

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy-Progress Report**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program  
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control  
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2008 (Proposition 84)**

**Grantee Name:** Sierra County Land Trust  
**Project title:** Sierra Buttes/ Lakes Basin Acquisition Program-  
Packer Saddle Property  
**SNC Reference Number:** SNC 080230 **Submittal Date:** 11/1/2011  
**Report Preparer:** \_\_Laurie Oberholtzer\_ **Phone#:** (530)265-5433

**Check one:**

**6-Month Progress Report**  
 **Final Report**

**6-Month Progress Reports** should reflect the previous six months. **Final Reports** should reflect the entire grant period.

- A. Progress Report Summary:** (Please provide a general description of work completed during this reporting period.)

We finalized the acquisition of the 298 acre Hayes/Volcano Lake property.

- B. Deliverables or Outcomes completed during this Reporting Period or Milestones Achieved:** (Include specific information, such as public meetings held, agency participation, partnerships developed, or acres mapped, treated or restored.)

Property acquisition. We also held a dedication event on August, 2011 and received area wide press attention for the acquisition.

- C. Challenges or Opportunities Encountered:** (Please describe what has worked and what hasn't; include any solutions you initiated to resolve problems. If your project is not on schedule, please explain why here.)

No special difficulties arose, a very straight forward acquisition.

- D. Unanticipated Successes Achieved:** (Please describe any additional successes beyond completing scheduled tasks or meeting scheduled milestones.)

None.

**E. Compare Actual Costs to Budgeted Costs:** (Please refer to your grant agreement to list your deliverables/budget categories and budgeted costs compared to actual costs incurred during this reporting period in the table below.)

<b>PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES</b>	<b>Budgeted SNC Dollars</b>	<b>Actual Dollars</b>
Property acquisition	\$750,000	\$750,000.00
Title report/ ins., escrow fees, transfer fees	\$ 3,100	\$ 3,100.00
Admin and consultants	\$ 19,900	\$ 19,874.00
Project performance measures	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400.00
Signs	\$ 1,800	\$ 0
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$777,200</b>	<b>\$775,374.50</b>

**Explanation:** (if needed)

**F. Do you have information to report on the project-specific Performance Measures for your project?** (If so, please list the Performance Measures below and describe your progress.)

1. **Number of people reached.**

Volcano Lake is one of the lesser known backcountry locations in the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin. It is accessed via a 2 mile hike up an old mining road from the USFS owned Sand Pond area. In the past, the trail and the lake have not been signed. The purchase, along with 2 other purchases, opened up the lake to legal public access for the first time. We conducted counts throughout this past spring, summer, and fall and we estimate that approximately 250 people visited the lake and the continuation of the trail leading through the site toward the Mt. Mine from May through October,

In the fall and winter hunters, snowmobilers and cross country skiers access the site less frequently. We estimate that during the fall and winter approximately 100 visitor days are added.

2. **Dollar value of resources leveraged. Over 400 hours of volunteer time were donated to the project for in-kind administrative support, sign installation, and visitor counts. Total value: \$16,800.**

3. **Number and types of jobs created. Administration of the grant has provided approximately ¼ of a staff position for the grant period. Future management of the property will continue to support a ¼ staff position, largely caretaking/ backcountry ranger responsibilities.**

4. **Number of new, improved, or preserved economic activities.**

The USFS has estimated that 133,000 people per year visit the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin. Based on our counts, we estimate that less than 1% of these visitors use the Volcano Lake site. However, the overall Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin visitation, which includes Volcano Lake, makes up about 13.3% of the total county visitation of approximately 1 million visitor days annually (local estimate).

It should be noted that the lower elevation of the site also extends down to Highway 49; as a result, this lower portion of the site is traveled through by thousands of vehicles annually. We have not included this in our use estimation.

Since visitors travel to many sites during their stays in Sierra County, the dollar amount of visits to Volcano Lake alone cannot be accurately determined. However, the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin which includes Volcano Lake is the main destination for the 13.3% of county visitors attributed to Basin trips, as noted above. Volcano Lake contributes to the overall attraction of the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin. Preserving the public accessibility of Volcano Lake will continue to contribute to the significant positive economic impact of the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin.

