

**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: Sequoia Riverlands Trust

Project Title: Acquisition of a Conservation Easement in the White River Watershed

Subregion: South

County: Tulare

SNC Funding: \$ 347,061.00

Total Project Cost: \$1,496,544.00

Application Number: 731

Final Score: 80.50

PROJECT SCOPE

The purpose of the project is to acquire a conservation easement on part of a southern Sierra foothills ranch in the White River Watershed. Sequoia Riverlands Trust and the landowner regard this as “Phase 1” of placing the entire ranch under easement protection. The ranch contains valuable grassland, sycamore alluvial woodland, vernal pool and blue oak savannah habitats that are suitable for a number of special status species such as San Joaquin kit fox, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, vernal pool fairy shrimp, burrowing owl and a variety of other grassland-dependent species. This working ranch has been the home of, and directly managed by, the same family since 1874. The property is strategically positioned to achieve grassland, riparian and blue oak woodland conservation goals, and to contribute to large-scale habitat connectivity for climate change adaptation. It straddles the transition between valley grasslands and blue oak woodlands, and is bisected by riparian corridors that connect these two major communities to mixed conifer and chaparral habitats at higher elevations. It also encompasses rare alkali meadows and blue oak woodlands that are vulnerable to fragmentation by development. This property, as currently zoned could be split into 160- acre parcels, with the potential of 2 residences on each parcel. To the west of this land within less than a mile, conversion to low density residential is underway. Phase 1 will protect intermittent streams and associated springs in the Fountain Springs Gulch area in the northeast corner of the ranch. The project will result in establishment of a conservation easement on approximately 480-acres, with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy covering the purchase price and transaction costs on roughly 380-acres and the landowner donating the conservation easement on the remaining 100-acres. If the goal of eventual protection of the entire ranch is achieved, it will directly conserve

1.75 miles of the White River riparian corridor, as well as, many more miles of intermittent streams and numerous springs that feed into the White River Watershed. It would also conserve thousands of acres of blue oak woodland and grassland; vernal pools and associated special status species; a stretch of rare sycamore alluvial woodland; and habitat for as many as 18 special status species.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
SNC Grant Authorization	June 30, 2013
Identify title or loan subordination issues that need to be resolved, if any	July 2013
Execute purchase & sale agreement and open escrow	July 31, 2013
Satisfy conditions of purchase & sale agreement for SNC-funded conservation easement	October 31, 2013
6-Month Progress Report	December 31, 2013
Final Report to SNC	January 31, 2014
FINAL PAYMENT/FINAL PAYMENT REQUEST	January 31, 2014

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Direct*	\$342,219.00
Indirect**	0
Administrative***	\$4,842.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$347,061.00

* 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
 - Southern Sierra Partnership
 - Tulare Basin Wildlife Partners

- Oppose
 - None

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.

- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected.
- Number of Special Significance Sites.
- Acres of Land Conserved.