

June 2, 2011
California Department of Food and Agriculture
Auditorium
1220 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814



**June 2, 2011
Board Meeting**

9:00 – 1:00 PM

(End time of the meeting is approximate)

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Oath of Office of New Members**
- III. Roll Call**
- IV. Approval of March 3, 2011 Meeting Minutes (ACTION)**
- V. Public Comments**
Opportunity for the public to comment on non-agenda items.
- VI. Board Chair's Report**
- VII. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**
 - a. Budget and Staffing
 - b. Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative Update
 - c. Proposition 84 Grant Program Audit Report
- VIII. Deputy Attorney General's Report (INFORMATIONAL)**
- IX. SNC Strategic Plan (ACTION)**
The Board will review and may provide direction to staff on the draft SNC Strategic Plan.
- X. 2011-12 and 2012-13 Grants Program (ACTION)**
The Board will consider and may provide direction to staff on recommendations for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 Proposition 84 Grants Program.
- XI. Reauthorization of Federal Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (ACTION)**
The Board will consider and may act to support the reauthorization of federal Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act.
- XII. Updates on Various SNC Activities (Information)**
 - a. Sierra Day in the Capitol Report
 - b. Sierra Nevada Water Report
 - c. SNC Involvement in the State Water Plan Update

XIII. Boardmembers' Comments

XIV. Public Comments

XV. Adjournment

Meeting Materials are available on the SNC Web site at www.sierranevada.ca.gov. For additional information or to submit written comment on any agenda item, please contact Mrs. Burgess at (530) 823-4672, toll free at (877) 257-1212; or via email at tburgess@sierranevada.ca.gov. 11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205, Auburn CA 95603. If you need reasonable accommodations please contact Mrs. Burgess at least **five** working days in advance, including documents in alternative formats.

Closed Session: Following, or at any time during the meeting, the Conservancy may recess or adjourn to closed session to consider pending or potential litigation; property negotiations; or personnel-related matters. Authority: Government Code Section 11126(a), (c) (7), or (e).

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Placerville Town Hall
549 Main Street
Placerville, CA 95667



I. Call to Order

Board Chair Kirwan called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

II. Oath of Office of New Members

Deputy Attorney General Christine Sproul administered the oath of office to new Boardmembers Karen Finn, Representative of Department of Finance; Dick Pland, Tuolumne County Supervisor; Tom Wheeler, Madera County Supervisor; Linda Arcularius, Inyo County Supervisor; and Ted Owens, Nevada County Supervisor.

III. Roll Call

Present: John Brissenden, Linda Arcularius, Brian Dahle, Dick Pland, Tom Wheeler, Bob Kirkwood, Karen Finn (Representative for Department of Finance), B.J. Kirwan, Ted Owens, Bill Nunes, Bob Johnston, Todd Ferrara, Kathy Hardy, Dan Jiron and David Graber.

Absent: None

IV. Approval of December 2, 2010 Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

There were no changes to the meeting minutes.

Action: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Owens seconded a motion to approve the December 2, 2010 meeting minutes. Boardmembers Dahle, Finn, Arcularius, Pland and Wheeler abstained from voting. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Public Comments

Ron Briggs, Supervisor, El Dorado County District 4, extended a welcome to the Board and said he hoped the Board found the previous day's tour to Wakamatsu Ranch and Coloma State Park educational. He thanked the community members who supported the tour and reception. Briggs said the SNC has been playing a very crucial role in helping El Dorado County to reach its goals, and especially appreciated the support for Finnon Lake project.

Board Chair Kirwan thanked Briggs for the wonderful tour and reception of the previous day.

Frank Stewart, member of Quincy Library Group and the board of the California Fire Safe Council expressed his concern that funding for County Fire Safe Council coordinators throughout the Sierra Nevada is being reduced, particularly in light of

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cutbacks in federal Secure Rural Schools funding, which is a primary source of support for the coordinators. He asked that the SNC do what it can to help. Boardmember Wheeler commented that it might be appropriate for the SNC to write a letter in support of continued federal funding.

Executive Officer Jim Branham commented that the SNC could not fund the coordinators with Proposition 84 Bond funds as had been previously suggested, but said the Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative Coordinating Council is going to consider approving a letter of support for Secure Rural Schools funding at its meeting later this month. He added that if the SNC Governing Board would like to take a similar position, it would need to be agendaized as an action item for the June meeting. Christine Sproul, Deputy Attorney General, concurred with the need to place the item on the agenda for the next Board meeting in accordance with the requirements of the the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.

VI. Board Chair's Report

Board Chair Kirwan noted that John Laird was appointed by Governor Brown as Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency and that he had expressed a strong interest in attending the SNC Board meetings. Boardmember Brissenden said Laird would do a great job on behalf of the Sierra, which is an area the Secretary truly values.

VII. Executive Officer's Report (INFORMATIONAL)

Executive Officer Branham said that Kim Carr has moved to a new position with the SNC, and Julie Bear is acting as the Mt. Whitney Area Manager. He also noted that the SNC will be affected by the current budget crisis. He noted that the bond sales have been delayed until the fall, so the SNC is dependent on cash on hand at this time.

Boardmember Finn pointed out that the Governor's budget assumed that no bonds would be sold in Spring. She clarified that the problem the State is facing is that it has too many unspent bond funds, so the decision was made to suspend new bond sales until there is a clearer understanding of existing funds and cash needs..

a. Budget and Staffing

Amy Lebak, Personnel and Business Services Officer, gave the budget and staffing report. Lebak reported that the SNC is developing a variety of scenarios to prepare for different potential budget outcomes. She updated the Board on the SNC's efforts to comply with existing Executive Orders reducing wireless devices and fleet vehicles by 50 percent, as well as the hiring freeze. Lebak reported that SNC is in compliance with the wireless order and would be meeting with Department of General Services on the fleet vehicle reduction piece later in the day. She also let the Board know that the SNC had requested and was granted an exemption to the hiring freeze to fill the Mt. Whitney Area Manager

vacancy. Branham added that in reality, a reduction in the SNC fleet would mean staff would not be out in the Region as much as they would like.

b. Strategic Plan Update

Assistant Executive Officer Joan Keegan recapped for the Board the steps taken to develop the draft Strategic Plan and summarized the themes of the discussion. SNC Staff has conducted workshops throughout the Region, drawing 140 attendees. The first draft of the plan will be presented to the Board in June. More outreach will continue with stakeholders before the June meeting. The final draft, following a public comment period will be presented to the Board at the September meeting.

Boardmember Wheeler asked if the Madera Visitor's Bureau had been contacted. Keegan said she was not certain, but noted that the SNC had conducted significant outreach to the recreation and tourism community. She indicated they would follow up with the Madera group.

Board Chair Kirwan noted that former Boardmember Paolo Maffei had served on the Strategic Plan subcommittee and a replacement would be needed. Boardmember Owens volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

c. System Indicators Update

Keegan reviewed with the Board the process to date related to development of a set of indicators to be used to evaluate the status of the environmental, economic and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region. She identified a number of challenges affecting the effort, including the contract freeze and difficulties finding consistent data due to the fact that most data is collected by county boundaries, not the SNC boundaries. She said the project is getting very close to being complete, noting a couple of changes from the originally approved indicators, including the addition of green business establishments/employment and "business churn" and slight changes to the fire risk and carbon storage-related indicators. Keegan said two indicators—access to high speed internet and total value and quantity of water exports—will not be available in June, because this data have been problematic to find.

Keegan thanked SNC Staff Chris Dallas, Elizabeth van Wagtendonk and Steve Beckwitt for their hard work on this project.

Boardmember Kirkwood asked for clarification on the purpose of the indicators compared to individual grant-funded project performance measures, developing some measures of success for the Region as a whole, or by Subregion.

Keegan explained that the project performance measures are reflected in the SNC's annual report, and that together the Regional system indicators and

project-specific performance measures will be used to promote regional understanding, make sound investments, inform strategic planning, and report results of the SNC's overall efforts.

Boardmember Graber asked about the frequency of updates to the data, to which Keegan responded that information will be posted on the SNC Web site and updates will depend on the actual data sources and how often they update their information. Graber also offered that the USGS was tasked by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to develop carbon sequestration rates at a fine scale and they should be available in the next couple of years.

Boardmember Pland said that Tuolumne County has a profile and community indicators project updated in 2008, and would send a copy of that plan to Keegan.

Boardmember Johnston noted that there is a statewide indicators project commissioned by CalTrans. Jay Lund at UC Davis is the expert on the water transport. He added that poverty rate as measured by subsidized lunches is also available spatially from the Department of Education. He pointed out that "green business" has a problem with clear definition and data and asked to be kept in the loop on this project.

Public Comment:

Mike Keene, a member of the public, said that as a past forest hydrologist, he believes there is already a lot of data out there that is available, such as the Sierra Nevada framework.

Keegan said that the data used by this effort has been collected from other agencies, such as counties, the Department of Finance, economic development agencies, etc. What has proved the most successful is when the data is in a GIS format, which eliminates the boundary issues. She encouraged anyone who has ideas of other data sources or thinks we're missing important data to please contact her.

d. Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI) Update

Branham said the SNC is making steady progress and the process has reaffirmed that this is a good direction for the SNC.

SNFCI Coordinator Kim Carr reviewed the history of the Initiative with the Board and presented the staff report. She said the ultimate goal is the "triple bottom line:"

1. protect and restore our current forest,
2. start doing forest treatments at a faster pace, and
3. show the local economic benefit, and the social aspects of communities working together to maximize local benefit.

Carr said the next meeting of the SNFCI Regional Coordinating Council is March 22 in Auburn, and the subsequent meeting will be in June. Two outcomes that are anticipated at the Auburn meeting are the letter of support for the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools Act funding of the Fire Safe Councils, and also reauthorization of the Stewardship Contracting Authority. These are being handled by the SNFCI Coordinating Council's Policy Committee.

Another subcommittee is the local forest collaborative working group. This group has convened twice since Columbia. It is developing an inventory of the number of groups—about eight to 12—that seem to fit into the goals of what SNFCI is about.

Calaveras County Supervisor and SNFCI Coordinating Council Co-Chair Steve Wilensky said that one important milestone has been achieved in that all 22 counties in the SNC Region have signed onto the SNFCI resolution.

Wilensky said that coordination of funding across jurisdictional lines is needed. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Secretary Vilsack's all-lands approach is an attempt to put the funding pieces together.

Wilensky said U.S. Forester Randy Moore has put forth the clearest picture in the past 40 years of what needs to be done in the forest, so that we can have a civil forum to get beyond the old arguments, and focus our efforts on those opportunities that are clearly before us.

Boardmember Nunes said the SNFCI Resolution appealed to the 22 counties because it contained three nuggets:

1. Opportunity to reduce litigation, with more money going to the forest instead of courtroom;
2. The reduction of the risk of forest fires...treating the forest, reducing the fuel load, bio-mass to cogeneration plants, and;
3. Economic picture...not just sustaining the mountain communities but improving them.

Boardmember Jiron said the U.S. Forest Service has its Forest Planning Rule out for 90-day comment and would appreciate receiving input on that.

Boardmember Arcularius agreed with Jiron regarding the planning rule. She said SNFCI needs some strengthening in the social part. She added that she will be attending a roundtable meeting in Washington D.C. next week, which is an important meeting to open up communication at that level.

e. Mokelumne Watershed Environmental Benefits Project Update

Branham said that due to the interest and support from some statewide and local groups, this project was an opportunity to “ground truth” some of the academic discussions about ecosystem services, and what it means from an investment or policy perspective.

Carr said the Sierra has many natural, environmental benefits that are valuable to society such as clean, reliable water, carbon storage in soils and trees, sustainable fish populations and opportunities for recreation. The goal is to provide private and public land managers with incentives and investment to maintain and implement conservation practices to ensure the sustainability of the watershed.

Carr said the primary steps of this first project phase include the formation of a 20-person work group of diverse organizations, including Resource Conservation Districts, East Bay Municipal Utility District, the U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Gas and Electric, the City of Lodi, and others.

Boardmembers responded positively to Carr’s presentation and expressed their support for the project. Boardmember Dahle thanked Carr for her work on behalf of all of those who live at the top of the watershed who want these issues to be addressed for all of the watersheds in the Sierra.

Boardmember Kirkwood said there is a project called SWEEP that is looking at the effect of forest management practices on water supply and quality and suggested that staff explore the potential to share information between the two projects.

Boardmember Hardy encouraged Carr to look at the City of San Francisco/Hetch Hetchy model where the City is making payments primarily to Yosemite National Park and the Stanislaus National Forest to maintain the health of the upper watersheds which then benefits the water that gets to the downstream users.

f. Sierra Day in the Capitol

SNC Program Manager Kerri Timmer reported that Sierra Day in the Capitol is April 6, and the theme this year is “The Journey of Water,” from the Sierra to other parts of the state. She acknowledged The Sierra Fund and the Sierra Nevada Alliance for initiating and planning the initial Sierra Day in the Capitol. She said this year’s event will focus on the economic impacts, benefits, investment in the headwaters and the area of origin. The SNC is thankful to have the involvement this year of Mountain Counties Water Resources Association. She encouraged the Board to attend and interact with the legislature as part of the stakeholder teams who will be visiting the members’ offices.

g. Sierra Nevada Water Report

Branham reported the Water Education Foundation (WEF) is preparing a Sierra Nevada report, with a requirement that WEF would maintain final editorial content, which the SNC felt would be the best approach to ensure credibility of the report. The SNC added a number of organizations to the review process, including water agencies, and other organizations which have had comments about the past activities in the Sierra. He said the SNC would have preferred that the few references to “legacy” issues taken from the Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project would not have been included without providing additional context as to the positive changes that have occurred and the value of those activities. It will be a strong report to assist policy makers in making the connection between fire, water, and healthy forests, which has not been addressed in other water reports. He added that it will be a “foundational report” and hoped it would be ready by Sierra Day in the Capitol.

Boardmember Pland said he was concerned whether the board is being asked to endorse the report before having had a chance to read it. He said he has only seen an early draft of part of the report that referred to the 15-year-old Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project (SNEP) report which had some negative portrayals of former practices in managing the forests. He said he is concerned that this report is based too much on the SNEP report.

Branham responded by saying that while there are references to the legacy issues, but in total, Branham said, the report is very positive and makes the point about the importance of managing the forests and about the importance of working landscapes. Branham said that WEF is under contract to produce the report and it is their report.

Boardmember Arcularius asked if there is a point in time where the board looks at the ability to edit a report that the SNC has funded. She said in the future it would fit in with the other goals of the SNC, in terms of building support and collaboration, to have some review before giving up editorial rights.

Boardmember Kirkwood suggested disclaimer language be added to inform the public that while the SNC funded and provided information and guidance on the development of the report, it does not own the editorial content.

Chair Kirwan suggested that the Board allow the Executive Officer to work with WEF to ensure that the issue is addressed appropriately.

h. Geotourism MapGuide Project Update

Mt. Lassen Area Manager Bob Kingman reviewed with the Board the progress of the project which is being implemented in partnership with National Geographic and the Sierra Business Council. He showed the Web site, stressed the unique

aspect of the user-generated content and noted the information which was available at the display table. Kingman provided an update on progress in the

Southern Sierra, He noted the entire project will be completed in 2011 and that work with local communities to sustain and further develop their geotourism assets will continue to keep the momentum going and maintain freshness of Web site.

i. Central Subregion Report

This item was removed from the agenda due to time constraints.

VIII. Deputy Attorney General's Report (INFORMATIONAL)

Deputy Attorney General Christine Sproul noted that there are "Assuming Office" statements for new Boardmembers to file with SNC Board Liaison, Theresa Burgess. She pointed out that Boardmembers have an obligation to take ethics training and that a Web link will be sent to them, so they can complete the online training.

Sproul also suggested that the SNC is in a good position to synthesize various reports that are being developed about water in the State and build on them in crafting its strategic plan and meeting its mission.

IX. Consideration of the SNC 2011 Action Plan (ACTION)

Executive Officer Branham introduced the draft 2011 SNC Action Plan which identified actions and relevant performance measures to be undertaken and/or completed within calendar year 2011. Branham requested Board approval of this plan.

Action: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Dahle seconded a motion to approve the proposed Sierra Nevada Conservancy 2011 Action Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

X. 2010-11 Grant Awards (ACTION)

Executive Officer Branham introduced the item by noting that this solicitation process had a few technical glitches, but explained that all information was made available to the public well within the public notice period. Branham noted that the effort had been beset by many challenges, not the least of which was a relatively small amount of money and so many good project applications. He pointed out that the projects presented represent four times more demand than available funding.

Branham reported that because of the large number of applications and SNC's desire to be inclusive of outside expertise, a different evaluation process was used for this grant round.

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SNC Grants Administrator Angela Avery presented the background and the timetable. There were 129 applications received in September, representing \$40 million in requests. Of these, 29 projects were recommended: 12 acquisition or site improvement projects totaling \$8 million, and 17 projects totaling \$2 million that include planning work leading to “on-the-ground” projects.

Area Managers Bob Kingman and Julie Bear reviewed the projects by Subregion that were included in the Board packet.

Boardmember Kirkwood said it was a remarkably strong set of projects. He applauded the process to winnow it down and the rigor of the scoring process with professional review. He added that the strength of the recommendations is clear and the strength of the process is wonderful.

Boardmember Graber said he was struck by how strong these projects were as compared to a few years ago and said that was attributed to the SNC staff helping to educate the applicants. Board Chair Kirwan also expressed her appreciation of the review process and said it made it easier for those on the Board to participate and understand. Boardmember Wheeler thanked the staff for helping to attract better applications. He said the South Subregion had better projects this time.

Boardmember Arcularius said she was pleased to be able to make these awards and appreciated efforts to help build capacity in grant writing in Sierra communities. She said she appreciated the step to have boardmembers involved in committee reviews and enjoyed participating.

Boardmember Pland said that during the subregion conference call he raised concerns about Ackerson Meadows but appreciated the staff’s response to his questions. He said that while Yosemite supported the project, he wanted to point out it isn’t in the National Park.

Branham noted that the SNC would welcome ideas and thoughts from the Subregional representatives on ways to improve the process of communicating proposed projects to local governments in the Region. He indicated that the current notification process rarely results in comments until very late in the process.

Arcularius responded that Boardmembers should also take on the responsibility to inform members on the Boards of Supervisors of counties within the Subregion. She also said she continues to be concerned about acquisitions and will have more to say about that topic in the next grants discussion.

Public Comment:

Dan Corcoran, Environmental Manager El Dorado Irrigation District, identified multiple benefits of the Hazel Meadows/Creek project before the Board and urged support.

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Cheri Jagers, Recreation Superintendent El Dorado Irrigation District summarized the importance of the Hazel Creek project and asked for the Board's support.

Mark Egbert, El Dorado RCD encouraged the Board to adopt staff's recommendations, recognizing the quality of the projects and attributed that to SNC staff work and their time in the field. He asked that the SNC continue to give staff the opportunity to get into the field to see potential projects.

Mark Rowney, Mariposa Public Utilities District said this is the first project (The Stockton Creek Preserve) in this watershed that includes 500 acres of land. The project will improve trails and water quality in area. He thanked staff and the Sierra Foothill Conservancy and urged approval.