**Visitor Economic Impacts to Sierra County and  
Attributed to Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin, 2009**

	<u>County (1)</u>	<u>Sierra Buttes /Lakes Basin(2)</u>
Travel spending	\$17.3 million	\$2,300,900
Earnings (personal income)	\$4.7 million (13.1%)	\$625,100
Employment (jobs)	270 jobs (23.7%)	36 jobs
Local tax receipts	\$0.3 million (77.2%)	\$39,900

(1) California Travel and Tourism Commission, Runyon Report, 2010

(2) Sierra County Land Trust

5. Approximately 2/3 mile of river frontage along the North Fork of the Yuba River which is located at the lower extent of the site has been protected through the acquisition.
6. 298 acres of land have been protected through the acquisition.
7. New public access points that have resulted number four total.

**G. Were there any other relevant materials produced under the terms of this Agreement that are not a part of the budgeted deliverables? If so, please attach copies.** (Include digital photos, maps, media coverage of project, or other work products.)

No.

**H. Next Steps:** (Work anticipated in the next 6 months, including location and timing of any scheduled events related to the project.)

This report marks the project completion.

## **Please Complete this Section for FINAL Report ONLY**

### **Capacity-Building Results and Collaboration and Cooperation with Stakeholders:**

(What partnerships did you initiate or strengthen as a result of this project? How did they affect the project outcome? If applicable, how did this grant increase your organization's capacity? What is your plan to sustain this increase?)

We have always had an excellent working relationship with the Sierra County Board of Supervisors and County staff. This was strengthened as we worked on the acquisitions and certainly the success of the project buoyed all of us to continue this relationship.

We began working with the US Forest Service during the acquisition process and after close of escrow. We are now coordinating on management issues since this property and others we acquired concurrently are surrounded by Forest Service lands and trails and roads travel jointly through each of our properties.

We have forged an even closer relationship with the Sierra Buttes/ Lakes Basin Trails Stewardship Council; we expect that they will participate in trails projects on this property in the future.

We have begun working on future potential projects with the local Fire Safe Council and CABY as a result of the acquisition(s).

This grant enabled us to increase our organizational capacity. The acquisition success as part of a large package of acquisitions has increased our support and donation base already, which we expect to continue via outreach to the community, our existing members, public relations work, events on the properties, and contact with visitors through our back country ranger program.

### **Description of Project Accomplishments:**

#### **1. Most Significant Accomplishment**

Describe in one concise, well-written paragraph, the most significant accomplishment that resulted from this grant.

The Hayes parcel was one of three properties we purchased this Spring that encircle Volcano Lake. As a result of these purchases, this gem of a high Sierra lake with magnificent views of the Sierra Buttes as its backdrop has been opened to legal public access for the first time and will be maintained for public use, water quality protection, and habitat preservation. The property also includes the trail that leads to the Mt. Mine; the end of this trail enjoys an even more spectacular view of the Buttes. The acreage also extends down steeply 1000 feet in elevation to Highway 49 and includes two sides of the North Fork of the Yuba River as well as the confluence of Salmon Creek at the 50 mile

point from Englebright Dam. This is the goal point for reintroduction of the historic salmon run.

Finally, the parcel is a critical piece in the 1525 acres that we have been able to preserve for public use and resource preservation in the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin overall.

## **2. WOW Factor**

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

The dedication event was a big success and enabled many people who had participated in the effort to preserve the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin to come together and congratulate each other as well as to reflect on the enormity of the outcome.

## **3. Design and Implementation**

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

This was a fairly straight forward acquisition. It was useful to be able to access DTSC funds for a Phase I Environmental Assessment. And, it was useful to have prepared a timber valuation on top of the land appraisal.

## **4. 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.

The successful acquisition(s) has sparked a number of other landowners to approach us on potential acquisitions and conservation easements.

## **5. Collaboration and Conflict Resolution**

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.

We worked closely with The Trust for Public Land on all of our acquisitions. In this case, they provided advice as needed during the finalization of the sale.

## **6. 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 your staff, size and involvement of membership. In addition, describe how your project improved capabilities of partners, or the larger community.

