

## **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.