Chuck Peck, Sierra Foothill Conservancy stated that the Topping Ranch project is a culmination of over 15 years of work, building on public and private investment in protecting Finegold Creek and the corridor on either side of the Topping Ranch. He urged support of the project

Bridget Fithian, Sierra Foothill Conservancy and the Upper Merced River Watershed Council (UMRWC) urged support of the Topping Ranch and UMRWC project. She commended SNC staff for the excellent communication and for making efforts to be out on the ground connecting with diverse stakeholders.

Cam Tredennick, Senior Project Manager, Western Rivers Conservancy indicated he was excited to continue working projects protecting portions of the Deer and Mill Creek watersheds. He noted that the SNC staff was very helpful and responsive on the projects.

Action: Boardmember Owens moved and Boardmember Kirkwood seconded a motion to adopt necessary CEQA findings for project SNC 419, the Lower Ash Creek Wildlife Area Restoration Project; adopt necessary CEQA findings for project SNC 322, the Hazel Creek and Hazel Creek Campground Restoration Project; authorize the grants listed in Agenda Item X, Exhibit A, with the exception of project 361, Rodden Ranch Conservation Easement which is conditionally approved pending final support of the appraisal from Department of General Services; and authorize the Executive Officer to file the appropriate CEQA documentation including NODs and NOES with the State Clearinghouse and enter into necessary agreements for all approved grant projects. Boardmember Brissenden recused himself from voting on project #407 Humbug Creek Watershed Assessment and Management Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Boardmember Kirkwood asked that in the next round the applicants should separate the summaries so that information is more readily available.

XI. 2011-12 and 2012-13 Grants Program (ACTION)

Executive Officer Branham summarized actions at last meeting and noted that the staff report has laid out options. He noted that it may be a while before more bond dollars are available, and exactly when that money could be spent is unknown. The SNC is moving forward on an “as-cash-needed” basis at this point. Branham added that this is an opportunity for the Board to make sure the SNC is on the right track relative to its strategic plan.

Grants Program Manager Kerri Timmer said the SNC wants to be as strategic as possible as it moves forward with last \$10 million in Proposition 84 grant dollars. She summarized actions to date, previous direction from the Board and how the funds were distributed.

Some initial concepts were presented for consideration at the last Board meeting. Based on input from the Board and stakeholders, Timmer said the SNC has presented the Staff Report ideas and asked the Board for additional guidance to help develop a specific recommendation for consideration at the June Board meeting.

Timmer said the next steps would be as follows:

- Direction from Board today
- Solicit more input from stakeholders
- Owens/Graber committee to help develop formal proposal
- Present to Board in June
- Final guidelines in September
- Launch after Board meeting in September

Boardmember Nunes said he does not agree with the proposal to spend funding on agricultural lands/working landscapes before forest health projects. He would like the funding to go to fire safe councils, fuel reductions and those projects that will also provide an economic benefit as soon as possible.

Timmer said that the SNC’s suggestion to spend funding on forest projects in the second year is only because of the time it takes to develop those kinds of projects.

Nunes said no fire safe types of projects were approved this year and feels that they may need more outreach and assistance with the process. He said that since these fire safe projects fit right in with SNFCI, he would like to see the Board make it a high priority.

Branham said the SNC wants to figure out how to engage the Fire Safe Councils to get more quality project applications.

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Boardmember Wheeler said he agreed with Boardmember Nunes. He asked if staff can staff help the Resource Conservation Districts and Fire Safe Councils to help make them more competitive, especially given that they often receive matching funds.

Wheeler also encouraged projects relative to water storage/sediment removal. Timmer said there may be an avenue to address that problem now that the SNC sits on the Department of Water Resources Water Plan Update State Agency Steering Committee as a voice for the Sierra.

Boardmember Owens also spoke in favor of forest health projects, and support to applicants. He suggested workshops to help proponents build their projects.

Boardmember Brissenden said he supports forest issues as well, and added to the SNC should make certain that funding for conservation easements are aimed at lands that are truly threatened.

Boardmember Dahle also expressed concern with the conservation easements that are perhaps not truly threatened by commercial development. He said lands should be checked for zoning, Williamson Act status, etc, and looked at closely to make sure the system is not being "gamed."

Boardmember Kirkwood said he supports a more Region-wide distribution, not earmarked for Subregions. The SNC has a statutory method to spread it around, but has gone beyond what has been required to honor that requirement. It seems we can move to a Region-wide approach for the remaining funds.

Owens said the Region-wide approach is more of a result of the economic situation we are in and not necessarily a long term approach.

Timmer said SNC is only suggesting we not set a project target by Subregion, and that staff will continue to look across the entire geographic Region.

Arcularius asked for more landowner participation, from those people who are working 12-hour days out there on the land, which affects their ability to develop projects.

Branham said the SNC does need help with that, has tried to reach out, and is open to any suggestions. Arcularius agreed to assist in this effort.

Public Comment:

Mike Keene had a question as to why an award could be made to a federal land management agency.

Branham replied that all federal agencies can apply under the Proposition 84 and SNC statutes. The project in question scored very high and was therefore

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recommended. He indicated that such projects on federal lands must show benefit beyond the boundaries of the National Forest.

Frank Stewart, California Fire Safe Council (CFSC) Boardmember asked the SNC to wait and see what happens with the US Forest Service Fiscal Year 2011-12 Budget indicating that federal funding may be limited in the future. He also stated that the SNC should help CalFire complete their programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for fuel reduction projects.

Steve Wilensky, Calaveras County Supervisor and SNFCI Co-Chair said the SNFCI group should serve as good advisors to the Board. He said it would be a good idea for the SNC to form a landowner/working landscape community to advise the SNC, similar to SNFCI.

Kirkwood asked for some more understanding of how the two-year strategy will help the process for project development.

Nunes received consensus from the Board that the motion would state that the two focus areas were "working landscapes and healthy forests," and not choose one over the other in terms of importance or timing.

Action: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Wheeler seconded a motion to direct staff to solicit public input on pursuing a two-year grant program based on the policy direction outlined in Alternative 2 of the staff report, consistent with the comments of the Board, and to bring back a formal proposal in June 2011.

Boardmember Kirkwood amended the motion and Boardmember Dahle seconded to include both working landscapes and healthy forest as areas of focus for the grant program, but not identify a priority for year one or two. The amended motion passed unanimously.

XII. Boardmembers' Comments

There were no comments from the Board.

XIII. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

XIV. Adjournment

Board Chair Kirwan adjourned the meeting at 1:38.

Background

California continues to struggle with a significant budget deficit, without a clear path in addressing this issue. The Governor's proposed budget contains significant budget reductions for a variety of state programs, with substantial impacts likely for local governments as well. It is unclear how future actions related to the budget may affect the SNC.

However, according to the Department of Finance (DOF) there are some positive signs. "More signs of an improving economy arrived in February 2011. Job gains continued for the fifth consecutive month and, further, the gains were spread widely across the private sector. The unemployment rate dropped for the second month in a row." Through March 2011 actual personal income tax revenues were \$1.3 billion higher than anticipated – another good sign of a strengthening economy.

Current Status – Budget

In addition to Governor Brown's [Executive Order B-1-11](#) (cell phone reductions), [Executive Order B-2-11](#) (vehicle reductions), [Executive Order B-3-11](#) (hiring freeze) and prohibition on the purchase of promotional materials reported at the March 2011 Board meeting, the Governor has issued two additional executive orders that affect the SNC. The first, [Executive Order B-5-11](#), requires state departments to collect any outstanding staff salary and travel advance balances within 30 days of the issuance of the order. The second, [Executive Order B-6-11](#), restricts expenditures on both in-state and out-of-state travel to only non-discretionary purposes, and requires approval of non-discretionary travel at the Agency (in-state) and Governor's (out-of-state) levels. Our status in compliance with each Executive Order is noted below:

- EO B-1-11:** Reduction plan submitted; waiting for response from DOF. Expect to reduce 18 active cell phones, smart phones and computer air cards by 6/30/11.
- EO B-2-11:** All requested reports have been submitted; awaiting next steps from the Department of General Services. SNC could lose up to 4 vehicles which would significantly impact staff's ability to travel to the areas they serve.
- EO B-3-11:** The hiring freeze impacts our ability to fill the Bishop position that Julie Bear vacated when she promoted to become the Mt. Whitney Area Manager.
- EO B-5-11:** SNC is in compliance with this requirement, no outstanding advances exist.
- EO B-6-11:** SNC immediately implemented the restrictions identified in this EO, and is identifying all non-discretionary travel to submit to Agency for approval. This restriction may significantly affect staff's ability to travel to the remote areas we serve.

Current Status – Staffing

We are pleased to report that Autumn Hutchings has returned to support the Mt. Whitney team in Mariposa. We also wish the best to departing students Terri Ruggiero and Johnson Lee, who have both moved on to the next phases of their career development.

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.

2010-11 SNC EXPENDITURES AND ENCUMBRANCES					
As of May 5, 2011					
State Operations					
<i>Personal Services</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Expended</i>	<i>Balance</i>	<i>% Spent</i>	
SALARIES AND WAGES	1,725,542	1,349,838	375,705	78%	
STAFF BENEFITS	571,379	453,131	118,248	79%	
Personal Services, Totals	\$2,296,921	\$1,802,968	\$493,953	78%	
Operating Expenses & Equipment					
	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Expended</i>	<i>Balance</i>	<i>% Spent</i>	
GENERAL EXPENSE	205,638	120,940	84,698	59%	
TRAVEL - IS	108,026	31,654	76,372	29%	
TRAVEL - OS	2,612	-	2,612	0%	
TRAINING	12,500	7,487	5,013	60%	
FACILITIES	261,380	192,084	69,296	73%	
UTILITIES	9,733	8,428	1,305	87%	
CONTRACTS- INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT	1,139,129	577,841	561,288	51%	
CONTRACTS- EXTERNAL	247,950	242,950	5,000	98%	
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	106,523	62,876	43,647	59%	
CONSOLIDATED DATA CENTER	-	-	-	0%	
EQUIPMENT	-	-	-	0%	
OTHER ITEMS OF EXPENSE	16,116	11,721	4,395	73%	
PRO RATA (control agency costs)	201,844	201,844	0	100%	
Operating Expenses & Equipment, Totals	\$2,311,451	\$1,457,825	\$853,626	63%	
Local Assistance					
<i>Appropriation</i>	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Expended</i>	<i>Balance</i>	<i>% Spent</i>	
NO APPROPRIATION FOR FY 2010/11	-	-	-	0%	
	<i>Budgeted</i>	<i>Expended</i>	<i>Balance</i>	<i>% Spent</i>	
State Operations	4,608,372	3,260,793	1,347,579	71%	
Local Assistance	-	-	-	0%	
SNC EXPENDITURES, TOTALS	\$4,608,372	\$3,260,793	\$1,347,579	71%	

Background

At the June 2010 meeting the Board unanimously approved the Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Resolution. Through the Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI), the SNC is fostering local and Regional collaboration to support a cohesive, economically viable, and sustainable approach to reducing fire risk, creating jobs, and protecting our valuable forest and watershed resources. SNFCI has strong coordination with federal agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS) and resource-oriented state agencies.

The SNC has formed a Regional Coordinating Council to work on Regional and statewide issues that will influence the success of local forest efforts. SNC Board Vice Chair Bill Nunes and former Board Vice Chair Steve Wilensky are co-chairing the Regional Coordinating Council, and Boardmember Bob Kirkwood along with Boardmember Nunes are serving as the Board liaisons to the Initiative. Other members include representatives from the woods products industry, local government, environmental and conservation organizations, community groups and water interests. The primary federal land managers will participate in an advisory role including: USFS, BLM and NPS.

The primary focus of the Coordinating Council is policy, investment, emerging technology, and science and research. The Coordinating Council has already suggested broadening the participation to include agricultural/ranching interest, Tribal entities and the Board of Forestry. SNC staff and the Coordinating Council are following up with these suggestions.

One critical SNFCI element is SNC support for local efforts aimed at convening diverse stakeholders to identify common visions and strategies that result in ecologically healthy forests, fire-safe communities, local job creation, and retaining existing industrial and commercial infrastructure, while fostering new infrastructure as needed. On-the-ground manifestations of the SNFCI include local collaborative groups such as the Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG) and the Sustainable Forests and Communities Collaborative (SFCC), and groups formed to address more specific projects such as fuels reduction project design. Some of these groups are largely supported by SNC staff in terms of meeting logistics, facilitation, drafting funding proposals and project development efforts. The work of the SNFCI Regional Coordinating Council will do a great deal to reduce barriers to the implementation of local, on-the-ground projects by providing support and feedback to local forest collaboratives based on their needs as communicated via effective two-way communication about Regional issues affecting local efforts.

Current Status

The inaugural SNFCI Regional Coordinating Council meeting was held in December 2010. During the meeting, the Coordinating Council decided to operate on a consensus basis with the option for a member of the Coordinating Council to abstain. The Coordinating Council also decided to convene quarterly and a second meeting was held in March in Auburn. The primary outcomes of this meeting were:

- Discussion of position on Forest Service Planning Rule – The Coordinating Council considered whether to submit joint comments on Planning Rule. The array of SNFCI community forestry projects has potential to give guidance and information to the Forest Service in developing and implementing its Planning Rule. It was felt that putting together a joint statement from the group would not be feasible at this early stage of the group's development and with the time constraints. However it would be beneficial for interested Coordinating Council members to exchange ideas as they prepare their own organizations' comments on the Planning Rule.
- Forest Service Leadership Intent – The Coordinating Council discussed whether to adopt the Region 5 Economical Restoration Leadership Intent. The Coordinating Council agreed that it supported the leadership intent document. Staff was directed to write a letter communicating this to the Forest Service but also note that the value of the document is how it translates into action on the ground, especially as the Forest Service moves into the next round of developing forest plans. The Coordinating Council will work to help develop more details and performance measures to accompany the document, and possibly address the Sierra Nevada needs more directly. There may be an opportunity to contribute through providing information about collaboratives that are looking at the triple bottom line.
- Reauthorization of the Stewardship Contracting Authority – A bill has been proposed which would give federal agencies 20 year contracting authority and have 25 percent of gross revenues going back to the county. The remaining revenues can be made available for stewardship work on other projects. The longer time period encourages more investment in infrastructure and equipment, but can also allow delay in implementation of the work. There was concern that the funding be allocated in such a way to encourage more work getting done on the ground. Also that it encourages involvement of local contractors and small businesses. The Coordinating Council's Policy Working Group will work to develop a recommended position for the June Coordinating Council meeting.
- Reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools Funding – There is no current bill regarding this, but the Coordinating Committee endorsed the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools Act in concept and staff is working to draft and circulate an appropriate support letter.
- Inventory of Sierra Activity – The Local Collaboratives working group compiled an initial list of organizational characteristics and activities that both met the definition of a 'collaborative effort' and were organized generally around the

principles in the SNFCI Resolution. The group is targeting efforts that address comprehensive issues, (e.g., not just forest health but also economic and social vitality) and which have a larger, Regional focus (e.g., watershed, multi-county, etc.) The working group is intending to meet between Coordinating Council meetings to continue to develop more definition around these topics.

- Social and community issues on equal playing field with environmental and economic issues – The Coordinating Council discussed the need to have social and community issues addressed in the ‘triple bottom line’ analysis. Some groups take the perspective that environmental sustainability is a key item in community benefit, but it is also important that social and economic benefits are considered in their own right.

The Coordinating Council will meet on a quarterly basis and the next meeting is scheduled for June 21th in Auburn. The Coordinating Council will discuss the Forest Service’s leadership intent, will hear reports for the working groups, and consider other relevant issues.

At this point, more than 150 organizations and individuals have signed on to endorse the Resolution. This group includes Boards of Supervisors representing the twenty-two counties making up the SNC’s jurisdictional area.

SNC staff developed the first SNFCI newsletter in late March and will distribute updates quarterly in order to provide regular communications about the most recent updates on the Initiative progress. The next electronic newsletter will be produced and circulated in June.

The SNC is assessing available data relating to the supply of woody biomass on public lands and developing an inventory of existing facilities and their volume capacities within the Sierra Nevada. This information will serve to begin development of a “regional blueprint” that can help ensure a balance of lumber mills, biomass to energy facilities, small wood and other value added products facilities, appropriately scaled and geographically distributed. This strategy will help target SNFCI efforts toward areas of greatest need. Staff continues to network with established groups with common goals to involve them in the initiative and evaluate specific support SNC may be able to offer them.

The Bass Lake Ranger District in the Sierra National Forest requested assistance from the SNF in facilitating a new collaborative landscape-level forest restoration effort in the Willow Creek Watershed. The request for assistance was evaluated in terms of its consistency with the SNFCI goals and it was determined that assistance would be provided. SNC staff will provide the assistance under the guidance and mentoring of facilitators from the Center for Collaborative Policy. This will be a cost-effective way to provide the assistance and will also build the capacity of staff to assist in other collaborative efforts throughout the Region. The Ranger District is also contributing staff to the effort. The 6-8 month effort will focus on defining what a restored watershed

should look like. The results will provide guidance for the Forest Service to use in developing future projects.

The SNC in partnership with the Yosemite-Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council (YS RC&D) successfully applied for a Rural Business Enterprise Grant last year. As of now, the project steering committee has approved \$66,000 for technical assistance projects. Two of these projects support biomass sort yards in Wilseyville (Calaveras County) and North Fork (Madera County). One grant of \$5,000 has been provided to Alpine Sierra Greencycling, a biomass business getting established in North Fork, to develop a new composting product line. About \$7,000 is remaining and staff has circulated an application for other biomass businesses to apply for technical assistance funds.

Next Steps

Staff will continue working with the Coordinating Council, which will establish short and long-term goals as well as draft an implementation plan and consider measureable outcomes. SNC staff is continuing to establish more consistent and diverse communications to stakeholders. Electronic SNFCI newsletter continues to be distributed and the staff will upgrade the SNFCI webpage with more photos, graphics and general information.

Staff will continue to engage federal land management agencies with SNFCI through the Regional Coordinating Council as well as the local collaboratives, recognizing that these agencies are ultimately responsible for management decisions on these public lands. As appropriate, additional resources will be focused on such items as support for market analysis/biomass utilization, business plan development and support for the Coordinating Council. Additional opportunities will be actively sought to submit applications for funding to support both local and Regional SNFCI activities. Through logistical support, facilitation and general guidance, SNC staff will continue to encourage local collaboratives to move continually towards on the ground projects with quantifiable results. Staff will also look for additional opportunities to support local efforts in new areas of the Sierra Nevada.

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.

Background

The Conservancy was notified in April 2010 that our Proposition 84 Grant Program was going to be audited by the Department of Finance, Office of State Audits and Evaluations. The audit process began with an introductory meeting with the audit team on May 18, 2010, and wrapped up with a final report received by us on March 29, 2011.

