

FINAL DRAFT, JULY 26, 2007



**SIERRA NEVADA
CONSERVANCY**

**SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY PROPOSITION 84 GRANTS
PROGRAM**

FUNDED BY

**Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River
and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006**

PROPOSITION 84

GRANTS GUIDELINES

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy initiates, encourages, and supports efforts that improve the environmental, economic and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region, its communities and the citizens of California.

FINAL DRAFT, JULY 26, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction	3
A. Grant Program Requirements	4
B. Eligible Applicants	4
C. Program Areas	4
D. Eligible Projects	4
E. Eligible Costs.....	5
F. Anticipated Project Completion Time Limits	5
II. Issuance of Grants	5
SNC Grants Program Structure	6
A. Specific Legislative Requirements	1
B. Block Grants	2
C. Acquisition and/or Site Improvement/Restoration Projects	2
1. Competitive Grants and the Application Process.....	2
2. SOGs (Category 1) and the Application Process	3
3. Acquisition Projects	3
4. Site Improvement/Restoration Projects	4
5. Grant Proposal Evaluation.....	5
6. Grant Selection Process.....	11
D. Category 2 and 3 Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs).....	11
1. Application Process	12
2. SOG Projects.....	12
3. Grant Proposal Evaluation.....	12
4. SOG Selection Process.....	13
APPENDIX A	15
Program Geographic Area	15
APPENDIX B	16
Glossary of Terms.....	16

I. Introduction

California voters passed Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coast Protection Bond Act of 2006 (the Act) on November 7, 2006. Proposition 84 added Section 75050 to the Public Resources Code (PRC), authorizing the Legislature to appropriate funds for the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. Section 75050 (j) allocates \$54 million of these funds for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC).

The Laird-Leslie Sierra Nevada Conservancy Act, commencing with PRC Section 33300, established the SNC, and Sections 33343 and 33346 established the authority for the SNC to administer grant funds.

The SNC has adopted a Strategic Plan and Program Guidelines in accordance with the statute, which provides direction for the SNC and the basis for these Grants Guidelines.

These Guidelines establish the process used by the SNC to solicit applications, evaluate proposals, and authorize grants under the SNC Grants Program from Proposition 84. A Glossary of Terms is provided at the back of this document.

Grant funds will be allocated through two primary approaches, Competitive Grants and Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs). These guidelines provide procedures for both types of grants.

It is anticipated that approximately \$17 million from Proposition 84 will be allocated annually for three years beginning in 2007-08, subject to legislative approval. For Fiscal Year 2007-08, the funds will be allocated as follows:

- Approximately \$9 million will be allocated through Competitive Grants across the SNC region to meet the purposes of the SNC.
- Approximately \$6 million will be allocated as SOGs to eligible applicants to address needs across the six Sub-Regions (\$1 million will be allocated for each Sub-Region).
- Approximately \$2 million in SOGs will be authorized for projects that have Regional significance. The SNC Board will review this formula and determine the appropriate allocation for future year funding.

A Grants Application Packet accompanies these Grants Guidelines, and includes information and forms needed for grant application. Sample grants contracts for each of the Proposition 84 project types are included in a separate document (known as **Sample Grants Contracts**) for applicants who want more information about the administrative requirements once a grant is authorized.

A. Grant Program Requirements

The Program will provide funding for the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources within the boundaries of the SNC as defined by PRC Section 33302 (f) – see Appendix A for definition.

B. Eligible Applicants

Grant funds may be authorized for public agencies, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, and tribal organizations.

C. Program Areas

In addition to Proposition 84 Bond requirements, projects must address one or more of the program areas of the SNC listed below:

- Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation.
- Protect, conserve, and restore the Region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources.
- Aid in the preservation of working landscapes.
- Reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfires.
- Protect and improve water and air quality.
- Assist the Regional economy through the operation of the SNC's program.
- Undertake efforts to enhance public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

D. Eligible Projects

Funds will be authorized for the planning or implementation of projects that are consistent with the provisions of these guidelines. The SNC Program Guidelines contain examples of potential projects that may be helpful in creating proposals, recognizing that these examples are not meant to reflect a comprehensive list.

In addition to being consistent with the SNC's Program Guidelines, projects must contribute to the protection or restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. Projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Prevention or amelioration of current or anticipated adverse impacts to natural resources.
- Preservation and/or enhancement of agricultural, forest, rangeland, or other working landscapes.
- Reduction or prevention of soil erosion;
- Reduction of fuel hazards;
- Control and elimination of invasive species;
- Elimination, conversion, relocation and/or rehabilitation of roads and trails;

- Improvement of physical structures or facilities;
- Improvement of natural recharge/storage of water;
- Protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat;
- Educational or interpretive activities;
- Community capacity-building through protection of resources; and
- Research.

Proposition 84 also stipulates that no more than 10 percent of grant program funds can be spent on planning-related activities. In addition, only SOGs may be used for planning-related activities; Competitive Grants may not be used for such purposes.

