject experts conducted initial work sessions which resulted in identifying approx. 180 PMs for consideration. The list was used in selection of interim performance measures for the first year of grants and provided a starting point for the project team's development of long-term PMs.

Step 2. *Evaluate and Refine (February, 2008)* – The project team applied specific criteria which resulted in refining the list of interim PMs to 34 candidates. The test criteria required that PMs be measurements of SNC's direct actions provide quantitative information within a useful timeframe and relate to SNC's program areas. The test also considered each PM's usefulness for management decisions and reportability at the Subregional scale, level of effort, and relationship to measurements reported by other programs.

Step 3. *Public Survey (March, 2008)* – A web-based survey was conducted of SNC staff, Board members, stakeholders, grantees and the interested public. The survey provided the project team ratings for each PM and asked respondents to give their own ratings. Rating categories included:

- ✓ Information value
- ✓ Usability
- ✓ Usefulness in decision making
- ✓ Ability to fund

The results were combined into scores and contributed to the project team's recommendations regarding which measures to include for the Strategic Advisory Group and SNC management review.

Step 4. *Finalize (April, 2008)* – The project team performed a comprehensive evaluation of survey results and also applied expert judgment to arrive at a final PM list that provides ample representation of all SNC Project Types and SNC Program Areas. This process included:

- ✓ *Stakeholder Advisory Workshop (April 21, 2008)* – The PMs were presented and fully discussed. Input was extremely useful in understanding implementation considerations.
- ✓ *SNC Management Workshop (April 22, 2008)* – SNC management completed an exercise to focus the number of PMs while maintaining good representation of both SNC Program Areas and SNC's interim Project Types. This resulted in the final list of 20 initial PMs that are presented here as Attachment A.
- ✓ Consultation with the Board Committee regarding appropriateness of performance measures and their intended use.

### **Next Steps**

Over the next couple of months, the project team will continue to evaluate and develop a final recommended set of System Indicators to present to the Board in October. The project team will work closely with SNC management and the Board committee in this effort.

A Governance and Implementation Plan (the Plan) will be prepared for presentation to the Board in October. Finalizing the Plan will involve direct work with SNC, stakeholders and others to identify ways System Indicators and Performance Measures will be systematically used, both internally and externally, for adaptive improvement. The Plan will be developed to articulate the relationship of Performance Measures to program improvement and to future strategic planning processes. It will also define annual and five-year cycles of data collection and reporting. Initial planning considerations are included in Attachment B—How Grantees will be Involved in the Performance Measurement Process, and Attachment C—How Performance Measures will be Used in Internal SNC Management Processes and Reporting.

### **Recommendation**

Board approval of the initial set of performance measures provided as Attachment A.

In addition, Board review, comment and direction is requested regarding the implementation considerations documented as follows:

- **Attachment B** – How Grantees will be Involved in the Performance Measurement Process
- **Attachment C** – Use of Performance Measures in internal SNC management Processes and Reporting

A final Governance and Implementation Plan will be brought to the Board for review and approval at the October meeting.

Draft

## ATTACHMENT A PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This attachment presents the set of initial Performance Measures (PMs) that have been developed for implementation by SNC. The attachment is organized as follows:

- **Performance Measures Descriptions** –a summary description of each PM.
- **Performance Measures for All Projects** – the quantitative and qualitative PMs that will be required of all projects.
- **Performance Measures Specific to Project Type** – a listing of the PMs by project type.
- **Other SNC Performance Tracking** –additional measures needed to track SNC activities

### A.1 Performance Measures Descriptions

The following set of 20 PMs have been developed to meet SNC's initial needs as it launches its programs and provides initial grant funding for several project types. These PMs, along with a brief description of each, are listed alphabetically below in two broad categories: Performance Measures for All Projects and Performance Measures specific to Project Type. A full definition, including implementation considerations, has been documented within a PM Information Sheet (see Figure A-1 for an overview of the PM Information Sheet):

#### PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ALL PROJECTS

- **Number of Projects**  
The Number of Projects completed by SNC provides basic information about SNC's level of activity related to accomplishing its programmatic goals and delivering services to the Sierra Nevada. Completed projects are categorized by SNC program area and project type.
- **Funds Directly Distributed in the Sierra Nevada**  
Funds Directly Distributed in the Sierra Nevada provides a direct measure of SNC's investments in the Sierra Nevada by program area and project type. The total value is based on funds expended by SNC to grantees in the Sierra Nevada, as distinguished from funds committed or approved.
- **Number of People Reached**  
Number of People Reached measures progress of information-sharing and education efforts and inclusiveness of other project efforts such as plan development.

- **Dollar Value of Resources Leveraged for the Sierra Nevada**  
The Dollar Value of Resources Leveraged provides a measure of the additional resources generated as a result of SNC investment. The total value is based on matching funds provided by external sources, valuation of volunteer hours, and the value of in-kind contributions made by a project. This performance measure is applicable to all of SNC's program areas and measures SNC's ability to leverage Californian's direct investment in the Sierra.
- **Number and Type of Jobs Created**  
Number and Type of Jobs Created provides an accounting of the full-time equivalent jobs created by SNC-funded activities. This performance measure is subcategorized by employment types.
- **Number of New, Improved or Preserved Economic Activities**  
New, Improved or Preserved Economic Activities measures the types, quantities, and, where appropriate, estimated dollar values of new, improved or preserved activities, products and services. This performance measure relates to SNC goals to develop tourism and recreational opportunities, aid in the preservation of working landscapes, and assist the regional economy.

#### **PERFORMANCE MEASURES SPECIFIC TO PROJECT TYPE**

- **Acre Feet of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced**  
Acre Feet of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced measures the benefits of water conservation and efficiency projects and particular restoration efforts that impact timing of flows. These actions benefit both local residents and the people of California who receive their water supply from the Sierra Nevada. Project activities can include: meadow restoration to enhance runoff timing or incentive programs such as converting to drip irrigation to reduce demand.
- **Acres of Land Conserved**  
Acres of Land Conserved includes areas that have been conserved through acquisition, including easements. This performance measure provides an accounting of the extent of landscape and natural resources conserved by SNC activities, and includes two groups of subcategories – one that focuses on methods of conservation (acquisitions, easements), and the other on purposes of conservation (recreation, open space, working landscapes, etc).
- **Acres of Land Improved or Restored**  
Acres of Land Improved or Restored tracks efforts to reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as catastrophic wildfire, and improve natural resource conditions, such as site productivity and wildlife habitat through site improvement. Acres may be categorized by importance or priority rating, such

as acres of critical habitat, or acres in moderate, high and very high fire hazard areas as delineated by the Calfire Fire Hazard Severity Zoning Map. This performance measure includes description of site characteristics, improvement or restoration goals, methods, and size of areas treated by SNC-funded projects.

- **Cubic Feet of Streamflow Improved**  
Cubic Feet per Second of Streamflow Improved measures the changes in flow conditions in a given stream or river resulting from a project. This performance measure directly addresses improving water quality and habitat since flow can be a controlling driver in these issues. Subcategories include: water conservation or efficiency projects dedicating conserved water to instream flows, actions that result in re-management, short-term leases of water for instream flows, and permanent transfers through acquisition of a water right.
- **Feet of Trail/Path Length Constructed or Improved**  
The Feet of Trail/Path Length Constructed or Improved incorporates paved and unpaved multi-use urban, hiking, OHV, equestrian and other trails and paths. Trails and paths provide recreation and tourism opportunities as well as enhance the use of public lands.
- **Kilowatts of Renewable Energy Production Capacity Maintained or Created**  
The Kilowatts of Renewable Energy Production Capacity maintained or created is based on the California Energy Commission's (CEC's) standards for renewable energy eligibility and includes energy generation capacity from biomass, wind, solar, small hydroelectric and other qualifying sources.
- **Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected or Restored**  
Linear Feet of Streambank Protected or Restored provides a measure of a projects contribution to water quality, riparian property values, habitat, and stream connectivity. This performance measure includes subcategories for the length of both protected and restored banks.
- **Mass of Pollutant Reduced Per Year**  
The Mass of Pollutants Reduced Per Year indicates the pollutant reduction effectiveness of restoration, water and air quality project. Current projects focus on reducing sediment and mercury pollution; however, additional pollutants may be targeted in future projects. This performance measure is subcategorized by pollutant type and project type.
- **Measurable Changes in Knowledge of Behavior**  
Measurable Change in Knowledge or Behavior tracks the effects of educational and interpretive efforts to improve appreciation for and

stewardship of Sierra Nevada resources. Examples of behavioral change include increased Firewise landscaping and removal of noxious weeds on private property. Examples of change in knowledge include improved student understanding of climate change and increased public acceptance of prescribed fire.

- **Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments**  
The Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments is a measure that may be relevant for a wide variety of projects. Plans and assessments help communities plan for resource use, qualify for targeted funding, and support understanding of conditions and management options. Examples of anticipated subjects include fire protection, water resources, land use, tourism development, habitat surveys and many more.
- **Number of New Recreation Access Points**  
Number of New Recreation Access Points measures improvements in recreation access by types of access points, recreation type, and increased capacity. This measure addresses the SNC's goal of providing increased opportunities for tourism and recreation.
- **Number of Special Significance Sites Protected or Preserved**  
Number of Special Significance Sites Protected or Preserved records the total number of sites with important cultural or natural features that are protected from development or other adverse impacts. This performance measure helps track progress toward the SNC's goal to protect the Sierra Nevada Region's rich and diverse physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources.
- **Percent of Pre-project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation**  
Percent of Pre-project and Planning Efforts Implemented measures progress in moving SNC-funded projects from initial stages of collaboration and planning to on-the-ground actions.
- **Tons of Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided**  
The Tons of Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided demonstrates the value of Sierra ecosystem resources in reducing the effects of climate change. Potential project types can include conservation forest management, renewable energy generation and industrial process improvements. The carbon reductions included in this performance measure will be based on protocols published by the California Climate Action Registry.

## **Figure A-1**

### **Fully Defining Each PM**

A Performance Measure Information Sheet (PM Sheet) has been developed for each of the 19 PMs listed here. The PM Sheet provides a comprehensive documentation of the who, what, where, when, why, and how of each PM. The PM Sheets will serve to:

- Document each PM
- Assist grantees with reporting
- Assist SNC staff with streamlined procedures to manage and report PMs
- Guide SNC grantees and staff in the design of additional PMs when needed

The PM Sheets are primarily intended to be incorporated into SNC's Implementation Plan for SNC staff use, but sections of the PM Sheet for each performance measure are designed to be provided to grant applicants to help them understand specific performance measures. The PM Sheets contain the following information:

- **PM Summary** – a single paragraph summary of the PM targeted toward a general audience. The summary briefly describes what the PM measures and how it is related to the SNC's program goals.
- **Related Program Areas** – a list of the SNC program areas to which the PM is related.
- **Related Project Types** – a list of the project types to which the PM can be applied. Project types may expand over time.
- **PM Subcategories** – the applicable subcategories of the PM that allow reporting on important subtopics. For instance, Acres of Land Conserved is subcategorized by acres for wildlife habitat, acres for recreation, acres for open space, and other subcategories. In many cases, there are more than one type of subcategory, thus acres may be counted for both wildlife habitat and riparian restoration.
- **Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting** – the details needed by project proponents and SNC staff to consistently and successfully report PMs. This section is divided into subsections for grant applicants and separate sections for SNC staff. It defines criteria to help grant applicants determine what qualifies as a unit of a PM and suggested forms to help them report in a structured format.
- **Notes** – important additional information that is specific to the PM that was not included in other sections. Often these notes include recommendations for future development of the PM or recommendations to ease PM data management tasks.

## **A.2 Performance Measures for All Projects**

A few PMs will be required for reporting of every project, regardless of project type. These will comprise quantitative measures as well as qualitative (i.e., narrative) information. These are described below.

### ***Overarching Grant Program Information***

From the list of 20 initial performance measures, there are two project performance measures that will not be reported by grantees but rather will be compiled by SNC in measuring basic administrative statistics applicable to all projects. These are:

- Funds Directly Distributed in the Sierra Nevada
- Number of Projects

### ***Project Quantitative Reporting***

From the list of 20 initial performance measures, there are four quantitative performance measures that all grantees will be required to report, if applicable, namely:

- Dollar Value of Resources Leveraged
- Number of People Reached
- Number of Jobs Created
- Number of New, Improved or Preserved Economic Activities

### ***Project Qualitative Reporting***

In addition, all projects will be required to provide a qualitative narrative report at the end of the project that describes the impact of their project in broader and less formal terms than that supplied through the quantitative reporting described above. Figure A-2 below provides a recommended set of narrative questions that will be part of Final Report Instructions for grantees. Other components of the final report include: 1) reporting on progress toward goals and objectives of the project, financial reporting, and reporting relative to quantifiable performance measures.

**Figure A-2**

**Sample Narrative Questionnaire for Grantees – *Qualitative Results***

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is very interested in the results of your project and what you learned. Grantees are the “boots on the ground” for the Conservancy and we count on you to let us know what worked and what did not work for your project, and also what you learned. This is critical information for SNC so that we can adapt over time, report to a range of audiences, and pass on this information to others in the region so they, too, can better their work. Please be candid and concise with your responses, limiting the entire project narrative to no more than five pages.

**Most Significant Accomplishment**

Describe in one concise, well-written paragraph, the most significant accomplishment that resulted from this grant. This paragraph will be read by SNC’s Board of Directors.

**WOW Factor**

If applicable, please describe anything that happened as a result of the project or during the project that is particularly impressive.

**Design and Implementation: Lessons Learned**

When considering the design and implementation of this project, what lessons did you learn that might help other grantees implement similar work?

**Indirect Impact**

Please describe any indirect benefits of the project such as information that has been developed as a result of the project is being used by several other organizations to improve decision-making, or a conservation easement funded by this grant that encouraged other landowners in the area to have conservation easements on their property.

**Collaboration and Conflict Reduction**

If you worked in collaboration or cooperation with other organizations or institutions, describe those arrangements and their importance to the project. Also, describe if you encountered conflict in the project and how you dealt with it, or if there was conflict avoided as a result of the project.

**Capacity-Building**

SNC is interested in both the capacity of your organization, as well as local and regional capacity. Please describe the overall health of your organization including areas in need of assistance. SNC is interested in the strength and involvement of your board, significant changes to staff, size and involvement of membership. In addition, describe how your project improved capabilities of partners, or the larger community.

## **Figure A-2 (continued)**

### **Sample Narrative Questionnaire for Grantees – *Qualitative Results***

#### **Challenges**

Did the project face internal or external challenges? How were they addressed? Describe each challenge and any actions that you took to address it. Was there something that SNC did or could have done to assist you? Did you have to change any of your key objectives in response to conditions “on the ground”?

#### **Photographs**

Grantees are strongly encouraged to submit photos, slides or digital images whenever possible. These images will be used for SNC publications such as annual reports or on the website. Please make sure you clearly identify location, activity, and your project with each submitted image. Imagines will be credited to the submitting organization, unless specified otherwise.

#### **Post-Grant Plans**

What are the post-grant plans for the project if it does not conclude with the grant? Include a description of the following (if applicable): (1) Changes in operations or scope; (2) Replication or use of findings; (3) Names of other organizations you expect to involve; (4) Plans to support the project financially, and; (5) Communication plans?

#### **Post-Grant Contact**

Who can be contacted a few years from now to follow up on the project? Please provide name and contact information.

## **A.3 Performance Measures Specific to Project Type**

In addition to reporting on PMs relevant to all projects, each grantee will report on PMs relevant to measuring the success of their specific project. To aid in the selection of relevant PMs for specific projects, the PMs can be grouped by project type. These groupings are shown in Figure A-3 below. It is worth noting that some projects may fall into more than one category. For example, a project to reduce fuels in order to decrease the risk of wild fire might also have an educational component related to helping homeowners understand the importance of defensible space. In those instances where more than one category may apply, it will likely be appropriate to include PMs from each of the applicable categories.

### Figure A-3 Performance Measures Specific to Project Type

#### Monitoring, Scientific Assessment and Research

- Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments

#### Planning

- Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments
- Percent of Pre-project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation

#### Educational and Interpretive

- Number of People Reached
- Measurable Changes in Knowledge or Behaviors

#### Hazard Reduction

- Acres of Land Improved or Restored
- Number of Physical, Cultural, Historical and Archaeological Special Significance Sites Protected or Preserved
- Tons of Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided

#### Recreation and Tourism

- Acres of Land Conserved
- Acres of Land Improved or Restored
- Feet of Trail/Path Length Constructed or Improved
- Number of New Recreation Access Points
- Number of Physical, Cultural, Historical and Archaeological Special Significance Sites Protected or Preserved

#### Restoration (Watersheds, Habitat, Riparian)

- Acre Feet of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced
- Acres of Land Improved or Restored
- Cubic Feet of Streamflow Improved
- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Restored or Protected
- Tons of Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided
- Tons of Pollutant Reduced Per Year

#### Acquisitions and Easements

- Acres of Land Conserved
- Number of Physical, Cultural, Historical and Archaeological Special Significance Sites Protected or Preserved

#### Resource Conservation and Development (water, energy, etc.)

- Kilowatts of Renewable Energy Production Capacity Maintained or Created
- Acre Feet of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced
- Tons of Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided
- Cubic Feet of Streamflow Improved

#### Initial Project Planning and Development

- Percent of Pre-project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation

## A.4 Other SNC Performance Tracking

Examples of activities include:

- Outreach and marketing activities
- Presentations to stakeholders
- Facilitating or participating in the discussions resolution of regional issues
- Providing technical assistance.
- Providing meeting space and facilities.
- Facilitating state certification of small and disabled veteran owned businesses in the region.

In addition to tracking activities related to the SNC grant program(s), the SNC is engaged in other activities that contribute to the region, which will also be tracked. Performance measures for these activities, which do not impact grant recipients, are under development.

## ATTACHMENT B HOW GRANTEES WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT PROCESS

This attachment describes the role of grantees in SNC's performance management process. The discussion is organized in the following three parts:

- **Guiding Principles**
- **Education and Communication** – describing initial and ongoing actions necessary to ensure the grantees understand their role and understand the value of measuring their projects' performance.
- **The Grantee Performance Measurement Process** – the role of the grantee is described for each step in the project lifecycle.

### B.1 Guiding Principles

The SNC understands the obstacles to effectively implementing a performance management process. These challenges have less to do with 'what' the Performance Measures (PMs) are than 'how' they are implemented. A process that is not well understood or is overly burdensome will not succeed. With this in mind, the SNC has established the following guiding principles:

- **Keep it simple** – The PMs themselves and the process applied in implementing them, should be straightforward, simple, and easily understood.
- **Make it meaningful** – Grantees can view performance measures as burdensome, bureaucratic requirements that have little benefit to them. SNC is committed to only asking for information from grantees that it will actually use and to making sure that grantees view this effort as being valuable to them for their own purposes as well.
- **Be innovative** – SNC's mission is broad in terms of scope and geography. Capturing and using a wide array of performance measures with limited resources will require innovation especially leveraging information technology.
- **Inform strategic direction** – The performance measurement process should be understood in context of SNC's Strategic Plan. Grantees should see the linkage of their work to SNC's strategic decisions. Specific reference to the results of SNC-funded projects and their relationship to new or continued strategic direction is critical.

Based on these principles, the strategies and actions presented below are intended to promote an ongoing, collaborative partnership with grantees to achieve mutually desired impact in the Sierra Nevada.

## B.2 Education and Communication

It is important for the SNC to provide grantees with the information and assistance they need to understand what's being asked of them. In addition, SNC intends to foster open communication with grant recipients regarding what has worked, what hasn't worked, and what should change as a result. Below are key education and communications actions:

- 1. Grantee User's Guide:** Develop a guide for use both by applicants while they are drafting their proposals and by grantees when they are managing their grants and reporting their progress. The Guide will clearly and concisely define the overall PM process as outlined in Section B.3 below. The guide will provide information on both quantitative performance measures and qualitative reporting requirements, and also describe the process for setting targets, selecting PM's for inclusion in grant proposals, and project reporting, etc. Web-based publishing of the guide including links to pertinent details (e.g., definitions, data collection forms, examples) will be useful to the grantees in understanding the process. Audio and/or video links should also be considered especially in describing the importance of qualitative (i.e., narrative) reporting. The guide will also be published in static electronic (Adobe PDF) and hardcopy formats.
- 2. Annual Grantee Workshops:** Conduct educational workshops at the outset of each annual grant cycle to provide potential applicants with information about SNC's performance management requirements (as outlined in B.3 below) and how they will be practical and useful for the grantees in their own work.
- 3. Ongoing Information Sharing with Grantees:** The SNC will share additional information with grantees on an ongoing basis, including sharing tools that might be helpful to them and lessons learned from other projects. In addition, SNC will seek input from grantees regarding areas that need additional refinement. Performance measure information compiled by SNC at both the aggregate and project levels will be shared with grant recipients, so that they can see how their projects contribute to overall success and compare the results of their project to the results of other projects funded by SNC.
- 4. Surveys:** Conduct confidential surveys with grantees at least every three years to assess the performance measurement and reporting process and allow for candid critiques or suggestions for improvement. SNC will make public the aggregated survey results (without attributing any specific comments to specific respondents) and conduct additional outreach to solicit input from grantees on how to improve the program over time.

### B.3 Grantee Performance Measurement Process

Grantees will be involved in developing and reporting on performance measures during each step of a project. The strategies SNC will use to assist them at each step are described below. The numbering of the strategies continues from the previous list of education and communication strategies.

5. **Pre-Project Guidance:** As SNC works with applicants to develop their project ideas into applications, staff will share information regarding PM requirements and processes, including directing applicants to information available on the SNC Web site. Applicants will be reminded to build into their budgets funding for implementing PMs, including necessary monitoring and communications. Pre-project guidance will also be included within the Grantee User's Guide (Action 1 above).
6. **Selection of Appropriate Performance Measures:** The initial PMs will be formally published within the Grantee User's Guide. The applicants will be directed to this initial list, specifically to review the PMs that are required of every project and those that are applicable to specific project types. PM's will be described in detail including guidance for selecting PMs and how grantees should approach analyzing and reporting on them at the project level. The applicants may select a few relevant PMs from this list for their project. If, however, the grantee determines that an inadequate number of PMs from the initial set appear relevant to their project, the grantee may propose (an) alternative PM(s). Figure B-2 below provides a sample of the types of information that will be requested from the grantee in this case. The objective is to obtain a clear description of the performance measure, the method used to collect the data, the target that will be used, and sources of baseline data. The grantee and SNC staff will then engage in a dialogue to jointly assess and potentially refine the candidate PM. In the event a new PM is adopted for the project, the PM will be applied to the grantees grant agreement and will also be considered for inclusion in SNC's active PM list for consideration by other grantees.

