

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

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

**Applicant:** WESTERN RIVERS CONSERVANCY

**Project Title:** DEER CREEK-MILL CREEK ACQUISITION:  
PROJECT PRE-PLANNING

**Subregion:** NORTH CENTRAL

**County:** TEHAMA

**SNC Funding:** \$125,000.00

**Total Project Cost:** \$460,000.00

**Application Number:** 394

**Final Score:** 96.7

**PROJECT SCOPE**

This grant funds pre-project planning and coordination of the acquisition of 2,730 acres of land along Deer and Mill Creeks in Tehama County (Phase 2), as well as the placement of 599.42 acres of previously acquired lands (Phase 1) into permanent protective stewardship. Mill and Deer Creeks are two of the top five streams in the Sierras for aquatic life, rare California waterways with healthy runs of Chinook salmon and steelhead. These creeks are the two most productive salmon-producing streams in the Sacramento River system, flowing nearly pristine from the slopes of the northern Sierra to the Sacramento Valley.

In this multi-year project's first phase in 2009, Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC) purchased the 599-acre Lower Deer Creek Falls property from Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) and is now holding this land. SPI has agreed to sell an additional 2,730 acres of land in the Mill and Deer Creek watersheds. These acquisitions would protect the only private lands along approximately 30 miles of Deer Creek, as well as 35 miles of Mill Creek between Lassen Volcanic National Park, Lassen National Forest and the Ishi Wilderness. These creeks are recommended by the U.S. Forest Service for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

Major project tasks for this SNC portion of the project include: completing an appraisal, environmental site assessment and due diligence; negotiating final purchase and option agreements with SPI; seeking Land and Water Conservation Fund monies from the U.S. Forest Service; developing grant applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board or other potential capital funders; coordinating with conservation groups and community organizations; partnering with agencies to identify and secure a long-term manager for the Deer and Mill Creek lands; and seeking philanthropic support.

(APNs: Phase II Parcel A 053-040-01, Parcel B 053-030-08, Parcel C 053-070-12, Parcel D 053-110-06, Parcel F 053-070-02 N ½ & 053-070-04 S ½, Parcel G 053-030-04; Phase I: Parcel E 053-120-05)

### PROJECT SCHEDULE

<b>DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
Complete due diligence (e.g. appraisals, title review, environmental survey)	May 1, 2011 – April 30, 2013
Complete purchase agreement for 2,730 acres of Phase II land	Sept. 30, 2011
Progress Report	Nov. 30, 2011
Progress Report	May 31, 2012
Identify and secure commitments from partners on long-term management of Phase II lands	October 1, 2012
Progress Report	Nov. 30, 2012
Close on Phase II purchase	April 30, 2013
<b>FINAL REPORT/FINAL PAYMENT REQUEST</b>	<b>May 31, 2013</b>

### PROJECT COSTS

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>TOTAL SNC FUNDING</b>
Direct Costs – Fees/Contracts: including Appraisals and Environmental Site Assessments	\$30,000.00
Direct Costs – Staff/Personnel	81,580.00
Direct Costs – Travel	6,000.00
Indirect Costs – Performance Measure Reporting	1,420.00
Administrative Costs	6,000.00
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$125,000.00</b>

### PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- (Resolution) Tehama County Board of Supervisors Supporting Conveyance to the U.S. Forest Service of Approximately 600 Acres Along Deer Creek Currently Owned by the Western Rivers Conservancy
- The Nature Conservancy

- Friends of the River
- Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Sierra Club

## **PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Percent of Pre-Project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation
- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected or Restored
- Number of New Recreation Access Points
- Number of Special Significance Sites Protected or Preserved
- Acres of Land Conserved

## PROJECT SUMMARY

**County:** Tehama

**Applicant:** Western Rivers Conservancy

**Project Title:** Deer Creek-Mill Creek Acquisition: *Pre-Project Planning*

### PROJECT GOAL

The goal of the Deer Creek – Mill Creek Acquisition Project is to acquire 3,330 acres of riparian and surrounding land, including more than seven miles of stream banks. The acquisitions would complete a continuous protected fish and wildlife habitat corridor along 30 miles of Deer Creek and 35 miles of Mill Creek – all within segments of the creeks recommended by the U.S. Forest Service for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System. Our efforts will conserve sensitive habitats for salmon, steelhead, California spotted owl, bears and birds, while providing compatible public access to popular hiking trails.