E. Eligible Costs

A description of eligible costs is provided in the appendices to the Sample Grants Contracts. Administrative costs, as defined in the Sample Grants Contracts, shall not exceed 15 percent for all types of projects. Eligible administrative costs must be directly related to the project.

F. Anticipated Project Completion Time Limits

The SNC anticipates that grantees will have a maximum of three years to complete work on an approved project, dating from the time that a grant is authorized. However, this limit is subject to final control language in the State's budget, and will therefore not be determined for a given fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) until the approval of the budget for that year.

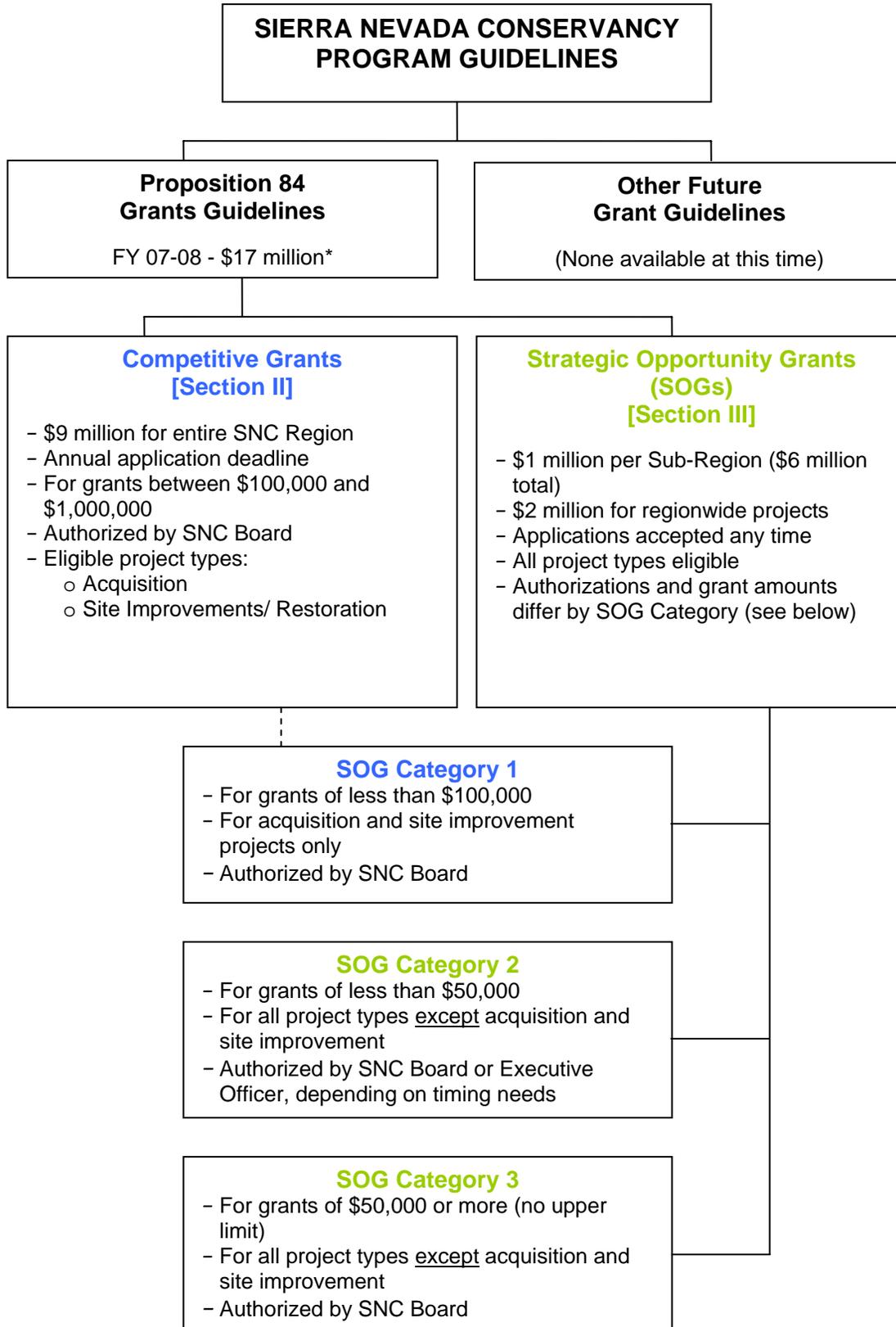
II. Issuance of Grants

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy offers Proposition 84 grants in two categories: (1) Competitive Grants and (2) Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs).

Competitive Grants are authorized for acquisition or site improvement/restoration projects of between \$100,000 and \$1,000,000. Applications for Competitive Grants are solicited, reviewed, and authorized on an annual cycle and must be authorized by the SNC Board of Directors.

SOGs are available on an ongoing basis, subject to available funding. SOGs are divided into three categories based on project type and size of grant being requested. Category 1 and Category 3 SOGs must be authorized by the SNC Board at a noticed Board Meeting; Category 2 SOGs can be authorized by either the Executive Officer or the Board, depending on timing needs. Further explanation of the distinctions between SOG types is provided in the subsequent sections of this document.