The Sierra County Land Trust is healthy. Our Board has not changed membership in 5 years. Staff time for our executive director has increased each year, now it is full time. Our membership has grown each year, as well as small and major donors. We have added a part time caretaker/ back country ranger during the Spring, Summer, and early Fall. We have a core of about 20 active volunteers and approximately 200 members. (Our county has a population of only 3300.)

Our acquisitions will incrementally increase the potential for success of the local eco tourism industry. The Sierra Buttes area including this property are a popular destination for the visitors they serve including skiers, snow mobilers, mountain bikers, fishermen/women, and hikers. It needs to remain open to the public for this industry to succeed. In some cases, we expect that specific activities of these businesses will take place on this property from time to time.

#### **7. 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”?

This was a fairly straight forward acquisition.

#### **8. 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. Images will be credited to the submitting organization, unless specified otherwise.

#### **9. 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?

We have placed directional signage on the trail to Volcano Lake so that more visitors will be made aware of it and we expect to add interpretive signs in the future. We expect to host activities on the site including nature classes. Our back country ranger

will interact with visitors on this highly used site. We will support the management of the property largely with our annual private fund raising.

**10. Post Grant Contact**

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

Laurie Oberholtzer, Executive Director, Sierra County Land Trust  
(530) 265-5433  
PO Box 4040 Sierra City, CA 96125  
laurie@sierracountylandtrust.org

**SNC-approved Performance Measures:** (Please list each Performance Measure for your Project, as identified in your Grant Agreement, and the results/outcomes.)

Please See Item F under Progress Report at the beginning of this submittal (page 2). It includes each of the 7 Performance Measures we identified in our Grant Agreement.



PO Box 404, Sierra City, CA 96125 (530)265-5433 [www.sierracountylandtrust.org](http://www.sierracountylandtrust.org)

## **We Did It!**

### **1525 Acres of Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Preserved**

With your help, five years of grant writing, fund raising, and negotiations have culminated in the purchase of 1525 acres of land to be preserved for public open space in our cherished Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin.

In May, 2011 the Sierra County Land Trust announced finalization of the purchases which include the last portion of the face of the Buttes still in private ownership. The parcels include Packer Saddle where the trail to the popular Sierra Buttes Lookout Tower begins as well as the start of the internationally renowned Downieville Downhill mountain bike trail. Also within the acreage are Young America Lake and Volcano Lake, as well as a segment of the Pacific Crest Trail, and lakeside frontage on Upper Sardine and Lower Sardine Lakes.

Funding for the acquisitions was from the State of California Sierra Nevada Conservancy (Proposition 84 funds), the California Resources Agency (Proposition 50 funds) and The Trust for Public Land.

Here is our full acquisition list:

- ◆ 835 acre Harris parcels – Volcano Lake, Young America Lake, Buttes face.
- ◆ 200 acres of Packer Saddle.
- ◆ 300 acres adjacent to Volcano Lake and Salmon Creek.
- ◆ Volcano Lake Beach and Access. 160 acres.
- ◆ Lower Sardine Lake frontage. 15 acres including a 5 acre conservation easement.
- ◆ Upper Sardine Lake frontage. 17 acres.

Your Sierra County Land Trust will own all 1525 acres of land and we will manage them for public use, beginning immediately.