During that time auditors reviewed our basic procedures and documentation for compliance with applicable legal requirements and established criteria. More specifically, as described in the audit report, the team:

- reviewed applicable bond acts and the Conservancy's grant management policies, and procedures, including the Strategic Plan and other legal provisions and regulations;
- interviewed key personnel responsible for administering bond funds to obtain an understanding of how the Conservancy oversees various project stages, including: pre-award, award, interim monitoring, closeout, and post-close monitoring;
- sampled project files and conducted site visits to determine if the projects stayed within scope and cost, and to ensure that grant expenditures were allowable and supported;
- identified and assessed the project tracking methods to determine their adequacy for monitoring projects;
- verified the information reported to the Strategic Growth Plan Bond Accountability Web site (www.bondaccountability.ca.gov);
- reviewed a sample of expenditures to verify accuracy of recorded and reported financial information; and,
- reviewed the reasonableness of the Conservancy's administrative expenditures charged to bond funds.

In addition, the audit team identified a subset of our grantees for specific site visits to review how they implemented our policies and procedures. A list of the audited grantees is attached to this report as Exhibit A.

We were granted an exit interview in late September, during which Conservancy Staff and auditors reviewed the initial findings. In that meeting and the subsequent report the auditors complimented the Conservancy on: a) our use of annual plans, including the program and Grant Guidelines and the Strategic Plan, to guide our program design and implementation, b) our efforts to improve processes with the new grant management system, c) our own internal process assessment, conducted with the help of a retired auditor, and d) our requirement that grantees report performance measures for all projects.

Beyond that, the audit team identified a few areas where we could improve our processes, including those related to fiscal monitoring and progress tracking for our funded projects, and more detailed controls for billing, project site visit documentation and earned interest tracking.

Current Status

We submitted our response on April 19, 2011, outlining the corrective actions we plan to take to address the report's observations and recommendations. These actions include, at a minimum:

- amending our reimbursement request forms within our new grant management system to require more detailed reporting on the receipt and use of non-Conservancy funds and/or earned interest for eligible project costs;
- reviewing our grant management policies to identify ways to become more proactive in tracking the interim and final report schedules, both as a means of gauging project progress against the timeline and as a mechanism to identify potential at-risk projects so that we may work more closely with those grantees to help them meet their project objectives and outcomes; and,
- developing additional internal policy guidelines, procedures and documentation tools for staff to better identify, record and make accessible critical project information gathered during pre-project site inspections and ongoing project monitoring visits.

Next Steps

In addition to implementing the actions outlined above, the Conservancy has posted a copy of the final audit report and our response to our Web site. In addition, the report and our response are posted on the Department of Finance Web site and will be added to the Reporting Government Transparency Web site at www.reportingtransparency.ca.gov.

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 on the audit or how to improve our processes.

Exhibit A

List of Projects Reviewed at the Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Project Ref #	Grantee	Project Title	Project Category	Total Project Amount
SNC 070072	High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council	Inventory and Geographic Reference of Firefighting Water Resources	Monitoring/Research	\$ 64,900
SNC 070133	Nevada County Resource Conservation District	Nevada County (FIRST) Community Shaded Fuelbreak and Riparian Forest Restoration Project	Site Improvement	\$ 406,000
SNC 070145	Lassen County Fire Safe Council	Susanville Fuel Reduction & Watershed Restoration Project	Site Improvement	\$ 99,999
SNC 070146	Lassen County Fire Safe Council	South Knob Sagebrush Steppe Watershed Restoration Project/Ash Valley	Site Improvement	\$ 99,999
SNC 070162	The Regents of the University of California, Berkeley, Center for Forestry	Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project	Planning	\$ 123,000
SNC 070167	Resources for Humanity	Filippini Ranch Riparian Restoration	Site Improvement	\$ 92,000
SNC 070176	Amador Community Foundation	Amador County Watershed Stewardship Project	Planning	\$ 173,780
SNC 070208	Alpine Springs County Water District/Alpine Meadows Fire Safe Council	Alpine Meadows Community Consolidated Fuels Reduction Project	Site Improvement	\$ 176,375
SNC 070219	Butte County Fire Safe Council	Feather Falls Shaded Fuel Break Phase III	Site Improvement	\$ 98,980
SNC 070221	Black Oak Mine Unified School District	Green Fields of Golden Sierra	Site Improvement	\$ 300,000
SNC 070222	Placer Land Trust	Canyon View Watershed and Habitat Restoration Project	Site Improvement	\$ 298,550
SNC 070225	Placer County	Squaw Valley Park Fuels Reduction and Related FireSafe Activities	Site Improvement	\$ 245,500

Exhibit A

SNC 070229	Truckee River Watershed Council	Merrill Davies Stream and Meadow Restoration	Site Improvement	\$ 152,000
SNC 070236	California Department of Parks and Recreation	Vegetation Management: Forest Thinning, Brush Mastication and Prescribed Burning	Site Improvement	\$ 214,044
SNC 070245	Placer County Department of Public Works	US Hwy. 40 (Donner Pass Road) Shoulder Rehabilitation	Site Improvement	\$ 500,000
SNC 070246	Placer County	Hidden Falls Regional Park - Fuel Load Reduction and Related Fire Safe Activities	Site Improvement	\$ 506,207
SNC 070253	Feather River College	Feather River College Hatchery	Site Improvement	\$ 70,000
SNC 070271	Community Services Employment Training, Inc.	Tule River Environmental Review	Pre-Project Due Diligence	\$ 140,000
SNC 070295	Butte County Fire Safe Council	Defensible Space Chipper Program	Site Improvement	\$ 98,445
SNC 070311	Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District	Sierra Valley RCD Watershed Outreach Event Proposal	Education/Interpretation	\$ 8,445
SNC 070327	Mono County Community Development Department & Inyo County Planning Department	Inyo and Mono Counties Community Based Land Tenure Planning	Planning	\$ 157,550
SNC 070344	Student Conservation Association	Sierra Nevada Trails and Recreation Initiative - Planning	Planning	\$ 33,750
SNC 070345	Plumas County Fire Safe Council	Grizzly Creek Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project	Site Improvement	\$ 12,300
SNC 070357	California Trout	Eastern Sierra IRWMP Launch Project	Planning	\$ 49,663
SNC 080092	Friends of Deer Creek	Nevada City Environs Trail and Restoration Project	Site Improvement	\$ 207,345
			Total	\$4,328,832

Background

In July 2006, the Board adopted a five-year Strategic Plan (Plan) for the SNC, which it subsequently revised at its December 2008 meeting. With a few exceptions, all of the actions contained in the Plan have been or are being accomplished or have been deemed to be ongoing activities of the SNC and have been built into our day-to-day operations. The few exceptions have been incorporated into the new draft Strategic Plan (Attachment A).

In June 2010, the Board endorsed a process for the creation of a new Strategic Plan by September 2011. The process began with a Board workshop in June 2010 where Boardmembers and stakeholders brainstormed potential areas of focus for the new Plan. Following the Board workshop, a survey was sent out to SNC stakeholders and meetings held with SNC stakeholders and staff regarding potential areas of focus for the Plan. Based on this input, the Board adopted a set of nine potential areas of focus for the Plan at its meeting in September 2010.

Subsequently, staff gathered additional information and input on these nine potential areas of focus including information on work being done by other organizations in the Region within each potential area of focus, an assessment of potential sources of funding to support activities within each area, and potential roles and objectives for the SNC within each potential area of focus. Based on this additional information, the Board adopted five areas of focus for the SNC's new Strategic Plan at its meeting in December 2010:

- ***Healthy Forests***
- ***Watershed Protection and Restoration***
- ***Agricultural Lands***
- ***Tourism and Recreation***
- ***Long-term Effectiveness of the SNC***

Stakeholder Input to Date

Following the adoption of the five areas of focus by the Board, staff held six workshops throughout the Region to gather input from stakeholders regarding the objectives and actions the SNC should pursue within the first four areas of focus. The workshops were held in Auburn, Susanville, Visalia, Bishop, Oroville, and Sonora and were attended by over 140 individuals representing a wide variety of interests. Stakeholders were also provided the opportunity to provide additional input via our Web site. In addition, meetings were held with staff and key stakeholders, including conservation organizations, fire safe councils, Resource Conservation Districts, landowner organizations, and others.

Although it was challenging to assimilate the large amount of input received from our stakeholders and staff, the job was made easier by the fact that consistent themes

emerged regarding desired roles for the SNC within each area of focus and across all of the areas of focus. While all of the specific actions presented in the workshops and meetings (Attachment B) could not possibly be included in the draft Plan, some of them are included as examples and the objectives and strategies contained in the draft Plan reflect the vast majority of input received.

Input received through the workshops and a first draft of the Plan was discussed with the Board sub-committee overseeing the strategic planning process, which is comprised of Boardmembers Bob Johnston and Ted Owens.

Draft Plan Builds on Existing Efforts

The activities undertaken by the SNC in accordance with its first five-year Strategic Plan have begun to establish the organization as an effective partner, adding value for the Region and have led to the launch of a number of key programs and initiatives. Most recently the Board approved the [SNC 2011 Action Plan](#), which includes a short description of the following key initiatives currently underway within the organization:

- Grant Program (for additional information on grants awarded to date, see [Attachment X](#) to the 2011-12 and 2012-13 Grants Program staff report)
- External Outreach
- Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI)
- Great Sierra River Cleanup
- Sierra Nevada Geotourism MapGuide Project
- Sierra Day in the Capitol
- Sierra Nevada Water Report
- Mokelumne Watershed Environmental Benefits Project
- Sierra Nevada System Indicators
- Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council

All of these initiatives are reflected in the draft Plan, not only because they were previously approved by the Board, but because they are wholly consistent with input received from stakeholders regarding what the SNC should be doing over the next three years.

In addition, staff reviewed the Climate Action Plan and the Education and Communication Plan, which were both previously adopted by the Board and incorporated their contents wherever appropriate. In some instances, elements of these two previously adopted plans were deemed to be no longer relevant due to actions already taken, actions taken by other organizations, or a shift in focus by our partners. Only currently relevant activities were included in the new draft Plan.

Draft Strategic Plan Contents

The introductory section of the draft Plan sets the stage by describing the SNC, our statutory charge and what we've accomplished since the adoption of our first five-year Strategic Plan in June 2006. It also describes the process used to develop the draft Plan and provides a brief explanation of the Plan's contents.

The heart of the draft Plan is contained within the sections devoted to the five areas of focus and the objectives, strategies, and example actions associated with each. The objectives define what the SNC plans to accomplish within each area of focus. Therefore, they're generally stated using words that imply change, such as "increase", "more", and "improve." The strategies under each objective describe how we plan to meet those objectives over the life of the Plan and, so, are not immediate in nature. Rather, they will inform the more immediate actions the SNC will take each year to reach our objectives.

In order to better understand how the strategies will play themselves out in terms of the specific actions the organization may take each year, the draft Plan includes *example* actions under each strategy. Note that these are only examples and will be removed from the final version of the Strategic Plan. The specific actions the SNC will take each year to accomplish the objectives laid out in the plan, and in accordance with the strategies included in the Plan, will be articulated in an annual Action Plan, which will be reviewed and approved by the Board each year. This approach allows the SNC to reassess the specific actions it should be undertaking each year in light of current realities and ongoing stakeholder input.

Although the draft Plan aligns specific objectives and strategies with specific Areas of Focus, the boundaries that had to be drawn around each Area of Focus for planning purposes are sometimes artificial. In reality, all of the Areas of Focus are interconnected. Therefore, the objectives and strategies that are laid out in support of one Area of Focus will often help the SNC make progress in other Areas of Focus and actions will need to be integrated across Areas of Focus to be most effective.

The objectives and strategies laid out in the draft Plan will not accomplish everything that needs to be done within each of the Areas of Focus for the Region. There are many important activities that will continue to be undertaken by other organizations throughout the Region to make our forest healthier, protect and restore watersheds, etc. Rather, the draft Plan lays out those objectives and strategies that are consistent with the roles stakeholders and staff articulated as being appropriate *for the SNC* and where we can add the most value. Additionally, the statute governing the SNC identifies the activities in which the SNC may engage, as the following:

- a) The conservancy may expend funds and award grants and loans to facilitate collaborative planning efforts and to develop projects and programs that are designed to further the purposes of this division.

- b) The conservancy may provide and make available technical information, expertise, and other nonfinancial assistance to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and tribal organizations, to support program and project development and implementation.

The Strategic Plan proposes that the SNC engage in the activities identified above in carrying out the following roles:

- Fund Projects—Funding from bond measures and other sources will be utilized to support projects that are consistent with the focus areas identified in the plan. While the types of projects funded may be constrained by specific requirements of the funding source, the SNC will strive to fund a variety of high benefit projects throughout the Region.
- Advocate for the Sierra Nevada—Whether it be with decision-makers in Sacramento, the public, other state government entities, those who benefit from the Region's resources, or others, the need for advocacy and education was strongly urged throughout all of the areas of focus. In some instances, this is also tied to the need to develop more compelling or quantifiable information and research about the benefits the Region provides to the State and may also involve leading Region-wide projects that build Regional identity.
- Secure additional funds for the Region—Related to advocating for the Region, is the need for additional funding to address regional and local issues. In addition to SNC's grant program, this may mean working with existing federal and state programs to help them better understand and address Sierra issues. In others, it may require efforts to raise private funds or explore new funding sources for the SNC, such as a fee-for-service model.
- Support local collaboration and capacity building—Many parts of the Region and many organizations within the Region may not have the information, technical expertise, or other resources they need to be more effective in addressing local concerns and issues. The SNC can help address these needs by providing information, expertise and assistance to these collaboration efforts at the local level.
- Lead efforts to address issues at the Regional and local levels—The SNC has established itself as a neutral convener that has been successful in bringing a variety of interests together to find common ground and in leading the development and implementation of steps to move forward on issues at both the Regional and local levels.

No matter what roles the SNC plays within the various areas of focus, the draft Plan emphasizes the need for the SNC to continue its practice of strong collaboration and partnership with other organizations working in the Region. Not only does the SNC plan

to continue to partner with other organizations on specific actions in support of the Plan, but will also continue to seek ongoing input from stakeholders regarding what we should be doing and how we should be doing it. In addition, the SNC will carry out these roles consistent with the statutory direction to allocate funding and other efforts equitably across each of the subregions and program areas.

Key Questions for Board Consideration

As the Board reviews the draft Plan, there are several key questions for Boardmembers to consider:

Does the draft plan address the highest priority needs of the Region?

Are the roles set forth in the draft Plan, the appropriate roles for the SNC? Are some more important than others? Are there roles for the SNC that are missing?

How should the Strategic Plan address the statutory requirement of “equitable distribution” of resources across Subregions and program areas over time?

Is the draft Plan realistic? Not only in terms of internal resources, but what’s happening at the local, state, and federal levels and within the nonprofit community?

Are there any specific items in the draft Plan that are of particular interest or concern to Boardmembers?

Next Steps

Once staff has made any needed changes to the draft Plan based on the discussion at the June Board meeting, the draft Plan will be posted for public comment. Input received during the 30-day public comment period and the final draft of the Plan will be brought to the Board in September.

Recommendation

Staff welcomes input from the Board regarding the draft Strategic Plan and recommends subsequent approval of the draft Plan for posting to the SNC Web site.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To be inserted later

ABOUT THE SNC

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) is a state agency created by bi-partisan legislation co-authored by Assembly members John Laird (D-Santa Cruz) and Tim Leslie (R-Tahoe City). AB 2600, the Laird-Leslie Sierra Nevada Conservancy Act, was signed into law by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in September 2004. The SNC has a broad mission based on the understanding that the environmental, economic and social well-being of the Region and its rural communities are closely linked and that the Region would benefit from an organization providing strategic direction and bringing attention and resources to the Region to better understand and meet its needs.

The mission of the SNC is to initiate, encourage, and support efforts that improve the environmental, economic and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region, its communities and the citizens of California.

Our Vision

The SNC's vision for the future is that the magnificent Sierra Nevada Region enjoys outstanding environmental, economic and social health with vibrant communities and landscapes sustained for future generations.

Features:

- Rich and diverse natural, physical and living resources are protected and conserved.
- Healthy, diverse and economically sustainable local communities thrive, prepared for and protected from natural disasters.
- Californians value and invest in healthy watersheds that provide high quality water, spectacular scenery and important wildlife habitat.
- Sustainable working landscapes provide environmental, economic and social benefits to the Region.
- The Region's cultural, archeological and historical resources are preserved, visited and treasured.
- Healthy and sustainable tourism, recreation and commercial activities are valued and encouraged.

Our Service Area

The SNC's service area – stretching from Modoc County in the north to Kern County in the south – covers 25 million acres and all or part of 22 counties. Comprising 25 percent of California's total land area, it is the largest conservancy region in the State. The jurisdiction includes the mountains and foothills of the Sierra Nevada range, the Mono Basin, Owens Valley, the Modoc Plateau and a part of the southern Cascade Range, including the Pit River Watershed. The statute establishing the SNC divides the Region into six smaller Subregions.

The Sierra Nevada Region is an extraordinary resource of regional, statewide, national and even global significance. It is the state's principal watershed, supplying up to two-thirds of California's developed water supply. The Sierra sustains 60 percent of California's animal species and almost half of its plant species, including the world's largest living thing: General Sherman, a Giant Sequoia. In addition to providing water for the State, the Sierra supplies up to half of California's annual timber yield and 15 percent of the state's power needs, holding an untapped potential to increase its contribution to California's green energy portfolio. Its forests and agricultural lands are also uniquely suited to help reduce the warming impact of a changing climate by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it in tree trunks, branches, foliage, roots and soils. The Sierra also hosts more than 50 million recreational visits per year and is home to more than 600,000 residents in 200+ local communities – communities that depend in large part on natural resources for economic sustainability, job creation, recreation and to preserve the community character that is unique to the Sierra Nevada Region.

Governance

The SNC is governed by a 16-member Board with voting members divided almost evenly between State-level appointments and local seats filled by members of County Boards of Supervisors in each of the SNC's six Subregions.

The members include:

- State Secretary for Natural Resources (or his/her designee)
- State Director of Finance (or his/her designee)
- Three members of the public appointed by the Governor
- Two members of the public, one each appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and the Senate Rules Committee, and
- Six county supervisors whose districts are within the Region, each representing one of the six Subregions.
- Three non-voting liaison advisers: one each from the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

Program Description

In accordance with the statute establishing the SNC, all of our activities are based on the principles of balance, cooperation and equity. The statute requires that the SNC:

- Support efforts that advance environmental preservation and the economic and social well-being of Sierra residents in a complementary manner;
- Work in collaboration and cooperation with local governments and interested parties in carrying out the SNC's mission;
- Make every effort to ensure that, over time, Conservancy funding and other efforts are spread equitably across each of the various Subregions and among the program areas, with adequate allowance for the variability of costs associated with individual regions and types of projects; and
- Inform and educate all Californians as to the substantial benefits they enjoy from the Region and the importance of the environmental and economic well-being of the Region.

Program Areas

The SNC serves the Sierra Nevada Region by providing a focal point for action and helping to develop and promote a regional identity for the Sierra as a whole. The SNC does that, in part, by providing funding for local and regional projects and offering technical and other assistance for collaborative efforts in cooperation with nonprofit, tribal, and government partners at all levels. The SNC's activities fall under seven non-prioritized, legislatively mandated program areas, including:

- Increasing the opportunity for tourism and recreation in the Region;
- Protecting, conserving and restoring the Region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical and living resources;
- Aiding in the preservation of working landscapes;
- Reducing the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfire;
- Protecting and improving water and air quality;
- Assisting the regional economy; and,
- Enhancing public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

Current Funding Sources

The SNC's budget is made up of funds from the California Environmental License Plate Fund and Proposition 84, The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coast Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Prop 84). Prop 84 allocated \$54 million in bond funds to the SNC. The SNC may also receive funds and interests in real

or personal property by gifts, bequests or grants. Our operations do not directly impact the General Fund.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We are guided in our operations by a number of principles developed as part of the SNC's initial strategic planning process in 2006:

How We Operate

- The SNC conducts operations openly. Decision making will be transparent, and we always strive to improve communications throughout the Region.
- The SNC strives to maintain neutrality so all interested parties are provided an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from the SNC's activities.

