

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

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

Applicant: Lassen Land and Trails Trust

Project Title: Pyle Ranch Conservation Easement

Subregion: North

County: Lassen

SNC Funding: \$35,000.00

Total Project Cost: \$35,000.00

Application Number: 722

Final Score: 80.75

PROJECT SCOPE

This project will enable Lassen Land and Trails Trust to complete pre-project work necessary to acquire a conservation easement to protect 578-acres of a working landscape near Susanville in Lassen County.

A conservation easement on this working ranch will improve water quality in the Honey Lake Valley through protection of this threatened segment of the riparian corridor of Gold Run Creek, a tributary to the Susan River. In addition to preserving ecological values, an easement will preserve the economic viability of this working ranch. Lassen Land and Trails Trust has identified the Pyle Ranch as critical for protection due to the continuing adjacent development threats to water resources and wildlife habitat.

The Pyle Ranch includes several acres of riparian corridor, and approximately 400-acres tilled for feed crops and 160-acres of irrigated meadow and pasture. The ranch sits in the Honey Lake Valley in Lassen County. State Highway 36, the primary transportation route into Susanville from the west, borders the northeastern edge of the property. Due to the proximity of this property to Susanville and its location on a major transportation corridor, the Pyle Ranch is under considerable development pressure. A significant number of adjacent properties have been sub-divided and have been subject to lot line adjustments for both commercial and residential development. An existing conservation plan was developed in 2010 with the Natural Resource Conservation Service to implement irrigation water management and resource management to improve water quality, water storage and wildlife habitat conditions. This plan will provide a base upon which a conservation easement can be drafted to ensure that these resources are protected in perpetuity. The Sierra Nevada Red Fox (*Vulpes*

vulpes necator), which is also currently under review for federal listing under the Endangered Species Act may be found on the ranch property. The ranch is also within the seasonal migration corridor for the Lassen mule deer herd, which is in decline. In addition, other species known to occupy habitats like those found on the Pyle Ranch include approximately 30 species of mammals, 15 species of reptiles, 5 species of amphibians, and 30 species of birds.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Develop Draft Conservation Easement/Negotiation	May 2013 - September 2013
RFP State-Certified Real Estate Appraiser	September 2013
Select Appraiser	October 2013
Complete Appraisal	November 2013
Purchase and Sale Agreement; Draft Monitoring Plan; Development of Funding Sources	November 2013 - February 2014
Six Month Progress Report	October 30, 2013
Final Report	March 30, 2014
FINAL PAYMENT/FINAL PAYMENT REQUEST	June 30, 2014

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Direct*	\$32,400.00
Indirect**	\$0
Administrative***	\$2,600.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$35,000.00

* Direct: Direct costs are expenses necessary to acquire, construct, or to adapt property to a new or different use, or to improve property including land, buildings and equipment. The property/expense must have a useful life longer than one year.

** Indirect: Expenses involve ongoing operations, repair or maintenance costs, regardless of whether the repair or maintenance may last more than one year.

*** Administrative: Expenses associated with the administration of a project and may not exceed 15 percent of the total SNC grant request for direct and indirect costs.

PROJECT LETTERS SUPPORT/OPPOSITION

- Support
 - Honey Lake Valley RCD

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.

- Number of People Reached.
- Dollar Value of Resources Leveraged for the Sierra Nevada.
- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected or Restored.