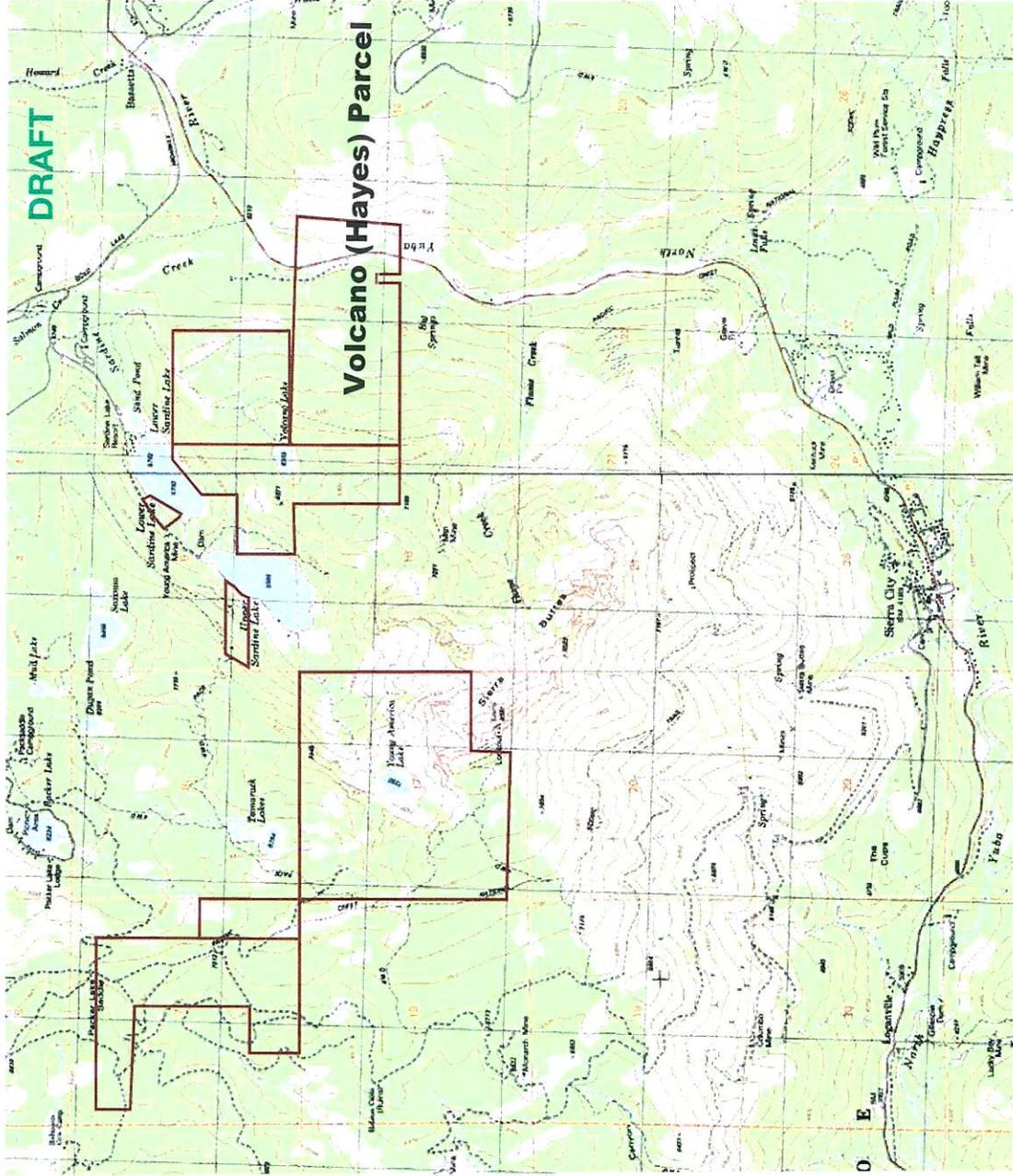
## Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Lands of the Sierra County Land Trust