## Figure B-2

### Suggested New Grantee Performance Measures – *Documentation Needs*

A Project Performance Measure Suggestion Form provides a means for project proponents and grantees to document the who, what, where, when, and how of a project performance measure (PM). The full project description is documented within the Pre-Project description and proposal. The PM selection form is specifically geared to documenting the suggested PM for use during a project. The types of information requested are as follows:

- ✓ **PM Name**
- ✓ **Related Project Objective**
- ✓ **PM Target for Project**
- ✓ **PM Data Collection Methods**
- ✓ **Baseline Data**
- ✓ **Criteria for Success**
- ✓ **Notes**
- ✓ **References Cited**

7. **Grant Applications:** Grant applicants will be asked to submit proposed project PMs as part of their grant application. Inclusion of PMs in the application clarifies expected outcomes and benefits of the project and ensures that performance measurement and reporting is built into proposal tasks, timeline and budget. The SNC has updated the Grant Application Packet (GAP) and Grant Guidelines to add information on PMs. Additional changes may be made to the GAP over time to meet the information needs of grant applicants.
8. **Grant Agreements:** Once a grant has been approved for funding, SNC enters into dialogue with the grantee regarding provisions related to their grant agreement. This is an opportunity for the SNC project lead to review the proposed performance measures and related tasks and reach agreement on final PMs. To that end, the SNC will develop performance measurement check-list for project leads to use when finalizing grant agreements, including workplans and budgets.
9. **Progress Reports:** Progress reports are an opportunity for SNC project leads to help create that culture of learning discussed above. It is a time to have a conversation about project status, achievements, sticking points, expected outcomes and next steps. It is also a chance to determine if there is

a need for course correction. Progress reports also provide an opportunity to evaluate the capacity of grantees to use and report on performance measures and the need to provide additional PM training for current and prospective grantees.

The SNC will respond to grantee progress and final reports, acknowledging each report and commenting briefly on the substance of the work. This response will provide a signal to the grantee that their reporting is important and useful. Otherwise, grantees often report that it feels as their work falls into “a black hole”. In reviewing progress and final reports, SNC will work with grantees to ensure that they go that final step and communicate their success and lessons-learned.

- 10. Post-Project Reporting:** Some SNC-funded projects will not “bear fruit” until several years after the project ends. In addition, SNC will fund planning grants and pre-project work such as permitting and development CEQA documents. SNC is interested in capturing the outcomes of these projects to the extent possible. Therefore, SNC will work with grantees to identify ways capture such information.

## ATTACHMENT C HOW PERFORMANCE MEASURES WILL BE USED IN SNC MANAGEMENT PROCESSES AND REPORTING

The information obtained from performance measures will provide SNC the management feedback necessary to continually adapt and improve. This can be described as “learning to manage, while managing to learn.” As described in Attachment B, grantees have an important role in this process. However, additional internal management processes are also needed to ensure that decision-useful information is provided to SNC management, the SNC Board and others at the right time and in the right form.

There are many benefits to implementing a robust performance management process. However, the costs must also be carefully considered. SNC management will need to carefully consider the value of information being received relative to the level of effort that will be required.

This attachment summarizes how performance measures will be used by SNC staff and management in an adaptive decision making process. It is organized as follows:

- **Internal Performance Management Processes** – providing an overview of the data collection and analysis needed to inform program progress and strategic direction.
- **Communication and Education** – outlining the considerations for understanding customer’s need for information and responding to those needs.

### C.1 Internal Performance Management Processes

The following strategies and actions are organized around a series of internal management processes – from collecting core project data from grantees, to analyzing that data, reporting and revising strategic direction where needed.

1. **Collecting and Managing Project Performance Data:** The source data for an effective performance management process comes from individual projects. It is vital, therefore, that the way in which this project data is reported and analyzed is carefully implemented. To ensure successful project reporting and data capture, the SNC will:
  - ✓ Provide technical assistance to grantees to ensure that their project reports respond to identified project measures and identify lessons learned.
  - ✓ Review project reports to ensure quality reporting.
  - ✓ Capture performance measurement data from progress and final reports and ensure accurate entry of these data into a data

management system. At the program level, staff will evaluate and aggregate performance data by program and project type.

- ✓ Train staff to ensure understanding of the performance management system and how data is to be recorded and can be used.

Two notes of caution are warranted regarding project performance data. First, measures are designed to focus grantee project reporting; grantees should not build projects in response to measures. Also, project learning should not be confused with project success. Some of the best learning is generated from projects considered “failures.” Actual failure occurs when lessons are not captured and do not inform subsequent work.

2. **Analyzing Performance Data:** The SNC will develop reports, which focus on outcomes and lessons learned by project type and program area for subregions. Reports will include documentation about what worked and what didn't, and other key findings identified by staff. These reports will be shared among staff and with managers for comment, discussion, and refinement.
3. **Informing Strategic Direction:** The evaluation of performance information will also be important at the highest level – business strategy. Implementing revised strategic goals and actions based on the information gained through performance measures is critical.
4. **Putting Strategy into Action:** The goal is not to generate static performance reports, but rather to apply performance information towards continuous learning and improvement, “closing the adaptive management loop.” Based on feedback of staff, grantees, and others, the SNC will consider the following actions: revising organizational work priorities, modifying grant guidelines and funding allocations, or modifying organizational outreach and education efforts. The specific tasks will vary, but successful implementation depends on sound action plan recommendations and management follow through.
5. **Improving Processes:** The SNC will update grant management processes as needed. Revisions will be incorporated into information, tools, and workshops available to grant applicants and grant recipients as well as training for SNC project staff
6. **Maintaining the Performance Measures List:** Staff will periodically review and update the existing set of performance measures to ensure that each measure addresses a current program goal and project type and provides useful feedback. As new project types are implemented, SNC may develop new performance measures to track their progress. Performance measures

that have not been used for two or more years may be eliminated, and others may be revised based on lessons learned by grantees and staff. Appropriate data collection and analysis methods will be included for each new or revised measure.

## C.2 Communication and Education

The communication and education approach supporting the performance management process will need to align directly with SNC's published Education and Communications Plan date January, 2008. The audiences identified in that plan will also be customers of SNC's performance related information. Audiences include:

- Existing and potential grantees
- Sierra residents
- People and groups working on Sierra-based issues
- Local officials and other decision-makers
- Teachers, students, and youth groups
- Property owners
- Recreationists and tourists
- State Administration Officials, State legislators and their staff
- California residents

Information needs vary by audience. Some audiences may need summary performance information such as broad aggregations of performance by program. Others may require more detailed information including performance of individual projects or project types by region. Success in communication will require matching information (content, form and timing) with the customer's need.

7. **Communicating Performance Information:** Targeted outreach will help SNC gain a clearer understanding of the content, form and timing of information that is needed by external customers in addressing questions that are of concern to them. Once informational needs are identified, the SNC will develop a communications and education approach that responds to those needs. Specific strategies may include:

- ✓ Include information in the SNC's Annual Report about program outcomes and improvement through adaptive learning and organizational change.
- ✓ Develop a schedule for information dissemination that includes different types of information, communication products, and timelines for information dissemination.
- ✓ Share performance results in a variety of ways, including searchable online databases, published reports, workshops and seminars, news releases, and interactive online technologies

**Educating Others about the Program:** Successful communication of new management processes will also involve educating SNC's external constituents as well as internal staff. Educational materials will be developed and published, which will support the targeted outreach mentioned above. The purpose of external education is to help ensure that stakeholders have a shared understanding of SNC's overall intention and approach to performance management.

## **Background**

In November 2006, California voters passed Proposition 84, which included an allocation of \$54 million of bond funding for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC). In January 2007, the Governor proposed and the legislature approved \$17 million in grant funds for the SNC for Fiscal Year 2007-08. It is anticipated that the additional bond funds will be appropriated over the next two fiscal years.

During the first half of 2007, the SNC held a series of workshops to assist in the development of Program and Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines. At the July 2007 meeting, the Board approved final guidelines that define eligible project and grant types, grant size limits, availability of funds, selection criteria and how to apply for funding.

The Board also approved a plan to allocate the grant funds as follows: \$9 million for a Competitive Grants Program and \$8 million for Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs).

In March, 2008 the SNC Board authorized 13 competitive grants for \$6,831,922, leaving an available balance of up to \$2,168,078 for possible authorization at the June meeting. At that meeting the Board authorized staff to shift funds between categories if necessary in order to recommend the highest priority projects for Board approval at the June Board meeting.

## **Current Status**

### **Project Evaluation**

Following the March meeting, staff reviewed remaining Competitive Grant projects for possible consideration by the Board at this meeting. A number of high scoring projects were unable to be recommended based on the inability to resolve CEQA and appraisal issues. In addition, staff became aware of a pending Attorney General's opinion holding that it is inappropriate to use Proposition 84 funds for purposes of the retirement of debt. Based on this knowledge, two projects considered are not being recommended.

After extensive review, it was determined that a total of five projects are being recommended for a total of \$1,512,413. This leaves a balance of \$655,665. Staff is recommending the re-allocation of \$583,084 of Competitive funds among four Subregions to fund SOGs (Agenda Item XIII) as follows: \$18,404 be re-allocated to the North Subregion; \$81,270 be re-allocated to the Central Subregion; \$162,411 be re-allocated to the South Subregion; and \$320,999 be re-allocated to the East Subregion. This would result in an unspent balance of \$72,581 and when combined with remaining SOG allocation the unspent balance is approximately \$75,000.

Reviews of technical aspects, environmental documentation, and real estate appraisals were performed by experts in the Department of General Services, other state agencies and consultants.

As required by statute, the SNC consulted with city and county officials and appropriate water agencies regarding project proposals within their jurisdictions. No comments were received on these projects.

#### Summary of Applications Reviewed

For fiscal year 2007-08 a total of 32 Competitive grant applications requesting \$17,647,268 million were determined to be eligible for Proposition 84 Grant funding and were reviewed by staff.

Six applications were moved to the SOG category and 13 grants were authorized by the Board at the March meeting. The remaining list of eligible applications yielded five projects totaling \$1,512,413 for consideration at this meeting. There are a number of Competitive applications that are not being recommended for the reasons stated above or because staff believes that they would not result in significant contributions to the SNC mission or the purposes of Proposition 84.

#### Projects Recommended for Funding

A spreadsheet showing project specific information and individual summaries for projects being recommended for Board approval are included as a part of this report as Exhibit A.

The total amount being recommended for funding in this cycle is \$1,512,413. The recommended projects (Exhibit A) received the highest scores, are able to be implemented on a timely basis and meet all environmental review and documentation requirements. The five projects recommended for funding in this round of Competitive grants will contribute to erosion control measures on one acre of steep road-cut and treatment of 470 acres of forested land for fire prevention and watershed protection.

The projects directly leverage over \$320,000 being committed in funds and in-kind contributions by applicants and others.

#### CEQA Compliance

The projects being recommended each require the Conservancy to complete a Notice of Exemption, to be filed with the State Clearinghouse. Notices of Exemption have been prepared for review and will be filed upon Board approval Attachment B.

The Board packet contains all notices referenced above.

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Board authorize **Competitive Grants listed in Agenda Item XII Exhibit A**, and further authorize staff to enter into all necessary agreements and file the appropriate CEQA documentation with the State Clearinghouse for all projects.

Reference #	County	Project Title	Grantee Organization	Total	URL
<a href="#">SNC 070208</a>	Placer	<a href="#">Alpine Meadows Community Consolidated Fuels Reduction Project</a>	Alpine Springs County Water District/Alpine Meadows Fire Safe Council	\$ 176,375	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070208final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070208final.pdf</a>
<a href="#">SNC 070235</a>	Mariposa	<a href="#">Mariposa County Chipping Program</a>	Mariposa County Firesafe Council	\$ 115,787	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070235final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070235final.pdf</a>
<a href="#">SNC 070236</a>	Nevada, Placer	<a href="#">Vegetation Management: Forest Thinning, Brush Mastication and Prescribed Burning</a>	California State Parks, Department of Parks and Recreation	\$ 214,044	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070236final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070236final.pdf</a>
<a href="#">SNC 070245</a>	Placer	<a href="#">US Hwy. 40 (Donner Pass Road) Shoulder Rehabilitation</a>	Placer County Department of Public Works	\$ 500,000	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070245final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070245final.pdf</a>
<a href="#">SNC 070246</a>	Placer	<a href="#">Hidden Falls Regional Park - Fuel Load Reduction and Related Fire Safe Activities</a>	Placer County	\$ 506,207	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070246final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070246final.pdf</a>
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>\$ 1,512,413</b>	

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: CENTRAL County: PLACER**  
**Applicant: ALPINE SPRINGS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT**  
**Project Title: ALPINE MEADOWS CONSOLIDATED DEFENSIBLE SPACE PROJECT**  
**Application Number: SNC 070208**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

The Alpine Meadows Consolidated Defensible Space Project will reduce forest fuel loadings in the Alpine Meadows area along Bear Creek in Placer County. Components critical to a successful project include:

- Reduction and removal of forest fuels using hand crews, chipping, and pile burning on 50 acres immediately adjacent to Bear Creek;
- Designation of a section of the project area as a demonstration plot for studying impacts of pile burning on riparian areas;
- Providing residential chipping services and defensible space inspections to 200 private residents to encourage defensible space clearing around private homes.

Fuel load reduction in the Alpine Meadows area will help to protect sub-alpine watershed values, including extensive riparian habitat, as well as residential and recreational areas.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Recommend funding at the full amount requested of \$176,375. Project will contribute to defensible space education, fire risk reduction near a waterway, and protection of up to 200 residences in the Alpine Meadows community.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

Alpine Meadows Fire Safe Council  
Alpine Meadows Estates Association  
Juniper Mountain Association

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Environmental documentation and archaeological survey	July – September 2008
Progress report	December 2008
Defensible space inspections and chipping and fuels treatment	June – September 2009
Progress report	September 2009
Mitigation and monitoring for pile burning	October – December

	2009
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	<b>February 2010</b>

**PROJECT COSTS**

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Fuels treatment	\$125,000
Chipping program	\$5,000
Defensible space inspections	\$5,000
Mitigation and monitoring for pile burning	\$12,500
Project management/environmental documentation/archaeological survey	\$20,000
Direct admin expenses	\$8,875
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$176,375</b>



	2008
Chip brush and limbs at multiple sites in Mariposa County	September 2008 – March 2009
Track project through photography, acres treated and tonnage	September 2008 – March 2009
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	January 2009
Chip brush and limbs at multiple sites in Mariposa County	April – August 2009
Complete and submit twelve-month progress report to SNC	1 July 2009
Complete chipping on remaining project sites	October 2009 – January 2010
Complete and submit eighteen-month progress report to SNC	January 2010
Follow-up with and conduct brief survey with participating landowners.	February 2010
Conduct project tour for interested stakeholders	March 2010
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>April 2010</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>SNC FUNDING</b>
Crew payroll	\$51,800
Emergency Room taxes	\$6,734
Workman's Compensation Insurance	\$13,748
Truck rental (to haul chipper)	\$17,500
Equipment and fuel	\$5,250
Mileage	\$5,075
Chipper fuel	\$2,800
Liability insurance (project)	\$3,108
Liability insurance (chipper)	\$350
MCFSC (280 hours @ \$33.65/hour)	\$9,422
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$115,787</b>

In-Kind Match: Chipper Rental @ \$180/day = \$900/week x 35	\$31,500
---	----------

<b>TOTAL PROJECT COST</b>	<b>\$147,287</b>
---------------------------	------------------

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: CENTRAL County: PLACER, NEVADA**  
**Applicant: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**Project Title: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT: FOREST THINNING, BRUSH MASTICATION  
AND PRESCRIBED BURNING**  
**Application Number: SNC 070236**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will utilize various techniques (hand clearing, mastication and prescribed burning), as appropriate for different forest characteristics, to reduce fuel loading on 87 acres in the Donner Lake and Emigrant Canyon watersheds within Donner Memorial State Park. Support of this project will allow the applicant (DPR) to purchase necessary equipment for extensive brush mastication and pile burning as well as contract for hand thinning of heavier forest areas. DPR will also work with CAL Fire for prescribed burning of select areas, with DPR providing supporting fire protection control and night monitoring. Areas for fuel reduction include:

- Hand clearing and pile burning – 35 acres
- Brush mastication – 29 acres
- Prescribed burn – 23 acres.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve at requested amount of \$214,044. This project will help create a strategic fire break within a heavily used recreational area, tying together existing project areas to improve watershed health through protection from wildfire. The project area is in a drainage area immediately adjacent to the east end of Donner Lake.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

No letters provided.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Prepare and advertise contract for thinning crew	July 2008
Identify cultural sites to be protected	July – Aug. 2008
Complete annual wildlife surveys in and around project area	July – Aug. 2008
Award contract for forest thinning	August 2008

Purchase equipment	Aug./Sept. 2008
Contract with CAL Fire for Prescribed Burn Plan	September 2008
Brush mastication	Sept. – Oct. 2008
Complete forest thinning	October 2008
Burn piles produced from hand thinning operations	Oct./Nov. 2008
Prescribed burn	Oct./Nov. 2008
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	<b>February 28, 2009</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Archaeological study	1,303
Equipment (masticating head and valves)	40,390
Brush mastication	17,400
Hand crew forest thinning	105,000
Pile burning	17,500
Prescribed burn support to CAL Fire	4,532
Administration and oversight	27,919
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$214,044</b>

## STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)

**Subregion:** CENTRAL County: PLACER  
**Applicant:** PLACER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
**Project Title:** US HIGHWAY 40 SHOULDER REHABILITATION PROJECT  
**Application Number:** SNC 070245

#### PROJECT SCOPE

Placer County Department of Public Works will conduct slope stabilization and culvert upgrades on a section of Donner Pass Road at the headwaters of the South Yuba River and adjacent to Lake Van Norden. The slope stabilization will be conducted using both mechanical and biological methods.

Specifically, the Department will:

- Establish photo-points, and conduct intensive pre and post-project photo-monitoring;
- Collect field data to facilitate detailed design, including soil sample collection and analysis, topographic survey, and assessment of drainage facilities;
- Prepare design plans, revegetation plans, specifications, and engineer's estimate for construction improvements;
- Advertise project, gather bids, and award construction contract;
- Install all temporary construction BMPs at the project site and minimize ground disturbance during construction;
- Attempt to partner with the California Conservation Corps for the revegetation effort;
- Utilize volunteers to the extent available in implementing the project, particularly revegetation;
- Stabilize the slope by placing rock at the toe of the slope, ensuring the ability to revegetate;
- Conduct revegetation, preferably native plants to avoid the need for irrigation, as a means of stabilizing the bank and reducing erosion;
- Conduct work during the summer months to minimize run-off during construction;
- Conduct revegetation in a manner conducive to preserving natural aesthetic value;
- Reconstruct and repair roadside culverts in the project area, including the installation of sediment detention cans where appropriate;
- Place signage on the project site explaining project and source of funds;
- Coordinate with CABY on incorporation of the project into the IRWMP.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends this grant for partial funding at \$500,000.

## LETTERS OF SUPPORT

- Placer County Board of Supervisors
- Truckee-Donner Land Trust
- Donner Summit Area Association
- Sugar Bowl Ski Resort

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Establish photo-points, and acquire pre-project photos	July 2008
Collect field data to facilitate detailed design, including soil sample collection and analysis, topographic survey, and assessment of drainage facilities;	August 2008- November 2008
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	December 2008
Prepare design plans, and specifications	January 2009
Advertise, gather bids, and award construction contract;	February 2009 – April 2009
Produce signage and place on project site	April 2009
Complete and submit twelve-month progress report to SNC	June 2009
Finalize design plans and acquire permits	June 2009
Purchase necessary construction related materials	June 2009
Initiate and complete sediment trap installations	June 2009 – September 2009
Initiate and complete slope grading and revegetation activities	June 2009 – September 2009
Conduct thorough clean-up of project site	October 2009
Acquire post-project photos from established photo-points	November 2009
<b>Final Report/Final Request for Payment to SNC</b>	<b>December 2009</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Mobilization/Demobilization	\$10,000
Project Signage	\$2,000
Traffic Control System	\$5,000
Water Pollution Control	\$10,000
Sediment traps and installation	\$13,500
Energy Dissipator	\$6,000
Slope Grading Equipment and Operator Costs	\$45,000
Topsoil importation and placement costs	\$82,500
Channel Lining	\$9,000
Revegetation Costs	\$97,500
Rock Slope Protection Material	\$100,550
Geotextile Filter Fabric	\$11,000
Construction Management Costs	\$40,950
Project Design and Management Costs	\$67,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: CENTRAL County: PLACER**  
**Applicant: PLACER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FACILITY SERVICES**  
**Project Title: HIDDEN FALLS REGIONAL PARK – FUEL LOAD REDUCTION AND  
RELATED FIRE SAFE ACTIVITIES**  
**Application Number: SNC 070246**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will create a series of strategically placed shaded fuel breaks across Hidden Falls Regional Park in order to help protect the park and surrounding properties from catastrophic wildfire, and ensure the protection of the watershed associated with the park. The total area of fuel breaks created will be about 94 acres; the majority is woodland, but about 10 acres is comprised of grassland. In addition, an 8-mile-long by 15-foot-wide cleared zone totaling 14 acres will be created around the perimeter of the park to provide fire fighting access. This grant also provides for the purchase of an all-terrain mower for the creation and maintenance of grassland clearing. Work is currently under way at the east end of the park, including the parking area, using non-SNC funding. This SNC grant will provide completion of these fire breaks as well as creation of others in the plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve at the reduced amount of \$506,207 to account for a reduction in administrative expenses to remain within the 15% cap – this project provides a significant contribution to reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfire threat to the 1,200-acre park, as well as for surrounding property. There are two major water courses in the park which will be protected through mitigation of fire threat.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

Placer County Parks Commission  
Placer County Air Pollution Control District  
Placer Land Trust  
Placer Nature Center  
Lincoln Hills Hiking Group  
Annette Nylander, Chair of the CST Department at Sierra College  
Action Coalition of Equestrians  
Meadow Vista Trails Association  
International Mountain Bicycling Association  
Jim Howard, Coach for the Colfax High School Cross Country team

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Purchase all-terrain mower	July or Sep. 2008
Complete fuel break clearing for Fuel Breaks E & F	July 2008 – June 2009
Perimeter clearing	July 2008 – March 2010
Progress report	January 2009
Fuel Breaks C & D	Oct. 2008 – June 2009
Progress report	July 2009
Progress report	January 2010
Fuel Break A	June 2009 – March 2010
<b>Final report</b>	<b>April 1, 2010</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Fuel Break clearing – forested/brush areas	299,750
Perimeter clearing	100,430
Purchase of all-terrain mower	40,000
Directly related administrative expenses	66,027
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$506,207</b>

# Notice of Exemption

Form D

To:  Office of Planning and Research  
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(Address)

County Clerk  
County of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Project Title:** Alpine Meadows Community Consolidated Fuels Reduction Project (SNC 070208)

**Project Location – Specific:**  
Alpine Meadows, northwest of Lake Tahoe on State Highway 89, just outside of the Lake Tahoe Basin

**Project Location – City:** outside of Truckee      **Project Location – County:** Placer

**Description of Project:**  
Alpine Springs County Water District is requesting \$176,375 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Competitive Grants Program to implement forest fuels reduction on 50 acres in the Alpine Meadows area and provide free residential chipping services and defensible space inspections for 200 private properties. See attached description.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Sierra Nevada Conservancy

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Alpine Springs County Water District

**Exempt Status:** (check one)  
 Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);  
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));  
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));  
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15304, "Minor Alterations to Land"  
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reasons why project is exempt:**  
The Alpine Meadows Consolidated Defensible Space Project will involve minor disturbances to land and vegetation to remove accumulated fire fuels within a residential and recreational area as well as provide chipping services for private homeowners who complete fuel management activities around their homes. See attached description.