SNC Grants Program Structure



* Subject to legislative approval

When deciding which category of grant to apply for, there are three primary considerations:

1. Type of project (acquisition or site improvement/restoration vs. other types)
2. Size of grant request
3. Timing factors or other special needs.

Applicants may consult with SNC staff to determine the most appropriate type of grant opportunity for potential projects.

A. Specific Legislative Requirements

As required by PRC 33342, the SNC shall cooperate with and consult with the city or county where a grant is proposed or an interest in real property is proposed to be acquired; and shall, as necessary or appropriate, coordinate its efforts with other state agencies, non-profit organizations, and other interested parties. The SNC shall, as necessary and appropriate, cooperate and consult with a public water system that owns or operates facilities, including lands appurtenant thereto, where a grant is proposed or an interest in land is proposed to be acquired.

For all grants less than \$50,000 for projects other than acquisition or site improvement/restoration, the SNC will notify the affected county and/or city of the proposed project and request comment within five business days of receipt of such notification. The SNC shall provide such notification at the point at which a project is deemed eligible and is being considered for funding.

For all other grants, the SNC will notify the affected county and/or city and public water agency (where appropriate) and request comments within 15 business days following notification. In addition, the SNC will attempt to make personal contact with the affected entity to ensure that the local government is aware of the proposed project and provided an opportunity to raise any concerns. The Sub-regional representative will also be notified at this time and may wish to communicate with the affected entity as well. The SNC shall provide notification at the point at which a project is deemed eligible and is being considered for funding.

For projects that provide information indicating support (in the form of a resolution) from the affected city and/or county and if appropriate, water agency, such information will be deemed adequate for meeting the statutory requirement.

A grantee will agree to use and maintain the project funded with grant monies only for the purposes of the grant and only for the purposes for which the funds were requested, and no other use, sale, or other disposition or conversion of the property shall be permitted except as authorized by a specific act of the Legislature and the property shall

be replaced with property of equivalent value and usefulness as determined by the SNC.

B. Block Grants

For SOGs only, an applicant may submit grant applications for a number of like projects, administered by separate entities with the intent that they all be managed by the block applicant. This approach is intended to minimize administrative effort for both the SNC and the applicant because only one contract would be required for multiple projects. Project “blocks” may include activities such as: fire safe projects, habitat protection/enhancement efforts, mapping or other information technology projects, invasive species eradication, or educational efforts.

Each project, in addition to being similar in nature, would need to meet Guideline requirements, and be within grant category funding limits for the individual project. A summary sheet listing all of the projects, the rationale for clustering them, and the proposed administering agency, must be provided along with the individual applications. Each individual project application will still be subject to review, and the SNC will reserve the right to fund a portion of the overall package.

C. Acquisition and/or Site Improvement/Restoration Projects

The SNC offers grants for acquisition and/or site improvement/restoration projects under two programs, the Competitive Grant program and the Strategic Opportunity Grant (SOG) program, Category 1. This section outlines the process and requirements for applying for acquisition or site improvement/restoration funding under these two programs. For information on the process and requirements for other types of projects, please see the Section on SOGs, Categories 2 and 3.

1. Competitive Grants and the Application Process

Project applications will be solicited, reviewed, and authorized on an annual cycle. The most current schedule will be provided on the SNC Web site.

Competitive Grants of between \$100,000 and \$1,000,000 will be given in two primary categories:

- 1) Acquisition projects
- 2) Site improvement/restoration projects

For Competitive Grants, applicants will be required to submit a complete application packet to the SNC by the posted deadline. All application materials and forms will be available from the SNC Web site or SNC offices by request. Some application items may be submitted electronically. Please consult with SNC staff to coordinate submittal and ensure receipt. Hard copies of all signature pages must be sent to the SNC and postmarked by the posted due date.

If submitted as a hard copy, the application should be an unbound original with all appropriate signatures, and delivered to the SNC at: 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205, Auburn, CA 95603. Hard copy submittals delivered by mail must be postmarked by the due date. All of the above requirements apply to Category 1 SOGs as well, except that there will be no fixed deadline.

NOTE: An applicant may submit applications for more than one project; however, each project must have its own application.

Letters of support are not required; however, they may be submitted any time prior to the Board's consideration of proposals. Letters of support should be directed to the applicant, and submitted only to SNC headquarters in Auburn.

To maintain fairness for all competitors, SNC staff will be able to provide information and assistance in developing Competitive Grant applications only to the point of submission.

2. SOGs (Category 1) and the Application Process

SOGs in general are intended to provide the SNC flexibility to address various needs and time-sensitive opportunities for all project types in all program areas consistent with Proposition 84. SOGs in Category 1 are specific to acquisition and site improvement/restoration projects of less than \$100,000. These applications may be submitted at any time, and must be authorized by the Board at a noticed Board Meeting.