Our Key Objectives

- The SNC seeks to "add value" and build upon existing community and Regional efforts.
- The SNC brings a Regional focus to the issues of the Sierra Nevada, collecting and sharing information across the Region and communicating the benefits and contributions of the Region.
- The SNC encourages community-based solutions and will assist communities with technical expertise, information and resources necessary to achieve local solutions.
- The SNC uses the best available information and science in making decisions, identifying opportunities to fill information and technical gaps and building on and expanding community information.
- The SNC informs and educates the public throughout the Region and the State about the substantial benefits the Sierra Nevada provides to all Californians, including providing clean water for many uses outside the Sierra, and the importance of protecting and enhancing the environmental wellbeing of the Region.
- The SNC strives to identify and implement activities that result in integrated environmental, economic and social benefits rather than "either or" outcomes.

Implementing Our Programs

- The SNC develops program priorities considering the input received through community outreach efforts and seeks to meet community needs.
- The SNC is flexible in implementing its programs, recognizing the need to act based on opportunity, available funding, local and regional differences and statewide interest.
- The SNC gives priority to multi-benefit projects and integrated activities (those that address more than one of the SNC's program objectives).
- The SNC encourages projects and activities that leverage other organizations' (government, private and nonprofit) competencies and funding.

- The SNC evaluates projects considering what is occurring on surrounding lands, cognizant of potential impacts to those landscapes.
- The SNC purchases and/or creates incentives for the purchase, where practical, of resources for goods and services within the Sierra Nevada Region. We diligently seek opportunities to improve the economic well-being of communities in the Region.
- The SNC makes every effort to ensure that, over time, Conservancy funding and other efforts are spread equitably across Subregions and program areas, with adequate allowance for the variability of costs associated with individual regions and types of projects.

Working with Others

- The SNC emphasizes cooperation with local governments and other governmental, tribal and non-governmental partners in providing information, technical assistance and financial support to assist in meeting mutual goals.
- The SNC coordinates and collaborates with all partners to achieve research, project funding and program goals.
- The SNC convenes and facilitates interested parties to seek solutions for difficult problems to achieve environmental, economic and social benefits.
- The SNC respects the mission, responsibilities and obligations of other agencies and organizations.

OUR FIRST FIVE YEARS

Despite the Sierra's considerable size and significant contributions to the State's economic, environmental and social well-being, the Region historically received relatively little state or federal investment or coordination of activities to protect and steward its natural and community resources. This was due, in part, to the lack of a coordinating entity at a broader (state) level that could involve local government and other stakeholders to represent the Region as a whole. With the creation of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, that institutional gap has been bridged. Due to our extensive outreach program over the past five years, the SNC now serves as a focal point and vehicle for partnering with local, state, and federal stakeholders, advocating for the Region and attracting additional investment to the Sierra.

The SNC has been hard at work during its first five years to meet this charge. The activities undertaken by the SNC in accordance with its first five-year Strategic Plan have established the organization as an effective partner, adding value to the Region and have led to the launch of a number of key programs and initiatives including:

Grants Program

The SNC's Grants Program, funded through the voter-approved *Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coast Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84)*, is one of the primary tools used by the SNC to support the work of its partners across the Region. Since its first year of grantmaking in 2007, the SNC has authorized more than 221 individual grants to nonprofit, tribal and governmental partners. These grants, totaling almost \$40 million, have been used to improve water quality, reduce the risk of wildfire and other natural disasters, protect important natural resources and habitat, promote sustainable recreational use (when tied to resource conservation), improve resource management practices, protect working farms and ranches and address climate change impacts across the 22 counties comprising the Sierra Nevada.

Climate Change Symposium

The effects of climate change on the Sierra are expected to be significant and could have far-reaching consequences. The forests and communities of the Sierra have the potential to contribute positively by reducing emissions, sequestering carbon, protecting the State's primary source of water, generating renewable energy and proactively adapting to changing conditions. In recognition of the role the Sierra could play, the SNC convened its first symposium, attended by more than 300 participants, to discuss potential impacts and Sierra-specific tools and strategies. This effort led to the development of the first of its kind "Climate Action Plan of the Sierra Nevada: A Regional Approach to Address Climate Change" in 2009.

Climate Action Plan

In 2009, the SNC Board adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP). This was an effort to better understand all relevant effects associated with a changing climate and determine what additional actions can be taken and what resources and information need to be generated to best serve the Sierra in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. The SNC CAP was written and intended to be a dynamic document. This plan was a starting point – a stake in the ground – from which to begin to determine how climate change can best be addressed in such a diverse and complex Region. Two years later, the SNC has developed an array of projects such as the Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative and the Mokelumne Ecosystems Services Project which fulfill many of the actions listed in the CAP. Many other actions have been completed or are currently being carried out either by the SNC staff or by others in the Region. Other actions that still need to be completed are included in this new Strategic Plan as actions under individual Areas of Focus.

Connecting the Dots

The SNC hosted a Sierra-wide web symposium, or “webposium,” on forest health and rural economies that attracted 150 participants across nine local meeting locations and the web. The event gathered local, state and national experts; policy-makers; and environmental, tribal, industry and community representatives to discuss improving watershed/forest resiliency and health by reducing the threat of wildfire while sustainably using forest “fuels” to create local jobs and economic resilience. The webposium served as the precursor to the Sierra Nevada Forest and Communities Initiative (SNFCI).

Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative

The Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI) is an effort to foster collaboration locally and regionally to support a cohesive, economically viable and sustainable approach to reducing fire risk, creating jobs, and restoring and protecting watershed health. A key component of the Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative is supporting locally based collaboratives that are taking action to actively manage the forests, create local jobs and improve the social well being of residents. With SNC’s assistance, these collaboratives have received federal, state and private funds as seed money to establish skills training programs, create fuel treatment and biomass utilization jobs for displaced timber workers and rural youth, and develop infrastructure for turning forest materials into value-added commercial products or renewable energy. In addition to receiving the endorsement of all 22 Sierra counties; Boards of Supervisors, the SNC has formed a Regional Coordinating Council consisting of diverse stakeholders engaged in forestry and community development issues. The Council supports local collaboratives by addressing policy issues, research and science and funding to support on-the-ground work.

Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project

Recognizing that tourism remains one of the Sierra’s strongest economic contributors, the SNC entered into a partnership with the Sierra Business Council (SBC) and the National Geographic Society to develop the web-based Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project, one of only four Geotourism projects in the United States. The project involves a Region-wide effort to engage local residents of the Sierra to identify and describe places to go or things to do that are unique and characteristic of the Region. This information is included in a website (www.sierranevadageotourism.org) to advertise the unique assets of the Sierra and to assist prospective tourists in selecting and planning for visits in the Region.

Federal Land Managers Meetings

In 2007 the SNC began hosting annual gatherings of federal land managers from agencies active in the Sierra, including National Park Service, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and US Fish and Wildlife Service. The goal of these meetings is to discuss Sierra-wide issues and establish or strengthen partnerships to address regional issues.

Integrated Regional Water Management Planning

The SNC played a key role in addressing the need for Integrated Regional Water Management Planning (IRWMP) in parts of the Region where planning efforts were not already underway or completed. Completion of an IRWMP is needed to qualify for the hundreds of millions of dollars to be disbursed by the Department of Water Resources over the next five years. As a result of SNC's efforts to participate with existing IRWMP projects and to convene and facilitate stakeholders in areas where planning was not yet occurring, most of the Region will reap the benefits of being part of an IRWMP.

Sierra Day in the Capitol

Sierra Day in the Capitol is an annual event dedicated to raising awareness among State legislators, their staff and members of the administration about the importance of the Sierra and the benefits the Region provides to the entire state of California. The 2011 Sierra Day involved 47 participants from 26 sponsoring organizations representing a broad array of interests from within and outside the Sierra.

Current Funding Opportunities

The Funding Team continues to disseminate a monthly update with information on state, federal and private funding sources relevant to nonprofit, government and tribal partners in the Sierra. The update is sent to more than 1,100 individuals and organizations throughout the Region and is then posted on the SNC Web site. By the end of 2009–10 the team had publicized more than 200 different funding-related opportunities, from actual grant and loan programs to grantwriting and other educational workshops and trainings to improve partners' fund development capabilities.

Supporting our Partners in Building Sierra Awareness

The SNC has developed a sponsorship program to help organizations in their efforts to inform people and communities within the Region and across the State about issues important to the Sierra. Supporting our partners in this way helps us to achieve our mutual goals of raising awareness and encouraging ongoing discussions of Region-wide issues. In 2010, this program supported more than a dozen partner organizations in their activities, engaging thousands of people in Sierra issues. Events sponsored

include the California Tribal Water Summit, the California Trails and Greenways Conference and the Rediscovering Rangelands 5th Annual Summit.

Sierra Water Group

From 2007-2009, the SNC helped to coordinate the Sierra Water Group, which consists of representatives from all of the Sierra IRWMP groups. These representatives include local, state and federal government agencies, non-profits, water purveyors and other stakeholders. A primary goal of the group has been to develop a common vision and voice for Sierra water by developing actions to be implemented collaboratively.

California Natural Diversity Database and Vegetation Mapping

In 2008–09 the SNC also provided funding to the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) to support improving the biological resource information base for the Region including updating records of rare, threatened and endangered species in the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and vegetation mapping of the foothills of the western Sierra. The CNDDDB is a spatial database that contains records of sensitive and rare species as well as state- and federal-listed threatened and endangered species (listed species). The CNDDDB is the most commonly used database by biologists and land managers to evaluate potential impacts to biological resources resulting from proposed projects that will alter the landscape, such as development and restoration activities.

As a result of these and other activities, virtually all of the actions contained in the SNC's original Strategic Plan have been or are being accomplished or have been deemed to be ongoing activities of the SNC and have been built into our day-to-day operations. The few exceptions as well as those activities listed above that have yet to be completed, have been incorporated into this new draft Strategic Plan.

DEVELOPMENT OF THIS NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Development of this Strategic Plan was specifically intended to focus planning efforts on measurable and attainable actions over the next three years and to set priorities for the SNC within the context of its broad mission and statutorily established program areas. This document will be implemented in ongoing collaboration with multiple partners throughout the Region. It will be carried out through specific actions identified in an annual work plan, which will set forth a realistic set of actions for the SNC to accomplish each year in support of the priorities we've established through this planning process.

While the SNC's original Strategic Plan has a goal associated with each of the SNC's seven statutorily established program areas, for this Plan, the Board established five Areas of Focus that cut across program areas, as follows:

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

Although this Plan aligns specific objectives and strategies with these five Areas of Focus, the boundaries that had to be drawn around each Area of Focus for planning purposes are sometimes artificial. In reality, all of the Areas of Focus are interconnected and the objectives and strategies that are laid out in support of one Area of Focus will often help the SNC make progress in other Areas of Focus. Activities that address multiple Areas of Focus will be given priority and actions will need to be integrated across Areas of Focus to be most effective.

Following the adoption of the five Areas of Focus by the Board, staff held six workshops throughout the Region to gather input from stakeholders regarding the objectives and actions the SNC should pursue within the first four areas of focus. The workshops were held in Auburn, Susanville, Visalia, Bishop, Oroville, and Sonora and were attended by over 140 individuals representing a wide variety of interests. Stakeholders were also provided the opportunity to provide additional input via our Web site. In addition, meetings were held with staff and key stakeholders, including conservation organizations, fire safe councils, Resource Conservation Districts, landowner organizations, and others.

In addition, staff reviewed the Climate Action Plan and the Education and Communication Plan, which were both previously adopted by the Board and incorporated their contents wherever appropriate. In some instances, elements of these two previously adopted plans were deemed to be no longer relevant due to actions already taken, actions taken by other organizations, or a shift in focus by our partners. Only currently relevant activities were included in the new draft Plan.

Although it was challenging to assimilate the large amount of input received from our stakeholders and staff, the job was made easier by the fact that consistent themes emerged regarding desired roles for the SNC within each Area of Focus and across all

of the Areas of Focus. Additionally, the statute governing the SNC identifies the activities in which the SNC may engage, as the following:

- a) The conservancy may expend funds and award grants and loans to facilitate collaborative planning efforts and to develop projects and programs that are designed to further the purposes of this division.
- b) The conservancy may provide and make available technical information, expertise, and other nonfinancial assistance to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and tribal organizations, to support program and project development and implementation.

This plan proposes that the SNC engage in the activities identified above in carrying out the following roles:

- Advocate for the Sierra Nevada—Whether it be with decision-makers in Sacramento, the public, other state government entities, those who benefit from the Region’s resources, or others, the need for advocacy and education was strongly urged throughout all of the Areas of Focus. In some instances, this is also tied to the need to develop more compelling or quantifiable information and research about the benefits the Region provides to the State and may also involve leading Region-wide projects that build regional identity.
- Fund Projects—Funding from bond measures and other sources will be utilized to support projects that are consistent with the focus areas identified in the plan. While the types of projects funded may be constrained by specific requirements of the funding source, the SNC will strive to fund a variety of high benefit projects throughout the Region.
- Bring additional funds into the Region—Related to advocating for the Region, is the need for additional funding to address regional and local issues. In addition to SNC’s Grants Program, this may mean working with existing federal and state programs to help them better understand and address Sierra issues. In others, it may require efforts to raise private funds or explore new funding sources for the SNC, such as a fee-for-service model.
- Support local collaboration and capacity building—Many parts of the Region and many organizations within the Region may not have the information, technical expertise, or other resources they need to be more effective in addressing local

concerns and issues. The SNC can help address these needs by providing technical assistance and more opportunities for collaboration at the local level.

- Lead efforts to address issues at the regional and local levels—The SNC has established itself as a neutral convener that has been successful in bringing a variety of interests together to find common ground and in leading the development and implementation of steps to move forward on issues at both the regional and local levels.

No matter what roles the SNC plays within the various Areas of Focus, the Plan emphasizes the need for the SNC to continue its practice of strong collaboration and partnership with other organizations working in the Region. Not only does the SNC plan to continue to partner with other organizations on specific actions in support of the Plan, but will also continue to seek ongoing input from stakeholders regarding what we should be doing and how we should be doing it. In addition, the SNC will carry out these roles consistent with the statutory direction to allocate funding and other efforts equitably across each of the Subregions and program areas.

We recognize that the objectives and strategies laid out in this Plan will not accomplish everything that needs to be done within each of the Areas of Focus for the Region. There are many important activities that will continue to be undertaken by other organizations throughout the Region to make our forest healthier, protect and restore watersheds, etc. Rather, the draft Plan lays out those objectives and strategies that are consistent with the roles stakeholders and staff articulated as being appropriate *for the SNC* and where we can add the most value.

Finally, it is worth noting that this plan addresses both the financial, i.e., grants, and nonfinancial assistance the SNC provides to the Region. Therefore, this Plan will remain relevant for the organization, whether or not the SNC has funds in the future to continue its Grants Program. The Grants Program is a key reason for our effectiveness in the Region and has played an extremely important role in allowing us to fulfill our mission. However, we have written this Strategic Plan so that, even without a Grants Program, we will still have a considerable role to play in the vitality and health of the Sierra Nevada.

The following sections describe the five Areas of Focus with specific objectives and strategies identified as priorities by the SNC Governing Board:

HEALTHY FORESTS

Discussion

The Sierra Nevada Region is facing a number of adverse impacts as a result of unhealthy forests throughout much of region. The risk and consequence of large damaging fire is significant, with serious threats to communities, habitat, water quality carbon storage and air quality are serious and impacts unavoidable without appropriate action. The issue of forest management has long been a contentious and divisive one for the Sierra Nevada. However the consequences of “more of the same” are unacceptable. It is vital that the Region find collaborative solutions to ensure that the health of the Sierra forests is restored and that the rural communities surrounding these forests benefit from these restoration efforts.

The overabundance of small trees and undergrowth in many Sierra forests can weaken mature trees and lead to uncharacteristically fast-moving, high-intensity wildfires that threaten human life and plant and animal habitat. The forest resiliency needs to be restored to reduce fire risk, minimize climate change impacts, and support biodiversity. Increasing the pace and scale of forest treatment to restore forest health, prevent large damaging fires and protect communities

Equally important is the need to ensure that management activities needed to restore forest health are conducted in a manner that improve the economic and social well being of Sierra communities. In addition to the work occurring in the forest, the biomass that is removed from forests to improve ecological health can be used to produce wood products including value-added products or to produce renewable, clean energy. These activities will create jobs and other economic activity in nearby communities important in a Region that has been hit hard by the loss of resource-related jobs and serves to create a new set of green jobs for the Region and additional green energy for California.

One approach under way is the SNC’s Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI) seeks to meet these challenges on our public lands by bringing diverse stakeholders together in a collaborative, consensus based approach to identify and act upon areas of common agreement. A significant milestone in the implementation of SNFCI was reached with the adoption of a SNFCI resolution by more than 120 stakeholder organizations from around the Region, including unanimous adoption by all twenty-two county Boards of Supervisors.

Many Sierra communities are actively working to reduce the risk of large damaging fires. Fire Safe Councils, Resource Conservation Districts and others are working with

local, state and federal agencies to protect communities and their watersheds. These efforts illustrate the symbiotic relationship between communities and the forests and are an important contribution to restoring forest health in the Region.

Working to promote forest health within the Region helps us meet all of our statutorily established program goals as listed below:

Primary

- Protecting, conserving and restoring the Region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical and living resources;
- Reducing the risk of natural disasters, such as wildfire;
- Protecting and improving water and air quality;
- Assisting the regional economy; and

Secondary

- Increasing the opportunity for tourism and recreation in the Region;
- Aiding in the preservation of working landscapes (i.e., working forests);
- Enhancing public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

Objectives

- ***Implement the SNFCI resolution to improve forest and community health through actions agreed upon in a collaborative, consensus-based process.***
 - **Use the SNFCI Coordinating Council as a forum for collaboration and a venue to address policy, attract investment, and support science and research in the area of forest health on public lands.**
 - e.g. Work with the Council to adopt state and federal policy positions and strategies for increased investments.
 - e.g. Ensure that local collaborative forestry groups are supported and that "lessons learned" and key issues are communicated to the Council.
 - e.g. Work with the USFS and other partners to implement the Ecological Restoration Leadership Intent.

- **Act as a neutral party to facilitate increased collaboration between agencies and organizations involved in forestry issues on public lands.**

- e.g. Support existing and new forest collaboratives through convening, facilitation, grant writing assistance and project development.
- e.g. Identify # new forest collaboratives and provide start-up support.
- e.g. Increase local government involvement in forest health issues.
- e.g. Bring together local and national NGOs to discuss local v national attitudes towards forest management.