**Lead Agency:**  
**Contact Person:** Marji Feliz      **Area Code/Telephone/Extension:** (530) 823-4679

**If filed by applicant:**  
1. Attach certified document of exemption finding  
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: Executive Officer  
Jim Branham

Signed by Lead Agency  
 Signed by Applicant      Date Received for Filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**  
**CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15304**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**  
**Proposition 84 Competitive Grant Application Number 070208**  
**Alpine Meadows Consolidated Defensible Space Project**

**Description of Activities**

Alpine Springs County Water District (ASCWD) is requesting \$176,375 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Competitive Grants Program to reduce forest fuel loadings on 50 acres in the Alpine Meadows area and offer free residential chipping services and defensible space inspections to 200 private properties, thereby minimizing the threat of wildfires in a residential and recreational area. Alpine Meadows is a popular ski resort and summer recreational area located northwest of Lake Tahoe, along State Highway 89, just outside of the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Alpine Meadows area contains 770 private parcels with 650 private residences. Bear Creek runs through the community, creating a riparian area near many of the homes.

The first element of the project is the reduction of overgrown forest fuels on common properties owned by three homeowners associations and ASCWD that intertwine between private homes. These areas are identified in a Community Wildlife Protection Plan completed in 2005. The fuels reduction will be done by hand crews, but the disposal of vegetative materials will be completed using multiple methods, including pile burning and chipping. A registered professional forester will be contracted to conduct environmental review, mark trees for removal, and interact with responsible agencies during thinning operations. ASCWD will also work with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board to create a work plan for pile burning in the Bear Creek riparian area.

The second element of the project is funding a community chipping program. The North Tahoe Fire Protection District has offered a community chipping program to the residents of the district for years, which runs entirely on grant funding. ASCWD is seeking SNC grant funding to support this effort in Alpine Meadows and complement the fuel clearing efforts on the common properties and open space areas. The goal is to inspire more defensible space treatments on private properties by providing free chipping services, public education, and inspections for homeowners.

**Reasons Why the Project is Exempt**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a categorical exemption provides for an exemption from CEQA environmental documentation requirements for a class of projects determined not to have a significant effect on the environment. Categorical Exemptions are addressed in Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines, where a list of 32 classes of projects has been identified. Projects falling within one of these classes of projects are generally exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

***CEQA Guidelines Section 15304: Minor Alterations to Land***

The Alpine Meadows Consolidated Defensible Space Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which is defined as follows:

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation, which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

...

(d) Minor alterations in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas or fish production facilities which result in improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources or greater fish production.

...

(f) Fuel management activities within 30 feet of structures to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation, provided that the activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or significant erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. This exemption shall apply to fuel management activities within 100 feet of a structure if the public agency having fire protection responsibility for the area has determined that 100 feet of fuel clearance is required due to extra hazardous fire conditions.

...

The Alpine Meadows Consolidated Defensible Space Project will involve minor disturbances to land and vegetation to remove accumulated fire fuels within a residential and recreational area as well as provide chipping services for private homeowners who complete fuel management activities around their homes.

**No Exceptions to a Categorical Exemption**

Categorical exemptions represent activities that generally do not result in significant environmental impacts. However, there are six exceptions to categorical exemptions, defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Generally, a categorical exemption does not apply if a project would occur in certain specified sensitive environments, would affect scenic resources within an official state scenic highway, or would be located on a designated hazardous waste site. In addition, a categorical exemption would not apply if the project causes substantial adverse changes in the significance of a historical resource or would be considered significant within the cumulative context. Table 1 identifies the exceptions from CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 and a brief discussion of why each exception does not apply to the Alpine Meadows Consolidated Defensible Space Project.

<b>Table 1 Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)</b>	
<b>Exception</b>	<b>Applicability</b>
(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.	A registered professional forester will be contracted to conduct environmental review, mark trees for removal, and interact with responsible agencies during thinning operations. The fuels reduction work will be implemented using hand crews. All possible options for fuels treatment have been examined to craft a plan that best protects the water quality and wildlife habitat within the project area and the Bear Creek riparian corridor. Each area's logistics will dictate how vegetation is removed; some areas will involve chipping removed materials and some will include pile burning. A burn pile area is planned within the Bear Creek riparian area. ASCWD will work with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board to create a work plan for the riparian area. Best management practices will be utilized to minimize erosion or other potential impacts. According to USFS, there are no wildlife concerns in the project area. The project will reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire and restore balance to the area's natural habitat.
(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.	The fuel removal activities will not adversely affect environmental resources and will therefore not contribute to any cumulative environmental impact in relation to other fuels reduction work in the area.
(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.	The project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.  <b>Aesthetics.</b> The presence of workers and equipment during fuel clearing work will be temporary. The project will result in a minor change in the appearance of the existing forest in Alpine Meadows due to a more open understory. However, the intent of the project is to restore the forest to a more natural condition. <b>Agriculture.</b> The project will have no impact on agricultural resources. <b>Air Quality.</b> Although fuels removal will be done by hand crews, the project may temporarily affect air quality due to burn piles. ASCWD will coordinate with the Placer County Air Pollution Control District and obtain burn permits as necessary. Burn bans will be followed and all measures will be implemented as required by the Air Pollution Control District to ensure less than significant air quality impacts. <b>Biological Resources.</b> See (a). <b>Cultural Resources.</b> See (f).

**Table 1  
Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)**

Exception	Applicability
	<p><b>Geology/Soils.</b> The thinning activities will not expose people or structures to loss, injury, or death due to seismic activity or unstable soils.</p> <p><b>Hazards/Hazardous Materials.</b> See (e).</p> <p><b>Hydrology/Water Quality.</b> The removal of fuels will work to protect water quality by reducing the risk of erosion associated with fire. Best management practices will be employed to prevent soil erosion. The project will have no impact on groundwater supplies or recharge.</p> <p><b>Noise.</b> The project will generate noise during fuel removal; however, this will be a temporary condition and will occur during normal working hours, the least sensitive hours of the day. Therefore, the project will not cause significant noise effects.</p> <p><b>Transportation.</b> The project will involve short term use of trucks needed for hauling thinning equipment, work crews, and chipping fuels. The project will generate a minimal, temporary effect on local transportation.</p> <p><b>Other CEQA Issues.</b> The project will have no effect on land use, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, or utilities and service systems.</p>
<p>(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.</p>	<p>Highway 89 in the vicinity of Alpine Meadows is an eligible state scenic highway. However, the forest thinning activities would not significantly alter, nor damage, views from the highway.</p>
<p>(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.</p>	<p>The site is not located on toxic sites listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. In addition, the restoration will not involve the storage, transport, or use of hazardous materials.</p>
<p>(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.</p>	<p>A qualified archaeologist will survey the project site prior to implementation of fuel clearing activities. If any cultural or historical resources are identified during the survey, they will be identified and avoided/protected during fuel clearing activities. If any additional cultural resources are discovered during fuel clearing activities, work in the area shall be stopped and a certified archaeologist shall be consulted before work may continue. This will ensure that the project avoids any significant effects to cultural resources.</p>

# Notice of Exemption

Form D

To:  Office of Planning and Research  
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(Address)

County Clerk  
County of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Project Title:** Mariposa County Chipping Program (SNC 070235)

**Project Location – Specific:**  
Chowchilla River, North and South Fork of Merced River, and Fresno River watersheds

**Project Location – City:** n/a      **Project Location – County:** Mariposa

**Description of Project:**  
Mariposa County Fire Safe Council is requesting \$115,787 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Competitive Grants Program to implement forest fuels reduction on the Chowchilla River, North and South Fork of Merced River, and Fresno River watersheds and provide free residential chipping services and defensible space inspections for area private properties. See attached description.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Sierra Nevada Conservancy

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** Mariposa County Fire Safe Council

**Exempt Status:** (check one)  
 Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);  
 Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));  
 Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));  
 Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15304, "Minor Alterations to Land"  
 Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reasons why project is exempt:**  
The Mariposa County Chipping Program will involve minor disturbances to land and vegetation to chip and redistribute fire fuels removed from defensible space around residences. The chipping and redistribution of trees and brush will complete work necessary to reduce fire risk and will prevent regrowth of weeds and invasive plants. The proposed chipping activities are not expected to generate any significant environmental effects. See attached description.

**Lead Agency:**  
**Contact Person:** Marji Feliz      **Area Code/Telephone/Extension:** (530) 823-4679

**If filed by applicant:**  
1. Attach certified document of exemption finding  
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: Executive Officer  
Jim Branham

Signed by Lead Agency  
 Signed by Applicant      Date Received for Filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**  
**CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15304**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**  
**Proposition 84 Competitive Grant Application Number 070235**  
**Mariposa County Chipping Program**

**Description of Activities**

Mariposa County Fire Safe Council is requesting \$115,787 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Competitive Grants Program to implement forest fuels reduction on the Chowchilla River, North and South Fork of Merced River, and Fresno River watersheds and provide free residential chipping services and defensible space inspections for area private properties, thereby minimizing the threat of wildfires in a residential and recreational area. The Chowchilla River, North and South Fork of Merced River, and Fresno River watersheds are rural residential and recreational areas in the southwest portion of Mariposa County.

The major task of the project is to provide educational and chipping services to private properties in high risk areas. The program is designed to educate and assist residents in reducing the risk of losing their homes and property to wildfire, while encouraging them to practice proper conservation of historical, archeological, and natural resource and watershed values.

Residents will cut brush around structures and along driveways and routes of ingress/egress, and pile cut material within 10 foot easements along existing roads and driveways prior to the crew's arrival. The program will provide educational and chipping crews, and all necessary equipment, maintenance, and insurance. The crews will educate residents about 'defensible space' around their homes, structures, and fire escape routes. Chipped materials will be left in piles for future use as mulch or broadcast for weed abatement and erosion control per request of property owners.

***Reasons Why the Project is Exempt***

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a categorical exemption provides for an exemption from CEQA environmental documentation requirements for a class of projects determined not to have a significant effect on the environment. Categorical Exemptions are addressed in Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines, where a list of 32 classes of projects has been identified. Projects falling within one of these classes of projects are generally exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

***CEQA Guidelines Section 15304: Minor Alterations to Land***

The Mariposa County Chipping Program is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which is defined as follows:

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation, which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

...

(d) Minor alterations in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas or fish production facilities which result in improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources or greater fish production.

...

(f) Fuel management activities within 30 feet of structures to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation, provided that the activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or significant erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. This exemption shall apply to fuel management activities within 100 feet of a structure if the public agency having fire protection responsibility for the area has determined that 100 feet of fuel clearance is required due to extra hazardous fire conditions.

...

The Mariposa County Chipping Program will involve minor disturbances to land and vegetation to remove accumulated fire fuels within a residential and recreational area as well as provide chipping services for private homeowners who complete fuel management activities around their homes.

**No Exceptions to a Categorical Exemption**

Categorical exemptions represent activities that generally do not result in significant environmental impacts. However, there are six exceptions to categorical exemptions, defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Generally, a categorical exemption does not apply if a project would occur in certain specified sensitive environments, would affect scenic resources within an official state scenic highway, or would be located on a designated hazardous waste site. In addition, a categorical exemption would not apply if the project causes substantial adverse changes in the significance of a historical resource or would be considered significant within the cumulative context. Table 1 identifies the exceptions from CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 and a brief discussion of why each exception does not apply to the Mariposa County Chipping Program.

<b>Table 1 Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)</b>	
<b>Exception</b>	<b>Applicability</b>
(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.	The project involves chipping brush and wood for the purpose of reducing fire hazards. The project will occur in the perimeter around residential homes. The chipping will observe avoidance measures for special status species and sensitive environments. All work is short term. The project will reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire and restore balance to the area's natural habitat.
(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.	The fuel removal activities will not adversely affect environmental resources and will therefore not contribute to any cumulative environmental impact in relation to other fuels reduction work in the area.
(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.	<p>The project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.</p> <p><b>Aesthetics.</b> The project have no impact on aesthetic resources because chipping will not alter the baseline view or scenic resources.</p> <p><b>Agriculture.</b> The project will have no impact on agricultural resources.</p> <p><b>Air Quality.</b> The project will not result in impacts on air quality. Fuels removal will be done by hand crews and the chipping will eliminate the need to burn woody debris removed from defensible space.</p> <p><b>Biological Resources.</b> See (a).</p> <p><b>Cultural Resources.</b> See (f).</p> <p><b>Geology/Soils.</b> The chipping activities will not expose people or structures to loss, injury, or death due to seismic activity or unstable soils.</p> <p><b>Hazards/Hazardous Materials.</b> See (e).</p> <p><b>Hydrology/Water Quality.</b> The chipping of fire fuel will not impact water quality and instead will protect water quality by reducing the risk of erosion associated with fire. The project will have no impact on groundwater supplies or recharge.</p> <p><b>Noise.</b> The project will generate noise during fuel removal and chipping; however, this will be a temporary condition and will occur during normal working hours, the least sensitive hours of the day. Therefore, the project will not cause significant noise effects.</p> <p><b>Transportation.</b> The project will involve short term use of trucks needed to haul chippers and workers. The project will generate a minimal, temporary effect on local transportation.</p>

**Table 1**  
**Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)**

Exception	Applicability
	<b>Other CEQA Issues.</b> The project will have no effect on land use, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, or utilities and service systems.
(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.	Highway 140 in Mariposa County is an eligible state scenic highway. However, the forest thinning activities are not in the vicinity of Highway 140 nor would they significantly alter, or damage, views from the highway.
(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.	The site is not located on toxic sites listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. In addition, the chipping activities will not involve the storage, transport, or use of hazardous materials.
(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.	The chipping activities will avoid disturbances to cultural resources and will not require excavation that could affect buried cultural, palaeontological resources or human remains.

# Notice of Exemption

Form D

To:  Office of Planning and Research  
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(Address)

County Clerk  
County of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Project Title:** Vegetation Management, Forest Thinning, Brush Mastication and Prescribed Burning (SNC 070236)

**Project Location – Specific:**

Donner Memorial State Park, 12 miles northwest of North Lake Tahoe near the town of Truckee. The project site is on the east end of Schallenberger Ridge, bordered by Donner Memorial State Park campground, Teichert and Caltrans properties, Cold Creek, the Union Pacific Railroad and Coldstream Valley. The project site is located within the Emigrant Canyon watershed and the Donner Lake watershed.

**Project Location – City:** Outside of the town of Truckee      **Project Location – County:** Placer and Nevada

**Description of Project:**

California State Parks, Department of Parks and Recreation is requesting \$238,184 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Competitive Grants Program to complete three types of vegetation management: 35 acres of hand thinning and subsequent pile burning on a 50% slope in a White Fir dominant forest stand; 29 acres of brush mastication under an open Jeffery Pine stand with a Manzanita dominant shrub understory; and 23 acres of understory prescribed burning in open Jeffery Pine with sparse shrub and pine litter understory. See attached description.

**Name of Public Agency Approving Project:** Sierra Nevada Conservancy

**Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project:** California State Parks, Department of Parks and Recreation

**Exempt Status:** (*check one*)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
- Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15304, "Minor Alterations to Land"
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reasons why project is exempt:**

The Donner MSP Vegetation Management Project will involve minor disturbances to land and vegetation to remove accumulated fire fuels. The proposed vegetation management activities are not expected to generate any significant environmental effects. This project will reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire and improve native forest composition and structure. See attached description.

**Lead Agency:**

**Contact Person:** Marji Feliz      **Area Code/Telephone/Extension:** (530) 823-4679

**If filed by applicant:**

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes     No

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: Executive Officer

Jim Branham

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

January 2004

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**  
**CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15304**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**  
**Proposition 84 Competitive Grant Application Number 070236**  
**Vegetation Management, Forest Thinning, Brush Mastication, and Prescribed Burning Project**

**Description of Activities**

California State Parks, Department of Parks and Recreation, (State Parks) is requesting \$238,184 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Competitive Grants Program to complete three types of vegetation management in Donner Memorial State Park (Donner MSP). Donner MSP is situated near the town of Truckee, 12 miles northwest of North Lake Tahoe. The project will be implemented on the east end of Schallenberger Ridge, bordered by Donner MSP campground, Teichert and Caltrans properties, Cold Creek, the Union Pacific Railroad and Coldstream Valley. The project site is easily accessed by dirt road and lies within the Emigrant Canyon watershed and the Donner Lake watershed.

The restoration project includes three types of vegetation management: 35 acres of hand thinning and subsequent pile burning on a 50% slope in a White Fir (*Abies concolor*) dominant forest stand; 29 acres of brush mastication under an open Jeffery Pine (*Pinus jeffreyi*) stand with a Manzanita dominant shrub understory; and 23 acres of understory prescribed burning in open Jeffery Pine with sparse shrub and pine litter understory. Project work shall be performed by a hand crew, and a masticator consisting of a State Parks excavator equipped with a masticating head. Purchase of the masticating head will be grant funded. Project oversight will be provided by State Park Forester I. State Park Archaeologist will perform PRC 5024 cultural review including a records search and site survey.

The project will reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire, protect both the Emigrant Canyon and Donner Lakes watersheds, and improve native forest composition and structure. Overall goals of the forest management in Donner MSP include protecting forest resources from potential fire, insect disease threats, and long-term restoration of estimated native forest conditions. Active management is necessary due to past resource exploitation and fire exclusion in a fire-dependent ecosystem. Forest disturbances such as fire and insect attack now have a much greater potential to kill entire forest stands, as compared to under native disturbance regimes. A specific goal is protection from catastrophic wildfire causing significant damage to the watershed. The project is consistent with State Park's park-wide management goals and guidelines as outlined in the Donner Memorial State Park General Plan and it directly ties to the proposed changes to the Nevada County Fire Plan, which states that "the primary goals of the fire plan are to reduce fire severity and intensity through fuels management."

**Reasons Why the Project is Exempt**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a categorical exemption provides for an exemption from CEQA environmental documentation requirements for a class of projects determined not to have a significant effect on the environment. Categorical Exemptions are addressed in Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines, where a list of 32 classes of projects has been identified. Projects falling within one of these classes of projects are generally exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

***CEQA Guidelines Section 15304: Minor Alterations to Land***

The Donner MSP Vegetation Management Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which is defined as follows:

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation, which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

...

(d) Minor alterations in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas or fish production facilities which result in improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources or greater fish production.

...

The Donner MSP Vegetation Management Project will involve minor disturbances to land and vegetation to remove accumulated fire fuels. The proposed vegetation management activities are not expected to generate any significant environmental effects. This project will reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire and improve native forest composition and structure.

### No Exceptions to a Categorical Exemption

Categorical exemptions represent activities that generally do not result in significant environmental impacts. However, there are six exceptions to categorical exemptions, defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Generally, a categorical exemption does not apply if a project would occur in certain specified sensitive environments, would affect scenic resources within an official state scenic highway, or would be located on a designated hazardous waste site. In addition, a categorical exemption would not apply if the project causes substantial adverse changes in the significance of a historical resource or would be considered significant within the cumulative context. Table 1 identifies the exceptions from CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 and a brief discussion of why each exception does not apply to the Donner MSP Vegetation Management Project.

Table 1 Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)	
Exception	Applicability
(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.	Vegetation management activities will be managed by a California Registered Professional Forester. Hand crews will perform forest thinning; brush mastication will be performed by a mechanical excavator. Best management practices will be employed to prevent soil erosion and areas where heavy equipment has disturbed soils will be restored to pre-disturbance conditions and mulched with native forest litter. The project will reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire, protect both the Emigrant Canyon and Donner Lake watershed, and improve native forest composition and structure.
(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.	The fuel removal activities will not adversely affect environmental resources and will therefore not contribute to any cumulative environmental impact in relation to other fuels reduction work in the area.
(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.	<p>The project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.</p> <p><b>Aesthetics.</b> The presence of workers and equipment during fuel clearing work will be temporary. The project will result in a minor change in the appearance of the existing forest due to a more open understory. However, the intent of the project is to restore the forest to a more natural condition.</p> <p><b>Agriculture.</b> The project will have no impact on agricultural resources.</p> <p><b>Air Quality.</b> Project work will be managed by a Prescribed Fire Burn Boss. Prescribed burning, including pile burning, shall be implemented in accordance with county and state regulations, including filing a Smoke Management Plan with the Placer County Air Pollution Control District and the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District. A Prescribed Fire Burn Plan will be prepared and approved prior to understory burning. Prescribed Fire Complexity for pile burning is low.</p> <p><b>Biological Resources.</b> See (a).</p> <p><b>Cultural Resources.</b> See (f).</p> <p><b>Geology/Soils.</b> Use of heavy equipment for mastication may increase the potential for surface erosion. Twigs and branches will be chipped and broadcast onto the ground to act as a soil stabilization measure. Removal of fuels will not expose people or structures to loss, injury, or death due to seismic activity.</p> <p><b>Hazards/Hazardous Materials.</b> See (e).</p> <p><b>Hydrology/Water Quality.</b> Best management practices will be employed to prevent soil erosion. Disturbance of soils and topography due to heavy equipment (masticator) could disrupt natural water flow paths. All disturbed areas will be de-compacted</p>

**Table 1**  
**Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)**

Exception	Applicability
	<p>and the natural topography and drainage patterns will be restored to pre-disturbance conditions and mulched with native forest litter. A Waiver of waste discharge requirements for minor timber harvest activities shall be filed with the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. The removal of fuels will work to protect water quality by reducing the risk of erosion associated with fire. The project will have no impact on groundwater supplies or recharge.</p> <p><b>Noise.</b> The project will generate noise during fuel removal; however, this will be a temporary condition and will occur during normal working hours, the least sensitive hours of the day. Additionally, there is a limited extent to which the fuel clearing activities could expose sensitive receptors to increased noise levels. Therefore, the project will not cause significant noise effects.</p> <p><b>Transportation.</b> All public roads and trails will remain open during operations. Information signs with a contact telephone number will be posted. The project will involve short term use of trucks needed for hauling thinning equipment and work crews. The project will generate a minimal, temporary effect on local transportation.</p> <p><b>Other CEQA Issues.</b> The project will have no effect on land use, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, or utilities and service systems.</p>
(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.	Highway 80 in the vicinity of Truckee is an eligible state scenic highway. However, the forest thinning activities would not significantly alter, nor damage, views of the forest from the highway.
(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.	The site is not located on toxic sites listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. In addition, the restoration will not involve the storage, transport, or use of hazardous materials.
(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.	A preconstruction archaeological survey and resource inventory will be completed for the project area, pursuant to PRC 5024. If evidence of potentially significant historical or archaeological resources is found, the District or Service Center archaeologist will be contacted. Identified cultural resources will be flagged no more than 30-days prior to the start of work and will be identified on a topographic map. Resource locations and protection measures will be communicated to the project manager and any fuel reduction in areas within/adjacent to recorded archaeological or cultural resource sites will be limited to hand clearing and no burning will be allowed. Vehicles and burning will be prohibited within the exclusion zones. This will ensure that the project avoids any significant effects to cultural resources.



**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**  
**CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Sections 15301 and 15333**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**  
**Proposition 84 Competitive Grant Application Number 070245**  
**US Highway 40 (Donner Pass Road) Shoulder Rehabilitation Project**

**Description of Activities**

Placer County Department of Public Works is requesting \$1 million from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Competitive Grants Program to rehabilitate an approximately 1-acre section of eroding slopes within the Placer County right-of-way on US Highway 40 (Donner Pass Road) with rock slope protection, native vegetation treatments, and/or retaining walls to both improve water quality and the aesthetics of the roadway. Up to 200-feet of dilapidated culvert drainage pipe will also be replaced and upgraded to better contain and treat slope and road storm water runoff. The project is located in the Placer County right-of-way along Donner Pass Road, approximately one mile west of Donner Summit. This section of highway was built over 70 years ago in loose erodible soils and bedrock. Roadway cuts in this area are now as high as 65 feet and as long as 300 feet, with slope angles approaching 36 degrees (73 percent). These barren roadway cut slopes have been an ongoing source of erosion and sediment runoff onto the highway as well as downgradient properties and surface waters (South Yuba River and Lake Van Norden).