To apply for a grant in this category, applicants should consult with SNC staff to determine specific information needed prior to a grant request. This may include a pre-project description no more than one page in length. Applicants should submit a grant application following consultation with SNC staff. The grant application will be evaluated by SNC staff for completeness and compliance with program requirements.

NOTE: The application requirements and forms are the same for all acquisition and site improvement/restoration projects, regardless of whether an applicant is applying for a Competitive Grant in the annual grant cycle or for a SOG Category 1 grant of less than \$100,000 on a rolling cycle.

3. Acquisition Projects

Overview

The SNC may make grants to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and tribal organizations to acquire an interest in real property, including water rights, from willing sellers, including a fee interest (The SNC is prohibited by statute (PRC 33347) from acquiring fee title interest of real property itself). Grants for acquisition of real property may include funds to pay down or retire real property debt previously incurred by an eligible applicant in connection with the applicant's acquisition of a real property interest that satisfies grant requirements

Grants shall be disbursed to a recipient entity only after the entity has entered into an

agreement with the SNC, on the terms and conditions specified by the SNC. After approving a grant, the SNC may provide technical assistance to the grantee to ensure efficient administration of the grant.

Statutory Requirements

A grant application to acquire an interest in real property shall specify all of the following:

- (1) The intended use of the property.
- (2) The manner in which the land will be managed.
- (3) How the cost of ongoing management will be funded.

In the case of a grant of funds to acquire an interest in real property, including, but not limited to, a fee interest, the agreement between the SNC and the recipient shall require all of the following:

- (a) The purchase price of an interest in real property acquired shall not exceed fair market value as established by an appraisal approved by the SNC.
- (b) The terms under which the interest in real property is acquired shall be subject to the SNC's approval.
- (c) An interest in real property to be acquired under the grant shall not be used as security for a debt unless the SNC approves the transaction.
- (d) The transfer of an interest in the real property shall be subject to approval of the SNC, and a new agreement sufficient to protect the public interest shall be entered into between the SNC and the transferee.

A project funded with grant funds may only be transferred to another eligible applicant with the concurrence of the SNC if the successor grantee assumes the obligations required under the contract.

A deed or instrument by which the grantee acquires an interest in real property under the grant shall include a power of termination on the part of the SNC. The deed or instrument shall provide that the SNC may exercise the power of termination by notice in the event of the grantee's violation of the purpose of the grant through breach of a material term or condition thereof, and that, upon recordation of the notice, full title to the interest in real property identified in the notice shall immediately vest in the SNC, or in another public agency or a nonprofit organization or tribal organization designated by the SNC to which the SNC conveys or has conveyed its interest.

4. Site Improvement/Restoration Projects

Overview

These projects will protect or restore rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, or other natural resources. Projects must also address one or more of the SNC's program goals (see Program Guidelines for some examples of projects). As described in the "Eligible Projects" section earlier in this document, a wide

array of potential projects will be considered by SNC. Applicants are encouraged to consult with SNC staff in determining the appropriateness of potential projects.

Land Tenure

Applicants must demonstrate and document to the SNC that they have adequate tenure to, and site control of, properties to be improved.

Adequate tenure includes, but is not limited to:

- Fee title ownership.
- An easement necessary for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant contract.
- Agreements where the applicant has adequate site control* for the purposes of the project.

*Adequate site control is the power or authority to: Conduct activities that are necessary for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant contract.

If property is owned in fee title, applicants can include the recordation number(s) on the application form or on a separate sheet attached to the application form. Recordation numbers are found on the deed or may be obtained through the applicable county recorder's office. If property is not owned in fee title, provide documentation (lease, easement, agreement, etc.) verifying that the land tenure requirement has been met.

Land Tenure Requirements – Alternate Process

When an applicant does not have tenure at the time of application, but intends to establish tenure via an agreement that will be signed upon grant authorization, the applicant may choose to follow the alternate land tenure process by:

- Submitting a copy of the proposed agreement, as well as letters from the applicant and the prospective landlord in which each commits to sign the proposed agreement should the application be successful.

Once a project has been authorized for funding, the applicant must submit a fully-executed agreement which meets the land tenure requirements within 30 days of Board authorization to execute the grant contract.

5. Grant Proposal Evaluation

The information provided in the project proposal will allow the SNC to evaluate the competing grant applications based on the criteria described below.

As stated previously, in order to be eligible for Proposition 84 funding a project must: a) contribute to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources, AND b)

address one or more of the SNC program goals.

Projects will be evaluated on a variety of criteria in order to determine which projects will provide the greatest contribution to achieving the SNC's mission, consistent with the requirements of Proposition 84.

Project proposals must provide information addressing each of the following criteria:

(The total number of points possible for each application is 100).

NOTE: In evaluating proposals for Category 1 SOG funding, the SNC will consider the criteria used to evaluate competitive grant applications; however, a point system will not be utilized. SOG recommendations will be made at the discretion of the SNC staff and the Executive Officer, consistent with the Strategic Plan and Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines.