- **Work with partners to promote fuel reduction projects that reduce fire hazard and promote job growth when possible.**

- e.g. Continue to fund fuels reduction and other forestry projects through the SNC's Grants Program consistent with the requirements of the funding source.
- e.g. Facilitate fuels reduction planning across forest boundaries and jurisdictions.
- e.g. Support Fire Safe Councils and other community groups through information, training and other funding assistance.

- **Work with partners to establish and maintain existing forest products infrastructure (i.e., mills, biomass energy/co-generation plants, etc.) at the appropriate locations and scale.**

- e.g. Support and assist local collaborative groups focusing on forest and community health, in order to take the actions necessary to implement sustainable forest management and the maintenance/creation of wood related infrastructure.
- e.g. Work with California Public Utilities Commission, the utilities and energy producers and others to create incentives for the maintenance, re-opening and/or construction of co-generation and biomass facilities in the Sierra.
- e.g. Work with partners to develop a Sierra wide inventory of existing infrastructure and potential biomass supply, to determine opportunities of additional opportunities.
- e.g. Secure technical assistance and funding to support local entrepreneurs to incubate biomass businesses.

- e.g. Convene an energy investors group to understand biomass to energy and biomass to fuels project development needs and issues as a way of creating/supporting markets for forest material that gets removed as part of fuels reduction/forest health projects.
- e.g. Increase tribal representation in local forestry collaborative.
- **Monitor, coordinate and when appropriate, initiate research about forest management, fire and biomass utilization that will lead to successful project implementation.**
 - e.g. Retain research expertise to support the Regional Council and local forest collaboratives in consensus based processes.
 - e.g. Engage partners with expertise and research capabilities to coordinate existing research, identify research gaps and increase targeted scientific research specifically about Sierra forests.
 - e.g. Target UC Davis, UC Merced and UC Berkeley to build more research partnerships.
- **Use GIS tools to foster understanding and collaboration across the Region.**
 - e.g. Visually display Sierra forest conditions including fire risk, climate vulnerability assessment and other factors to communicate the current state of Sierra forests.
 - e.g. Develop pilot mapping project to identify “ghost subdivisions” in the Wildland Urban Interface.
- **Provide access to new peer-reviewed scientific research findings to target audiences so that they are taking actions based on valid information.**
 - e.g. Expand the SNFCI mailing so that news on latest research reaches targeted audiences.
 - e.g. Provide links on SNC website to web portals that include scientific research and findings.
 - e.g. Work with others to make research understandable to forest management practitioners.

- **Increase awareness among policy makers about the benefits provided by Sierra forests and the actions needed to maintain and enhance those benefits.**
 - **Develop information and tools for educating policymakers about the importance of Sierra forests to the rest of the state so that they understand the need to support policies and increase funding directed at Sierra forests.**
 - e.g. Track and promote biomass-related outcomes of existing projects.
 - e.g. Host site visits/tours for decision-makers to see successful projects and potential projects.
 - e.g. Create video “tour” of model projects to post on SNC website.
 - **Ensure the presence of the SNC and Sierra stakeholders in decision-making forums so that appropriate policies and funding streams are developed for Sierra forests.**
 - e.g. Develop a coalition of spokespeople to advocate for Sierra projects and policies.
 - e.g. Proactively coordinate with other state agencies, including the Department of Water Resources on policy and actions.
 - e.g. Work with the Board of Forestry’s Interagency Forest Working Group (IFWG) to represent the Sierra perspective and needs related to biomass development, including assisting the IFWG with their landowner incentives and public education initiatives.
 - e.g. Develop materials about Sierra forests for distribution at state Visitor Centers throughout the Region.
 - **Ensure funding for forest and watershed protection and restoration in order to maintain and enhance the beneficial uses and health of Sierra forests and watersheds.**
 - e.g. Focus the 2012-13 Grants Program in this area consistent with Proposition 84 funding requirements.
 - e.g. Develop funding models such as payment systems or funding agreements between land managers and beneficiaries to generate long-term revenues to invest in watershed and forest restoration.

- e.g. Establish stronger relationships with water agencies to make a clearer linkage between their need for reliable, clean water supplies and the health of the forest.

PRESERVATION OF RANCHES AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Discussion

The ranching and agricultural lands of the Sierra are an integral part of the Region's and local communities' economy, history, cultural heritage and scenic beauty. In addition, these lands provide important contributions to habitat, biodiversity, water quality, air quality, carbon sequestration and open space that benefit everyone as well as preserve the rural character of many Sierra communities.

Those engaged in agriculture and ranching in the Sierra Nevada face a number of important challenges to their ongoing efforts. Regulation, transportation costs of delivering products to market and conflict with urban neighbors are just a few of the challenges. At the same time, despite the recent slowdown in the real estate market, Sierra agricultural and ranching lands remain under pressure for conversion to other uses, including residential development, especially in the fast-growing foothills Region and high-elevation meadows that adjoin urbanizing areas. The recent loss of funding for Williamson Act subvention payments put ranches and farms further at risk. Even for those fully committed to keeping their lands "working", these challenges make it very difficult.

The past transition of ranches, farms, and orchards to non-agricultural uses **has** resulted in fewer farm- and ranch-related jobs, a reduction in local food production, loss of open space and habitat, and loss of the skills, traditions and culture built around agriculture and the rural economy.

One of the factors that contribute to the conversion of agricultural and ranching lands to other uses is the lack of awareness of the many benefits agriculture and ranching provide. There is a lack of comprehensive and compelling data regarding how the protection and appropriate management of these lands positively impacts water quality, habitat and other issues. Telling the story of the true overall benefits of agricultural and ranching land in the Sierra will assist in positive policy and funding decisions at all levels.

Working to preserve ranches and agricultural lands will address a number of our statutorily established program goals as listed below:

Primary

- Aid in the preservation of working landscapes.
- Protect, conserve, and restore the Region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources.
- Assist the Regional economy.

Secondary

- Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation (through agritourism.)
- Protect and improve water and air quality.

Objectives

- ***Assist in maintaining the viability of agricultural lands and ranches in the Sierra***

- **Learn more about the needs of farmers and ranchers in the Sierra and what the SNC can do to support them in preserving and restoring their lands.**

e.g. Work with partners to gather information and, if appropriate, perform a needs assessment on funding and technical needs for Sierra ranchers and farmers.

- **Create opportunities for and participate in discussions to foster agreement and advocacy for needed changes in policy.**

e.g. Convene agricultural and ranching interests from around the Region through a Sierra Agricultural Advisory Committee or other mechanism.

e.g. Meet more regularly with statewide advocacy organizations to gain an understanding of key issues.

- **Work with partners and communities to encourage Sierra "buy local" and agritourism campaigns and to create markets to increase working lands profitability.**

e.g. Work with others to conduct workshops to promote greater understanding of agritourism projects by potential operators.

- e.g. Increase exposure of agritourism attractions in the Region as part of the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project.
 - e.g. Publicize successful agritourism projects that can be used as models throughout the Region.
- **Build on existing processes to discuss mechanisms and opportunities for developing and sustaining Sierra agricultural infrastructure (e.g. meat processing facilities, biomass utilization).**
 - e.g. Convene agricultural and ranching interests from around the Region through a Sierra Agricultural Advisory Committee or other mechanism.
 - e.g. Contract for a feasibility study to identify whether certain facilities are viable in certain Subregions.
- **Create mechanisms to discuss grazing on public lands leading to common understanding among stakeholders and potential to build consensus on policy.**
 - e.g. Serve as a neutral third party in convening stakeholders for a series of meetings around the issue of grazing on public lands.
- ***Support greater understanding and quantification of the benefits provided by preservation and stewardship of ranches and agricultural lands in the Region.***
 - **Gain a greater understanding of the gaps in scientific research relevant to ranches and agricultural lands in the Region and determine how to work collaboratively with other organizations to address those gaps.**
 - e.g. Meet with statewide advocacy groups and universities focused on this issue to discuss research gaps.
 - **Support model projects and other research to determine and quantify the ecosystem services provided by preservation and stewardship of ranches and agricultural lands in the Sierra.**

- e.g. Make inclusion of a monitoring/research component one of the evaluation criteria for projects on ranches and agricultural lands funded through the SNC's Grants Program.
- e.g. Engage private funders to support a project that quantifies the water quality benefits of agricultural lands and ranches in the lower Mokelumne watershed in order to promote investment in the preserving these lands and implementing best management practices.
- **Support greater understanding of how management of ranches and agricultural lands in the Region lead to adaptations and mitigation to the impacts of climate change within the State.**
 - e.g. Include carbon sequestration as another benefit to be quantified as part of the lower Mokelumne watershed project (above).
- ***Increase understanding among decision-makers and others about the environmental, economic, and social benefits of ranches and agricultural lands in the Sierra and the actions needed to maintain and enhance those benefits.***
 - **Develop information and tools for educating decision-makers about the importance of ranches and agricultural lands in the Sierra and the benefits they bring to the State.**
 - e.g. Host legislative tours that bring members of the Legislature and staff into the Sierra to better understand the benefits of ranches and agricultural lands.
 - e.g. Develop a map illustrating the important role that agricultural lands play in preserving habitat.
 - e.g. Develop information that explains how ranching and agricultural lands in the Sierra contribute to water quality and supply in the State.
 - e.g. Integrate information on the benefits of ranches and agricultural lands into a general advocacy program for the Region.
 - **Increase the presence of the SNC and Sierra stakeholders in decision-making forums so that policies and other actions take the needs of Sierra ranches and agricultural lands into account.**

- e.g. Become more educated about the government forums where decisions affecting Sierra ranches and agricultural lands are made and become engaged in those with the most significant potential impact.
- e.g. Recruit farmers and ranchers to be spokespeople on a range of Sierra agricultural issues.

- ***Increase funding for preservation and stewardship of ranches and agricultural lands in the Sierra in order to protect and enhance the multiple benefits they provide***
 - **Provide funding through the SNC's current and future Grants Programs and leverage SNC funding to act as matching funds from other Programs.**
 - e.g. Focus the 2012-13 Grants Program in this area consistent with Proposition 84 funding requirements.
 - e.g. Make "funds leveraged" part of the evaluation criteria when determining which projects receive SNC grant funds.
 - e.g. Coordinate with federal agencies and private funders to identify opportunities where SNC funds could match project funding and meet mutual goals.

 - **Work with federal, state and local agencies to increase the share of funding directed towards preservation and restoration of ranches and agricultural lands in the Sierra.**
 - e.g. Work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and NGO partners to advocate for changes in existing programs that would help ranches and agricultural lands in the Sierra compete more effectively for funding.
 - e.g. Investigate possibilities for the SNC to serve as a grant "banking" partner for Sierra-directed federal programs (USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) etc.)

 - **Investigate and develop potential new funding streams**
 - e.g. Contract with fund development consultant to help raise more funding for SNC programs from public and private agencies.

- **Assist individual farmers and ranchers in learning about available programs and program requirements so that they are able to compete successfully for funding.**
 - e.g. Determine if there are opportunities to partner with and support local Resource Conservation Districts and other organization that work with local ranchers and farmers to increase their success.
 - e.g. Develop “funding toolbox” for individual farmers and ranchers.
 - e.g. Provide regular Current Funding Opportunities updates directed specifically at ranchers and farmers and produce workshops to help them apply for funding.

WATERSHED PROTECTION AND RESTORATION

Discussion

The Sierra Nevada has hundreds of lakes, and thousands of miles of streams that together form the 31 major watersheds. These rivers and the watershed areas around them are the lifeblood of California, as they contribute over 60% of California's water needs (primarily to areas outside of the Sierra).

The importance of Sierra watersheds to the state's overall water picture cannot be overstated. The precipitation captured in the upper elevations flows to fill rivers, reservoirs, and recharge groundwater basins. Approximately 23 million Californians have all or some of their drinking begin its journey in the Sierra Nevada. The controlled release of snowmelt throughout the spring helps to control winter flooding in the valleys and provides irrigation for food crops and water to keep recreation and other businesses and industries thriving throughout the summer. Sierra water also provides hydropower to light homes, and quality drinking water to meet the needs of residents throughout California, while the watersheds themselves serve as important habitat for all species of plants and animals. Investing in the Sierra – the state's primary watershed – is a long-term solution to challenges such as increasing water demands, threatened water quality, and for buffering anticipated climate change impacts over time.

One of the biggest challenges the SNC and other organizations face in working to protect and restore the watersheds of the Sierra Nevada is the lack of awareness of the importance of these watersheds to the entire State and a more comprehensive and quantifiable understanding of the benefits they provide to downstream users. In addition, these watersheds face significant threats including fire, poorly planned development and unauthorized recreation. Helping decision makers outside the region

understand the relationship of investing in the Sierra Nevada watersheds to reliable supplies of clean water is essential.

Protecting and restoring watersheds within the Region helps us meet a number of our statutorily established program goals as listed below:

Primary

- Protect, conserve, and restore the Region's physical, cultural, archaeological, historical, and living resources;
- Protect and improve water and air quality;
- Increase opportunities for tourism and recreation in the Region;

Secondary

- Assisting the regional economy;
- Enhance public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

Objectives

- ***Increase understanding among decision-makers and others about the services healthy Sierra watersheds provide to the entire State and the actions needed to maintain and enhance those benefits.***
 - **Develop information and tools to educate decision-makers about the importance of Sierra watersheds so that they understand the need to support relevant policies and increase funding streams directed at upper watersheds.**
 - e.g. Host legislative tours to highlight successful projects and demonstrate the benefits of protection and restoration in the upper watersheds.
 - e.g. Build on the Sierra Nevada Water Report to develop web content, fact sheets, and other targeted educational tools.
 - **Increase the presence of the SNC and Sierra stakeholders in decision-making forums so that Sierra interests are taken into account when policy and funding decisions are being made.**

- e.g. Participate on Agency Steering Committee for State Water Plan updates to ensure that the unique characteristics of the Sierra Region and the area-of-origin needs are adequately defined and addressed.
- e.g. Participate in the development of the Delta Plan, since it includes the upper watersheds as part of the Delta “solution area.”
- e.g. Continue supporting Sierra IRWM planning and implementation efforts so that upper watershed needs are considered and made eligible for funding through DWR’s IRWM implementation funding programs.
- **Educate targeted stakeholders both in the Sierra and downstream about the values and beneficial uses of Sierra watersheds so that they understand that the Sierra is the source of their water and they become stewards of Sierra watersheds and advocate for SNC programs.**
 - e.g. Coordinate with utility companies to create educational inserts for inclusion in billing statements of urban water users to link water conservation with the health of Sierra rivers.
 - e.g. Contract to produce video “virtual tours” of successful projects that illustrate the values and beneficial uses of Sierra watersheds for use in targeted outreach meetings with decision-makers, posting on the SNC website and for other partners to link to on their websites.
- **Expand the Great Sierra River Cleanup (GSRC) to improve overall health of Sierra watersheds and to encourage public stewardship and education**
 - e.g. Increase the number and size of Cleanup efforts, paying attention to underserved watersheds.
 - e.g. Increase the number of restoration projects included in the Great Sierra River Cleanup.
 - e.g. Develop an exchange program to link the Great Sierra River Cleanup efforts with downstream efforts to educate the public about Sierra watersheds.
- ***Increase funding for watershed protection and restoration in order to maintain and enhance the beneficial uses of Sierra watersheds, both within and outside the Region.***
 - **Partner with federal and state agencies to increase the amount of funding directed towards watershed health in the Sierra.**

- e.g. Work with other state agencies to identify existing funding programs where a portion of available funds can be dedicated to projects in the Sierra (e.g. Public Goods Charge funds administered by the CPUC).
- e.g. Work to identify and develop funding mechanisms through participation in Water Plan Updates and Delta Plan development.
- e.g. Investigate possibilities for the SNC to serve as a grant “banking” partner for Sierra-directed Federal programs (USDA, NRCS etc).

- **Provide funding through SNC’s future Grants Program and leverage SNC funding to act as matching funds from other programs.**
 - e.g. Coordinate with federal agencies and private funders to identify opportunities where SNC funds could match project funding, and that meet mutual goals.

- **Investigate and develop potential new funding streams in order to support upstream watershed protection and restoration.**
 - e.g. Contract with fund development consultant to help raise more funding for SNC programs from public and private agencies.
 - e.g. Work with downstream water users to fund projects in the upper watershed.

- **Help to build bridges between available funding and local governments and organizations in the Sierra**
 - e.g. Work with the California Energy Commission (CEC) to better reach rural governments in the Sierra and help them build projects to access CEC funds.
 - e.g. Continue to send out the CFO monthly bulletin to enable more stakeholders to access available funding.
 - e.g. Create a searchable database of Sierra appropriate funding resources to make funding research easier for interested stakeholders.
 - e.g. Work with existing information providers, such as the Foundation Center, to help make funding information more accessible to groups in the Sierra.

- ***Build greater understanding and quantification of the benefits provided by Sierra Nevada Watersheds to generate long-term investment in watershed protection and restoration.***
 - **Support efforts to quantify the ecosystem services provided by healthy watersheds in the Region.**
 - e.g. Support research and pilot projects with federal partners and existing public-private consortia groups, such as Feather River CRM, that can better quantify the water supply, quality and habitat benefits of different restoration techniques, such as high-elevation meadow restoration.
 - e.g. Identify and post outcomes of existing research and model projects demonstrating multiple benefits of meadow restoration.
 - e.g. Complete the next phase of the Mokelumne Watershed Ecosystem Services Project.
 - **Monitor and participate in efforts throughout the US to build the case for watershed ecosystem services**
 - e.g. Communicate regularly with the US Forest Service Office of Ecosystem Services at both the state and national levels.
 - e.g. Create a list of other efforts underway across the US and monitor their efforts.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND RECREATION

Discussion

Recreation and tourism have a long history in the Sierra, dating back to the early State and National Parks and accelerating with the advent of the commercial ski industry and newer sporting activities like mountain biking, rock-climbing and snowboarding. In addition to the Region's natural wonders, its cultural and historic assets – such as Native American and early pioneer history, the California Gold Rush, a growing winery presence and vibrant arts communities – provide a rich backdrop for a growing heritage tourism market. The scenic lands and cultural/historic resources of the Sierra not only provide enjoyment to local residents, they support a multi-billion-dollar tourism industry, which is the single most important economic activity in a number of Sierra counties. While these economic activities are important to local economies, especially in light of significant areas of poverty in the region, many of the jobs and associated spending is seasonal, presenting its own set of challenges.

Working to diversify the recreational and tourism opportunities in the Sierra Nevada will help to provide a more sustainable future to our communities. So called “place based” tourism, exemplified by the Sierra Nevada Geotourism project provides a great example of this type of effort.

Promoting sustainable tourism and recreation within the Region helps us meet the following statutorily established program goals as listed below:

Primary

- Provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation
- Protecting, conserving and restoring the Region’s physical, cultural, archaeological, historical and living resources
- Assisting the Regional economy
- Enhancing public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public.

Secondary

- Aiding in the preservation of working landscapes (through agritourism)

Objectives

- ***“Brand” the Sierra as a top destination for tourism and recreation to promote a greater understanding of the unique qualities of the Region.***
 - **Implement the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project and link it to other geotourism projects around the country**
 - e.g. Secure annual maintenance and development funding for the Sierra Nevada Geotourism Project.
 - **Support the development of iconic events or experiences to help brand the Region.**
 - e.g. Work with public and private partners to create and publicize a Sierra water trail.