Temporary best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented during restoration/construction activities, including dry-season construction, erosion control devices and temporary area closures. The project will result in permanent BMPs in the form of slope stabilization, which will result in benefits to the watershed including improved drainage controls and reduced sediment runoff. Reducing erosion and sedimentation will improve the quality of runoff draining into the South Yuba River. No permits are known to be required for this project other than ensuring compliance with the Regional Water Quality Control Board – Central Region Stormwater Construction General Permit, which will be completed as part of final project design.

**Reasons Why the Project is Exempt**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a categorical exemption provides for an exemption from CEQA environmental documentation requirements for a class of projects determined not to have a significant effect on the environment. Categorical Exemptions are addressed in Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines, where a list of 32 classes of projects has been identified. Projects falling within one of these classes of projects are generally exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

***CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities***

The Donner Pass Road Shoulder Rehabilitation Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1, which is defined as follows:

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. The types of "existing facilities" itemized below are not intended to be all-inclusive of the types of projects which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use. Examples include but are not limited to:

...

(c) Existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities (this includes road grading for the purpose of public safety)

...

(h) Maintenance of existing landscaping, native growth, and water supply reservoirs (excluding the use of pesticides, as defined in Section 12753, Division 7, Chapter 2, Food and Agriculture Code);

...

The Donner Pass Road Shoulder Rehabilitation Project will involve stabilizing eroding slopes and repairing drainage facilities within the Placer County right-of-way along Donner Pass Road. The road will not be expanded.

***CEQA Guidelines Section 15333: Small Habitat Restoration Projects***

The Donner Pass Road Shoulder Rehabilitation Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15333, Class 33, which is defined as follows:

Class 33 consists of projects not to exceed five acres in size to assure the maintenance, restoration, enhancement, or protection of habitat for fish, plants, or wildlife provided that:

- (a) There would be no significant adverse impact on endangered, rare, or threatened species or their habitat pursuant to Section 15065,
- (b) There are no hazardous materials at or around the project site that may be disturbed or removed, and
- (c) The project will not result in impacts that are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects and the effects of probable future projects.
- (d) Examples of small restoration projects may include, but are not limited to
  - (1) revegetation of disturbed areas with native plant species;

...

The Donner Pass Road Shoulder Rehabilitation Project will involve native plant revegetation and mechanical slope stabilization measures to repair an approximately 1-acre area of eroding roadway slopes. The project will not result in significant adverse impacts to special status species or cumulative environmental impacts and there are no hazardous materials at or around the project site.

**No Exceptions to a Categorical Exemption**

Categorical exemptions represent activities that generally do not result in significant environmental impacts. However, there are six exceptions to categorical exemptions, defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Generally, a categorical exemption does not apply if a project would occur in certain specified sensitive environments, would affect scenic resources within an official state scenic highway, or would be located on a designated hazardous waste site. In addition, a categorical exemption would not apply if the project causes substantial adverse changes in the significance of a historical resource or would be considered significant within the cumulative context. Table 1 identifies the exceptions from CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 and a brief discussion of why each exception does not apply to the Donner Pass Road Shoulder Rehabilitation Project.

<b>Table 1 Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)</b>	
<b>Exception</b>	<b>Applicability</b>
(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.	The project will avoid adverse impacts through minimizing new ground disturbance, emphasizing slope stabilization through revegetation and self-sustaining native plants, and restricting construction to the summer period to minimize runoff during construction. The project will result in permanent BMPs in the form of slope stabilization, which will result in benefits to the watershed including improved drainage controls and reduced sediment runoff. Reducing erosion and sedimentation will improve the quality of runoff draining into the South Yuba River. No permits are known to be required for this project other than ensuring compliance with the Regional Water Quality Control Board – Central Region Stormwater Construction General Permit, which will be completed as part of final project design. A storm water pollution prevention plan will be prepared.
(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.	Rehabilitation of the eroding road slope will not adversely affect environmental resources and will not contribute to any cumulative environmental impact in relation to projects in the area. The slope stabilization will result in beneficial effects related to reducing erosion and sedimentation, long-term protection of water quality in the South Yuba River watershed and revegetation with native plants.

**Table 1**  
**Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)**

Exception	Applicability
<p>(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.</p>	<p>The Donner Pass Road Shoulder Rehabilitation Project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.</p> <p><b>Aesthetics.</b> Temporary disturbances to the visual quality of the site will occur during project construction. However, the stabilization and rehabilitation of the eroded slopes with native vegetation and mechanical measures will improve the visual quality of that section of Donner Pass Road and will help the transportation corridor blend with the surrounding undisturbed landscape.</p> <p><b>Agriculture.</b> The project will have no impact on agricultural resources.</p> <p><b>Air Quality.</b> Restoration/construction activities will result in nominal fugitive dust and mobile source emissions. Mobile source emissions will be limited to those associated with vehicle trips to/from the project area. Some motorized equipment will be used for project implementation, but revegetation will be done by hand. Given the limited ground disturbance for restoration activities and lack of sensitive receptors in close proximity to work areas, sensitive receptors will not be exposed to substantial pollutant concentrations. The restoration will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the region's applicable air quality plan and will not violate any air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation.</p> <p><b>Biological Resources.</b> See (a).</p> <p><b>Cultural Resources.</b> See (f).</p> <p><b>Geology/Soils.</b> The purpose of the project is to stabilize an eroding slope along Donner Pass Road. The slope rehabilitation will not expose people or structures to loss, injury, or death due to seismic activity or unstable soils.</p> <p><b>Hazards/Hazardous Materials.</b> See (e).</p> <p><b>Hydrology/Water Quality.</b> The slope stabilization will involve repairing drainage facilities to better contain and treat slope and road storm water runoff. The project will stabilize eroding slopes to prevent ongoing sedimentation into the South Yuba watershed. A detailed storm water pollution prevention plan will be prepared and BMPs will be implemented during construction to prevent the discharge of soils into waterways. Due to the limited ground disturbance for restoration activities, it is unlikely that groundwater will be encountered; in addition, the project will have no other effect on groundwater supplies or recharge.</p> <p><b>Noise.</b> Temporary construction activities will generate noise. However, given that slope stabilization activities will be limited to daytime business hours (the least sensitive hours of the day) and the limited extent in which these activities could expose sensitive receptors to increased noise levels, the project will not cause significant noise effects.</p> <p><b>Transportation.</b> The project will involve short term use of trucks needed for hauling equipment and work crews to the site. The project will generate a minimal, temporary effect on local transportation. The vehicles will not block traffic and no traffic delays will occur due to installation activities.</p>

**Table 1**  
**Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)**

Exception	Applicability
	<b>Other CEQA Issues.</b> The project will have no effect on land use, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, or utilities and service systems.
(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.	US Highway 40 is not designated as a state scenic highway. Therefore, the slope stabilization will not result in the removal of, or damage to, any trees, rock outcroppings, historic buildings or other resources within the viewshed of a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. Additionally, the stabilization and revegetation of the eroded slopes will improve the visual quality of that section of Donner Pass Road
(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.	The site is not located on toxic sites listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. In addition, the slope rehabilitation will not involve the storage, transport, or use of hazardous materials.
(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.	Due to the disturbed nature of the project site and the limited ground disturbance for restoration activities, the project will not result in an adverse change in the significance of any archaeological or historical resource and will not disturb or destroy any human remains or paleontological resources.



**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**  
**CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15304**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**  
**Proposition 84 Competitive Grant Application Number 070246**  
**Hidden Falls Regional Park - Fuel Load Reduction and Related Fire Safe Activities Project**

**Description of Activities**

Placer County Department of Facility Services, Parks Division, is requesting \$517,859 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Competitive Grants Program to create three shaded fuel breaks and a firebreak on 108 acres of Hidden Falls Regional Park. The park is located in the Sierra Nevada Foothills between Auburn and Lincoln. The principle vegetation types are mixed oak savanna, blue oak woodland, and annual grassland. The fuel load reduction and related fire safe activities will include the creation of shaded fuel breaks covering 94 acres of brush, annual grassland, and timberland; clearing a 15 foot wide, 8 mile access perimeter around the property (14 acres); mowing 10 acres of grasslands to create defensible space around the parking and staging areas; and the purchase of an all-terrain Mower for creation of and the on-going maintenance of the shaded fuel breaks and grasslands.

The shaded fuel breaks will range from 200 feet wide to 300 feet wide depending upon the degree of slopes. The project will entail a combination of thinning of the forest canopy by removal of trees so that no more than 40-60% of ground is covered by their canopy, trimming ladder fuels from the ground to a height of between 6 feet to 10 feet, and removing the understory vegetation. Twigs and branches will be chipped and the chips will be broadcast onto the ground to act as a soil stabilization measure, as well as a weed inhibitor. An All Terrain Mower will be used to mow slopes up to 34 degrees that are not accessible with conventional mowers.

Vegetation management and fuel load reduction will protect the Deadman Creek and Coon Creek watersheds. It will also reduce the risk of wildfire and protect neighboring communities, wildlife habitat, natural resources, and an archaeological site.

**Reasons Why the Project is Exempt**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a categorical exemption provides for an exemption from CEQA environmental documentation requirements for a class of projects determined not to have a significant effect on the environment. Categorical Exemptions are addressed in Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines, where a list of 32 classes of projects has been identified. Projects falling within one of these classes of projects are generally exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

***CEQA Guidelines Section 15304: Minor Alterations to Land***

The Hidden Falls Regional Park - Fuel Load Reduction and Related Fire Safe Activities Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which is defined as follows:

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation, which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

...

(d) Minor alterations in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas or fish production facilities which result in improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources or greater fish production.

...

The Hidden Falls Regional Park - Fuel Load Reduction and Related Fire Safe Activities Project will involve minor disturbances to land and vegetation to remove accumulated fire fuels.

**No Exceptions to a Categorical Exemption**

Categorical exemptions represent activities that generally do not result in significant environmental impacts. However, there are six exceptions to categorical exemptions, defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Generally, a categorical exemption does not apply if a project would occur in certain specified sensitive environments, would affect scenic resources within an official state scenic highway, or would be located on a designated hazardous waste site. In addition, a categorical exemption would not apply if the project causes substantial adverse changes in the significance of a historical resource or would be considered significant within the cumulative context. Table 1 identifies the exceptions from CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 and a brief discussion of why each exception does not apply to the Hidden Falls Regional Park - Fuel Load Reduction and Related Fire Safe Activities Project.

**Table 1  
Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)**

Exception	Applicability
<p>(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.</p>	<p>The project involves thinning common tree and brush species on parkland for the purpose of reducing fire hazards and restoring balance to the area's natural habitat. Work will be performed by a hand crew, the County's masticator, and an all-terrain mower. The shaded fuel breaks will be designed and cleared under the direction of a registered forester.</p>
<p>(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.</p>	<p>The fuel removal activities will not adversely affect environmental resources and will therefore not contribute to any cumulative environmental impact in relation to other fuels reduction work in the area.</p>
<p>(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.</p>	<p>The project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.</p> <p><b>Aesthetics.</b> The presence of workers and equipment during fuel clearing work will be temporary. The project will result in a minor change in the appearance of the existing forest due to a more open understory. However, the intent of the project is to restore the forest to a more natural condition.</p> <p><b>Agriculture.</b> The project will have no impact on agricultural resources.</p> <p><b>Air Quality.</b> The project may temporarily affect air quality during fuel reduction activities. Equipment used for fuel removal will use approved emission control devices.</p> <p><b>Biological Resources.</b> See (a).</p> <p><b>Cultural Resources.</b> See (f).</p> <p><b>Geology/Soils.</b> Use of heavy equipment for mastication and mowing may increase the potential for surface erosion. Twigs and branches will be chipped and broadcast onto the ground to act as a soil stabilization measure. Removal of fuels will not expose people or structures to loss, injury, or death due to seismic activity.</p> <p><b>Hazards/Hazardous Materials.</b> See (e).</p> <p><b>Hydrology/Water Quality.</b> The removal of fuels will work to protect water quality by reducing the risk of erosion associated with fire. Best management practices will be employed to prevent soil erosion. The project will have no impact on groundwater supplies or recharge.</p> <p><b>Noise.</b> The project will generate noise during fuel removal; however, this will be a temporary condition and will occur during normal working hours, the least sensitive hours of the day. Additionally, there is a limited extent to which the fuel clearing activities could expose sensitive receptors to increased noise levels. Therefore, the project will not cause significant noise effects.</p> <p><b>Transportation.</b> The project will involve short term use of trucks needed for hauling thinning equipment, work crews, chipping fuels, and mowing vegetation. The project will generate a minimal, temporary effect on local transportation.</p> <p><b>Other CEQA Issues.</b> The project will have no effect on land use, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, or utilities and service systems.</p>

**Table 1**  
**Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)**

Exception	Applicability
(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.	The project will not alter visual resources that contribute to scenic views within a scenic highway or eligible segment of a state highway.
(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.	The site is not located on toxic sites listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. In addition, the restoration will not involve the storage, transport, or use of hazardous materials.
(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.	A recent archaeological study of the project site identified nine historic-era cultural resources and nine prehistoric sites. One unique site has been determined to potentially be associated with spiritual rituals and may be eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources. These cultural resources will be avoided and protected during fuel clearing activities. If any additional cultural resources are discovered during fuel clearing activities, work in the area shall be stopped and a certified archaeologist shall be consulted before work may continue. This will ensure that the project avoids any significant effects to cultural resources.

**Background**

In November 2006, California voters passed Proposition 84, which included an allocation of \$54 million of bond funding for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC). In January 2007, the Governor proposed and the legislature approved \$17 million in grant funds for the SNC for Fiscal Year 2007-08. It is anticipated that the additional bond funds will be appropriated over the next two fiscal years.

At the July 2007 meeting, the Board approved final guidelines that define eligible project and grant types, grant size limits, availability of funds, selection criteria and how to apply for funding. The Board also approved a plan to allocate the grant funds as follows: \$9 million for a Competitive Grants Program and \$8 million for Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs). Of the \$8 million in SOG funding, \$1 million was allocated to each of the six SNC subregions and \$2 million for region-wide projects.

At the December, 2007 meeting the Board authorized 47 SOGs for a total of \$2,756,188. At the March 2008 meeting, the Board authorized 55 SOGs for a total of \$4,305,320. To date the Executive officer has authorized six grants for a total of \$188,495. Three grant requests were withdrawn by the applicants after the Board authorized them in December. Therefore, a total of \$789,997 remains available for SOGs.

**Current Status**

The available funds remaining in each of the subregion allocations as of May 21, 2008, are shown in the table below. Staff is recommending that an additional \$583,084 be re-allocated among four subregions, also shown below in Table 1.

Table 1 as of May 21, 2008

<b>Subregion</b>	<b>Allocation</b>	<b>Total Authorized to date</b>	<b>Total Remaining As of May 21, 2008</b>	<b>Recommended Reallocation from Competitive</b>
Region-Wide	\$2 Million	1,949,149	52,851	0
Central	\$1 Million	988,635	49,365	81,270
North	\$1 Million	952,204	47,796	18,404
North Central	\$1 Million	691,856	308,144	0
East	\$1 Million	824,895	175,105	320,999
South Central	\$1 Million	1,000,000	0	0
South	\$1 Million	843,264	156,736	162,411
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8 Million</b>	<b>7,250,003</b>	<b>789,997</b>	<b>583,084</b>

### Project Development and Evaluation Process

The SNC Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines encourage potential applicants to consult with SNC staff prior to submitting applications. Many applicants have taken advantage of this consultation and report that it has been very helpful in developing their projects and applications. The consultations have also been beneficial for SNC staff by providing them with a better understanding of potential projects and increasing the likelihood that applications address the purpose of Proposition 84 and the mission of the SNC.

Immediately following the March 21 submittal deadline, staff began reviewing all applications for completeness and applicant eligibility. Upon determining that an application was complete and eligible for funding, the SNC provided local governments and water agencies with summaries of proposed projects, consistent with SNC guidelines. The subregional representatives on the SNC Board were also notified at this time, providing an opportunity for them to communicate with the affected entities as well and summaries of all eligible applications were posted on the SNC Web site. Staff is not aware of any outstanding issues with local governments on these projects.

SNC staff consulted with experts in a number of state agencies to review technical aspects of project proposals. Representatives from the Department of General Services (DGS) Environmental Services Branch and the office of the State Attorney General were consulted relative to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance.

For those projects found to be eligible, SNC staff evaluated project applications using the evaluation criteria contained in the Guidelines:

1. Contribution to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources (Proposition 84);
2. How the project addresses one or more of the SNC program goals;
3. Demonstrated cooperation, community support and leveraging.

All applications were required to provide evidence of their ability to implement the project and meet environmental requirements. Through the course of the evaluation, staff interacted with applicants to gather additional information and resolve outstanding issues as necessary. Project proposals were reviewed with the Board's Subregional committees in mid-May regarding Subregional priorities and any issues or concerns related to specific projects.

### Summary of Applications Reviewed

The SNC established March 21 as the last day an application could be submitted and still have the potential to be considered at the June Board meeting. The SNC received a total of 31 new applications by that date. Of these 27 were eligible. These were added to 17 eligible applications that were deferred from the first and second rounds of SOGs, for a total of 44 applications reviewed by staff. The total dollar amount requested for all projects in the third round of SOGs was \$2,642,188.

Following this round of authorizations, all remaining applications not funded will be considered inactive. Applicants may submit new applications for these or similar projects in future years and are urged to consult with SNC staff in order to improve the project application.

### Projects Recommended for Funding

Exhibit A to this staff report includes both a spreadsheet showing project-specific information as well as individual project summaries for projects being recommended for Board approval at this meeting.

In some cases the recommended grant amount is less than the amount requested. This is primarily the result of some proposed expenditures being ineligible or elements of the projects needing additional refinement before being funded. In some cases, it may reflect a lack of available funds to fund the entire project.

Together, the recommended projects directly leverage more than \$1.1 million in additional funding and in-kind contributions being committed by applicants and others.

The recommended projects most strongly meet the evaluation criteria described above, are able to be implemented on a timely basis, and meet all environmental review and documentation requirements. The 20 projects recommended for funding in this round of Strategic Opportunity Grants will contribute to completion of due diligence work to acquire two conservation easements protecting 1,600 acres of working landscapes and implementation of 4 site improvement projects resulting in treatment of 1,962 acres of forested land for fire prevention, restoration of 25 acres of riparian habitat, and restoration of over 30 miles of wilderness trail to avoid adverse impacts. Other projects will complete environmental review for future projects, pre-project planning and natural resource education activities.

Table 2 Staff Recommendations

Subregion	Recommended Projects	Total Recommended	Total Remaining	Augmented w/ Competitive
Region-Wide	1	50,000	2,851	0
Central	1	130,635	0	81,270
North	3	66,200	0	18,404
North Central	5	308,144	0	0
East	6	496,104	0	320,999
South	4	319,127	0	162,411
South Central	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1,370,230</b>	<b>2,851</b>	<b>583,084</b>

Region-Wide Significance: \$50,000

One project is being recommended for funding with Region-wide significance. This project will complete restoration of over 30 miles of wilderness trail, and will provide educational opportunities for 32 youth volunteers each contributing three weeks of hard wilderness labor in three national forests and wilderness areas.

Central Subregion: \$130,635

One project is being recommended for funding in the Central Subregion. New applications were not received for the Central Subregion due to the small amount of funds remaining after the March board meeting. A project authorized in December was withdrawn before being encumbered, adding \$38,000 to available funds and bringing the total available amount in this Subregion to \$49,365. The Central Subregion received more applications than any other Subregion in previous rounds, so it was not difficult to select a worthy project for authorization for this final round. The project proposed for authorization would contribute to the completion of a comprehensive watershed plan in the Placerville area. This recommended authorization includes \$81,270 re-allocated from the Competitive grants allocation.

North Subregion: \$66,200

Three projects are being recommended for funding in the North Subregion. Projects will provide for completion of pre-acquisition activities for 1,600 acres of working landscape and support development of an environmental education program in Alturas focused on preservation of the Pit River. This recommended authorization includes \$18,404 re-allocated from the Competitive grants allocation.

North-Central Subregion: \$308,144

Five projects are being recommended for funding in the North-Central Subregion to complete hazardous fuels reduction work, develop a watershed management plan for the Almanor Basin, upgrade visitor education and youth outreach programs for a working fish hatchery, complete a trails master plan to reduce erosion impacts to the watershed, and coordinate efforts aimed at preserving the integrity of the Tuscan headwaters area covering 11 watersheds in Butte and Tehama counties.

East Subregion: \$496,104

Six projects are being recommended for funding in the East Subregion. Projects would provide environmental review for fuels treatment projects and implementing fuels treatment projects, preliminary coordination for development of an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan to identify and prioritize watershed related projects, and a planning effort to improve water and air quality in the Mammoth Lake Basin by assessing current circulation patterns and transportation modes, and reducing recreation impacts by assessing current recreation uses. These assessments will support low impact planning and design efforts in the Mammoth Lake Basin. This recommended authorization includes \$320,999 re-allocated from the Competitive grants allocation.

South Subregion: \$319,147

Four projects are being recommended for funding in the South Subregion. These include one project to reduce trash disposal and encourage recycling, and protect natural features along the Tule River. One project will produce an educational video focused on reducing impacts to river corridors and riparian areas for specific ethnic groups. Other projects will assist in coordination of developing an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan to identify and prioritize watershed related projects, and an effort to educate and unify partners to undertake a collaborative approach to restoring portions of the San Joaquin River. This recommended authorization includes \$162,411 re-allocated from the Competitive grants allocation.

Reporting of Executive Authorizations: \$33,750

The SNC received two applications requesting Executive Officer approval since the last Board meeting. Consistent with the SNC Board Resolution 2007-001 and the Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines, the project in Table 3 details authorized grant funding by the Executive Officer based on the time-sensitive nature of the project. The second EO request did not meet the urgency test for EO approval; but it is being recommended for Board authorization as part of the North Subregion recommendations described above.

Table 3 Executive Officer Authorizations

Project Name	Project #	Grantee	Description	Dollar Amount
Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative	070344	Student Conservation Association	Complete recruitment, training, and hiring of crewleaders for the Summer 2008 SCA program.	\$33,750
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$33,750</b>

California Environmental Quality Act Compliance

A total of 16 projects being recommended do not require California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation due to the nature of the activities being recommended and have been included in a memo prepared for the Conservancy Attachment B.

Two projects being recommended require the Conservancy to complete a Notice of Exemption and file with the State Clearinghouse. A Notice of Exemption has been prepared for each project and will be filed upon Board approval.

Two projects require the Conservancy to adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration and an Initial Study / Negative Declaration and file a Notice of Determination (NOD) for each.

The SNC as a Responsible Agency in accordance with CEQA Guidelines is proposing to provide grant funding to the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District (MLFPD) for the Old Mammoth Lakes and Mill City Fuels Reduction Project. MLFPD, the Lead Agency pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, prepared and circulated the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Old Mammoth/Mill City Fuels Reduction Project (SCH #2008012093). The 30-day public review period closed on February 25, 2008 and two comment letters were received, one from the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and one from the Native American Heritage Commission. Per letter from the State Clearinghouse dated February 26, 2008, MLFPD complied with the review requirements for environmental documents, pursuant to CEQA. MLFPD approved the project and filed a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse on March 12, 2008. SNC staff has reviewed the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared and adopted by the MLFPD, which identifies and considers the work proposed in the Old Mammoth Lakes and Mill City Fuels Reduction Project (SNC 070346) and recommends that the Board make findings concurrent with the findings adopted by the MLFPD and direct staff to file a NOD with the State Clearinghouse.