A. Land And Water Benefits (Maximum Of 25 Points)

Describe how the project contributes to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. Include how the project provides direct and indirect benefits, avoids adverse impacts, and addresses existing or potential threats to water and watersheds and other natural resources. Include a description of what is occurring on surrounding lands and the effect it may have on the project's sustainability. Describe how the investment of public funds will lead to long-term benefits.

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project benefits the identified resources.

B. SNC Program Goals (Maximum of 25 points)

Describe how the project addresses one or more of the SNC program goals listed below. Provide information for each of the program goals that the project addresses.

1. Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation.
2. Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources.
3. Aid in the preservation of working landscapes.
4. Reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfires.
5. Protect and improve water and air quality.
6. Assist the regional economy through the operation of the SNC's program.
7. Undertake efforts to enhance public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project provides multiple benefits.

C. Implementability (Maximum of 15 points)

Acquisition Projects

Address each of the following, as appropriate:

1. Workplan and schedule
In the workplan, describe the project's tasks, deliverables, and schedule. Address the factors affecting the acquisition's timeline and completion, and how these factors will be addressed. Describe how the project will be implemented in a timely manner.
2. Budget
This section refers to the Cost Estimate.
 - a) Describe any monetary and/or in-kind support that is a part of the project.
Note: Other contributions to the project are not required to receive a grant; however, projects that include other sources of funds will be more competitive.
 - b) Identify the source and amount of funds already committed to the purchase and maintenance of the project and the expected timing of those funds. Cite specific dollar amounts for cash contributions, in-kind services, volunteer effort, technical expertise, etc.
 - c) Explain how the project will be completed using grant funds and other sources of funds, and explain the timing of availability of all funding.
 - d) If a project depends on other funding sources, describe how the portion of the project to be funded by the SNC can be implemented by itself.
3. Status of technical documents and agreements
Applications that have completed all applicable planning, such as appraisals, completed and adopted environmental documentation, necessary resolutions, letters of intent, and all other items included in the application checklist will be scored higher.
 - a) Agreements and commitments from project partners (type of documentation flexible)
 - b) CEQA compliance
 - c) Appraisal
 - d) Preliminary title report
 - e) Property restrictions and/or encumbrances, easements, mineral rights
 - f) Negotiations of terms of sale, option to purchase, or easement with a willing seller
 - g) Phase I or Phase II Environmental Assessment (Toxics Report)

Site Improvement/Restoration Projects

1. Workplan and schedule

- a) In the workplan, describe the project's tasks, deliverables, and schedule.
 - b) Address the factors affecting the project's timeline and completion, and how these factors will be addressed. Describe how the project will be implemented in a timely manner.
2. Budget
- This section refers to the Cost Estimate.
- a) Describe any monetary and/or in-kind support that is a part of the project. Note: Other contributions to the project are not required to receive a grant; however, projects that include other sources of funds will be more competitive.
 - b) Identify the source and amount of funds already committed to the implementation and maintenance of the project and the expected timing of those funds. Cite specific dollar amounts for cash contributions, in-kind services, volunteer effort, technical expertise, etc.
 - c) Explain how the project will be completed using grant funds and other sources of funds, and explain the timing of availability of all funding.
 - d) If a project depends on other funding sources, describe how the portion of the project to be funded by the SNC can be implemented by itself.
3. Indication of the land tenure held
4. Status of technical documents and agreements
- Applications that have completed all applicable planning, such as issuance of all necessary permits, completed and adopted environmental documentation, necessary resolutions, and all other items included in the application checklist will be scored higher.
- a) Commitments from project partners (type of documentation flexible)
 - b) CEQA compliance
 - c) Permitting
 - d) Property restrictions and/or encumbrances, easements, mineral rights
 - e) Availability of labor and materials

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project is implementable on a timely basis.

D. Cooperation and Community Support (Maximum of 10 points)

- 1. Describe demonstrated community support and project partners.
- 2. Describe the efforts to include various stakeholders in planning and/or implementation of the project. Provide information on the following:
 - a. Consultation and cooperation with local, State, and federal agencies, including methods used to solicit participation.
 - b. The use of stakeholders in designing and/or implementing the project, including methods used to solicit participation.
- 3. Any project opposition, explanation of the nature of the concerns, and how they have been addressed.
- 4. Explain how the project will provide educational opportunities about the Sierra Nevada, the SNC, and the project area for children, schools, and

- communities.
5. Describe the potential affect the project may have upon various plans, including general plans, recreation plans, urban water management plans, and groundwater management plans, as well as the potential impact these plans may have on the long term sustainability of the project.
 6. Explain how the benefits of the completed project would be communicated to local and regional media; elected and agency officials from within the region; elected and agency officials from outside the region; non-governmental and business partners; and others.

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project exhibits cooperation and community support. (For projects that have confidentiality requirements, applicants should consult with SNC staff prior to submission).