### PROJECT SCOPE

A Category Two grant by Sierra Nevada Conservancy will advance pre-project planning and coordination of the acquisition of 2,730 acres of Phase II lands along Deer and Mill Creeks in Tehama County, as well as the placement of 599.42 acres of Phase I lands into permanent protective stewardship. In the northern Sierra Nevada foothills, precious few river canyons hold the hope for restoration of the endangered salmon and steelhead runs on the Sacramento River. Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC) requests a Category Two grant of \$125,000 to complete protected corridors for fish and wildlife along Mill and Deer Creeks.

Mill and Deer Creeks are two of the top five streams in the Sierras for aquatic life, rare California waterways with healthy runs of Chinook salmon and steelhead. These creeks are the two most productive salmon-producing streams in the Sacramento River system, flowing nearly pristine from the slopes of the northern Sierras to the Sacramento Valley. If the endangered Sacramento run of Chinook salmon survives, it will be in these streams. While development is beginning to move into this Tehama County landscape, it is still early enough to secure healthy river ecosystems as ecological and recreational sanctuaries.

In this multi-year project's first phase in 2009, WRC purchased the 599-acre Lower Deer Creek Falls property. We bought these lands from Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) with a loan from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. We are now holding this land, securing capital financing, and cultivating a long-term steward. With the success of our first purchase, SPI has agreed to sell an additional 2,730 acres of land in the Mill and Deer Creek watersheds. These acquisitions present an unprecedented opportunity to protect the only private lands along approximately 30 miles of Deer Creek, as well as 35 miles of Mill Creek between Lassen Volcanic National Park, Lassen National Forest and the Ishi Wilderness.

The expected outcome for the SNC portion of the project is the completion of pre-acquisition tasks that will lead to: enhanced protection of water quality; increased opportunities for recreation; and the protection, conservation and restoration of the Region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical and living resources.

Major project tasks for this SNC portion of the project include: completing an appraisal, environmental site assessment and due diligence; negotiating final purchase and option agreements with SPI; seeking Land and Water Conservation Fund monies from the U.S. Forest Service; developing grant applications to the Wildlife Conservation Board or other potential capital funders; coordinating with conservation groups and community organizations; partnering with agencies to identify and secure a long-term manager for the Deer and Mill Creek lands; and seeking philanthropic support.

Our project partners include: California Department of Fish and Game (potential capital funder via Wildlife Conservation Board and possible long-term land steward); U.S. Forest Service (potential capital funder via the Land and Water Conservation Fund and possible long-term steward of the properties); Friends of the River (long-time advocate for Wild and Scenic status along Mill and Deer Creeks); and The Nature Conservancy (engaged in an upper watershed conservation planning effort on Mill and Deer Creeks).

### LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Friends of the River – Steve Evans. The Nature Conservancy – Jake Jacobson. Tehama County Board of Supervisors – Resolution. Sierra Club – Mother Lode Chapter. Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy – Bill Berens.

### SNC PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Complete due diligence (e.g. appraisals, title review, environmental survey)	May 1, 2011 – April 30, 2013
Completed purchase agreement for 2,730 acres of Phase II land	Sept. 30, 2011
Identify and secure commitments from partners on long-term management of Phase II lands	October 1, 2012
Close on Phase II purchase	April 30, 2013
Submit six-month and final reports to SNC	11/30/11, 5/31/12, 11/30/12, 5/31/13

### SNC PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Direct Costs – Fees: Including Appraisals and Environmental Site Assessments	\$30,000.
Direct Costs – Staff / Personnel: Two-Year Grant Period	\$81,580.
Direct Costs – Travel	\$6,000.
Indirect Costs: Performance Measure Reporting	\$1,420.
Administrative Costs	\$6,000.
<b>SNC GRANT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$125,000.</b>