SNC was the lead agency for the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project (SNC 070358) Initial Study and Negative Declaration (SCH#2008034005). The USFS revised the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project FONSI and EA in preparation of an Initial Study and Negative Declaration, pursuant to CEQA, and submitted it to the State Clearinghouse on behalf

of the SNC for a 30-day review period, which closed on April 16, 2008. USFS received one comment letter from the California Department of Fish and Game. Per a letter from the State Clearinghouse dated April 17, 2008, SNC and USFS complied with the review requirements for environmental documents, pursuant to CEQA. SNC will file a lead agency Notice of Determination for the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project if grant funding for the project is approved.

These environmental documents are on file at the offices of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

### **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends that Board adopt the Old Mammoth/Mill City Fuels Reduction Project Mitigated Negative Declaration which identifies and considers the proposed actions in the Old Mammoth/Mill City Fuels Reduction Project and make finding concurrent with the findings adopted by the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District and direct staff to file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff further recommends that Board adopt the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project Initial Study and Negative Declaration which identifies and considers the proposed actions in the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project and make findings that The proposed project would not have a significant impact related to aesthetics, agricultural resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, and utilities and service systems. The proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact related to air quality, biological resources, geology and soils, noise, and transportation and traffic, and direct staff to file a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse.

Staff further recommends the Board authorize Strategic Opportunity Grants listed in Agenda Item XIII Exhibit A, and further authorize staff to enter into all necessary agreements and file the appropriate CEQA documentation with the State Clearinghouse for all projects.

Sub-Region	Reference #	County	Project Title	Grantee Organization	Total	URL
Region-Wide	<a href="#">SNC 070275</a>	Alpine, Fresno, Inyo	<a href="#">Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative</a>	Student Conservation Association	\$ 50,000	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070275final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070275final.pdf</a>
<b>Region-Wide Total</b>					<b>\$ 50,000</b>	
North	<a href="#">SNC 070158</a>	Modoc	<a href="#">Central Modoc River Center Capacity Building Project</a>	Modoc River Center	\$ 23,500	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070158final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070158final.pdf</a>
North	<a href="#">SNC 070353</a>	Lassen	<a href="#">Hulsman Ranch Conservation Easement</a>	Lassen Land and Trails Trust	\$ 35,000	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070353final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070353final.pdf</a>
North	<a href="#">SNC 070356</a>	Lassen	<a href="#">McClelland/Eagle Lake Ranch Appraisal</a>	HoneyLake Valley Resource Conservation District	\$ 7,700	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070356final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070356final.pdf</a>
<b>North Total</b>					<b>\$ 66,200</b>	
North Central	<a href="#">SNC 070201</a>	Plumas	<a href="#">Developing a Working Landscapes Watershed Management Plan for the Almanor Basin</a>	Sierra Institute for Community and Environment	\$ 92,329	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070201final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070201final.pdf</a>
North Central	<a href="#">SNC 070298</a>	Plumas	<a href="#">Feather River College Hatchery - Project Fish - Education and Tourism</a>	Feather River College Hatchery	\$ 26,875	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070298final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070298final.pdf</a>
North Central	<a href="#">SNC 070343</a>	Plumas	<a href="#">Plumas County Trails Master Plan</a>	Plumas Corporation and Trails for Plumas County	\$ 30,000	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070343final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070343final.pdf</a>
North Central	<a href="#">SNC 070345</a>	Plumas	<a href="#">Grizzly Creek Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project</a>	Plumas County Fire Safe Council	\$ 12,300	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070345final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070345final.pdf</a>
North Central	<a href="#">SNC 070354</a>	Butte, Tehama	<a href="#">Tuscan Headwaters Project</a>	Northern California Regional Land Trust (NCRLT)	\$ 146,640	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070354final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070354final.pdf</a>
<b>North Central Total</b>					<b>\$ 308,144</b>	
Central	<a href="#">SNC 070125</a>	El Dorado	<a href="#">Hangtown Creek Comprehensive Watershed Plan</a>	City of Placerville	\$ 130,635	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070125final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070125final.pdf</a>
<b>Central Total</b>					<b>\$ 130,635</b>	
South	<a href="#">SNC 070165</a>	Fresno, Madera	<a href="#">Revive the San Joaquin, San Joaquin River Restoration Stewards Partnership Network</a>	Revive the San Joaquin	\$ 69,769	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070165final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070165final.pdf</a>
South	<a href="#">SNC 070347</a>	Tulare	<a href="#">Tule River Site Improvement Project II</a>	Community Services & Employment Training, Inc. (CSET)	\$ 149,428	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070347final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070347final.pdf</a>
South	<a href="#">SNC 070364</a>	Fresno, Kern, Tulare	<a href="#">Southern Sierra IRWMP Launch Project</a>	Sequoia Riverlands Trust	\$ 49,950	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070364final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070364final.pdf</a>
South	<a href="#">SNC 070365</a>	Fresno, Kern, Madera, Tulare	<a href="#">C.A.R.E. Environmental Ethics in the Sierra Nevada Video</a>	Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council	\$ 50,000	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070365final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070365final.pdf</a>
<b>South Total</b>					<b>\$ 319,147</b>	
East	<a href="#">SNC 070305</a>	Mono	<a href="#">Mammoth Lakes Basin Interagency Collaborative Planning</a>	Town of Mammoth Lakes	\$ 196,000	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070305final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070305final.pdf</a>
East	<a href="#">SNC 070346</a>	Mono	<a href="#">Old Mammoth and Mill City Fuels Reduction Project</a>	Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District	\$ 99,999	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070346final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070346final.pdf</a>
East	<a href="#">SNC 070357</a>	Mono	<a href="#">Eastern Sierra IRWMP Launch Project</a>	California Trout	\$ 49,663	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070357final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070357final.pdf</a>
East	<a href="#">SNC 070358</a>	Mono	<a href="#">Mill City Fuels Reduction Project</a>	Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Ranger District	\$ 99,999	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070358final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070358final.pdf</a>
East	<a href="#">SNC 070366</a>	Mono	<a href="#">Swauger Creek Shaded Fuelbreak and Habitat Improvement</a>	US Forest Service, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest	\$ 25,000	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070366final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070366final.pdf</a>
East	<a href="#">SNC 070367</a>	Mono	<a href="#">Twin Lakes Drainage Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project</a>	US Forest Service, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest	\$ 25,443	<a href="http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070367final.pdf">http://www.sierranevadaconservancy.ca.gov/docs/SNC070367final.pdf</a>
<b>East Total</b>					<b>\$ 496,104</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>					<b>\$ 1,370,230</b>	

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion:** REGION-WIDE      **County:** ALPINE, FRESNO, AND INYO  
**Applicant:** STUDENT CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION (SCA)  
**Project Title:** SIERRA TRAILS AND RECREATION INITIATIVE  
**Application Number:** SNC 070275

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will support the deployment of high school trail crew volunteers for three-week service tours to enhance five project areas on National Forest land in the Sierra. Trail projects will affect more than 31 miles of wilderness trails and include trail enhancement; wilderness restoration, and erosion control. Projects also include removal of five campsites from sensitive areas and enhancing/rebuilding two stock exclusion fences to protect meadows and water quality. SNC grant funds will be used as shown in the budget categories below.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve – this project consists of support for on-the-ground site improvements/restoration implemented by youth who will be learning firsthand about the benefits of watershed stewardship. It will leverage \$35,000 of other funding as well as an estimated \$104,000 of in-kind donations, and will also build on a previous SNC Executive Officer Authorization of \$33,750 (SNC 070344) granted to enable SCA to hire and train crew leaders in time to implement its summer program. SCA has demonstrated capacity as shown by its 50+ years of existence, existing partnership with the Forest Service, and experience implementing similar programs all over the United States.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Region

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Deploy four, eight-person high school trail crews recruited from high schools in Sierra Nevada, Bay Area, Los Angeles, and Central Valley.	July-August 2008
Accomplish 5,376 total hours of volunteer service.	July-August 2008
Remove brush and loose rocks from 25 miles of trail on the Inyo National Forest (NF). Install 10 water bars/drainage dips. Remove five campsites too close to creeks/lakes.	July-August 2008
Enhance/rebuild two stock exclusion split-rail fences	July-August 2008

approximately ½ mile in length on Inyo NF to protect meadows and water quality.	
Remove and rehabilitate 2.5 miles of unwanted old Golden Trout Lakes Trail on Sierra NF. Reduce erosion of soil into creek.	July-August 2008
Stabilize a .75-mile section of the L. Lake Trail that is deeply incised and currently causing significant erosion and associated resource damage. This section of trail is located between Elba Lake and the bottom of French Canyon.	July-August 2008
Remove brush and loose rock from three miles of trail on Stanislaus NF. Perform erosion control on and reconstruct 1,000 feet of trail. Improve public access.	July-August 2008
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>October 2008</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Crew Leader Travel	\$3,000
Crew Leader Coordination	\$15,500
Supplies and Equipment (Non-food)	\$2,000
Project Vehicle Rental, Gas	\$9,000
Crew Member Travel Assistance	\$3,000
Packer Support	\$4,000
Project Support, Evaluation, Reporting	\$8,000
Project Administration	\$5,500
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: NORTH County: MODOC**  
**Applicant: CENTRAL MODOC RIVER CENTER**  
**Project Title: CENTRAL MODOC RIVER CENTER CAPACITY BUILDING**  
**Application Number: SNC 070158**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This capacity-building project supports the Central Modoc River Center in its role as a watershed educator and community resource in Modoc County. Funding under this program supports the River Center's role in conducting two outreach and educational projects: the *Wings of the Warners* and the Pit River Adoption project.

*Wings of the Warners* teaches families about migratory waterfowl and the importance of the local watersheds to the lifecycle of these species, while the Pit River Adoption Project provides two field trip sessions for Alturas-area high school students to the River Center and the Modoc National Wildlife Refuge. The field trips will take place in Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 and will accommodate approximately 500 students over a two-week period for each season. Two buses per day will transport students to the River Center and the Refuge. Teaching assistants, under the direction of a project coordinator and the River Center Director, will teach students about the river, watershed, and wildlife through a series of place-based learning activities and educational materials that meet California state curriculum standards. Additional education and demonstrations will be provided by volunteer teachers and agency personnel.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve at the reduced amount of \$23,500 to focus the efforts on two specific projects – the *Wings of the Warners* event and Pit River Adoption Project – to educate area high school students and local residents about the importance of watershed health in the Pit River watershed. The Pit River Adoption Project is a newly revised program for the River Center, which has a history of providing popular and important educational services and outreach to the local area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing a matching grant of \$20,000 for this project (which will pay for administration costs, travel, bus transportation for the students, educational materials, and a portion of the Coordinator's time).

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

No support letters were provided.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
<b>Wings of the Warners</b>	
Twice-monthly Event Committee meetings	June – September 2008
Obtain City, County & State permits	June/July 2008
Arrange for support services and volunteers	July/August 2008
Arrange for vendors and necessary permits	July/August 2008
Complete event schedule and site layout	August/September 2008
Hold <i>Wings of the Warners</i> event	September 2008
<b>Pit River Adoption Program</b>	
Event Committee meetings (1 to 2 per month)	July – October 2008
Meetings with Wildlife Refuge and other agencies	July – October 2008
Teacher/Teaching Assistant training	August 2008
Supply procurement / event arrangements	August – October 2008
Site preparation	Sept./Oct. 2008
<i>Fall 2008</i> Pit River Adoption field trip session	October 2008
6 month progress report (covering both projects)	January 2009
Event Committee meetings (1 to 2 per month)	February – May 2009
Meetings with Wildlife Refuge and other agencies	March – May 2009
Teacher/Teaching Assistant training	March 2009
Supply procurement / event arrangements	March – May 2009
Site preparation	April/May 2009
<i>Spring 2009</i> Pit River Adoption field trip session	May 2009
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	June 30, 2009

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Event coordination and logistics - <i>Wings of the Warners</i>	3,500
Pit River Adoption Program pre-field trip procurement & arrangements, training of teaching assistants, field support and day-of coordination	11,300
6 Teaching Assistants for Pit River Adoption field tours	7,200
Pit River Adoption procurement, contract management & reporting	1,500
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$23,500</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: NORTH County: LASSEN**  
**Applicant: LASSEN LAND AND TRAILS TRUST**  
**Project Title: HULSMAN RANCH CONSERVATION EASEMENT APPRAISAL**  
**Application Number: SNC 070353**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will provide for the landowner negotiation, title work and appraisal for 500 acres of significant watershed and habitat corridor on the historic Hulsman Ranch approximately 3 miles southeast of Susanville, California. This ranch is part of the Wildlife Conservation Board's approved Conceptual Area Protection Plan for the habitat corridor linking the Bass Hill Wildlife Area and the Lassen National Forest.

- The specific deliverables include:
- Easement negotiation and review
  - Appraisal and title
  - Baseline report and monitoring plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**

SNC Staff recommendation is to fund at the requested level of \$35,000. This project would provide for the protection of significant watershed values and habitat corridors between two already protected areas – the Bass Hill Wildlife Area and Lassen National Forest.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

None provided.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Easement negotiation	July –August 2008
Appraisal and Title work	September 2008
Progress Report	December 2008
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	<b>March 2009</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Easement Negotiation	\$15,000
Appraisal and Title work	\$10,000
Baseline Report and Monitoring Plan	\$10,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: NORTH County: LASSEN**  
**Applicant: HONEY LAKE VALLEY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**Project Title: MCCLELLAND/EAGLE LAKE RANCH APPRAISAL**  
**Application Number: SNC 070356**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will fund the appraisal of the 1,100-acre McClelland Ranch on the north shore of Eagle Lake in order to develop a conservation easement with the landowner. The property consists of two proximate but non-contiguous parcels – one parcel of approximately 500 acres of shoreline property, and one +/- 600-acre parcel to the west and upland from the lake. The applicant will work with the landowner to identify and contract with an appraiser and develop an acquisition plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve – this appraisal is the first step to secure a conservation easement from a very willing landowner to permanently protect a significant piece of Eagle Lake shoreline and help preserve its water quality, while also preserving the working landscape. The landowner is anxious to ensure that the land is preserved for cattle ranching, and not developed, after he retires from ranching. Considerable interest has been shown over the years from agencies and conservation organizations to see that the lakeshore property is protected from development in order to help preserve the water quality of Eagle Lake, which is showing stress from reduced groundwater, increased algae, and decreased water clarity due to existing developments. The lake has high alkalinity which supports an endemic species of trout. It is expected that the final easement would include specific water protection features to maintain the low impact of the current land use. The low appraisal cost is a good allocation of SNC funds to help facilitate the overall land protection project.

The total budget for the appraisal project is \$12,700. It includes \$7,700 from SNC to hire an appraiser and for RCD grant administration costs; and \$5,000 in-kind match of the landowner’s time to identify, negotiate with, and hire an appraiser.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

No letters of support were included with the application.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Identify and hire appraiser	May 2008
Complete appraisal	May 2008
Complete acquisition plan	July 2008
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	August 2008

## PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Hire appraiser	\$7,000
Acquisition plan development and grant administration by RCD	\$700
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,700</b>

## STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)

**Subregion:** NORTH-CENTRAL                      **County:** PLUMAS

**Applicant:** SIERRA INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT

**Project Title:** DEVELOPING A WORKING LANDSCAPES WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE ALMANOR BASIN

**Application Number:** SNC 070201

### PROJECT SCOPE

This project will develop a Watershed Management Plan to protect water quality and habitat values in the Lake Almanor Basin, which encompasses 320,000 acres mostly in Plumas County but also extending into Lassen and Shasta Counties. The applicant will work closely with the Almanor Basin Watershed Advisory Group (ABWAC), as well as various agencies and the public, to identify area needs and priorities for inclusion in the plan. The project encompasses three sets of deliverables:

- 1) Develop a comprehensive Almanor Basin Watershed Management Plan to protect water quality and habitat values.
  - Continue facilitating monthly ABWAC committee and sub-committee meetings throughout the duration of the project to identify, discuss and decide on plan contents;
  - Hold periodic workshops and fieldtrips involving ABWAC, agency, and public participation;
  - Produce a watershed newsletter and newspaper articles to apprise the public about planning issues and progress and elicit public participation;
  - Produce a comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for presentation to county governments through ABWAC.
  
- 2) Develop and implement a continuous and comprehensive water quality monitoring program for Lake Almanor to identify current conditions and trends.
  - Collect and record existing water quality data on the Sierra Institute website, and make available to the public;
  - Develop a set of water quality monitoring protocols for a citizen/student monitoring program;
  - Complete an information kiosk and library information center at the Chester Library with water quality database access, virtual watershed tours, and other watershed information;
  - Launch a local citizen's lake and tributary water quality monitoring program as part of a public outreach and education effort, to involve monitoring by students.

- 3) Explore ways to secure values of “ecosystem services” of the watershed resources and return those values as investment in the watershed, including water monitoring and habitat restoration.
- Applicant will consult with ABWAC, PG&E, the U.S. Forest Service, and local timber companies to identify potential methods to capture and invest the values of ecosystem services provided by the Basin;
  - Develop a watershed ecosystem-services investment report.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve at a reduced amount of \$92,329 to reflect funding already received from Plumas County in support of ABWAC activities in the Basin. There is no existing watershed management plan for the Almanor Basin, despite the fact that Lake Almanor is the third largest reservoir in California and a significant source of water for the state. Urban runoff, erosion and sedimentation is affecting watershed habitat, water quality and aquatic habitat in the Basin. In addition, the Department of Water Resources halted water quality monitoring of Lake Almanor as of the beginning of 2008. This project helps address water quality and habitat issues by using public and agency input to develop a watershed plan, initiating a citizen-based water quality monitoring program, and exploring the potential to increase investment in the watershed by valuing ecosystem services provided by the Basin.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

Almanor Basin Watershed Advisory Committee (ABWAC)  
 Collins Pine Company  
 Plumas County Board of Supervisors Resolution #08-7460  
 Sherrie Thrall, Plumas County Supervisor, District 3  
 Robert Meacher, Plumas County Supervisor, District 2

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
18 monthly meetings with ABWAC	July 2008 – Dec. 2009
18 monthly meetings with ABWAC Wildlife subcommittee	July 2008 – Dec. 2009
18 monthly meetings with ABWAC Land Use subcommittee	July 2008 – Dec. 2009
8 bi-monthly meetings w/ ABWAC Water Quality subcommittee	July 2008 – Dec. 2009
4 subcommittee/public workshops/fieldtrips	July 2008, July 2009
4 management plan public workshops	July 2008, July 2009
4 watershed tours	July 2008; July 2009
Progress report	January 2009
Completed kiosk and library information at Chester Library	March 2009
Watershed newsletter	Quarterly, beginning July 2008

Progress report	July 2009
Minimum 12 educational newspaper articles on workshops, field tours, and status of watershed management plan	ongoing
Water quality database refinement and updates	ongoing
Lake Almanor water quality monitoring program protocols	March 2009
Implement Lake Almanor water quality monitoring program	May 2009
Completed Watershed Management Plan	December 2009
Watershed ecosystem-services investment report	December 2009
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	<b>January 31, 2010</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Management plan development	43,740
Ecosystem services investment research and plan development	23,550
Administration	11,339
Travel	3,500
Workshop/monitoring training	900
Equipment, including laptop, GIS software upgrade/subscription	1,700
Chester Library Kiosk/watershed display	500
Supplies for meetings and workshops	1,200
Printing – meetings, workshops	1,500
Special project reports/brochures	2,700
Postage/mailing expenses	950
Newspaper ads/publicity	750
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$92,329</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion:** NORTH-CENTRAL County: PLUMAS  
**Applicant:** FEATHER RIVER COLLEGE HATCHERY  
**Project Title:** FEATHER RIVER COLLEGE HATCHERY– PROJECT FISH – EDUCATION AND TOURISM  
**Application Number:** SNC 070298

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will help to expand, support, and sustain Feather River College Fish Hatchery’s youth education opportunities. Funding will support the following programs:

- Program equipment, educational materials, and coordination for Project FISH – a K-12 after-school mentoring program targeting at-risk youth in Plumas County. Through bi-weekly afterschool activities, weekend outings, and summer camps, students learn about fish habitats, open space preservation, sustainable forestry, and environmental ethics and participate in watershed education and exploration, outdoor recreation, and habitat protection.
- Program equipment for Trout in the Classroom – an elementary, middle, and high school fish and watershed education program run in partnership with Trout Unlimited.
- On-site educational displays, interpretive signage, and promotional items to support Hatchery programs.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Recommend funding at the reduced amount of \$28,731 to support three priority environmental and watershed education programs. Funding these programs will support ongoing Feather River College Hatchery youth programs and provide opportunities for the Hatchery to promote watershed stewardship among new groups of students.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

- Kokanee Power
- Trout Unlimited

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Project FISH Fall course schedule and outline, class materials produced	August 2008
6 month progress report to include hatchery signage designs,	December 2008

promotional item designs, and photos of completed educational displays	
Project FISH Spring course schedule and outline, class materials produced	January 2009
Trout in the Classroom fish tanks and chillers installed	April 2009
12 month progress report to include photos of hatchery signage installation and completed educational displays, and Project FISH Summer course schedule and outline	June 2009
<b>FINAL REPORT</b> (to include copies/examples of promotional materials produced)	<b>October 2009</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Project FISH coordination, equipment, and materials	\$15,000
Hatchery signage, educational displays, and promotional items	\$5,000
Trout in the Classroom equipment	\$5,000
Direct admin expenses	\$1,875
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,875</b>

## STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)

**Subregion:** NORTH-CENTRAL                      **County:** PLUMAS

**Applicant:** PLUMAS CORPORATION

**Project Title:** PLUMAS COUNTY TRAILS MASTER PLAN

**Application Number:** SNC 070343

#### PROJECT SCOPE

Trails for Plumas County (TPC), in cooperation with Plumas Corporation, is working to develop a non-motorized Trails Master Plan (TMP) for Plumas County, as called for in the *Plumas Vision 2020* process completed in 2001. The overall TMP development includes the migration of U.S. Forest Service mapping data and County GIS data into a new TMP database with new hardware and software; developing the Master Plan with public, user stakeholder groups, County, and USFS input; implementing the TMP through public education and outreach efforts, along with identification of priority trail projects; and marketing and promotion of the TMP to residents and tourists. Deliverables associated with the SNC-funded portion of this project include:

- Purchase of computer hardware and software to provide a centralized TMP data repository and website, to accept migrated mapping and GIS data from multiple sources;
- Creation of an educational website to facilitate downloading of scalable trail maps and other information on TMP trails. The website will include a bulletin board for information such as trail education or volunteer opportunities, trail conditions, etc.;
- Development and publishing of printed outreach materials, including brochures of popular trails and other information;
- Other outreach efforts, including advertising in trails-related publications, web blogs, etc.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Approve – Many popular Plumas County trails run through riparian areas and along streambanks, thereby impacting the watersheds of streams, rivers and lakes. This project would facilitate efforts to identify and remediate degraded trails and reduce watershed erosion, leading to improved water quality. Additionally, the project meets several other SNC goals, including enhancement of public use and enjoyment of public lands and support of tourism. There is strong match funding (\$26,000) for the Trails Master Plan.