E. Project Management and Adequacy of Design (Maximum of 10 points)

Describe the capability of applicant and/or partners to provide for all relevant aspects of an integrated management process that includes project planning, acquisition, restoration, monitoring, operation, and maintenance. The applicant should demonstrate that staff or partners involved in the project will utilize all the applicable basic elements of a project management process. Provide information on the following:

- Fiscal partners and their roles in the project as related to the workplan
- Applicant's or partners' demonstrated ability or type of training received to implement the proposed project.
- All elements of a management process including:
 - The appropriate up-front planning that demonstrates the project need;
 - The expertise needed to complete the project within the applicant's organization or its partners';
 - Utilizing appropriate design to obtain maximum sustainability of the proposed project;
 - A demonstrated ability to design the project to minimize impact to the natural and cultural resources;
 - Construction techniques that utilize aesthetic design and compatible or renewable material resources (for site improvement/restoration projects); and
 - A monitoring and maintenance process that keeps the proposed project at intended standards.

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project demonstrates management capacity and adequacy of design.

F. Sustainability, Long Term Management, and Maintenance (Maximum of 10 points)

1. Describe how the project is sustainable (involves an activity that can be repeated over a long period of time without causing damage to the environment and community). Describe the sustainability of the project in the context of the surrounding land uses including the potential impacts to surrounding lands and the potential impact that future activities on surrounding lands may have on the project area.
2. Site improvements and properties acquired with grant funds, including less than fee title acquisitions, must be maintained to protect the value of the resource. Long-Term Management Plans for site improvement/restoration projects shall be for a minimum of 10 years or for a period determined to be necessary for successful project implementation. Long-Term Management Plans for property or easement acquisitions shall be in perpetuity. Requirements for the Long-Term Management Plan are as follows:
 - a) Describe the long-term management plan (e.g., weed control, mosquito abatement, fencing, etc.) of the resource, including:
 - i. What is planned for the long-term management?
 - ii. Who will perform the long-term management? Describe the individual's or organization's experience in managing this type of resource.
 - iii. How will the ongoing management be funded?
 - b) What, if any, future modifications/improvements may be considered for the resource (e.g., habitat improvement/restoration, recreation, public access, etc.)? How would the property continue to meet the program requirements with these improvements?
 - c) For conservation easements, describe your plan for stewardship, and address ongoing funding to support the terms and conditions of the stewardship plan.

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project demonstrates sustainability and provides for long-term management.

G. Model Project Values (Maximum 5 points)

Describe how the project is useful as a model in the program area or in other Sub-Regions, if appropriate (i.e. innovative partnerships, approaches, problem-solving, or research).

Points will be awarded based on the degree to which the project represents a potential model or utilizes innovative approaches.

6. Grant Selection Process

- Applicants submit a complete grant application to the SNC by the deadline (Fixed deadline applies to Competitive Grants only).
- Application reviewed by staff for completeness and eligibility.
- Complete, eligible applications evaluated by the SNC staff. In evaluating projects, SNC staff may involve other parties as necessary and appropriate.
- In evaluating applications, SNC may consider authorizing partial funding with concurrence from grant applicant and with agreement that meaningful progress toward the goal can be made.
- Site visits will be scheduled, as necessary and appropriate; scores may be adjusted as a result of the site visit.
- The SNC staff recommends projects for funding to the Board.
- The Board determines the final authorizations.

D. Category 2 and 3 Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs)

SOG grants will be available on an on-going basis contingent upon availability of funds. SOG Category 2 and 3 grants are intended to provide the SNC flexibility to address various needs and time-sensitive opportunities for all project types except acquisition and site improvement/restoration grants in all program areas consistent with Proposition 84. Acquisition and site improvement/restoration projects are covered under Competitive Grants and Category 1 SOGs.

Category 2 and 3 SOGs may be used for activities including, but not limited to:

- Initial project planning & development
- Environmental review
- Appraisal services
- Capacity-building
- Educational efforts
- Research
- Publications
- Events
- Procurement of equipment to ensure protection of water resources and related landscapes
- Monitoring and assessments

In addition, Category 2 SOGs **only** may be used for funding for staff, provided that the staff activity results in tangible outcomes consistent with Proposition 84 and that the funding is one-time in nature.

For the 2007/08 Fiscal year, each of the six Sub-Regions has been allocated \$1 million. An additional \$2 million has been allocated for projects of Regional significance.

Category 2 and 3 SOGs are offered as follows:

Category 2: These grants of less than \$50,000 may be authorized by the Board at any noticed meeting or by the Executive Officer in instances where there is a timeliness issue or extenuating circumstance (such authorizations will be reported to the Board at the next scheduled Board meeting).

Category 3: These grants of \$50,000 or more may be authorized by the Board at any noticed Board meeting. There is no upper limit on Category 3 SOG authorization size, subject to fund availability.

