

### **Background**

In September 2011, the Board adopted a Strategic Plan, which established objectives for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) within five (5) areas of focus and laid out the strategies the organization will employ in meeting those objectives. The five areas of focus include:

- Healthy Forests
- Preservation of Ranches and Agricultural Lands
- Watershed Protection and Restoration
- Promotion of Sustainable Tourism and Recreation
- Long-term Effectiveness of the SNC

In June 2014, the Board directed staff to re-focus and increase efforts related to healthy forests in recognition of the dire conditions in many of the forests in the Sierra Nevada and the urgent need for action. Per that direction, staff developed the Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI) Action Plan which was approved by the Board in September 2014. In addition, the Board approved the Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) at the March 2015 meeting, building upon the SNFCI Action Plan.

### **Current Status**

The SNC continues to be guided by the Strategic Plan, approved by the Governing Board in 2011.

Annual Action Plans have been used to identify the specific initiatives and activities planned for the year, based on available resources and existing opportunities and conditions. The Board approved the most recent Action Plan in June 2014 and the organization continues to carry out the actions identified in that plan.

While the Focus Areas in the Strategic Plan continue to provide appropriate guidance for the organization, the reduction of base funding, the priority of the Sierra Nevada WIP and the focus of Proposition 1 makes revisions to it necessary, and development of a new Action Plan appropriate.

### **Next Steps**

Staff is recommending that SNC continue to operate under the 2014-15 Action Plan through the end of calendar year 2015. A draft proposal for revising the Strategic Plan and developing a new Action Plan will be presented at the September 2015 meeting, with adoption of final plans expected at the December Board meeting. This approach is being proposed based on a number of key considerations:

- Ongoing and potential base budget reductions are requiring the organization to make a number of adjustments affecting the amount of resources available for various focus areas and initiatives. A more complete picture will emerge in the coming weeks.
- The SNC currently has four staff vacancies that will continue at least through June 2015. These vacancies limit the staff capacity available to develop a draft

proposal at this time, given the activities associated with the WIP and the impending launch of the Proposition 1 Program.

- Development of the WIP is steadily evolving and the SNC expects to have a better understanding of our role over the coming months, better informing the Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plan.

Upon Board approval of this approach, staff will continue to communicate with key stakeholders and partners in developing proposed plans for the September meeting.

**Recommendation**

**This is an informational item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments. The Board may wish to assign a Board committee to work with staff in the development of the plans.**