## LETTERS OF SUPPORT

U.S. Forest Service – Plumas National Forest (providing \$10,000 funding)  
Plumas County - Board of Supervisors (providing \$6,000 funding)  
Plumas County Planning & Building Services  
Plumas County Transportation Commission  
Feather River Land Trust

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Website development and launch	September 1, 2008
Purchase and training on computer hardware and software	November 1, 2008
Progress report	December 2008
Development, printing and distribution of outreach materials	February 28, 2009
Advertising, blog launch	May 31, 2009
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	<b>June 30, 2009</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Computer hardware and software, including training	15,000
Consultant to develop interactive Website	8,000
Publisher to develop peripheral marketing materials	5,000
Advertising and other outreach	2,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion:** NORTH-CENTRAL **County:** PLUMAS  
**Applicant:** PLUMAS COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL  
**Project Title:** GRIZZLY CREEK HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION  
**Application Number:** SNC 070345

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will treat 10 acres of hazardous fuels in an at-risk community in Plumas County, using a combination of thinning and mastication. This is the last unit of a larger 97-acre fuels reduction program that has been underway. The initial project exceeded cost projections due to increased fuel and hauling costs, along with declining forest market values, which occurred after the initial funding was received. The treatment will mitigate effects of future wildland fire by reducing fuel loading that contributes to fire intensity and risk near communities at risk.

Tasks necessary to complete the project include:

- Maintain RFP with existing contract
- Obtain Landowner Agreement
- Complete surface and ladder fuel treatment
- Photo monitoring, project monitoring
- Complete project reports.

**RECOMMENDATION**

SNC Staff recommendation is to fund at requested level of \$12,300. This relatively small infusion of funding would allow the County to complete work already started to reduce risk within the wildland-urban interface area from the current rating of “severe stand replacing behavior” to “fire resilient stands.”

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

None provided.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Adjust RFP to Complete Project	July 2008
Obtain Landowner Agreements	August – November 2008
Progress Report	December 2008
Complete Treatments	June 2009
Progress Report	June 2009

Establish photo monitoring and project monitoring	July 2009
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	<b>September 2009</b>

**PROJECT COSTS**

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Complete contracts for treatment on 10 acres	\$12,300
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$12,300</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion:** NORTH-CENTRAL County: BUTTE/TEHAMA  
**Applicant:** NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL LAND TRUST  
**Project Title:** TUSCAN HEADWATERS PROJECT  
**Application Number:** SNC 070354

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will provide for facilitation of coordinated outreach to local watershed conservation groups in Butte and Tehama Counties with the intention of increasing stakeholder awareness and permanent protection of lands within the upper reaches of 10 prominent creeks contained within the Tehama Land Formation.

There are eight watershed groups that currently monitor water quality and organize stakeholders within the Tuscan Region. These watershed groups will help to increase the protection of priority properties through conservation easements with private landowners. SNC funding under this grant does not include direct acquisition funding, but will increase capacity of the NCRLT and local watershed conservancies to complete priority easement and/or acquisition projects in the future.

Specific deliverables include:

- Develop outreach materials for mailing and presentations targeting approximately 1,000 landowners;
- Construct geo-database using GIS;
- Conduct outreach through direct mailing, presentations and site-visits;
- Evaluate submitted project applications;
- Develop approximately 10 prospects for possible conservation easement acquisition.

**RECOMMENDATION**

SNC Staff recommendation is to fund at the requested level of \$146,640. This project would provide for expanded capacity of the watershed groups and the NCRLT. The outreach and education of landowners on the importance of protection of watershed values is beneficial to at least 10 watersheds within the two counties.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy  
Cherokee Watershed Alliance  
Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy  
Little Chico Creek Watershed Group  
Lower Feather River/Honcut Creek Watershed Group

Tehama County Resource Conservation District

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Develop Landowner Outreach Materials	August 1 – December 2008
Conduct Initial Landowner Outreach	January – April 2009
Progress Report	March 2009
Evaluate Initial Group of Land Protection Applications	May – August 2009
Rank Applications and Approve Potential Projects	December 2009
Progress Report	October 2009
Continue Evaluation of Applications and Present to Lands Committee	Quarterly
Develop Final Easement Acquisition Projects	September 2009 – March 2010
Submit Application for Funding	November 2009- March 2010
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	<b>April 1, 2010</b>

**PROJECT COSTS**

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Contract for completion of outreach materials, GIS data base development and presentations	\$64,515
Develop Prospects and apply for CE Acquisition Funding	\$29,645
Materials, Supplies and postage NCRLT	\$5,462
Travel for Executive Director NCRLT	\$2,020
Coordination for watershed groups (8)	\$19,818
Materials and Supplies/Postage for watershed groups(8)	\$25,180
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$146,640</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: CENTRAL County: EL DORADO**  
**Applicant: CITY of PLACERVILLE**  
**Project Title: HANGTOWN CREEK COMPREHENSIVE WATERSHED PLAN**  
**Application Number: SNC 070125**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This project will assist with the development of the flood management element for the Hangtown Creek Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. This phase of the project would develop the system design for flood management by providing aerial photography and modeling tools.

Specific deliverables would include:

- Aerial photography to cover Hangtown Creek watershed
- Flood Models to design floodwater management strategies.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is the recommendation of the SNC staff to fund a portion of the Hangtown Creek Comprehensive Watershed Plan's flood management element, in the amount of \$130,635. Once the flood management element is finished, the city can move forward on completing the overall Comprehensive plan as part of an integrated regional watershed management planning effort for Hangtown Creek, a tributary to the American River. Completion of the Comprehensive plan will allow the city to move into the implementation phase, resulting in water conservation, water efficiency and better watershed management for Hangtown Creek and surrounding areas.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

Placerville Downtown Association  
Placerville Clothing Company  
El Dorado County & Georgetown Divide RCD  
Community Pride  
Hangtown Creek Stewardship Committee  
American River Conservancy

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Aerial Photography Acquisition	September 2008
Flood Models	November 2008

Progress Report	December 2008
Flood Management Strategy	May 2009
<b>FINAL REPORT</b>	<b>June 2009</b>

**PROJECT COSTS**

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Aerial Photography	\$90,000
Flood Models	40,635
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$130,635</b>

## STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)

**Grantee Name:** REVIVE THE SAN JOAQUIN      **County:** FRESNO,  
MADERA

**Project Title:** UPPER SAN JOAQUIN RIVER BASIN WATERSHED, RIVER HEALTH  
ASSESSMENT

**Application Number:** SNC 070165

#### PROJECT SCOPE

The Revive the San Joaquin organization will conduct a river health assessment to synthesize existing watershed assessment data regarding the upper San Joaquin watershed and create a report document that identifies information gaps, indicators for assessing river health, restoration needs, threats, and data management tools for managing watershed information. The following steps will be completed:

- Compile GIS and hard copy maps regarding the Upper San Joaquin watershed's rivers and streams including available information regarding habitat, water quality, water rights, threats, ongoing restoration, restoration opportunities, fire history, land use, etc.;
- Gather relevant reports and studies regarding the watershed's condition;
- Identify and contact scientists and planners from agencies, universities, and local organizations to participate in an expert focus group;
- Convene an expert focus group to review the maps and data and provide input regarding river and watershed health, data gaps, needs, and threats. The group will select existing or new indicators to evaluate the watershed's condition, threats and restoration opportunities to be used in the River Health Assessment;
- Provide the data, GIS maps, and hard copy maps, input from the expert focus group, and the selected indicators to the Upper San Joaquin River Stewardship Council, the Sequoia Riverlands Trust (preparing a Water Planning Project throughout the southern Sierra), and SNC;
- Attend and participate in the southern Sierra Water Planning Meetings being organized and convened by Sequoia Riverlands Trust;
- Draft the River Health Assessment Document that will include the gap analysis, indicator assessment, needs assessment, threat assessment, and watershed tool assessment and submit to SNC for review; and
- Finalize the River Health Assessment and disseminate the report to the local communities and appropriate agencies and organization.

#### **Recommendation:**

Staff recommends the authorization of this grant for the requested \$69,769.

#### **Letters of Support:**

None submitted.

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Compile GIS and hard copy maps and report and study information	June 2008-August 2008
Attend and participate in Southern Sierra water planning project being convened by Sequoia Riverlands Trust	June 2008-May 2009
Synthesize data and maps to prepare for expert focus group meetings, provide information to Sequoia Riverlands Trust	September 2008
Select scientists and planners for expert focus group	September 2008
Convene expert focus group	September 2008 –November 2008
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	November 2008
Provide the data, GIS maps, and hard copy maps, input from the expert focus group, and the selected indicators to the Upper San Joaquin River Stewardship Council, the Sequoia Riverlands Trust and SNC	November 2008
Draft the River Health Assessment Document and submit to SNC for review and comments	December 2008-March 2009
Complete the River Health Assessment	April 2009-June 2009
Complete and submit 12-month progress report to SNC	May 2009
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>July 2009</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
RSJ Staff	\$50,000
Payroll taxes	\$5,288
Workers Compensation	\$781
Materials and supplies	\$1,200
Telephone and internet	\$500
Cell phone service	\$500
Accounting	\$1,000
Printing	\$3,000
Travel	\$2,500
Dues, conferences, resource materials	\$500
PR/Fundraising	\$2,500
Misc.	\$2,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 69,769</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion:** SOUTH County: TULARE  
**Applicant:** COMMUNITY SERVICES & EMPLOYMENT TRAINING, INC. (CSET)  
**Project Title:** TULE RIVER SITE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT II  
**Application Number:** SNC 070347

**PROJECT SCOPE**

The Community Services & Employment Training, Inc. (CSET) will conduct twice a month clean-ups along the Tule River within the Sequoia National Monument. This effort will be carried out by CSET in partnership with the US Forest Service and WildPlaces. CSET will also organize and oversee large-scale river clean up events. CSET will train and supervise youth corps to conduct the clean ups, and they will also be educating the youth they employ about the importance of watershed health. CSET will train and work with their youth corps to conduct graffiti evaluations and mapping using GIS. Finally, CSET will conduct river clean-up outreach and education at local community events, through the Wild Camp program, high school presentations, and by scheduling presentation with youth corps staff and forest rangers.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the authorization of this grant for \$149,428, which does not include \$49,100 for a crew cab that would continue to be used beyond the life of this grant.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

None provided.

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Organize and set clean up schedules for monthly river clean ups	June 2008, March 2009 & 2010
Order supplies for monthly and large scale clean ups	June 2008, March 2009 & 2010
Conduct safety training for monthly clean ups	June 2008, 2009 & 2010
Plan and coordinate large clean up events: Keep America Beautiful, Public Lands Day, and Earth Day	June 2008-April 2010
Conduct monthly river clean ups including photo documenting each event and logging location and amount of trash collected to identify future trash bag dispenser sites and receptacles	July 2008, May-September 2009 & 2010
Conduct Keep America Beautiful-Great American Clean Up and	July 2008 & 2009

evaluate clean up effort	
Forest Service presentations to Youth Corps and public	July 2008, May-September 2009 & 2010
Conduct Wild Camp outreach and education program (five sessions each summer)	Summer 2008 & 2009
High school presentations about river clean up and watershed health	September-June 2008 & 2009
Conduct Public Lands Day Clean Up and evaluate clean up effort	September 2008 & 2009
Conduct GIS training for graffiti mapping	September-November 2008
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	November 2008
Conduct Earth Day Clean Up and evaluate clean up effort	April 2009
Conduct GIS graffiti mapping	April 2009-March 2010
Complete and submit 12-month progress report to SNC	May 2009
Complete and submit 18-month progress report to SNC	November 2009
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>April 2010</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Supplies for large clean up events, conduct evaluations, graffiti mapping	\$40,000
60, twice monthly clean up events	\$84,762
Mileage	\$3,960
Clean up supplies for monthly events	\$6,000
Direct administration expenses	\$14,706
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$149,428</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion:** SOUTH County: KERN, TULARE, FRESNO  
**Applicant:** SEQUOIA RIVERLANDS TRUST  
**Project Title:** SOUTHERN SIERRA IRWMP LAUNCH PROJECT  
**Application Number:** SNC 070364

**PROJECT SCOPE**

Sequoia Riverlands Trust will initiate a process to establish a collaborative regional water planning team in Fresno, Tulare and Kern Counties to address multiple water issues, increase stakeholder coordination across jurisdictional boundaries to develop high cost-benefit projects, and streamline the disbursement of funding to distinct regions. Water issues to be addressed include: ground water management, preservation of working landscapes, improvement of water structures and facilities, control and elimination of invasive species, protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat, and reduction or prevention of soil erosion. This project will compile the information necessary to develop a South Sierra Regional Water Plan..

Specifically, the project actions will include:

- Conducting outreach to stakeholders;
- Recruiting, selecting, and contracting for a facilitator and a grant writer;
- Developing a governance structure, regional boundaries, goals and objectives, data management strategies, and a planning process;
- Identifying, collecting, and analyzing existing local water and land use planning documents and data and synthesizing the information into a comprehensive report;
- Conducting monthly coordination meetings;
- Establishing and maintaining an Southern Sierra IRWMP Launch Project website; and
- Drafting and finalizing a Southern Sierra Water Planning Project document.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the authorization of this grant for the requested \$49,950.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

Sierra Resource Conservation District  
Sierra and Foothill Citizens Alliance

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Conduct outreach to stakeholders	June 2008 – September 2008
Recruit, select, and contract for a facilitator and a grant writer	June 2008-July 2008
Develop a governance structure, regional boundaries, goals and objectives, data management strategies, and a planning process	August 2008 – October 2008
Identify, collect, and analyze existing local water and land use planning documents and data and synthesize the information into a comprehensive report	August 2008 – October 2008
Conduct monthly coordination meetings	July 2008 – June 2009
Establish and maintain a website for the project	October 2008 – June 2009
Draft and finalize the Planning Project document	November 2008-March 2009
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	January 2009
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	June 2009

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Project Manager and Staff	\$22, 160
Meeting expenses (materials and facilities)	\$750
Consultants ( Facilitator and Report/Grant writer)	\$22,500
Indirect Costs	\$4,540
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$49,950</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion:** SOUTH County: FRESNO, KERN,  
MADERA, TULARE

**Applicant:** YOSEMITE RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
FOR CALIFORNIA AMER-ASIAN RESOURCE EDUCATION (C.A.R.E.)  
COUNCIL

**Project Title:** C.A.R.E. ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS IN THE SIERRA NEVADA VIDEO

**Application Number:** SNC 070365

**PROJECT SCOPE**

The Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council is partnering with the California Amer-Asian Resource Education Council to produce an environmental ethics video in two Southeast Asian languages, Hmong and Laotian. Following production, these videos will be presented by trained C.A.R.E. members at Southeast Asian community events to educate members of this community about appropriate conservation and camping practices and campfire safety in the Sierra Nevada. This project will include:

- Developing the video script in collaboration with other agency partners (Forest Service, Park Service and Fish and Game);
- Filming on location in the Sierra Nevada to show the conservation practices in a real setting;
- Translating/Narrating the script into Hmong and Laotian, and the incorporation of narration into the video; and
- Reproducing 50 copies of the film;
- Presenting the video at training and community events sponsored by C.A.R.E., partners, and other community organizations;
- Survey the regulatory partners before and after the video is distributed to determine if there is a change in the number of natural resource violations occurring on public lands.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the authorization of this grant for the requested \$50,000.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

None submitted

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Conduct regulatory agency survey to determine the number of natural resource violations that occur on public lands by	June 2008-December 2008

members of the Southeast Asian community	
Script Development	June 2008-October 2008
Filming on location	September 2008 – December 2008
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	January 2009
Translating/Narrating the video into Hmong and Laotian	January 2009 –April 2009
Reproduction of 50 copies	May 2009-July 2009
Complete and submit 12-month progress report to SNC	July 2009
Display the video at a minimum of 10 Southeast Asian training and community events that are sponsored by C.A.R.E., partners, and other community organizations.	July 2009-March 2010
Complete and submit 18-month progress report to SNC	January 2010
Conduct regulatory agency survey to determine if the number of natural resource violations that occur on public lands by members of the Southeast Asian community declined	January-March 2010
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>April 1, 2010</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Script Development	\$2,000
Filming and Editing	\$40,000
Translating/Narrating	\$2,500
In-direct/Overhead	\$5,000
Reproduction	\$500
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>

## STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)

**Subregion:** EAST County: MONO  
**Applicant:** TOWN OF MAMMOTH LAKES  
**Project Title:** MAMMOTH LAKES BASIN INTERAGENCY COLLABORATIVE  
PLANNING  
**Application Number:** SNC 070305

#### PROJECT SCOPE

The Town of Mammoth will conduct a collaborative planning effort to analyze multi-modal circulation, transportation, and recreation facilities and capacity in the Mammoth Lakes Basin in Mono County. This 71 square mile network of lakes, streams, and high alpine meadows and vegetation is a regional water source and sensitive watershed that receives over three million visitors annually. The project presents a unique opportunity to plan for resource protection as well as recreation activity in this high country area which is managed by both the Town of Mammoth and the U. S. Forest Service. A two-year project will assess the existing conditions of transportation infrastructure and use and recreation use. This will support identifying and prioritizing projects and implementing these projects to achieve maximum water and air quality by reducing the amount of vehicle miles traveled and therefore air emissions and managing the amount of visitors to sensitive resource areas to better protect these resources.. Specifically project actions will include:

- Hiring transportation and recreation use consultants
- Assessing transportation and circulation routes, modes, infrastructure, capacity, plans and data over two summer seasons, and providing specific recommendations to increase alternative transportation use and decreasing vehicle miles traveled
- Assessing recreation uses, numbers, facilities, data and plans over two summer seasons and providing specific recommendations to protect sensitive resources. This recommendations may include limiting visitation rates and designing and constructing specific access points to manage visitor use.
- Conducting public outreach for gathering input and disseminating information
- Completing a transportation and circulation analysis report
- Completing a recreation analysis report
- Developing a projects and implementation plan which will include environmentally sustainable recreation options, possible enhancement to current recreational uses; transportation, circulation, and related infrastructure options which will maximize the walkability in the basin while minimizing the negative effects to air and water quality from (excessive) vehicular usage

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends funding \$196,000 of the \$250,000 requested for the project. The \$54,000 reduction of funds eliminates mitigation projects from the project scope.

## LETTERS OF SUPPORT

- U.S. Forest Service
- Mammoth Community Water District
- Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation
- Friends of the Inyo
- Mammoth Mountain Ski Area

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Hire transportation and recreation consultants	August 2008
Assess transportation and circulation routes, modes, infrastructure, capacity, plans and data	August – October 2008 June – October 2009
Assess recreation uses, numbers, facilities, data and plans	August – October 2008 June – October 2009
Conduct 4 public outreach meetings for gathering input and disseminating information	September 2008 – December 2009
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	January 2009
Complete and submit twelve-month progress report to SNC	July 2009
Complete and submit eighteen month progress report to SNC	January 2010
Complete a transportation and circulation analysis report and complete a recreation analysis report	October 2009-February 2010
Develop a plan that prioritizes projects and establishes an implementation plan	February 2010-March 2010
<b>FINAL REPORT/FINAL PAYMENT REQUEST</b>	<b>April 2010</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Contract management staff salary	\$44,000
Transportation consultant contract (includes assessment team, public outreach, data gathering, analysis, and report preparation)	77,900
Recreation use consultant – contract (includes assessment, public outreach, data gathering, analysis, and report preparation)	74,100
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$196,000</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: EAST County: MONO**  
**Applicant: MAMMOTH LAKES FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**  
**Project Title: OLD MAMMOTH AND MILL CITY FUELS REDUCTION PROJECT**  
**Application Number: SNC 070346**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

The Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District (MLFPD) will reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and protect the community, water quality, and recreation values by improving fire resiliency through vegetation treatments on 57 acres of public land within and adjacent to the community of Mammoth Lakes in Mono County. This project will protect the watershed and municipal water and wastewater systems, wildlife habitat, residences, a preserve owned by the University of California, Santa Barbara, and recreation infrastructure, from the threat of wildfire. The area to be treated is rated high fire risk in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Specifically, the project actions will include:

- Implementing fuels reduction treatments including hand thinning and brush mastication
- Organizing community workdays to assist landowners with slash chipping and removal
- Establishing photo points and taking pre and post treatment photos of exemplary project sites to include in final report

In-kind and financial support of \$93,071 has been provided by the Inyo National Forest, the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, and the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends funding this project at the requested amount of \$99,999.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

- Town of Mammoth Lakes
- Mono County Administrative Officer
- Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation
- Mammoth Lakes Fire Safe Council

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Purchase equipment and hire seasonal work crews	July 2008
Take pre and post treatment photos to include in final report	July 2008 October 2009
Develop contracts for projects on Inyo National Forest land	July 2008
Organize two community workdays and assist landowners with slash chipping and removal	July – October 2008 June – October 2009
Implement fuels reduction treatments on Town of Mammoth property and UCSB Reserve	July – October 2008 June – October 2009
Award contracts and implement fuels reduction treatments on Inyo National Forest lands	August – October 2008 June – October 2009
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	January 2009
Complete and submit twelve-month progress report to SNC	July 2009
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>December 2009</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Cal Fire Crew -salaries	\$17,600
MLFPD Seasonal Crew -salaries	35,899
Equipment (skidders, chainsaws, portion of pick-up truck purchase)	46,500
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$99,999</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: EAST Counties: INYO AND MONO**  
**Applicant: CALIFORNIA TROUT**  
**Project Title: EASTERN SIERRA IRWMP LAUNCH PROJECT**  
**Application Number: SNC 070357**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

California Trout will initiate a process to establish a collaborative regional water planning team in Inyo and Mono Counties to address multiple water issues, increase stakeholder coordination across jurisdictional boundaries to develop high cost-benefit projects, and streamline the disbursement of funding to distinct regions. Water issues to be addressed include: ground water management, preservation of working landscapes, improvement of water structures and facilities, control and elimination of invasive species, protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat, and reduction or prevention of soil erosion. This project will compile the information necessary to develop an Eastern Sierra Regional Water Plan (ESRWP).

Specifically, the project actions will include:

- Conducting outreach to stakeholders
- Recruiting, selecting, and contracting for a facilitator and a grant writer
- Developing a governance structure, regional boundaries, goals and objectives, data management strategies, and a planning process
- Identifying, collecting, and analyzing existing local water and land use planning documents and data and synthesizing the information into a comprehensive report
- Conducting monthly coordination meetings
- Establishing and maintaining an ESRWP web-site
- Drafting and finalizing an ESRW Planning document

In-kind and financial support of \$70,236 has been provided by the Sierra Nevada Alliance, CAL Trout, Friends of the Inyo, Inyo National Forest, and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends funding this project at the requested amount of \$49,663.