1. Application Process

- Applicants consult with SNC staff to determine specific information needed prior to a grant application. This may include a pre-project description of no more than one page in length.
- Grant application submitted following consultation with SNC staff. All application materials and forms will be available from the SNC Web site or SNC offices by request. Some application items may be submitted electronically. Please consult with SNC staff to coordinate submittal and ensure receipt. Hard copies of all signature pages must be sent to the SNC and postmarked by the posted due date.
- If submitted as a hard copy, the application should be an unbound original with all appropriate signatures, and delivered to the SNC at: 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205, Auburn, CA 95603.
- Grant application evaluated by the SNC staff for completeness and compliance with program requirements.

2. SOG Projects

In order to be eligible for funding, a project must contribute to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. The project must also address one or more of the SNC program goals. The application requirements for SOGs are detailed in the Grants Application Packet.

3. Grant Proposal Evaluation

In evaluating proposals for Category 2 and 3 SOG funding, the SNC will use the criteria listed below.

A. Land and Water Benefits

Describe how the project contributes to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources. Include how the project addresses all direct and indirect benefits, avoidance of adverse impacts, and existing or potential threats to water and

watersheds and other natural resources. Describe how the investment of public funds will lead to long-term benefits.

B. SNC Program Goals

Describe how the project addresses one or more of the SNC program goals listed below. Projects that provide multiple benefits will be given priority.

- a) Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation.
- b) Protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources.
- c) Aid in the preservation of working landscapes.
- d) Reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfires.
- e) Protect and improve water and air quality.
- f) Assist the regional economy through the operation of the SNC's program.
- g) Undertake efforts to enhance public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

C. Cooperation, Community Support, and Leveraging

- a) Describe demonstrated community support and project partners
- b) Describe the efforts to include various stakeholders in planning and/or implementation of the project. Provide information on the following:
 - i. Consultation and cooperation with local, State, and federal agencies, including methods used to solicit participation.
 - ii. The involvement of stakeholders in designing and/or implementing the project, including methods used to solicit participation
- c) Describe any monetary and/or in-kind support that is a part of the project. Note: Other contributions to the project are not required to receive a grant; however, projects that include other sources of funds will be more competitive.
- d) Identify the source and amount of funds already committed to the purchase and/or maintenance of the project and the expected timing of those funds. Cite specific dollar amounts for cash contributions, in-kind services, volunteer effort, technical expertise, etc.
- e) Explain how the project will be completed using grant funds and other sources of funds and explain the timing of availability of all funding.

4. SOG Selection Process

- SNC assesses grant applications for completeness and eligibility.
- In evaluating projects, SNC staff may involve other parties as necessary and appropriate.
- SNC may consider authorizing partial funding with concurrence from grant applicant and with agreement that meaningful progress toward the goal can be made.
- Site visits may be scheduled, as necessary and appropriate.

- The SNC staff recommends projects for funding to the Board (or Executive Officer as appropriate).
- The Board (or Executive Officer under delegated authority) authorizes funding for successful applications. Grants of \$50,000 or more must be authorized by the Board, which may be done at any noticed Board meeting.

APPENDIX A

Program Geographic Area

Project must be located in the boundaries of the Sierra Nevada Region to be eligible. Projects bisected by the boundaries described are eligible for this program. PRC Section 33302 (f) defines the Sierra Nevada Region as the area lying within the Counties of Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Fresno, Inyo, Kern, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba, described as the area bounded as follows:

On the east by the eastern boundary of the State of California; the crest of the White/Inyo ranges; and State Routes 395 and 14 south of Olancho; on the south by State Route 58, Tehachapi Creek, and Caliente Creek; on the west by the line of 1,250 feet above sea level from Caliente Creek to the Kern/Tulare County line; the lower level of the western slope's blue oak woodland, from the Kern/Tulare County line to the Sacramento River near the mouth of Seven-Mile Creek north of Red Bluff; the Sacramento River from Seven-Mile Creek north to Cow Creek below Redding; Cow Creek, Little Cow Creek, Dry Creek, and the Shasta National Forest portion of Bear Mountain Road, between the Sacramento River and Lake Shasta; the Pit River Arm of Shasta Lake; the northerly boundary of the Pit River watershed; the southerly and easterly boundaries of Siskiyou County; and within Modoc County, the easterly boundary of the Klamath River watershed; and on the north by the northern boundary of the State of California; excluding both of the following:

- (1) The Lake Tahoe Region, as described in Section 66905.5 of the Government Code, where it is defined as "Region."
- (2) The San Joaquin River Parkway, as described in Section 32510.

See http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/html/map_of_the_region_sub_regions.html for map or contact staff to clarify whether project is located in an eligible area.

APPENDIX B

Glossary of Terms

Unless otherwise stated, the terms used in these Guidelines shall have the following meanings:

Acquisition – To obtain fee title interest or any other interest in real property including easements, leases and development rights. All rights obtained, whether purchased, donated, or otherwise conveyed are to be permanent. Rentals do not constitute Acquisition.

Applicant – Eligible entities as defined by the SNC program.

Application – The individual application form and its required attachments for grants pursuant to the SNC Program.