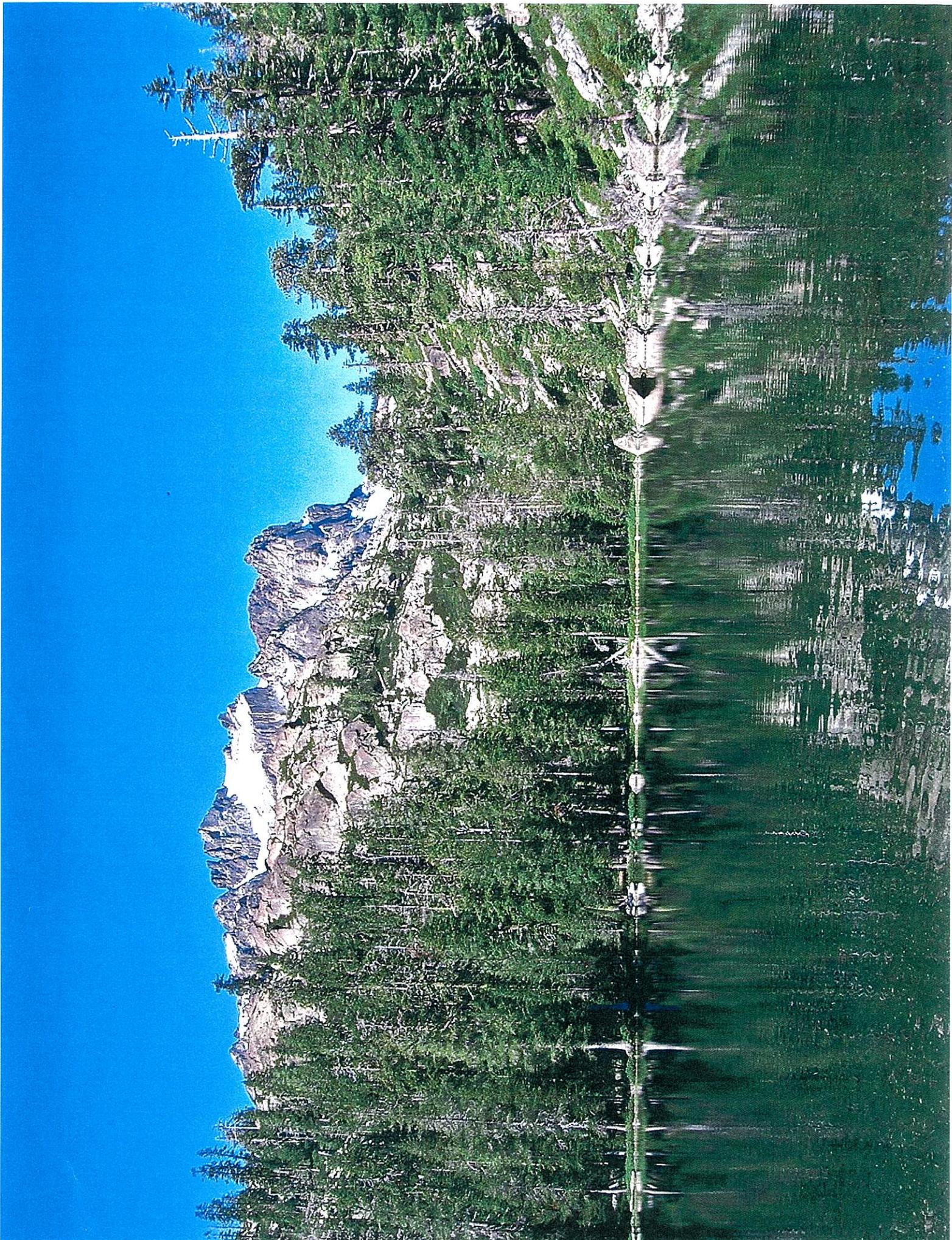
Funding for these purchases was made possible with major assistance from the State of California Natural Resources Agency and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, agencies of the State of California, as authorized by the voters of the State of California with passage of Proposition 50 (2002) and Proposition 84 (2006) as well as:

The Nancy Eccles and Homer M. Hayward Foundation in memory of Marguerite H. Lemmon  
 Peter Davis  
 The Morgan Family Foundation  
 Dan Martin  
 Megan Christian and Kenneth Wright  
 The family of Phyllis O'Gara Currens  
 The Trust for Public Land

**Sierra County Land Trust Board of Directors**  
 Laurie Oberholzer, Executive Director  
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 Megan Christian and Kenneth Wright  
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 Maureen Meikle  
 The Parsons family  
 The Hunt family  
 The family of Phyllis O'Gara Currens







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November 1, 2011

Lynn Campbell  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Dr. #205  
Auburn, CA 95603

Re: SNC Grant # 080230, Volcano Lake Property acquisition

Dear Lynn,

Attached please find our final Payment Request Form for closeout of the Volcano Lake Property grant. We closed escrow on March 9, 2011 and you have received all the related documents.

We have attached:  
Payment Request Form  
Performance Measures Report  
Itemized List of Expenditures  
Supporting documentation (time sheets)

Please give me a call if you have any questions or need further documentation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Oberholtzer". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Laurie Oberholtzer  
Executive Director