## LETTERS OF SUPPORT

- Mono Lake Committee
- CA Department of Fish and Game
- Owens Valley Indian Water Commission
- Lundy Mutual Water Company
- June Lake Public Utility District
- University of California, Santa Barbara – Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab and Valentine Preserve
- Mammoth Mountain Ski Area
- The Andrea Lawrence Institute for Mountains and Rivers
- The Owens Valley Committee
- Eastern Sierra Land Trust
- Amargosa Conservancy
- Eastern Sierra Audubon Society
- Ecosystem Sciences Foundation
- Inyo County Board of Supervisors
- Mono County Board of Supervisors

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Conduct outreach to stakeholders	July 2008 – September 2008
Recruit, select, and contract for a facilitator and a grant writer	July 2008
Develop a governance structure, regional boundaries, goals and objectives, data management strategies, and a planning process	August 2008 – October 2008
Identify, collect, and analyze existing local water and land use planning documents and data and synthesize the information into a comprehensive report	August 2008 – October 2008
Conduct monthly coordination meetings	July 2008 – June 2009
Establish and maintain an ESRWP website	October 2008 – June 2009
Draft and finalize ESRW Planning document	November 2008-March 2009
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	January 2009
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	July 2009

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Project Director salary	\$9,000
Coordinating Committee expenses (travel, per diem)	4,000
Administrative Assistant salary	4,600
Meeting expenses (materials and facilities)	1,000
Consultants ( Facilitator and Grant writer)	26,548
Administrative fees	4,515
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$49,663</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: EAST County: MONO**  
**Applicant: U.S. FOREST SERVICE, MAMMOTH RANGER DISTRICT**  
**Project Title: MILL CITY FUELS REDUCTION PROJECT**  
**Application Number: SNC 070358**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

The Mammoth Ranger District will reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and protect the community, water quality, and recreation values by improving fire resiliency through vegetation treatments on 55 acres of public land within and adjacent to the community of Mammoth Lakes in Mono County. This project will protect the watershed and municipal water and wastewater systems, wildlife habitat, residences, a scientific preserve owned by the University of California, Santa Barbara, and recreation infrastructure from the threat of wildfire. The area to be treated is rated as a high fire risk area in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Specifically, the project actions will include:

- Implementing fuels reduction treatments including hand thinning and brush mastication;
- Removing brush and slash by chipping, hauling materials off-site using hand crews and helicopters, and burning a minimal amount of slash piles.

In-kind and financial support of \$130,000 has been provided by the Inyo National Forest.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends funding this project at the requested amount of \$99,999.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

- Town of Mammoth Lakes
- Mono County Administrative Officer
- Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation
- Mammoth Lakes Fire Safe Council

## PROJECT SCHEDULE

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Develop and award contracts for fuel treatments	July 2008
Take pre and post treatment photos to include in final report	July 2008 & October 2009
Implement fuel treatments on U.S. Forest Service land	August -October 2008 August – October 2009
Complete and submit 6 month progress report to SNC	January 2009
Complete and submit 12 month progress report to SNC	July 2009
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>December 2009</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Fuels reduction crew and expenses –(\$3,000 – 5,000/ acre)	\$99,999
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$99,999</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY - RECOMMENDATION**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control,  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)**

**Subregion: EAST County: MONO**  
**Applicant: U.S. FOREST SERVICE, HUMBOLDT- TOIYABE NATIONAL FOREST**  
**Project Title: SWAUGER CREEK SHADED FUEL BREAK AND HABITAT  
IMPROVEMENT PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS**  
**Application Number: SNC 070366**

**PROJECT SCOPE**

The U. S. Forest Service will complete the NEPA and CEQA planning and environmental review processes for a shaded fuel break and Aspen grove enhancement project on up to 1,400 acres in the Swauger Creek drainage and the Devils Gate Corridor in Mono County. The project is located within an area that is in need of fuels reduction treatments due to the dense vegetative conditions, terrain, prevailing wind patterns, and proximity to a year-round recreation corridor which is also a scenic byway. This drainage has been rated as a high fire danger area in the Mono County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Specifically, the project actions will include:

- Conducting archeological field surveys and inventories in consultation with local tribes
- Conducting wildlife field surveys(two years of surveys required for Goshawk habitat) and completing a biological evaluation
- Conducting a health assessment of Aspen groves
- Completing NEPA and CEQA documents

In-kind and financial support of \$30,000 has been provided by the U.S. Forest Service.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends funding this project at the requested amount of \$25,000.

**LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

- Bridgeport Fire Department
- Swauger Creek/Devils Gate Fire Safe Council
- Mono County Board of Supervisors
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Retain archeological field crew	July 2008
Conduct archeological site inventories and surveys	August – September 2008

Conduct first year of wildlife survey	July – September 2008
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	January 2009
Conduct second year of wildlife survey	June – September 2009
Conduct Aspen assessment	June – September 2009
Complete and submit twelve-month progress report to SNC	July 2009
Complete NEPA and CEQA documents	October 2009-January 2010
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>February 2010</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Seasonal Survey Crew (4) - salaries	\$20,000
Wildlife Biologists salary	5,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>



## PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Retain archeological field crew	July 2008
Conduct archeological site inventories and surveys	August – September 2008
Conduct first year of wildlife survey	July – September 2008
Complete and submit six-month progress report to SNC	January 2009
Conduct second year of wildlife survey	June – September 2009
Conduct Aspen assessment	June – September 2009
Complete and submit twelve-month progress report to SNC	July 2009
Complete NEPA and CEQA documents	October 2009 - March 2010
Complete and submit eighteen-month progress report to SNC	January 2010
<b>Final Report/Final Payment Request</b>	<b>April 2010</b>

## PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Seasonal Survey Crew (4) - salaries	\$20,433
Wildlife Biologists salary	5,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$25,433</b>

**SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY  
PROPOSITION 84 STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY GRANT APPLICATIONS  
NOT SUBJECT TO THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)**

## **Introduction**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), a Conservancy within the Resources Agency of the State of California, initiates, encourages, and supports efforts that improve the environment, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada region, its communities, and the citizens of California. SNC jurisdiction includes all or portions of 22 counties in the mountains and foothills of the Sierra Nevada, and certain neighboring areas including the Mono Basin, Owens Valley, the Modoc Plateau and a part of the southern Cascade region including the Pit River watershed.

The SNC Strategic Plan states that it will:

- ▶ Support efforts that advance environmental preservation, and the economic and social well-being of Sierra residents in a complementary manner;
- ▶ Work in collaboration and cooperation with local governments and interested parties in carrying out the SNC mission;
- ▶ Make every effort to ensure that, over time, Conservancy funding and other efforts are spread equitably across each of the various subregions and among the program areas, with adequate allowance for the variability of costs associated with individual regions and types of projects; and
- ▶ Inform and educate all Californians as to the substantial benefits they enjoy from the Region and the importance of the environmental and economic well-being of the Region.

The statute creating the SNC (Public Resources Code 33300 et seq.) provides for seven specific program objectives:

- ▶ Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation;
- ▶ Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources;
- ▶ Aid in the preservation of working landscapes;
- ▶ Reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfires;
- ▶ Protect and improve water and air quality;
- ▶ Assist the regional economy through the operation of the Conservancy's program;
- ▶ Undertake efforts to enhance public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

## **2007/2008 Grant Applications**

One of the tools used by SNC to accomplish the seven program objectives is the issuance of grants. As part of SNC review of Strategic Opportunity Grant applications for fiscal year 2007/2008 funding, SNC considered whether or not the action to be funded by the grant is considered a "project" subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); whether or not the action would be exempt from CEQA; and if the action is not exempt from CEQA, what the appropriate CEQA documentation would be.

The grant applications listed in Table 1, below, were determined to involve activities that are not considered a “project” subject to CEQA.

<b>Table 1 Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 Strategic Opportunity Grant Applications Not Subject to CEQA</b>					
Application Number	Project Name	Applicant	County	Activity	Determination
SNC 070125	Hangtown Creek Comprehensive Watershed Plan	City of Placerville	El Dorado	Watershed Management Plan Environmental Review	Completing a comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for Hangtown Creek and preparation of a CEQA document is not a project subject to CEQA.
SNC 070158	Central Modoc River Center Capacity Building	Central Modoc River Center	Modoc	Capacity Building Education Publication Events	Building capacity for educational programs, publications, and public events is not a project subject to CEQA.
SNC 070165	San Joaquin River Stewardship Partners Network	Revive the San Joaquin	Fresno Madera	Planning and Development Capacity Building Education Publication Events Monitoring	Establishment of the San Joaquin River Community Resource Information System, conservation planning, coordination with stewardship partners, and preparing a community outreach plan is not a project subject to CEQA.
SNC 070201	Working Landscape Watershed Management Plan - Almanor	Sierra Institute for Community and Environment	Plumas	Initial Development/ Watershed Management Plan	Developing a comprehensive Watershed Management Plan for Almanor Basin is not a project subject to CEQA.
SNC 070298	Feather River College Hatchery – Project Fish – Education and Tourism	Feather River College Hatchery	Plumas	Capacity Building Education	Developing a hatchery brochure, webpage, maps and coordination of events and advertising for education and tourism purposes are not project subject to CEQA.
SNC 070305	Mammoth Lakes Basin Interagency Collaborative Planning	Town of Mammoth Lakes	Mono	Planning and Development Capacity Building	Analysis of circulation and transportation; planning a heritage, wildlife, and water use interpretive program; and data collection and analysis of current recreation activity in the Mammoth Lakes Basin are not projects subject to CEQA.
SNC 070343	Plumas County Trails Master Plan	Plumas Corporation and Trails for Plumas County	Plumas	Planning and Development Education Research Equipment	Developing a Trails Master Plan is not a project subject to CEQA.

**Table 1  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 Strategic Opportunity Grant Applications  
Not Subject to CEQA**

Application Number	Project Name	Applicant	County	Activity	Determination
SNC 070347	Tule River Site Improvement Project II	Community Services & Employment Training, Inc.	Tulare	Litter Removal Education	Litter removal, graffiti mapping, and education are not projects subject to CEQA.
SNC 070353	Hulsman Ranch Conservation Easement	Lassen Land and Trails Trust	Lassen	Planning and Development Appraisal Monitoring	Negotiation, legal review, appraisal, title work, and creation of baseline documentation for a conservation easement are not projects subject to CEQA.
SNC 070354	Tuscan Headwaters Project	Northern California Regional Land Trust	Tehama Butte	Capacity Building Education Events	Collaboration and facilitation of watershed conservation projects is not a project subject to CEQA.
SNC 070356	McClelland/Eagle Lake Ranch Appraisal	Honey Lake Valley Resource Conservation District	Lassen	Appraisal	Appraisal service and development of an acquisition plan are not projects subject to CEQA.
SNC 070357	Eastern Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Launch Project	California Trout	Mono	Initial Project Planning Capacity Building	Project planning and capacity building are not projects subject to CEQA.
SNC 070364	Southern Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Launch Project	Sequoia Riverlands Trust	Kern Tulare Fresno	Planning and Development	Initial planning and development of an Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Launch Project is not a project subject to CEQA.
SNC 070365	C.A.R.E. Environmental Ethics in the Sierra Nevada Video	Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council	Madera Fresno Tulare Kern	Education	Developing a video for public outreach and education is not a project subject to CEQA.
SNC 070366	Swauger Creek Shaded Fuel Break and Habitat Improvement	U.S. Forest Service, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest	Mono	Planning and Development Environmental Review	Resource surveys and environmental review pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act is not a project subject to CEQA.
SNC 070367	Twin Lakes Drainage Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project	U.S. Forest Service	Mono	Planning and Development Environmental Review	Initial planning, development, and environmental review for a fuel reduction and habitat improvement plan are not projects subject to CEQA. (The action for which

**Table 1**  
**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 Strategic Opportunity Grant Applications**  
**Not Subject to CEQA**

Application Number	Project Name	Applicant	County	Activity	Determination
					planning is being conducted, on-the-ground fuel reduction, is subject to CEQA and the required review will be carried out by the lead agency.)

**Grant Application Activities Listed in Table 1 are Not “Projects” Subject to CEQA**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a) defines “project” as “the whole of an action, which has a potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment, and that is any of the following:

- (1) An activity directly undertaken by any public agency including but not limited to public works construction and related activities clearing or grading of land, improvements to existing public structures, enactment and amendment of zoning ordinances, and the adoption and amendment of local General Plans or elements thereof pursuant to Government Code Sections 65100-65700.
- (2) An activity undertaken by a person which is supported in whole or in part through public agency contracts, grants, subsidies, loans, or other forms of assistance from one or more public agencies.
- (3) An activity involving the issuance to a person of a lease, permit, license, certificate, or other entitlement for use by one or more public agencies.”

The activities proposed in the grant applications listed in Table 1 involve public outreach, educational programs/ trainings/ workshops, distribution of educational materials, appraisal services, litter removal, initial project planning, environmental review/ permits, and monitoring. Although SNC will provide public assistance in the form of a grant for the activities listed in Table 1, the proposed activities have no potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect change in the environment. Therefore, the activities proposed in the grant applications listed in Table 1 are not “projects” subject to CEQA.

**CEQA Does Not Apply to Table 1 Grant Application Activities**

Per CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), a project is exempt from CEQA if “the activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.” As described above, the activities proposed in the grant applications listed in Table 1 have no potential for causing a significant effect on the environment and are not subject to CEQA.

**Potential Future Actions**

By funding the grants listed in Table 1, SNC does not authorize, or commit to authorizing, any action that has potential to result in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a), described above, any other action that would potentially result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the

environment and that would either (1) be directly undertaken by a public agency; (2) be undertaken by a person and supported in whole or in part through a public agency; or (3) that would involve the issuance of an entitlement from a public agency shall be considered a “project” and shall be subject to CEQA. In such cases, the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving the project (the “lead agency” per CEQA Guidelines Section 15367) shall determine the appropriate CEQA documentation and shall ensure that such documentation is prepared.

# Notice of Exemption

Form D

To:  Office of Planning and Research  
PO Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: (Public Agency) Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(Address)

County Clerk  
County of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Project Title: Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative (SNC 070275)

### Project Location – Specific:

Stanislaus National Forest, Inyo National Forest (Golden Trout Wilderness), Sierra National Forest (High Sierra Ranger District)

Project Location – City: NA Project Location – County: Fresno, Inyo, and Alpine

### Description of Project:

The Student Conservation Association in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service is requesting \$50,000 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Strategic Opportunity Grants Program to implement trail maintenance activities necessary to improve current trail conditions. Trail projects will affect more than 31 miles of wilderness trails and include trail enhancement; wilderness restoration, and erosion control. Projects also include removal of five campsites from sensitive areas and enhancing/rebuilding two stock exclusion fences to protect meadows and water quality. See attached description.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Student Conservation Association and the U.S. Forest Service

### Exempt Status: (check one)

- Ministerial (Sec. 2180(b)(1); 15285);
- Declared Emergency (Sec 21080(b)(3); 15269(2));
- Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
- Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Section 15301, "Existing Facilities"
- Statutory Exemptions. State code number: \_\_\_\_\_

### Reasons why project is exempt:

The project will consist of general trail maintenance and repair activities along existing trails and public recreation areas; no new facilities or facility expansions will occur. All maintenance activities will follow standard leave-no-trace practices. Improvements to trails and camping areas will enhance the existing trail system, protect surrounding sensitive habitats, reduce erosion into streams and stabilize soils. The project will not result in significant adverse impacts to special status species or cumulative environmental impacts and there are no hazardous materials at or around the project sites. See attached description.

### Lead Agency:

Contact Person: Marji Feliz Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (530) 823-4679

### If filed by applicant:

1. Attach certified document of exemption finding
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project?  Yes  No

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: Executive Officer

Jim Branham

- Signed by Lead Agency
- Signed by Applicant

Date Received for Filing at OPR: \_\_\_\_\_

January 2004

**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**  
**CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Sections 15301**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**  
**Proposition 84 Strategic Opportunity Grant Application Number 070275**  
**Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative**

**Description of Activities**

The Student Conservation Association in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service is requesting \$50,000 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Strategic Opportunity Grants Program to implement trail maintenance activities necessary to improve current trail conditions. The following four maintenance and repair projects will be implemented:

**Stanislaus National Forest. Summit Ranger District.** Maintenance of County Line Trail from its trailhead to the boundary of the Summit Ranger District in the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness. Three miles of trail will be brushed and rocked. Perform heavy maintenance and erosion control on 1,000 feet of trail. Primary activities will consist of drainage repair, erosion control, rebuilding trail through an area of mud and rockslide. Primary benefits will be public access, soil stabilization, and water quality.

**Inyo National Forest. Mammoth Ranger District.** Trail maintenance, campsite clean up, and repair of livestock exclusion fences in the Golden Trout Wilderness. Remove brush and loose rocks from 25 miles of trail, install 10 water bars/drainage dips, and remove 5 campsites too close to creeks/lakes. Rebuild two stock exclusion fences to protect meadows and water quality at Horseshoe Meadows administrative site and at Casa Vieja Meadow in the Golden Trout Wilderness. The trail maintenance will take place on the Cottonwood Lakes Trail and Blackrock to Kern River Trail, also in the wilderness. The proposed clean-up of campsites will occur at Jordan Hot Springs.

**Sierra National Forest. High Sierra Ranger District.** Remove and rehabilitate 2.5 miles of the old Golden Trout Lake Trail to natural conditions and eliminate, over the long-term, any indication that a trail existed. Reduce erosion of soil into creek between the Piute Canyon Trail and the Golden Trout Lakes. The most severely degraded sections occur in alpine meadows, where the failure of water diversion structures has caused the trail to capture surface runoff and cut severe incisions into the meadows. This project will improve wilderness character, bring wilderness trails to standard, and address remedial actions called for in 2005 John Muir/Ansel Adams Record of Decision.

**Sierra National Forest. High Sierra Ranger District.** Repair and stabilize a section of the L Lake Trail that is deeply (3+ feet in some locations) incised and is currently causing significant erosion and associated resource damage. This section of trail is located between Elba Lake and the bottom of French Canyon and is approximately 0.75 miles in length. It climbs switchbacks through sand and talus slopes where trail structures have failed, causing the trail to become deeply rutted.

These projects involve three types of work activities, which fall within the following categories of actions that are excluded from environmental documentation by the Forest Service Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook (1909.15, Chapter 31.12):

- Section 3. Repair and maintenance of administrative sites
- Section 4. Repair and maintenance of roads, trails, and landline boundaries
- Section 5. Repair and maintenance of recreation sites and facilities

All trail work, campsite and stock activity will follow standard leave-no-trace practices. Maintaining trails protects trail resources and allows the public the opportunity to access and enjoy the backcountry in a manner that reduces environmental impacts from heavy human traffic. Implementation of the project will benefit recreational opportunities, water resources and soil productivity and condition.

**Reasons Why the Project is Exempt**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a categorical exemption provides for an exemption from CEQA environmental documentation requirements for a class of projects determined not to have a significant effect on the environment. Categorical Exemptions are addressed in Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines, where a list of 32 classes of projects has been identified. Projects falling within one of these classes of projects are generally exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

***CEQA Guidelines Section 15301: Existing Facilities***

The Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, Class 1, which is defined as follows:

Class 1 consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency's determination. The types of "existing facilities" itemized below are not intended to be all-inclusive of the types of projects which might fall within Class 1. The key consideration is whether the project involves negligible or no expansion of an existing use. Examples include but are not limited to:

...

(c) Existing highways and streets, sidewalks, gutters, bicycle and pedestrian trails, and similar facilities (this includes road grading for the purpose of public safety)

...

(h) Maintenance of existing landscaping, native growth, and water supply reservoirs (excluding the use of pesticides, as defined in Section 12753, Division 7, Chapter 2, Food and Agriculture Code);

...

The Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative will consist of general trail maintenance and repair activities along existing trails and recreation areas located in Stanislaus National Forest, Inyo National Forest (Golden Trout Wilderness), Modoc National Forest, Sierra National Forest (High Sierra Ranger District), Sequoia National Forest (Kern River Ranger District), and Plumas National Forest. Trails will not be expanded, nor new trails constructed.

**No Exceptions to a Categorical Exemption**

Categorical exemptions represent activities that generally do not result in significant environmental impacts. However, there are six exceptions to categorical exemptions, defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Generally, a categorical exemption does not apply if a project would occur in certain specified sensitive environments, would affect scenic resources within an official state scenic highway, or would be located on a designated hazardous waste site. In addition, a categorical exemption would not apply if the project causes substantial adverse changes in the significance of a historical resource or would be considered significant within the cumulative context. Table 1 identifies the exceptions from CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 and a brief discussion of why each exception does not apply to the Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative.

Table 1 Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)	
Exception	Applicability
<p>(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.</p>	<p>The Sierra National Forest projects are located within Yosemite toad habitat. However, proper resource protection/avoidance measures are built into these two projects; therefore, the projects will not significantly affect the physical environment, biological environment, human environment or wilderness character. The US Forest Service District Wildlife Biologist for each project has determined that the projects will have no effect on special status species. The US Forest Service District Fisheries Biologist for each of the four projects has determined that the projects will have no effect on special status aquatic species. The US Forest Service Botanist for each of the four projects has determined that the projects will have no effect on special status plants. The US Forest Service District Hydrologist for each of the four projects has determined that the projects will have no effect on hydrologic/soil resources. The US Forest Service District Heritage Resources Specialist for each project has determined that the proposed project will have no expected effect on heritage resources. These determinations are based in part on implementing project design measures, such as the US Forest Service District Fisheries Biologist's protection/ avoidance measures for Yosemite toads, leave-no-trace practices, cleaning and decontaminating equipment, and avoidance of ground disturbing activities at all identified archaeological sites.</p>

**Table 1**  
**Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)**

Exception	Applicability
	<p>Additionally, the repair and maintenance projects in the Stanislaus and Inyo National Forests also incorporate proper resource protection/avoidance measures; therefore, the projects will not significantly affect the physical environment, biological environment, human environment or wilderness character.</p> <p>Benefits to the watersheds will include improved soil stability, drainage controls and reduced sediment runoff, which will improve the quality of runoff draining into the local watersheds.</p>
<p>(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.</p>	<p>Trail improvements will not adversely affect environmental resources and will not contribute to any cumulative environmental impact in relation to projects in the area. The activities will provide slope stabilization and improved drainage along trail sections resulting in beneficial effects related to reducing erosion and sedimentation, long-term protection of water quality.</p>
<p>(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.</p>	<p>The Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.</p> <p><b>Aesthetics.</b> Temporary disturbances to the visual quality of the site will occur during project construction. However, the general trail maintenance and repair activities will improve the visual quality along trails.</p> <p><b>Agriculture.</b> The project will have no impact on agricultural resources.</p> <p><b>Air Quality.</b> Maintenance/construction activities will be conducted by hand crews with hand tools. The project would create no mobile source air emissions. The maintenance activities will not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans and will not violate any air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation.</p> <p><b>Biological Resources.</b> See (a).</p> <p><b>Cultural Resources.</b> See (f).</p> <p><b>Geology/Soils.</b> The purpose of the project is to improve soil stability and drainage along trail systems. The trail maintenance will not expose people or structures to loss, injury, or death due to seismic activity or unstable soils.</p> <p><b>Hazards/Hazardous Materials.</b> See (e).</p> <p><b>Hydrology/Water Quality.</b> The maintenance/construction activities will include installation of water bars, which are natural drainage features, to better contain and treat storm water runoff. The project will stabilize eroding slopes along existing trails to prevent ongoing sedimentation into surrounding watersheds. Project activities will be surficial and will require limited ground disturbance; therefore, it is unlikely that groundwater will be encountered. In addition, the project will have no other effect on groundwater supplies or recharge. The US Forest Service District Hydrologist for the Sierra National Forest projects has determined that the projects will have no effect on hydrologic/soil resources.</p> <p><b>Noise.</b> Temporary construction activities will generate noise. However, work would be done by hand crews using hand tools and would require minimal motorized equipment. Further, the projects are located in wilderness areas with limited sensitive receptors in</p>

Table 1 Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)	
Exception	Applicability
	<p>the vicinity that could be impacted. The project will not cause significant noise effects.</p> <p><b>Transportation.</b> The project will involve short term use of trucks needed for hauling equipment and work crews to the trails. The vehicles use required will not block traffic and no traffic delays will occur due to installation activities.</p> <p><b>Other CEQA Issues.</b> The project will have no effect on land use, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, or utilities and service systems.</p>
(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.	Project maintenance and repair activities will take place along trails within designated wilderness areas. Maintenance/construction activities will not result in the removal of, or damage to, major trees, rock outcroppings, historic buildings or other resources within the viewshed of a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. Additionally, the trail work will improve the visual quality along associated trail systems.
(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.	The trail maintenance locations are not located on toxic sites listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. The maintenance/construction will be implemented consistent with state and local environmental permitting requirements and will not require the use of hazardous substances.
(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.	<p>The Sierra National Forest project sites have been surveyed for archaeological resources. The US Forest Service District Heritage Resources Specialist for these two projects has determined that the projects will have no expected effect on heritage resources. The determination is based in part on avoiding ground-disturbing activities at all archaeological sites.</p> <p>If any historic, cultural, or archeological resources are found during project activities, all project activities in the vicinity of the historic resource shall cease and the District Heritage Resources Specialist will be notified immediately. Therefore, the projects will not result in an adverse change in the significance of any archaeological or historical resource and will not disturb or destroy any human remains or paleontological resources.</p>

**Potential Future Actions**

By funding the Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative, SNC does not approve, or commit to approving, any action that has potential to result in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. As defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(a), any other action that would potentially result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment and that would either (1) be directly undertaken by a public agency; (2) be undertaken by a person and supported in whole or in part through a public agency; or (3) that would involve the issuance of an entitlement from a public agency shall be considered a "project" and shall be subject to CEQA. In such cases, the public agency that has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving the project (the "lead agency" per CEQA Guidelines Section 15367) shall determine the appropriate CEQA documentation and shall ensure that such documentation is prepared.