Authorized Representative – The designated position authorized in the Resolution to sign all required Grant documents including, but not limited to the Grant contract, the application form, payment requests, and grant completion packet forms. The authorized representative may designate an alternate by informing SNC in writing.

Board – The governing body of the SNC as authorized by PRC Section 33321.

Bond Or Bond Act - Proposition 84, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coast Protection Bond Act of 2006

Capital Improvement Projects that utilize grant funds for acquisition of land or site improvement/restoration.

CEQA – the California Environmental Quality Act as stated in the Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.; Title 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq. CEQA is a law establishing policies and procedures that require agencies to identify, disclose to decision makers and the public, and attempt to lessen significant impacts to environmental and Historical Resources that may occur as a result of a proposed project to be undertaken, funded, or approved by a local or state agency. For more information, refer to <http://ceres.ca.gov/ceqa/>.

Conservation Easement - Any limitation in a deed, will or other instrument in the form of an easement, restriction, covenant or condition which is or has been executed by or on behalf of the owner of the land subject to such easement and is binding upon the successive owners of such land, and the purpose of which is to retain land predominantly in its natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, forested or open-space condition. (Civil Code Section 815.1)

Competitive – A process whereby projects are ranked and selected based upon program specific criteria.

Conservancy – Sierra Nevada Conservancy as defined in PRC Section 33302 (b).

Contract – An agreement between the SNC and the grantee specifying the payment of funds by the SNC for the performance of the project scope within the contract performance period by the grantee.

Contract Performance Period – The period of time during which the grant scope eligible costs may be incurred, and the work described in the grant scope must be completed. Eligible costs incurred during this period may be funded from the grant.

Contract Term – The period of time that includes the Contract Performance Period, plus time for all work to be billed and paid by the state. This period is the same as the beginning and ending dates of the contract.

Easement - An interest in land entitling the holder thereof to a limited use or enjoyment of the land in which the interest exists.

Executive Officer - The person appointed the manager of the SNC.

Fair Market Value - The value placed upon property as supported by an appraisal that has been reviewed and approved by the California Department of General Services or other designated authority.

Eligible Costs – Expenses incurred by the Grantee during the Contract Performance Period of an approved Contract, which may be reimbursed by the SNC. (See page 3)

Grant – Funds made available to a grantee for eligible costs during a contract performance period.

Grantee – An entity that has a contract for grant funds.

Grant Scope – Description of the items of work to be completed with grant funds as described in the application form and cost estimate.

Historical Resource – Includes, but is not limited to, any building, structure, site, area, place, artifact, or collection of artifacts that is historically or archaeologically significant in the cultural annals of California.

In-kind – Donations that are utilized on the project, including materials and services. These donations shall be eligible only as other sources of funds.

Nonprofit Organization - A private, nonprofit organization qualified to do business in California and qualified exempt status under Section 501(c) (3) of Title 26 of the United States Code.

Other Sources of Funds - Cash or in-kind contributions that are necessary or used to complete the acquisition or site improvement/restoration project beyond the grant funds provided by this program.

Preservation - Rehabilitation, stabilization, restoration, development, and reconstruction, or any combination of those activities.

Project – The work to be accomplished with grant funds.

Project Manager – An employee of the SNC, who acts as a liaison with the applicants or grantees and administers grant funds, ensures compliance with guidelines and the grant contract.

Proposition 84 - See bond.

Protection - Those actions necessary to prevent harm or damage to rivers, lakes, and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources, or those actions necessary to allow the continued use and enjoyment of property or natural resources and includes acquisition, restoration, preservation and education.

Public Agencies – Any city, county, district, or joint powers authority; State agency; or federal agency.

Region - Sierra Nevada Region as defined in PRC Section 33302 (f).

Regional Significance – Providing benefits that affect all or a substantial portion of the SNC Region.

Restoration - The improvement of physical structures or facilities and, in the case of natural systems and landscape features includes, but is not limited to, projects for the control of erosion, the control and elimination of invasive species, prescribed burning, fuel hazard reduction, fencing out threats to existing or restored natural resources, road elimination, and other plant and wildlife habitat improvement to increase the natural system value of the property.

Site Improvements/Restoration - Project activities constituting restoration or protection or both.

SNC – Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

Stewardship Plan - Means a plan to provide ongoing implementation and management associated with the acquisition of a conservation easement or site improvement/restoration project.

Total Project Cost – The amount of the Other Sources of Funds combined with the Grant request amount that is designated and necessary for the completion of a project.

Trail – A thoroughfare or track for pedestrian (including assistive mobility devices), skating or skateboarding, equestrian, skiing, canoeing, kayaking, bicycling or off highway vehicle activities.

Tribal Organization - Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, or a tribal agency authorized by a tribe, which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and is identified on pages 52829 to 52835, inclusive, of Number 250 of Volume 53 (December 29, 1988) of the Federal Register, as that list may be updated or amended from time to time.

Working Landscape(s) - Lands producing goods and commodities from the natural environment (most commonly farms, ranches, and forests). For many communities, these lands are an important part of the local economy, culture, and social fabric.