

Background

As discussed under Agenda Item XI, the Board adopted a new Strategic Plan in September 2011, which establishes objectives for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) and lays out the strategies the organization will employ in meeting those objectives. In March 2012, the Board approved the first Action Plan, which described specific actions the SNC would undertake between March 2012 and July 2013 to meet Strategic Plan objectives with the understanding that future Action Plans would coincide with the State fiscal year from July 1st through June 30th. Under Agenda Item XI, staff reported progress on completing the actions included in the 2012-13 Action Plan.

Current Status

Staff has completed the development of the Draft 2013-14 Action Plan ([Attachment A](#)). Input received from the Board, stakeholders and staff in strategic planning workshops throughout the Region and in ongoing meetings since the adoption of the Strategic Plan serve as the basis for the draft Action Plan (Plan).

The primary challenge faced in developing the draft Action Plan continues to be developing a realistic scope in terms of what we can accomplish over the next twelve months. The breadth of the SNC's mission, the varied needs of the Region, and the enthusiasm of stakeholders and staff in terms of all the ways the SNC can contribute to meeting those needs, continues to require some discipline on the part of staff in setting forth a set of activities we can reasonably accomplish. In addition, this draft Action Plan puts a tremendous emphasis on the importance of working with partners to accomplish all of the objectives that are so important to the Sierra Nevada.

The draft 2013-14 Action Plan is substantially similar to the prior Action Plan in terms of the specific projects and initiatives included in the Plan. New actions have been identified under existing projects and initiatives, as well as the continuation of actions from the prior Plan, either because the actions were begun, but have not yet been completed, or because the actions are more ongoing in nature.

Two initiatives have been added to this Plan that did not appear in the 2012-13 Action Plan: Biomass Utilization and Abandoned Mine Lands. While biomass utilization activities did occur in 2012-13 under the auspices of the Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI), the role identified for the SNC in the State Bioenergy Action Plan and the increasing importance of these activities to the Region, led staff to develop a separate initiative to encompass activities related to biomass utilization. Abandoned Mine Lands was added as a new initiative in response to Board interest in this issue, as well as an increasing awareness of the importance of addressing the legacy impacts of Abandoned Mine Lands in the Region—particularly in terms of the impact on water quality and supply. Because SNC involvement in issues related to Abandoned Mine Lands was not contemplated at the time the Strategic Plan was adopted by the Board in September 2012, the addition of this initiative to the 2013-14 Action Plan requires an amendment to the SNC's Strategic Plan. The specific changes proposed by staff to the Strategic Plan are shown in [Attachment B](#).

In addition to adding two new initiatives to the Draft 2013-14 Action Plan, staff is also recommending that Funding Development and Regional Water no longer appear as separate initiatives in the new plan. This in no way reflects any intention to decrease the level of activity devoted to funding development given the clear direction from the Board and the interest of stakeholders and staff in making this a high priority. Rather, it reflects a realization that funding development activities are integral to a number of other projects and initiatives. Activities previously included under Regional Water are proposed for inclusion under Education and Communications since the role of the Sierra Nevada in the California's water picture is a primary focus of this initiative.

Next Steps

Staff has developed a high level workload and resource analysis related to the thirteen (13) projects and initiatives described in the Draft Action Plan. It should be noted, however, that as staff develops more detailed project plans, the specific activities associated with some projects may change. This may occur not only as a result of resource constraints, but as new opportunities present themselves (as well as, external requirements that are not currently anticipated). Staff will update the Board at future Board meetings on the progress of, or significant changes in, the projects included in the Action Plan.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board approve the proposed Sierra Nevada Conservancy 2013-14 Action Plan and the proposed changes to the Strategic Plan after reviewing and providing any comments.