**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**  
**CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Section 15304**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy**  
**Proposition 84 Strategic Opportunity Grant Application Number 070345**  
**Grizzly Creek Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project**

**Description of Activities**

The Plumas County Fire Safe Council is requesting \$12,300 from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) Strategic Opportunity Grants Program to finish hazardous fuels removal/treatment on 10 acres in the community of Portola as part of a larger 97-acre fuels treatment project, which has exceeded initial cost projections. Portola is located in Plumas County, east of Highway 89 along Highway 70 in the northern California Sierra Nevada foothills.

To date, the following actions have been completed on the project:

- 1) Obtained a Registered Professional Forester who completed the Timber Harvest Exemption and the NEPA decision;
- 2) Completed landowner agreements specifying that any revenue from merchantable timber products removed from the properties will be used for the projects and that landowners commit to maintaining their properties in a fire resilient condition;
- 3) Completed fuels treatments on 87 acres, treating surface, ladder, and canopy fuels to create a fire resilient condition, with projected flame length of less than 4 feet; and
- 4) Project monitoring, including photo points and projections.

As with the completed portion of the project, fuels reduction techniques will involve retaining dominant and co-dominant trees of the best phenotype ( i.e., healthy crown, straight bole, no deformities); targeting intermediate and suppressed trees and those co-dominants that are the cause of overcrowding; and sanitation/salvage requirements, targeting dead, dying and/or diseased trees. Treatments will be implemented by hand crews and mechanical methods and removed timber materials will be chipped, piled and burned, or sold if they are merchantable timber products. The project compliments Hazardous Fuel Reduction efforts on public lands being treated under the Herger Feinstein Quincy Library Forest Recovery Act, private industrial lands, and other non-commercial private lands in the County. The project will reduce the risk of catastrophic fire.

**Reasons Why the Project is Exempt**

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), a categorical exemption provides for an exemption from CEQA environmental documentation requirements for a class of projects determined not to have a significant effect on the environment. Categorical Exemptions are addressed in Article 19 of the CEQA Guidelines, where a list of 32 classes of projects has been identified. Projects falling within one of these classes of projects are generally exempt from the provisions of CEQA.

***CEQA Guidelines Section 15304: Minor Alterations to Land***

The Grizzly Creek Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project is categorically exempt from the provisions of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15304, Class 4, which is defined as follows:

Class 4 consists of minor public or private alterations in the condition of land, water, and/or vegetation, which do not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees except for forestry and agricultural purposes.

...

(d) Minor alterations in land, water, and vegetation on existing officially designated wildlife management areas or fish production facilities which result in improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife resources or greater fish production.

...

(f) Fuel management activities within 30 feet of structures to reduce the volume of flammable vegetation, provided that the activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or significant erosion and sedimentation of surface waters. This exemption shall apply to fuel management activities within 100 feet of a structure if

the public agency having fire protection responsibility for the area has determined that 100 feet of fuel clearance is required due to extra hazardous fire conditions.

...

The project will involve minor disturbances to land and vegetation to remove accumulated fire fuels. The proposed vegetation management and fuel reduction activities are not expected to generate any significant environmental effects. The project will reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire.

**No Exceptions to a Categorical Exemption**

Categorical exemptions represent activities that generally do not result in significant environmental impacts. However, there are six exceptions to categorical exemptions, defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2. Generally, a categorical exemption does not apply if a project would occur in certain specified sensitive environments, would affect scenic resources within an official state scenic highway, or would be located on a designated hazardous waste site. In addition, a categorical exemption would not apply if the project causes substantial adverse changes in the significance of a historical resource or would be considered significant within the cumulative context. Table 1 identifies the exceptions from CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2 and a brief discussion of why each exception does not apply to the Grizzly Creek Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project.

Table 1 Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)	
Exception	Applicability
(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply in all instances, except where the project may impact an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.	A Registered Professional forester has completed environmental review for the proposed fuels management project. A Timber Harvest Plan Exemption (Exemption No. 2-07EX-587-PLU) and a NEPA decision have been prepared and approved. The environmental review determined that no federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat are present; no flood plains or wetlands are present; no congressionally designated areas are present; no roadless areas are present; and archaeological sites or historic resources identified in the area have been flagged-off and eliminated from any treatment. Best management practices will be utilized to minimize erosion or other potential impacts. The project will reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire and restore balance to the area's natural habitat.
(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.	The fuel removal activities will not adversely affect environmental resources and will therefore not contribute to any cumulative environmental impact in relation to other fuels reduction work in the area.
(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.	The project will not have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.  <b>Aesthetics.</b> The presence of workers and equipment during fuel clearing work will be temporary. The project will result in a minor change in the appearance of the existing forest surrounding residential areas in the Portola community due to a more open understory. However, the intent of the project is to restore the forest to a more natural condition. <b>Agriculture.</b> The project will have no impact on agricultural resources. <b>Air Quality.</b> Disposal of vegetative materials will be completed using chipping and burning, and the project may temporarily affect air quality due to burn piles. According to existing Timber Harvest Exemption, burning operations shall be completed by April 1 of the year following surface fuel creation. The activities will be short term in nature and will not cause significant air quality effects.

**Table 1**  
**Categorical Exemption Exceptions (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2)**

Exception	Applicability
	<p><b>Biological Resources.</b> See (a).  <b>Cultural Resources.</b> See (f).  <b>Geology/Soils.</b> The thinning activities will not expose people or structures to loss, injury, or death due to seismic activity or unstable soils.  <b>Hazards/Hazardous Materials.</b> See (e).  <b>Hydrology/Water Quality.</b> The removal of fuels will work to protect water quality by reducing the risk of erosion associated with fire. Best management practices will be employed to prevent soil erosion. The project will have no impact on groundwater supplies or recharge.  <b>Noise.</b> The project will generate noise during fuel removal; however, this will be a temporary condition and will occur during normal working hours, the least sensitive hours of the day. Therefore, the project will not cause significant noise effects.  <b>Transportation.</b> The project will involve short term use of trucks needed for hauling thinning equipment, work crews, and chipping fuels. The project will generate a minimal, temporary effect on local transportation.  <b>Other CEQA Issues.</b> The project will have no effect on land use, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, or utilities and service systems.</p>
<p>(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.</p>	<p>The project area is not located in along an eligible state scenic highway; it will not adversely impact scenic resources within a state scenic highway.</p>
<p>(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.</p>	<p>The project is not located on toxic sites listed pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. In addition, the restoration will not involve the storage, transport, or use of hazardous materials.</p>
<p>(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.</p>	<p>The archaeological sites or historic resources identified in the area have been flagged-off and eliminated from any treatment. If any additional cultural resources are discovered during fuel clearing activities, work in the area shall be stopped and a certified archaeologist shall be consulted before work may continue. This will ensure that the project avoids any significant effects to cultural resources.</p>

## NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

To: Office of Planning and Research  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

Subject: **FILING OF NOTICE OF DETERMINATION IN COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 21108 OR 21152 OF THE PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE**

State Clearinghouse No.: SCH# 2008012093

Project Title: Old Mammoth and Mill City Fuel Reduction Project (SNC 070346)

Project Location: Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, California

Project Description: The Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District (MLFPD) proposes to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire by improving fire resiliency through vegetation treatments on 15 acres within the community of Mammoth Lakes. MLFPD would perform fuels reduction and removal on one town-owned parcel (Bell-shaped parcel), located southwest of the Meridian Boulevard and Minaret Road intersection. Additionally, MLFPD would perform site inspections and provide guidance to private property owners (over 800 parcels), and would assist property owners with slash disposal through providing chipping and disposal services (but would not perform tree or fuels removal on such parcels).

The project is a cooperative effort between MLFPD, Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Lakes Community Water District, Mono County, Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Lakes Trails-Public Access and University of California, Santa Barbara Valentine Reserve and is associated with a larger effort to perform fuels reduction treatments on approximately 125 acres of National Forest lands that are adjacent to private property. The proposed fuels reduction activities on federal lands owned by the United States Forest Service are being reviewed under separate NEPA and CEQA documents.

As  Lead Agency  a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Sierra Nevada Conservancy approved the above-described project on **June 5**, 2008 and has made the following determinations:

1. The project  will  will not have a significant effect on the environment.
2. A  Negative Declaration  Mitigated Negative Declaration  Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures  were  were not made a condition of project approval.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan  was  was not adopted for this project.
5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations  was  was not adopted for this project.
6. Findings  were  were not made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final environmental document, comments and responses, and the record of project approval are available to the public at the following location:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

Jim Branham

Executive Officer

(530) 823-4670  
Phone #

TO BE COMPLETED BY OPR ONLY

Date Received For Filing and Posting at OPR:

above, the proposed fuels reduction activities on federal lands owned by the USFS are being reviewed under separate NEPA and CEQA documents.

**IMPACT MINIMIZATION MEASURES INCORPORATED INTO THE PROJECT**

- ▶ The Town of Mammoth Lakes requires a tree removal permit to remove any tree larger than 6 inches diameter breast height (dbh) from any private property. The Town and MLFPD will work together to monitor proposed trees for removal and ensure compliance with the tree removal policy.
- ▶ The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection *General Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space*, February 8, 2006, will be employed as a primary framework for proposed practices for fuel reduction activities undertaken by the MLFPD.
- ▶ Fuels reduction work will be restricted in the vicinity of wetland areas in order to avoid directly impacting the riparian corridor of Mammoth Creek and the wetland areas located on the town-owned bell-shaped parcel. Restrictions include prohibition of the use of mechanical equipment within 75 feet of the edge of the mapped wetland area, and allowing only limited vegetation removal using hand tools within 50 feet of the wetland areas.
- ▶ The MLFPD will schedule chipping services by neighborhood in order to minimize the total vehicle miles traveled (VMT) associated with equipment movement.
- ▶ Vegetation removal activities will employ best management practices (BMPs) to minimize erosion. Chipped material will be spread on exposed soils and excess material will be made available to private property owners for use as ground cover.
- ▶ MLFPD will require fire precautions and control measures to be undertaken, including presence of on-site fire extinguishers and shovels, prohibition on smoking or lunch fires, and spark arresters and mufflers on equipment.
- ▶ Prior to beginning any vegetation removal work in the bell-shaped parcel, a survey shall be undertaken by a qualified biologist to determine the possible presence of any special status species. Should the potential occurrence of any such species be identified, the biologist shall specify procedures to avoid or minimize potential disturbance or impacts to those species. Such procedures shall be consistent with standard protocols developed and approved by the California Department of Fish and Game and/or US Fish and Wildlife Service. Such procedures shall be followed by MLFPD personnel or contractors in performing fuels reduction activities. **(Mitigation Measure Bio-1)**

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:		
The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils
<input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology / Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation / Traffic
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance	<input type="checkbox"/> None With Mitigation

## PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), as a Responsible Agency in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15096, is proposing to provide grant funding to the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District (MLFPD) for the Old Mammoth Lakes and Mill City Fuels Reduction Project. MLFPD, the Lead Agency pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15050 to 15053, prepared and circulated the *Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Old Mammoth/Mill City Fuels Reduction Project* (SCH #2008012093). The 30-day public review period closed on February 25, 2008 and two comment letters were received, one from the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and one from the Native American Heritage Commission. Per letter from the State Clearinghouse dated February 26, 2008, MLFPD complied with the review requirements for environmental documents, pursuant to CEQA. MLFPD approved the project and filed a Notice of Determination with the State Clearinghouse on March 12, 2008.

The Old Mammoth Lakes and Mill City Fuels Reduction Project is associated with a larger effort to perform fuels reduction treatments on approximately 125 acres of land owned by the United States Forest Service (USFS) that are adjacent to private property. The proposed fuels reduction on federal lands was the subject of environmental review in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and CEQA. USFS was the NEPA lead agency for the *Mill City Fuels Reduction Project Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and Environmental Assessment (EA)*. The Mill City Fuels Reduction Project completed public scoping and review periods from October 2007 through February 2008. The final 30-day objection period on the FONSI and EA closed on February 21, 2008. No objections were filed, and the FONSI was signed on February 28, 2008.

SNC was the lead agency for the *Mill City Fuels Reduction Project Initial Study and Negative Declaration* (SCH #2008034005). The USFS revised the *Mill City Fuels Reduction Project FONSI and EA* in preparation of an Initial Study and Negative Declaration, pursuant to CEQA, and submitted it to the State Clearinghouse on behalf of SNC for a 30-day review period, which closed on April 16, 2008. USFS received one comment letter from the California Department of Fish and Game. Per letter from the State Clearinghouse dated April 17, 2008, SNC and USFS complied with the review requirements for environmental documents, pursuant to CEQA. SNC will file a lead agency Notice of Determination for the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project if it approves grant funding for the project.

These environmental documents are on file at the offices of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

## DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The Old Mammoth Lakes and Mill City Fuels Reduction Project is an effort to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire by improving fire resiliency through vegetation treatments within the community of Mammoth Lakes. MLFPD would perform fuels reduction and removal on one town-owned parcel (bell-shaped parcel), located southwest of the Meridian Boulevard and Minaret Road intersection. Additionally, MLFPD would perform site inspections and provide guidance to private property owners (over 800 parcels), and would assist property owners with slash disposal through providing chipping and disposal services (but would not perform tree or fuels removal on such parcels). All tree removal would be subject to review and approval of a tree removal permit in accordance with the Town of Mammoth Lakes regulations. The California Department of Forestry guidelines would be employed as a primary framework for proposed practices for fuel reduction activities undertaken by the MLFPD.

The project is a cooperative effort between MLFPD, Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Lakes Community Water District, Mono County, Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Lakes Trails-Public Access and University of California, Santa Barbara Valentine Reserve and is associated with a larger effort to perform fuels reduction treatments on approximately 125 acres of National Forest lands that are adjacent to private property. As described

# RESPONSIBLE AGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PROJECT INFORMATION	
<b>1. Project Title:</b>	Old Mammoth Lakes and Mill City Fuels Reduction Project (SNC 070346)
<b>2. Responsible Agency Name and Address:</b>	Sierra Nevada Conservancy 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205 Auburn, CA 95603
<b>3. Contact Person and Phone Number:</b>	Marji Feliz, Grant Administrator (530) 823-4679
<b>4. Project Location:</b>	Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County, California
<b>5. Project Sponsor's Name and Address:</b>	Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District P.O. Box 5 Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546
<b>6. General Plan Designation:</b>	Land within the Town of Mammoth Lakes is residential, public use and ecological preserve.
<b>7. Zoning:</b>	Land within the Town of Mammoth Lakes is residential, public use and ecological preserve.
<b>8. Description of Project:</b>	<p>The Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District (MLFPD) proposes to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire by improving fire resiliency through vegetation treatments on 15 acres within the community of Mammoth Lakes. MLFPD would perform fuels reduction and removal on one town-owned parcel (bell-shaped parcel), located southwest of the Meridian Boulevard and Minaret Road intersection. Additionally, MLFPD would perform site inspections and provide guidance to private property owners (over 800 parcels), and would assist property owners with slash disposal through providing chipping and disposal services (but would not perform tree or fuels removal on such parcels).</p> <p>The project is a cooperative effort between MLFPD, Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Lakes Community Water District, Mono County, Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Lakes Trails-Public Access and University of California, Santa Barbara Valentine Reserve and is associated with a larger effort to perform fuels reduction treatments on approximately 125 acres of National Forest lands that are adjacent to private property. The proposed fuels reduction activities on federal lands owned by the United States Forest Service (USFS) are being reviewed under separate National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents.</p>
<b>9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:</b>	Within the approximately 15 acres of land affected by the proposed project within the Town of Mammoth Lakes, land is comprised of privately owned property (over 800 parcels), one parcel owned by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, and an ecological preserve owned and operated by the University of California, Santa Barbara Valentine Preserve.
<b>10. Other public agencies whose approval is required:</b>	MLFPD, Town of Mammoth Lakes (tree removal permit), Inyo National Forest, Mammoth Lakes Community Water District, Mono County, Mammoth Lakes Trails-Public Access and University of California, Santa Barbara Valentine Preserve.

**DETERMINATION (To be completed by the Responsible Agency)**

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

I find that although the proposed project **COULD** have a significant effect on the environment, there **WILL NOT** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** has been prepared.

I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier **EIR** or **NEGATIVE DECLARATION**, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Branham

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy

\_\_\_\_\_  
Responsible Agency

### NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

To: Office of Planning and Research  
State Clearinghouse  
P.O. Box 3044, 1400 Tenth Street, Room 212  
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

From: Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

Subject: **FILING OF NOTICE OF DETERMINATION IN COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 21108 OR 21152 OF THE PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE**

State Clearinghouse Number: SCH# 2008034005

Project Title: Mill City Fuels Reduction Project (SNC 070358)

Project Location: National Forest lands (Old Mammoth and Mill City), Mono County, California  
(south 1/2 section 4, north 1/2 section 9, and northwest 1/4 section 10; T.4S., R.27E., MDB&M)

Project Description: Conduct fuels reduction treatments on approximately 125 acres of National Forest system lands, including understory thinning and mastication of trees and brush, piling of project-generated slash and dead and down woody material, and biomass disposal through on-site pile burning, chipping, hauling the material off-site, or through the sale of fuel wood.

As  Lead Agency  a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Sierra Nevada Conservancy approved the above-described project on June 5, 2008 and has made the following determinations:

1. The project  will  will not have a significant effect on the environment.
2. A  Negative Declaration  Mitigated Negative Declaration  Environmental Impact Report was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures  were  were not made a condition of project approval.
4. A mitigation reporting or monitoring plan  was  was not adopted for this project.
5. A Statement of Overriding Considerations  was  was not adopted for this project.
6. Findings  were  were not made pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.

This is to certify that the final environmental document, comments and responses, and the record of project approval are available to the public at the following location:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

Jim Branham

Executive Officer

(530) 823-4670  
Phone #

TO BE COMPLETED BY OPR ONLY

Date Received For Filing and Posting at OPR:

State of California  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy

**Final Negative Declaration**

**State Clearinghouse Number:**

#2008034005

**Project Title:**

Mill City Fuels Reduction Project

**Lead Agency:**

Sierra Nevada Conservancy (in partnership with the US Forest Service, Inyo National Forest)

**Project Description:**

Conduct fuels reduction treatments on approximately 125 acres of National Forest system lands, including understory thinning and mastication of trees and brush, piling of project-generated slash and dead and down woody material, and biomass disposal through on-site pile burning, chipping, hauling the material off-site, or through the sale of fuel wood.

**Project Location:**

National Forest lands (Old Mammoth and Mill City), Mono County, California (south ½ section 4, north ½ section 9, and northwest ¼ section 10; T.4S., R.27E., MDB&M)

**History of Environmental Documents:**

The proposed Mills City Fuels Reduction Project, proposed by the Inyo National Forest and located on federal lands, was the subject of environmental review in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). US Forest Service (USFS), Inyo National Forest, was the NEPA lead agency for the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment. The Mills City Fuels Reduction Project completed NEPA public scoping and review periods from October 2007 through February 2008. The final 30-day objection period on the Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment closed on February 21, 2008. No objections were filed, and the Finding of No Significant Impact was signed by USFS on February 28, 2008.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) was the lead agency for the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project Initial Study and Negative Declaration (SCH #2008034005). The USFS revised the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project NEPA Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment in preparation of an Initial Study and Negative Declaration, pursuant to CEQA, and submitted it to the State Clearinghouse on behalf of SNC for a 30-day review period, which closed on April 16, 2008. USFS received one comment letter from the California Department of Fish and Game for which a response was prepared. Per letter from the State Clearinghouse dated April 17, 2008, SNC and USFS complied with the review requirements for environmental documents, pursuant to CEQA.

The CEQA Initial Study and Negative Declaration and NEPA Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment are on file at the following locations:

Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603

*Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
Initial Study and Negative Declaration  
Mill City Fuels Reduction Project*

Inyo National Forest  
Mammoth Ranger Station  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546

**Findings:**

An Initial Study has been prepared by USFS, Inyo National Forest, on behalf of SNC, the CEQA lead agency, to assess the proposed project's potential effects on the environment and the significance of those effects. Based on the Initial Study, it has been determined that the proposed project would not have any significant effects on the environment and no mitigation measures are necessary. This conclusion is supported by the following findings:

- The proposed project would not have a significant impact related to aesthetics, agricultural resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, public services, recreation, and utilities and service systems.
- The proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact related to air quality, biological resources, geology and soils, noise, and transportation and traffic.

Copies of the Mill City Fuels Reduction Project Initial Study and Negative Declaration, letter from the State Clearinghouse documenting completion of the CEQA public comment period, and comments and responses to comments on the Initial Study and Negative Declaration, as well as the NEPA Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment, are attached. Questions or comments regarding this Negative Declaration may be addressed to:

Bob Kingman, Program Manager  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, CA 95603  
(530) 823-4678 (office)

**Approval of Initial Study/Negative Declaration:**

Certification by Those Responsible for Preparation of this Document. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy, in partnership with the US Forest Service, Inyo National Forest, has been responsible for the preparation of this Initial Study and Negative Declaration. I believe this document meets the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, is an accurate description of the proposed project, and that the lead agency has the means and commitment to implement the project design that will assure the project does not have any significant adverse effects on the environment. Based on review of the whole record for the Mills City Fuels Reduction Project, I recommend approval of this document.

---

Jim Branham  
Executive Officer  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy

---

Date

Approval of the Project by the Lead Agency. Pursuant to Section 21082.1 of the California Environmental Quality Act, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, has independently reviewed and analyzed the Initial Study and Negative Declaration, comments received on the Negative Declaration, and the NEPA Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment for the Mills City Fuels Reduction Project and finds that the Initial Study and Negative Declaration reflect the independent judgment of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. The lead agency further finds that the project will not result in significant impacts or potentially significant impacts that require mitigation measures.

I hereby approve this project:

---

Jim Branham  
Executive Officer  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy

---

Date