- e.g. Use the next federal land managers meeting as a forum for discussing how public lands could be included in an iconic Sierra event or experience.
 - e.g. Identify a “celebrity champion” to be a spokesperson for Sierra issues.
- **Partner with other government entities and other partners to raise the profile of the Sierra “brand.”**
 - e.g. Work with Caltrans to develop Sierra-specific signage, e.g. “You are now entering the Sierra Nevada” signs.
 - e.g. Become regular panelists and presenters at California tourism and recreation conferences to increase Sierra visibility and branding.
 - e.g. Work with the California Travel and Tourism Commission (CTTC) to explore the potential for them to support a Sierra brand.
 - e.g. Collaborate with others to approach large media markets with Sierra news and events.
- ***Encourage responsible tourism in the Sierra in order to protect valuable Sierra resources and promote the character and economic vitality of the Region.***
 - **Use on-line resources such as the Sierra Nevada Geotourism project to educate visitors about the unique values of the Sierra.**
 - e.g. Create content for the Sierra Nevada Geotourism website to educate visitors on the importance of appropriate stewardship and use.
 - **Collaborate with tourism and recreation providers to build programs that enhance and protect local resources and values.**
 - e.g. Use existing geo-council networks to increase number of “voluntourism” opportunities in the Region.
 - **Foster a sense of “Pride of Ownership” among people who live, work and recreate in the Sierra.**
 - e.g. Partner with the “Leave No Trace” organization to spearhead a Sierra based program.

- **Build local and regional capacity and increase funding to support sustainable recreation and tourism throughout the Sierra.**
 - **Explore opportunities to bring new sources of funding into the Region for the promotion of sustainable tourism and recreation**
 - e.g. Lead an effort to determine whether to pursue designation of all or a portion of the Sierra as a National Heritage Area.
 - e.g. Contract with fund development consultant to help raise more funding for SNC programs from public and private agencies.
 - **Increase opportunities for collaboration and information-sharing among groups at the subregional and local levels**
 - e.g. Help each geo-council create an internal web site where they can share ideas, tools, and information across organizations.
 - e.g. Work with organizations such as Tourism Offices and Chambers of Commerce to create a Sierra Nevada regional tourism caucus.
 - e.g. Work with Lassen National Park to establish a Regional Gateway Partnership organization.
 - **Increase the presence of the SNC and Sierra stakeholders in decision-making forums regarding tourism so that Sierra interests are taken into account when marketing and funding decisions are being made.**
 - e.g. Become active members of tourism related professional organizations (e.g. California Travel and Tourism Commission (CTTC), California Travel Industry Association (CALTIA), National Parks Promotion Council (NPPC), National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA)) and attend meetings on a regular basis.
 - e.g. Fund a study to quantify the economic value of tourism to the Region to make a case for increased investment in Sierra tourism by other agencies.

LONG TERM EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SNC

Discussion

In order to achieve the objectives of this Strategic Plan, it will be important for the SNC to keep an eye on the vibrancy and effectiveness of our internal organization. While we

have successfully established the SNC in our first five years, it is important that we continue to build the credibility of the organization and firmly establish ourselves as a trusted, effective partner and leader in the Region; the better the reputation of the SNC, the better we will be able to serve the interests of the Region with decision-makers, other government entities, and other partners. Additionally, the SNC must have the internal capacity necessary to focus and prioritize the implementation of this Strategic Plan and to carry out our mission. In an era of severe resource constraints for State government and for our partners, continued focus on ingenuity, collaboration, and maximum efficiency will help us to meet this challenge. While this Area of Focus is internally oriented, a strong organization will be better positioned to meet all of our statutorily established program goals.

Objectives

- ***Establish the SNC as a highly credible and effective agency in the minds of our partners, decision-makers and others within and outside the Region so that we can continue to successfully carry out our mission.***
 - **Improve the SNC’s visibility and publicize our work with decision-makers and the public to improve knowledge of our program successes and our mission.**
 - e.g. Create a comprehensive annual media and outreach plan.
 - e.g. Become regular panelists and presenters at relevant conferences to increase knowledge about the SNC’s work.
 - e.g. Encourage NGO and agency partners to include Sierra-based educational tracks or presentations at their conferences to provide information on Sierra issues and the SNC’s work.
 - **Ensure that all staff, Boardmembers, and external partners fully understand our work and successes and can act as “ambassadors” for the SNC and promote the SNC and its work.**
 - e.g. Continue to coordinate Sierra Day in the Capitol; include more staff in this effort.
 - e.g. Create staff- and partner-focused training and materials to ensure that they fully understand SNC programs and what and how programs meet

Subregional needs, e.g. continue to create standard presentation materials for use by staff and partners in outreach activities (consistent messaging and prioritization of issues).

- **Continue to increase partnerships with other organizations that will lead to creative project ideas, greater investment in the Region overall and a leveraging of all efforts to achieve program goals.**
 - e.g. Hold quarterly meetings with other state conservancies and the Wildlife Conservation Board, hold an annual meeting with federal land managers in the Region.
 - e.g. Hold semi-annual or quarterly stakeholders' meetings about specific Areas of Focus.
- **Continue to build the knowledge and capacity of the SNC so that we are ever better at representing and serving the Region.**
 - e.g. Update the matrix of staff expertise to reestablish who the "go to" people are on various issues and determine where to focus additional training.
 - e.g. Establish an ongoing program/schedule for keeping system indicator information current and a plan for integrating SI information in outreach materials.
- ***Increase and diversify funding for SNC programs and initiatives to ensure long-term funding for the SNC and our work.***
 - **Develop strategic alliances with better-funded State agencies to bring a higher proportion of state funding to our work.**
 - e.g. Participate on Agency Steering Committee for State Water Plan update.
 - e.g. Increase our participation in the Strategic Growth Council actions.
 - e.g. Begin participating in Natural Resource Agency discussions on sister-department actions and the SNC's role in them.
 - **Investigate potential fee-for-service opportunities with other organizations.**
 - e.g. Complete the process work that establishes the foundation for implementing fee for service opportunities (i.e. Stewardship Council project and process definition through DOF).

- e.g. Assess the capacity of the SNC to accept additional fee for service work; produce an assessment report stating what our statute allows, what staff resources could be used, what process would we have to follow and who our partners could be in getting this done?
- **Diversify the SNC funding stream by strengthening the non-profit arm of the SNC.**
 - e.g. Define the role of the Friends of the Sierra (FOS) and how it supports the SNC's work in the Region.
 - e.g. Get the Friends of Sierra included in the booklet for the annual state employees charitable campaign.
 - e.g. Create a website dedicated to the FOS and identify work the FOS supports.
 - e.g. Pursue corporate and private contributions to the FOS.
- **Explore and pursue potential new sources of income (e.g. urban transportation planning dollars) to sustain and expand our work.**
 - e.g. Develop a consulting contract to identify opportunities and approaches to raise funding for our programs from public and private agencies.
- ***Ensure that staff are fully engaged and have the information, knowledge, and skills they need to be successful in carrying out our Strategic Plan.***
 - **Evaluate communication mechanisms within the organization and put additional processes and tools in place where needed.**
 - e.g. Assess and improve the effectiveness of current meeting strategies.
 - e.g. Invite other unit staff to staff meetings for specific presentations and discussion.
 - e.g. Ensure that quarterly all-staff meetings emphasize informational areas that need attention and conduct two-way discussions for addressing these needs (as opposed to just presenting information).
 - e.g. Periodically conduct all-staff meetings in Mariposa.
 - e.g. Conduct local project tours as teambuilding elements in all staff meetings.

- **Continue to solicit and respond to input from staff regarding how to make the SNC the best it can be.**
 - e.g. Establish an ongoing methodology for evaluating organizational (staff, management, and process) effectiveness.
 - e.g. Develop and use on-line tools to gather assessment information on a regular basis.
 - e.g. Focus executive blog postings to solicit specific input from staff.
 - e.g. Explore ways to expand staff and resources as funding permits.
- **Provide staff with the opportunities and training they need to do their jobs and continue to develop professionally.**
 - e.g. Establish a process to identify staff and manager skills and knowledge gaps.
 - e.g. Arrange for expanded project tours for all staff to get a practical “boots on the ground” understanding of the value of our work.
 - e.g. Continue to award merit awards annually and identify more ways to ensure that staff is recognized for good work.
- **Put mechanisms in place to ensure critical functions are not interrupted when staff members are out of the office.**
 - e.g. Create desk manuals for specific functions, cross-train staff in specific functions.
 - e.g. Use SharePoint as a posting tool for common reference information.
- ***Ensure that our processes, systems, and tools are efficient and effective and enable the SNC to manage resources in accordance with our highest priorities.***
 - **Continue to assess and streamline internal processes and systems to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.**
 - e.g. Implement specific actions identified in IT assessment and develop/document specific procedures.

- e.g. Devise a “SharePoint site health assessment” tool to evaluate how SharePoint sites have been constructed and are being used and provide support and strategies to site owners.
- e.g. Establish a directive to prioritize staff training and use of SharePoint so that it is used by all staff in an effective way in all our operations and projects.
- **Continue the “greening” of the SNC in accordance with the SNC Climate Action Plan.**
 - e.g. Benchmark the SNC’s energy consumption and take appropriate actions to lower usage where appropriate.
 - e.g. Determine standards for procurement of supplies to lessen the SNC’s carbon footprint.
- **Use information technology systems and tools to address information and collaboration needs across the Sierra.**
 - e.g. Identify teleconferencing (audio/video, one-way, two-way, multiple users), web-conferencing (Webex, LiveMeeting) and other collaboration tools (like Skype) that are available to us and provide guidance documents and procedures to help staff and stakeholders know when and how to use them.
 - e.g. Identify sites around the Region that have the technology that can be used by the SNC to host webinars and remote meetings.
 - e.g. Keep abreast of the latest tools in content management systems and web-based communication tools (wikis, blogs etc.) and assess which ones are appropriate and useful for the SNC to implement.
- **Develop processes and tools to prioritize and manage projects and workloads on an ongoing basis.**
 - e.g. Define workplan guidelines to help staff who are managing projects to understand how to plan and initiate projects and to realistically identify and access needed resources.
 - e.g. Use SharePoint workplanner to define project components and identify and track the completion of activities.
 - e.g. Implement the use of the SharePoint workplanner for all staff and train them on its use.

- e.g. Use this Strategic Plan to focus and prioritize staff workloads and assignments.
- **Take necessary steps to ensure the SNC is prepared to continue operations in the event of a disaster or other unforeseen event.**
 - e.g. Complete the SNC business continuity plan, assign and train staff in various roles and responsibilities, and carry out regular table-top exercises to train and test for emergency response readiness.
 - e.g. Update all emergency preparedness plans and reports on a regular and timely basis.
 - e.g. Prioritize actions recommended in the IT Assessment Report that address identified emergency/disaster preparedness weaknesses.
 - e.g. Complete the development of the Emergency Preparation, Safety, Security and Disaster Preparedness site on SharePoint and train staff on its use.

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INPUT TO STRATEGIC PLAN FROM REGIONAL OUTREACH MEETINGS

Focus Area	Workshop	Ideas
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Develop a "riparian biomass initiative" that includes riparian conservation easements for landowners to increase biomass and provide transient habitat
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Increase the amount of riparian vegetation specifically for biofuels production
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Provide incentives for the development of local co-ops and farmers markets to support "buy local" campaigns similar to the "Placer Grown" campaign
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Develop "buy local" outreach campaigns to support local agribusiness
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Develop an agricultural lands strategy with local and regional agricultural partners
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Use the SNC as a venue for cross-constituency discussions between agriculture and other interest areas (e.g., environmental, recreation, industry, etc.) similar to the "Sutter County Model"
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Expand the availability of Farm Bill programs to underserved communities within the SNC service area
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Develop targeted education programs for "non-institutionalized" agricultural communities (i.e., those not represented by large organizations such as Cattleman's or the Farm Bureau Federation)
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Provide outreach to "institutional" agricultural organizations (i.e., Cattleman's, Future Farmers of America, etc.) on the importance of agriculture in the Sierra Nevada. Link non-institutionalized farmers with these organizations where possible.
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Develop public outreach/education programs highlighting the importance of agriculture in preserving open space
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Host a Sierra agricultural summit
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Connect agriculture with the green jobs revolution
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Provide technical assistance to local land owners to apply for Farm Bill programs
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Develop technical assistance to help landowners with Endangered Species Act issues
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Provide information on how to meet regulations such as the irrigate lands regulatory program
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Develop a block grant program to streamline the grant approval process for individual landowners
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Investigate the ability of the SNC to serve as a grant "banking" partner for federal programs (EQUIP, CCPI, etc)
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Focus efforts and funding on productive working landscapes
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Provide grants to private landowners to do water quality protection/improvements
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Create a single venue for discussions on public lands grazing
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Separate Sierra Nevada foothills from the valley on water quality research
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Reduce agricultural product processing and transit times
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Work with the USDA Rural Development Program to bring mobile meat processing facilities to the region
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Create more agricultural inspection locations to make inspections more cost-effective for producers-producers currently have to drive many hours to have products inspected
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Maintain current enrollment of Williamson Act lands within the SNC service area
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Assist individual landowners with Williamson Act enrollment

Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Work with county representatives to maintain Williamson Act in their counties
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Use the SNC to investigate/advocate for changes to state and federal tax policies on agricultural lands
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Investigate/advocate for extending tax incentives on agricultural easements
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Analyze the savings in revenue provided by maintain the current agricultural base
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Preserve water resources for sustainable agriculture in the Sierra foothills
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Work with landowners and existing irrigation districts to promote more efficient water use
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Work with landowners and irrigation districts to develop incentive programs to participate in tiered water rate structures (working within existing 20x2020 and US Bureau of Reclamation guidelines)
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (public)	Concentrate on acquisitions and easements with a focus on private landscapes/agricultural land owners
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Integrate Ag opportunities with other areas of focus
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Identify obstacle to and potential solutions for ag-tourism issues
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Develop "branding"/buy local regional campaigns
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Host ag-tourism events on properties SNC has helped protect
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Partner with trusted organizations to build relationship with agriculture community (host symposiums, workshops ,etc.)
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	SNC partner with CAFF à understand where and how much as in SNC region
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Maintain or expand agricultural lands in conservation easements
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Educate farmers in benefits of easements. Work with counties to maintain in Williamson Act enrollment
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Sponsor programs that support youth education and restoration efforts on Ag land
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Coordinate school gardens programs with existing farms (eg. Life Lab)
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Educate the public about importance of agriculture in the Sierra
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Develop youth programs to perform restoration. Partner with CFFA to identify amount of ag. Dev. "branding" and buy local campaigns. Dev. Farmer's markets in local communities
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Provide education/ outreach to ranchers on sustainable grazing methods
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Develop outreach plans to educate landowners in NRCS and other programs
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Provide education on how conservation easements benefit landowners
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Disseminate info to farmers on the benefits of restoration efforts (especially upstream)
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Identify opportunities to develop block grant programs using existing grant infrastructure (especially federal programs)
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Develop workshops to assist landowners/ranchers in applying for grants
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Include grant opportunities for farmers/ranchers
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Develop BMPs for sustainable grazing
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Participate in existing statewide forums on grazing in public lands
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Encourage development if processing facilities (including mobile processing) for underserved communities
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Provide outreach to all counties to maintain ag acreage/limit as conversion to other uses
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Help develop Sierra region as an opportunity for mitigation banking to offset environmental impacts elsewhere

Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Identify opportunities for ag community to “nationalize” importance of programs like Williamson Act
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Identify obstacles/solutions for constructing community farms
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Support research aimed at dev. BMPs for ag to link value of as to environmental benefits (in region and downstream)
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Identify opportunities to fund carbon sequestration research (from ag) using AB 32
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Identify areas where easements have been successful and if not, why?
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Identify if (or where) climate change is affecting ag. And how to address this
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Develop assessment of sub-regional ag needs/ characteristics
Agricultural Lands	Auburn (Staff)	Assist agriculture community with reaching state agriculture discharge/water quality objectives
Agricultural Lands	Bishop	Review language in general plan and zoning ordinances to suggest modifications which allow broader use of agritourism, hunting, etc.
Agricultural Lands	Bishop	Conduct an agricultural sustainability symposium to highlight BMPs with organizations such as Cattleman's and the California Rangeland Trust
Agricultural Lands	Bishop	Develop a strategy for preserving agricultural land [from development] which takes into account the cost of county services should the land be developed, its ability to integrate with existing communities, overall agricultural productivity, and restrictions on future development from local and county general plans.
Agricultural Lands	Bishop	Survey general plans to identify issues related to agricultural needs
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Develop incentives for private landowners to implement BMPs
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Include profitability for agricultural producers using BMPs
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Develop oversight capabilities regarding large-scale agri-business and forest products industry
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Develop monitoring programs to ensure BMPs are being used
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Allow for more livestock diversification
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Implement BMPs to conserve resources
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Develop BMPs for emerging biomass industry
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Expand agricultural lands / manage forests to benefit fuel management
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Create agricultural-tourism opportunities
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Help develop “buy local / eat local” campaigns and markets
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Convene multi-county workshop of County Supervisors to develop policy recommendations
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Encourage coordination between state and federal programs
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Maintain economic viability of agriculture in the region
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Develop outreach / educational programs to County Board of Supervisors on implementation of preserving working landscapes within the SNC service area
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Develop public outreach / educational campaign to highlight importance of agriculture in SNC area
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Develop policy recommendations for cities regarding importance of maintaining working lands
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Educate policy makers on affects of downstream changes to water system on foothill / sierra agriculture

Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Education public on importance of agriculture in the region
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Leverage existing programs (i.e. NRCS) to provide matching funds
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Encourage development of small scale mobile meat processing
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Encourage railway to market programs
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Develop policy recommendation for County Boards to maintain working lands
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Maintain economic viability of working lands
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Make policy recommendations at local, county, and state level to maintain working lands
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	When investigating grazing policies, consider agriculture and wild grazing (e.g. wild horse herds)
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Work with state and federal water contractors to maintain agricultural water allocations
Agricultural Lands	Oroville	Reinvestigate William Act& TPZ's
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Local grown: Is this integral to the viability of agriculture in the Sierra? There's a value in looking at foodsheds in terms of working landscapes. There needs to be investment in foodshed infrastructure—this is important to the local economy and local resource base e.g. Apple Hill benefits all sorts of people including motels, gas stations and more. Localvores are an important market but need to expand out. The local food movement is an entrée into educating voters that this food comes from healthy water and healthy ecosystems. It encourages mutual interests between El Dorado and Marin. Local ag brings in sales tax dollars and property tax dollars – not just malls bring these things in.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	SNC could be a convenor re grazing on public lands. Slow process, need more people involved. (CA Farm Bureau and Defenders) Rangeland 2000 made some strides.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Bringing together a coalition of landowners like in the Sierra Buttes to put together a large grazing amount of parcels.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Could the SNC do a better job getting the ag community engaged? Time of day and time of year is very important to farmers and ranchers. Need to find the right times and places to listen. And find someone like Joanne Neff—someone who walks in two worlds, who is respected -- a patron—who can give you entrée into the ag world. The local Farm Bureaus can help. Focus group? Invite people to come to (a series) of meetings and ask them what they need. Then sit back and listen—to gather open, independent views.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	There's not enough funding for the easements that people want to give.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Lack of education about working landscapes and the Sierra -- people don't know where water comes from.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	People need to understand the importance that working landscapes play in protection of special species e.g. fairy shrimp, Swainsons hawks—they wouldn't be there if not for working landscapes.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Potential loss of the Williamson Act: this is a big issue along the western slope. They could personalize this issue perhaps in the larger education of people in the capitol.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	People don't know where water comes from? Need to get into colleges. Need for internal education of local residents. (Ca Water Foundation publication)

Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	SNC could be doing media for all communities –editorial meeting with newspapers etc. Establish relationships as an objective voice. Do this proactively. People think that preserved landscapes are never used. Replace bias with knowledge. Ranchers did a great presentation in ED in June.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Need to educate Planning Commissioners about ag lands
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	We export major commodities to the rest of the state and that story isn't being told.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Outreach and education. Putting face on landowners whoever they are. Research and infrastructure needs across the board – lack of investment impacts everyone.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Inequity between how much grant money comes to the Central Valley rather than the Sierra. Problem of matching grants. Equip dollars are oversubscribed and regional equity is a national problem.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Need to have downstream people participate to fund projects. We need to illustrate that watersheds are more than just water. Policymakers need to understand this.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Is there an opportunity to partner with others to get funding. (Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation?)
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Is there were a way to provide matching funding through RCDs?
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Economic infrastructure which supported working landscapes has disappeared e.g. there's no meat processing factory in the region and no rendering plants. This is mirrored in each aspect of the industry. We have lost USDA inspected plants for meat and there is a general lack of investment.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Infrastructure issues. Roads and sewers and internet and signage (e.g.off Hwy 50 and into the wineries). Lodi sustainability certification is expensive yet the small wineries are sustainable. Small people can't tell their story easily.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Marketing sustainability—branding Sierra agriculture
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Fragmentation is making it harder to make ranching work.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Aging of farmers and ranchers – many landscapes will change hands in next ten years.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Research needs to be compiled on benefits of grazing and make it available. Research about this issue in the Sierra is limited.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	Lack of good science – need funding for research into the benefits of grazing in the Sierra. This could perhaps be done through a partnership with UCD. (Find the publication on Vulnerability of Rangelands (TNC))
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers 1)	SNC should do a needs assessment with UCD Community Development Dept. Need to listen to what people actually need. Ranchers and farmers will tell you what they need.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Coordinate efforts, facilitate, bring people together to agree on baseline data
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Reach out to younger generation farmers/ranchers who don't have the same distrust of agencies
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Facilitate COLLABORATION/STRATEGY around grazing
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Help draw the conneciton between rangeland and watersheds
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Educate decision makers (planners) about the benefits of ag land
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Lead on-the-ground tours (or fund tours) to educate people about the benefits of grazing and other ag land values
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Use GIS to map overlap between important habitant and ag lands in the Sierra

Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Funding toolbox for ranchers--letting them know about opportunities and help with applying and paperwork
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Use SNC grant funding to match other pots of funding -- integrate with other agency funding e.g. NRCS
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Work with other agencies to match funding to get more staffing at rangeland organization offices
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Work with Watershed coordinators to increase the capacity of rangeland organizations
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Work with private foundations to help fund projects such as weed management
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Advocate for the Sierra so that grant funding from USDA doesn't all get directed at big producers in other regions of the country
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Work to get a Sierra-wide exemption to various permitting processes e.g. NEPA
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Fund water quality monitoring for farmers/ranchers
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Collaborate to gather baseline data, generate agreed upon science
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Study unintended consequences of restoration projects for downstream users (e.g. meadow restoration)
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Work with UC Coop Ext and others to get good research and data so that litigation issues which hold up permitting etc. can be more easily dealt with
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Support conservation easements on agricultural land, especially for ranches.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Work to develop strategies for agricultural land protection beyond easements: easements should not be thought of as "the end all be all" for protecting working landscapes, and do not necessarily protect the economic viability of working landscapes. At the same time, conservation easements should not be abandoned and do provide more benefits than outright acquisition (i.e., they still preserve the landscape for a lower cost and provide full time managers).
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	As an alternative to standard easements, develop programs that sell leases for grazing (on private lands) instead of restricting other activities besides grazing/growing (as in current conservation easements).
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Educate the public on the types of agriculture that take place in the Sierra (the public may not be aware that ranches ARE agriculture)
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Educate counties on the next steps for Blue Oak mitigation requirements. Direct/assist with mitigation being established in already protected areas or areas where protection could expand.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Ranches aren't always viable unless they access to public lands. Although we need to maintain easements, at the same time SNC needs to consider access to long-term leases. Some type of forum to discuss these issues could be useful.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	The term "Agricultural Lands" may not be illustrative enough- consider using "farm and ranchlands" instead in SNC documents.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Where possible, develop programs similar to the Placer County Conservation Plan. Similar strategies could be advocated for, although they are very difficult and costly to implement. As currently written, the Placer County Plan secures \$1.6 billion in funding over 50 years to preserve agricultural lands.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Leverage CESA/ESA to meet agricultural lands needs.

Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Additional layers of protection in areas where there is a lot of sprawl should be supported using grants and advocacy as much as possible (especially in areas where this type of advocacy is supported by the local population).
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	There is some concern that protection strategies could result in escalating agricultural land prices. This could lead to speculation on agricultural lands. Future farmers may have difficulty starting unless some type of agricultural succession plan is created. SNC could help develop this type of strategy.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Develop growth restriction strategies for counties before developing economic viability packages for agriculture.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Consider developing new grant rules that require project proponents to show economic viability and environmental benefit.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Identify local roadblocks to productive agriculture and advocate for "Right to Farm" rules.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Develop strategies to remove barriers for existing agricultural operations to grow or diversify.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Work with counties to align oak (and all) mitigation requirements with agricultural protection.
Agricultural Lands	Sacramento KC	Support research on agricultural landscapes.
Agricultural Lands	Sonora	Create marketing campaigns to brand Sierra agricultural products
Agricultural Lands	Sonora	Promote buy local campaigns
Agricultural Lands	Sonora	Develop programs to establish conservation easements aimed at maintaining working ranches
Agricultural Lands	Sonora	Educate the public and environmentalists on the importance of working landscapes in preserving open space and maintaining ecosystems
Agricultural Lands	Sonora	Host conversations between agencies about the importance of sustaining Sierra Nevada agricultural infrastructure
Agricultural Lands	Sonora	Sustain the economic viability of working ranches
Agricultural Lands	Sonora	Work with counties to develop alternatives to the Williamson Act if continued enrollment becomes unsustainable
Agricultural Lands	Sonora	Analyze the benefits of agricultural conservation easements vs. acquisitions for open space preservation
Agricultural Lands	Susanville	Ensure that conservation easement contracts to remove control of the land from the landowner
Agricultural Lands	Susanville	Determine whether support of Conservation Easements on working landscapes is still a priority
Agricultural Lands	Susanville	Strengthen the criteria for evaluation of Conservation easements for multiple benefits
Agricultural Lands	Susanville	Provide outreach to the public on the value of agricultural lands
Agricultural Lands	Susanville	Publicize BMPs for management of agricultural lands
Agricultural Lands	Susanville	Provide support for permitting processes on restoration projects
Agricultural Lands	Susanville	Protect water rights theory and practice
Agricultural Lands	Susanville	Provide "licensed expertise" to assist with noxious weed control on private lands in combination with education and outreach about invasive species on public lands
Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Educate legislators and the public about the value of foothill agriculture and that agricultural lands have water retention and wildlife value
Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Educate the public about the importance of agricultural land as open space

Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Recruit farmers as spokespersons for agricultural outreach
Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Maintain existing agricultural lands
Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Maintain Williamson Act enrollment
Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Advocate for smart growth policies to protect agricultural lands
Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Disseminate research highlighting the high productivity of California grazing land
Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Conduct studies on the best way to protect agricultural lands
Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Reduce competition for water between housing and agriculture
Agricultural Lands	Visalia	Provide funding for weed eradication
General	Auburn (public)	Create an annual "State of the Sierra" report or event
General	Auburn (Staff)	Educate SN constituents so they can influence legislators (list publications SNC is regularly featured in)
General	Sonora	Work with other agencies such as the Strategic Growth Council to establish matching funds or portions of their grant programs to focus on and fund Sierra projects.
General	Sonora	Develop something similar to the Great Valley Center for the Sierra Nevada to help translate science to the general public
General	Sonora	Continue publicizing other grant funding sources for grant seekers
General	Sonora	Maintain the "advance payment" of grant monies to organizations in need of this option
General	Sonora	Revise the proposed \$250,000 limit for acquisition projects
General		Target politicians and the public through letters to the editor, letters to specific opinion leaders (such as Congressional and State representatives), and constant encouragement to support actions in the Sierra
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Advocate for federal policy changes
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Create incentives for the construction of co-generation plants and biomass facilities
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Increase the effectiveness of existing forest collaboratives
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Foster increased communication of Sierra needs in a cohesive, unified fashion
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Increase SNC presence in decision making forums/get more involved in policy development
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Promote local government involvement in forestry issues
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Explore additional partnerships between SNC, local reclamation districts, and the USDA
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Develop dialogues to increase coordination between natural resources agencies at the local, state, and federal levels
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Develop GIS tools to foster collaboration/strategy across forest boundaries
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Promote the "Community Forest Concept" from Weaverville
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Coordinate mine remediation with resources agencies
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Disseminate a comprehensive definition of biomass using federal information sources (i.e., Farm Bill) and state sources (i.e., California Air Resources Board)
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Create an education campaign for schools and urban centers on the value of healthy forests (including oak woodlands) including radio advertisements, field trips, classroom instruction, and teacher training
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Initiate "save a tree" campaigns
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Develop private and federal forest partnerships with universities, including tours for the public and students, and identification of areas for expansion within education
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Provide funding for grant project monitoring

Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Provide seed money for biomass projects
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Support existing groups already doing work in the Sierra Nevada to provide a consistent funding stream
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Focus funding for maintenance on high priority projects
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Provide resources and consolidate information into a functional tool
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Develop a climate change vulnerability assessment of the entire Sierra Nevada Region
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Increase the pace and scale of forest management
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Generate 30% of revenue from natural resource production
Healthy Forests	Auburn (public)	Use large timber company research for marketing campaigns
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Encourage development of biomass facility on western border of SNC area to utilize forest and agricultural products
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Look at forests as a mitigation bank for carbon and water and air quality issues, rather than focusing on carbon markets
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Develop common agreed-upon goals based on shared science
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Develop list of entities that need to agree
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Engage people coming in out of left field to get them bought in – if they can't be brought in, marginalize them
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Develop coalition within environmental community to engage those who don't get it
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Local environmental community needs to focalize their concerns to statewide groups
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Build understanding that we are restoring forests to a natural state
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Understand that there are shared values around forestry issues
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Bring groups together to get funding, address issues
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Be a neutral party for facilitation
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Reduce or eliminate negative rhetoric: reframe discussion and target opinion leaders
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Take advantage of opportunities to integrate goals/groups (IRWMP & forest collaborative)
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Get people to focus on what they agree on; keep bringing them back to that
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Sell people on advantages of collaboration eg. Funding
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Negotiate Sierra Nevada "forest treaty", find the Sierra Versailles, fund carrots. Build common vision, recognize common risks-No action is the risk
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Increase efforts/ resources toward tribal engagement
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Help to build relationships among governmental jurisdictions –local ,state, federal
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Bridge differences in how people define forest health without marginalizing too many people/groups
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Build on consensus and trust each project can lead to more consensus on next project
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Participate in landscape conservation cooperatives on healthy forests
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Ecosystem services include tourism and recreation; need to get those players to the table on forest issues
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Identify a champion who has credibility
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Educate people and groups about the interconnectedness of issues. Help people see the watershed, not just the trees
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Address marijuana gardens & environmental degradation

Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Educate young people about healthy forests (engage schools and have them engage in projects)
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Educate those outside the region about the state of Sierra forests, what is a healthy forests (talk about specific areas). Use language that is easy to understand, use social media, and system indicators
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Get people into forests to see management strategies in action, see actual conditions of forests
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Build support and local capacity
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	A strong agreed upon scientific platform for people to coalesce around (based on an inventory of existing science and using the regional council)
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Become a clearinghouse for info on resources
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Work on getting a common definition of healthy forest, perhaps by region
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Quantify improvements in forests health
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Look at DOW/TNC collaboration on Ecosystem services
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Bring science together, synthesize it
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Eliminate ambiguity; develop commonly-accepted principles
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Quantify costs/gains of fuel reduction: what does litigation cost, how much water is saved, how much does fighting fires cost, fire insurance, jobs
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Implement SNFCI
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Make stronger tie between SNFCI and watershed restoration
Healthy Forests	Auburn (Staff)	Carbon offsets –broker and develop projects in the Sierra
Healthy Forests	Bishop	Assist in the development of forest products/biofuels business
Healthy Forests	Bishop	Utilize existing forest management infrastructure for multiple uses (e.g., forest roads for cycling and OHV)
Healthy Forests	Bishop	Support fuels management and defensible space projects
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Advocate to change power plant contracts to help cover removal costs (and transport)
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Green waste facility in area WUIs
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Identify / support market niches (small wood products) businesses
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Make sure SNC accounts for these BMPs in thinning design
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Policies need to follow BMPs
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Incorporate climate impacts into forest health / fuels treatment priorities
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Include mitigation or climate threats in evaluating grants (longer-term things in grant scoring)
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Create forest cooperation
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Aid small landowners to collaborative in forest management
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Support communities to have input into state decisions of forests
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Educate public on regulation that is in place on forest management
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Education on positive aspects of natural processes: fire, grazing
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Educate homeowners on existing BMPs on Forest Health and watershed health
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Homeowners should understand relationship of small private timber owners to forest health
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Partner with insurance companies on fire safe standards (standardization)
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Long-term goal of establishing natural fires
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Awards for individual actions of good stewardship

Healthy Forests	Oroville	Reduce catastrophic impacts of forest fires
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Educate landowners on fuel thinning and motivate them to do so
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Protect forest communities (human and wildlife)
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Create incentives (i.e. rebates) for landowners to reduce fuels
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Increase grazing into thinned forest areas to maintain vegetation health
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Avoid habitat loss that often occurs when fuel projects remove understory
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Facilitate development of outlets for ash from co-gen plants
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Invasive weed removal (especially scotch broom)
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Bio-engineering invasive weeds to mitigate
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Account for potential colonization by invasive in all restoration type projects, including fuel breaks
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Avoid soil erosion
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Factor soil erosion impacts into evaluation of fuel treatment projects
Healthy Forests	Oroville	SNC to shed light on large scale private forest management
Healthy Forests	Oroville	SNC to evaluate on-the-ground conditions to forest harvest plans
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Research methods to rehydrate meadows
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Encourage mandates for native planting in WUIS. Work with Caltrans on right of ways
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Reduce erosion from illegal travel / recreation activities
Healthy Forests	Oroville	Maintain robust and diverse fauna and flora
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	Develop an advocacy role for SNC to align state policy with the realities of forest management (for example, work with CARB to focus on fire prevention as opposed to miles of travel in rural areas)
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	Use the SNC as a convener for workshops/forums related to Healthy Forests, and allow stakeholders to figure out the specifics
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	Develop community forest initiatives to provide a nexus between research and projects. There is gap between the time that community forests are in the "nursing" stage and actually producing financial gain. Where possible, the SNC should partner in these initiatives with local groups.
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	SNC should work to ensure that market forces are an ally in large scale conservation efforts instead of opponents. Finding ways to help private landowners reach their land management objectives while still turning a profit and bringing their products to market is absolutely critical. SNC could serve as the organization to create a VISION for conservation that takes all of these things into account. One key component of the visioning process could be education and outreach to remind landowners that everyone in the Sierra Nevada is working for the economic and environmental benefit of the region (i.e., develop a way to communicate beyond either economic OR environmental benefits to include BOTH)
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	Large scale landscape conservation initiatives need to be aligned with healthy forest/working landscape objectives. As these projects continue to gain prevalence, the SNC needs to remember that there has to be connectivity between conservation projects to preserve large scale landscapes.
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	Highlight the nexus between the importance of healthy forests on private and public lands.

Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	Think of other things outside of the existing SNC grant program to show “lessons learned” in past SNC funded projects. The SNC could facilitate discussions that bring together a variety of interests involved in these projects to hear about them in the same room.
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	Maintain funding and acquisition programs.
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	Refer to biomass issues as a standalone item and a means for achieving overarching healthy forest objectives.
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	Understand that biomass facilities have a number of roadblocks including: policies not being aligned, facilities being outdated, barriers to biomass supply, and regulatory barriers in general. The SNC could host discussions on this issue throughout the Sierra Nevada. One questions is whether the facilities and market for biomass products exist. Wood pellets/blocks for heating come entirely from the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, and aren't really used throughout most of California.
Healthy Forests	Sacramento KC	There are important conservation projects that can be done on smaller scales. SNC needs to be clear about what the overall goal of conservation is, and how some of these smaller projects fit together in the larger conservation framework.
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Create a viable market for biomass utilization
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Encourage biomass product development
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Work with the California Public Utilities Commission to create biomass incentives
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Develop a coalition of biomass supporters to speak on biofuels issues with a unified voice
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Invest in climate change remediation and restoration projects
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Provide outreach to build fuels reduction partnerships
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Educate the public about the impact of marijuana cultivation on public lands, including environmental and public safety risks
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Educate the public on the importance of fuels reduction and how fire affects watersheds
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Develop sustainable fuels reduction strategies
Healthy Forests	Sonora	Facilitate planning for fuels reduction across agencies and jurisdictions
Healthy Forests	Susanville	Tap into social power for renewable energy- make compelling arguments to keep energy production local.
Healthy Forests	Susanville	Emphasize the avoided costs by diverting funding from fire suppression budgets to fuels reduction programs (it's cheaper to prevent than to suppress)
Healthy Forests	Susanville	Focus on large scale fuel treatments at a scale of 60,000 acres/year
Healthy Forests	Susanville	Create a strategy to maintain existing forest products infrastructure (i.e., mills, co-generation plants, etc)
Healthy Forests	Susanville	Perform comparative cost analysis of real fire occurrences
Healthy Forests	Susanville	Look into the David Gallo report and use his methodology through the Sierra
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Study and analyze the effects of controlled burns on air quality
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Integrate and implement the Sierra National Forest Community Initiative resolution
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Develop electricity sucharges and biomass incentives
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Support co-generation plants/technology including portable plants, small steam energy generation, and subsidized cogeneration energy compensation
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Support CES for carbon sequestration
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Utilize SNC contacts to leverage action and speak across agency lines [on forestry issues]

Healthy Forests	Visalia	Provide a neutral platform to integrate forestry with water management planning
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Coordinate support/provide leadership to support landscape level restoration activities
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Provide outreach to publicize project successes and build support of the program
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Provide outreach materials about forestry issues at visitor centers
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Provide education to urban centers and the general public to highlight the belief that there is no shortage of trees and that increased harvesting is needed to restore a natural balance
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Host site visits for decision makers to see what is being done on private and public lands [regarding forestry BMPs]
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Continue "Sierra Day at the Capital"
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Provide long-term investments in fuels reduction projects
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Develop and require BMPs to include grazing animals and protect wildlife
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Fund a study to quantify the costs of and delays caused by increased regulations
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Engage the University of California system to use its scientific expertise
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Work to define the relationship between forest management and water supply
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Perform a study to provide broadly accepted understandings of forest growth/yield. Engage in joint fact finding between interest groups and define the current information base
Healthy Forests	Visalia	Identify the top 10 areas within the Sierra Nevada at greatest risk for large damaging fires
Healthy Forests		Address legal challenges effectively on federal lands. Specifically, identify appropriate groups, target common litigants, educate the public, bring science into the dialogue, and talk to key decision makers [in advance of litigation]
Healthy Forests		Educate the public on what's at stake from healthy/unhealthy forests including the health effects from air quality (smoke) and water quality issues.
Healthy Forests		Capitalize on projects that can export energy from elsewhere- Lassen and Plumas county export energy from the area and could provide additional energy outside their immediate jurisdiction. This could lead to additional jobs and better resource efficiency.
Healthy Forests		Focus on fuel reduction projects with a scope similar to large area multi-county efforts with larger acreages
Healthy Forests		Implement the Sierra Nevada Forest Communities Initiative
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (public)	Develop region wide maps depicting all current SNC-funded projects
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Give short-term priority to finishing off "lingering" efforts (eg system indicators, Easygrants implementation, etc.) so we can: a.) start reaping the benefits of the work, and b.) get them off the to-do list
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Keep considering ways to organize/realign staff resources to achieve goals and find way(s) to provide more focus so individuals are not scattered across so many priority activities at the same time
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Get fund development contractor on board to help us strategize and diversify our funding, especially once Prop 84 goes away
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Collaboration with other agencies
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Policy: coordinated meetings with policy makers regarding any legislation involving the Sierra
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	-more proactive outreach to Tribes...determine what we have to offer them and staff this adequately

Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Integrated management such that SNC staff have the opportunity to discuss relevant topics with their managers that are being discussed at management meetings.
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	-rotate all staff meeting locations
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Work with legislators on Sierra issues.
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Develop youth outreach strategy
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Leverage all the county supervisors (not just Board members) to assist us in funding and outreach efforts.
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Shameless promotion
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Develop a communication plan and train staff in communications
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Completion of lingering tasks (organizational efficiency)
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Develop a decision-making tool to decide when to take on new projects and to help identify priorities
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Continue to work on internal efficiency by getting relevant info to the right people but minimizing time spent in internal meetings
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Related to the above – lean more on technology (skype, etc.) in place of driving to meetings, especially internal since we can control this
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Fee for service idea e.g. facilitation
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Strengthen non-profit arm of SNC
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Funding: develop the SNC NGO to implement funding ideas discussed
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Funding: fee for services such as GIS, having the SNC be the agency that provides data and expertise to write reports for the Sierra, ect.?
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Funding: license plate campaign minus the 7,500 threshold
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	explore urban funding for rural areas (follow Tahoe’s lead on using urban transportation planning dollars based on their visitor, not population, numbers).
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	further develop the nonprofit arm of the SNC
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Ecosystem Services: how can get fee systems in place, move the Moke Pilot forward...
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Brand the Sierra, and own the brand.
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Data integration: what data can be collected from our stakeholders in the Sierra to address our four areas of interest, and how can we assimilate them into GIS?
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Reevaluate exiting talent/expertise within SNC and use it.
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Recognize staff efforts
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	develop a relationship with CCP beyond just contracting their facilitators: CCP could mentor/train SNC staff to make us more effective as local facilitation resources for the constituents of the Sierra Nevada. This would build our agency’s capacity, the capacity of our Region, and better equip us for a potential fee for service model for the SNC.
Organization Effectiveness	Auburn (staff)	Identify ways to recognize good work in the absence of job promotion opportunities
Organization Effectiveness	Oroville	Contingency plan for funding in relation to State freeze
Organization Effectiveness	Oroville	Consistent fund stream
Organization Effectiveness	Oroville	Continue with other fund sources email
Organization Effectiveness	OTHER	Initiate regular gatherings of sister agencies to discuss issues and learn from each other, as well as to identify partnering opportunities
Organization Effectiveness	OTHER	Make external outreach to legislators, especially urban representatives, a higher priority

Organization Effectiveness	OTHER	Make educational, communication, marketing, and promotion activities a higher priority
Organization Effectiveness	Sacramento	Engage in private fundraising efforts where feasible
Organization Effectiveness	Sacramento KC	Educate external stakeholders on the importance of the SNC so <i>they</i> can lobby for continued support
Organization Effectiveness	Sacramento KC	Reconvene the Working Group/Kitchen Cabinet to address current funding constraints and ongoing effectiveness of the SNC
Organization Effectiveness	Sacramento KC	Increase visibility with major statewide groups that could be major supporters for the SNC.
Organization Effectiveness	Sacramento KC	Expand outreach efforts to decision makers – it is important to build relationships and visibility in Sacramento.
Organization Effectiveness	Sacramento KC	Develop clear priorities for projects and plan implementation given the ongoing funding difficulties.
Organization Effectiveness	Sacramento KC	Investigate how other conservancies have been able to remain effective in previous economic downturns.
Organization Effectiveness	Sacramento KC	Investigate multiple public funding streams.
Organization Effectiveness	Visalia	Develop coordinated messaging for the Sierra Nevada
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Advocate for parks in light of the current budget crisis
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Promote "leave no trace" activities at community events, boy scout/girl scout camps, etc
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Provide increased coordination among sub-regional efforts by creating networks for project solicitors and information exchange
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Create partnerships between different recreation communities (i.e., OHV partnerships with geotourism)
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Create collaboratives for regional trail networks to provide more facilities, better access, and greater collaboration between motorized/non-motorized forms of recreation
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Develop an advocacy role for increased open space by assisting with comprehensive trail planning and collaborating with counties to develop recreation/tourism plans
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Develop a marketing strategy with the California Travel and Tourism Commission
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Develop recreation relationships with colleges and universities
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Develop partnerships between the SNC and National Geographic
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Promote tourism in the region by making more information available in a variety of venues such as online, county visitors bureaus, or setting up booths at community events
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Help create materials for visitors bureaus throughout the Sierra Nevada
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Assist with outreach and messaging on public lands. Act as a conduit for news/messages from public land managers
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Create and disseminate state or Sierra-wide fishing advisories
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Promote fishing derbies
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Develop sustainable funding sources for diverse recreation throughout the Sierra Nevada region
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Develop a "branding" campaign that goes beyond iconic areas like Yosemite
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Advocate for "sports-based" recreation
Recreation	Auburn (public)	By 2015, develop guidelines to incentivize non-peak season/time usage of fee-based recreational facilities
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Increase or decrease recreation fees for use depending on the season/time of use

Recreation	Auburn (public)	Integrate tourism and recreation with other focus areas (such as agritourism)
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Carry out feasibility studies to create additional national recreation areas, corridors, and scenic bypass regions
Recreation	Auburn (public)	Develop a recreation-specific SNC staff position
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Represent Sierra Nevada on Recreation & tourism issues – more involved in state Recreation & Tourism orgs.
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Organize, convene orgs to support trail dev. Volunteer recruitment
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Bring different groups together
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Support existing network in the Sierra
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Support local trail Councils
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Establish relationships with State and National organizations
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Create a Sierra Nevada Recreation & Tourism network
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Assist in creating Recreation & Tourism Collaborations – Convening and Facilitate
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Recreation “master plan”
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Capture stories to those outside the area
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Include Info about the Sierra with fishing licenses
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Sponsor Sierra groups to hold state conferences
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Assist in creation of Trails endowment funds
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	SNC is dedicating appropriate resources to Recreation & tourism efforts
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Support geo-tourism, leverage funds
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Build on geo-tourism effort
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Use geo-tourism to launch new efforts
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Create Sierra Nevada “passport”
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Assist in creating tour packages
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	10K miles of trails “adopted by”
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Use Recreation & Tourism feature to website
Recreation	Auburn (Staff)	Improve quality and quantity of Recreation & Tourism opportunities
Recreation	Bishop	Support interagency collaboraiton to create a seamless recreational experience (i.e., between the US Forest Service, National Parks, State Parks, etc)
Recreation	Bishop	Educate the public on sustainable recreation practices
Recreation	Bishop	Support signage for education and outreach to OHV users
Recreation	Bishop	Acquire private lands to create recreational connectivity
Recreation	Bishop	Create a Sierra-wide branding campaign for Sierra tourism
Recreation	Oroville	Include coordination between SNC and the US Forest Service, BLM, State Parks, etc regarding trail rules
Recreation	Oroville	Include coordination between trail maintenance groups and forest product groups to remove deadfall (where appropriate)
Recreation	Oroville	Collaborate with California Conservation Corps regarding trail building, and state parks trail design
Recreation	Oroville	Aid in collaboration between local and state agencies. In light of shift in responsibilities from state and local level. Inmate work crews
Recreation	Oroville	Consider having RCDs as a liaison

Recreation	Oroville	Work with and supporting recreation and tourism associations (encourage membership)
Recreation	Oroville	Coordinate various efforts and facilitate coordination between groups
Recreation	Oroville	SNC could be the "One stop" to find all the hidden gems (events, recreational opportunities, fishing, wine region)
Recreation	Oroville	SNC could be a clearinghouse for support and assistance to connect groups (RCDs) to events (runs, fests)
Recreation	Oroville	Educate the public regarding public lands, leave no trace, cooperation with other users
Recreation	Oroville	Wilderness common sense courtesy and respect
Recreation	Oroville	Seminars for law enforcement personnel on wilderness law
Recreation	Oroville	Incentives for schools to get involved in the outdoors and trail maintenance
Recreation	Oroville	Start reaching kids in schools
Recreation	Oroville	Find Sierra Nevada mentors
Recreation	Oroville	Provide resources for teachers
Recreation	Oroville	Provide opportunities to reach troubled youth
Recreation	Oroville	Promote the good news ex: education program to leave no trace
Recreation	Oroville	Create major magnet events
Recreation	Oroville	Look for non-traditional events to promote region and education
Recreation	Oroville	Assist with producing new events
Recreation	Oroville	Provide funding for maintenance (trails and training)
Recreation	Oroville	Use recreation to promote tourism on public lands
Recreation	Oroville	Promote working vacations, trails, programs (maintain)
Recreation	Oroville	Encourage ecotourism and local events
Recreation	Oroville	Publicize the various events throughout Sierra Nevada
Recreation	Oroville	Promote Sierra Nevada as a wedding destination
Recreation	Oroville	Support and encourage using California Conservation Corps and youth efforts in relationship to programs
Recreation	Oroville	Fishery resources need sufficient water and law enforcement (more rangers, wardens)
Recreation	Oroville	Protect wild fish and game, hooked on fishing programs
Recreation	Oroville	Research / aggregate data on current recreation / tourism numbers
Recreation	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Develop model codes about bio-implication risks of agritourism
Recreation	Sacramento (Ranchers)	Help ranchers deal with liability issues around agri-tourism
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Provide a convening of a regional-wide destination. Must come from the ground up, but SNC can be key.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Getting people to accept each others' views. Need forums to bring people together.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	SBC conferences are missed. They improved collaboration and provided a place for cross pollination of ideas.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Need to bring multiple people together to promote the area. Could the SNC fill this gap?
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Is there a regional approach that we can take? A Sierra Nevada Caucus would be good. How would we convene collaborations and caucuses on a regional basis? We could facilitate something like this. Invest in/use web technology to get people involved.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Must invest in getting agencies working together.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Use SBC leadership course trainees to facilitate meetings.

Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Provide a sense of the coherence of the Sierra region. We are about the range and all the cultures and heritage of the Sierra.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Break through the county barriers and identify as a region. Tourists don't care which county they're in. Bring chambers together. Help us be more regional. Provide a more coherent experience.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Need to build capacity of all the small Chambers of Commerce and Arts Organizations etc.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Storytelling—this can happen through geotourism site.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	What brings people to the Sierra? Nature. This is our heritage. SNC has to create understanding that the SN is a jewel in the USA. This understanding needs to include all the different ways that people engage in the SN.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	We could mimic the "Connect the Dots" webinars and do a series on tourism and recreation. We could also do small scaled webinars.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Lots can be done with messaging and storytelling for not a lot of money e.g. a series such as Arts/Trails/Wines of the Sierra. A PR campaign isn't too hard to do.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Storytell about successful grant projects to get people to visit
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Make the connection between people who recreate in the Sierra and their support of things (Water Bonds, other funding measures) that protect the upper watershed
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Combine the geotourism work with additional Asset mapping. (see Zoomaru.net for example)
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	We need to create a joint media plan for communities with a layered approach for a varied audience.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Ask Sierra Heritage to do regular features.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	We should replicate the Mono County Recreation Access tool which is GIS based database of all tourism activities, so that future planning efforts takes place with these in mind.
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	We could do a study on the value of recreation to the counties. (Has the CCTA got this info already? Or Ca Roundtable on Parks and Tourism?)
Recreation	Sacramento (Tourism)	Steward of the larger concept of the Sierra. Must be reliable and consistent.
Recreation	Sacramento KC	Highlight the importance of agritourism in the Sierra Nevada.
Recreation	Sacramento KC	Utilize the networks set up by the geotourism project to identify other opportunities (using geocouncils to build stronger collaborative relationships between all member entities).
Recreation	Sacramento KC	Ensure that there are sustainable and high quality recreational opportunities even in slow economic times.
Recreation	Sacramento KC	Identify areas that may be good for National Heritage Area/National Recreation Area status-characterize as a tool for local economic development
Recreation	Sonora	Promote responsible tourism
Recreation	Sonora	Provide outreach to educate the public about the SNC geotourism project
Recreation	Sonora	Provide outreach about recreational opportunities in the southern Sierra
Recreation	Sonora	Develop a marketing strategy to brand Sierra tourism and recreation
Recreation	Sonora	Develop "gateway" projects for non-traditional activities and for smaller towns/regions
Recreation	Susanville	Create a vision/strategy for trail networks in the Sierra
Recreation	Susanville	Develop a regional tourism marketing plan
Recreation	Susanville	Advocate for policies to support cross-jurisdictional trails efforts including interagency coordination

Recreation	Susanville	Form coalitions for insurance liabilities on public-access lands
Recreation	Susanville	Communicate with the State Tourism Office to advocate for Sierra recreation
Recreation	Susanville	Continue support of locally defined recreation projects
Recreation	Susanville	Support agritourism events through sponsorship activities
Recreation	Susanville	Promote "loop driving" to increase rural tourism
Recreation	Susanville	Support efforts by local chambers of commerce to create local tourism guides, including local transportation services
Recreation	Susanville	Provide assistance in the northern Sierra for implementation of Rail Trails- implementation is time sensitive due to rail banking
Recreation	Susanville	Develop travel management systems that include recreational opportunities
Recreation	Susanville	Establish methods to highlight and provide support for recreation-related transit services
Recreation	Visalia	Coordinate regional tourism along the Golden Chain Highway
Recreation	Visalia	Provide public outreach to increase understanding of the agricultural landscape in the Sierra Nevada and raise awareness of the importance of agriculture for tourism in the region
Recreation	Visalia	Conduct media outreach and develop PSAs showcasing Sierra Nevada destinations
Recreation	Visalia	Increase advocacy efforts to educate decision makers about the importance of recreation in the Sierra Nevada
Recreation	Visalia	Coordinate with DFG to disseminate information on which streams will be stocked each year
Recreation	Visalia	Have National Parks Service staff distribute 1 million SNC information pamphlets over a 12 month period
Recreation	Visalia	Enforce regional and community fire plans
Recreation	Visalia	Provide grants to the US Forest Service to maintain/improve forest roads in order to keep them open for recreation
Recreation	Visalia	Develop grants for California Conservation Corps activities
Recreation	Visalia	Coordinate efforts to increase TOT funding
Recreation	Visalia	Host "free fishing" days
Recreation	Visalia	Poll campgrounds to measure the number of days they are impacted by smoke
Recreation		Educate the public about rules and regulations governing responsible tourism
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Convene and facilitate dialogues on soft storage and water rights
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Create a Sierra-wide water marketing plan
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Sponsor an IRWMP conference
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Increase public education and awareness of the value of healthy watersheds
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Investigate the use of higher education programs to education college students on the value of healthy watersheds
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Use elementary school programs to educate children on the value of healthy watersheds
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Work with schools to develop watershed-specific curricula
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Work with local developers to fund restoration projects
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Consider creating user fees for dams that have met their bond obligations to fund watershed resotation
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Remove old/unused infrastructure from waterways
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Survey and evaluate abandoned infrastructure in waterways

Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Encourage "green" infrastructure for stormwater management, floodplain restoration, and wildlife corridors
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Remove invasive plants from mountain meadows
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Promote the growth of indigenous species
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Prioritize watershed projects that have been identified as significant
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Decommission unused/under-used roads
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Prioritize mountain meadows that can/should be protected and restored
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Monitor meadow restoration projects to determine their impact on adjacent land and flow levels
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	When implementing projects, focus on quantifiable categories such as meadow restoration
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Define in-stream requirements
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Identify willing sellers (of water rights) to meet flow requirements
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Identify unaddressed waterways that have "escaped" attention
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Identify watershed health species indicators
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Establish a comprehensive, Sierra-wide watershed based database and website for citizen input
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Utilize good science [for restoration projects] by working with the University of California
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Meet in-stream flow requirements on 10 rivers/reaches by 2014
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Restore 20% of degraded meadows by 2014
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Reduce 20% of the fuel load in forests to increase water production
Watershed Protection	Auburn (public)	Fund mercury remediation efforts
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Educate consumers on BMPs for surface water conservation
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Collaborate and coordinate with existing processes to come up with region wide watershed master plan (priority) and toolbox of strategies
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Establish working partnerships
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	focus on watershed health in more collaborative open way
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Better integrate land use forests etc into watershed restoration
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Encourage real collaboration between forest and watershed groups and all groups in watershed
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Partner with DFG to educate public re watershed health
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Statewide education (i.e. where water comes from and legislation education)
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	GSRC (sister clean up coast, combine data eoc, dual publicity, and monitoring in schools)
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Use data to tell stories regarding specific needs in the area and impacts outside the area
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Media/Education messages need to integrate water/forests/etc and be more compelling and point out threats
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Educate industrial farms operations about water conservation, BMPs etc.
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Link GSRC with SNC as QC manager
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Explore new revenue-- Advocate for developing new funding streams (FERC relicensing, PUC public good charge, study ecosystem services revenue without regulation, advocate for increased targeted revenue, and increase visibility in Sacramento)
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Use grants Funds for priority areas
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Leverage other agencies' monies to be directed at Sierra Nevada watersheds

Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Funding needs to come from rate payers. Need to make the link: cost avoidance for new infrastructure or no more dams
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Take a more proactive approach to pursuing funds for our stakeholders
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	GSRC: morve restoration, volume based restoration (increase 50%), identify more groups (increase 100%) in every watershed, and set up workshops on volumes restoration projects
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Establish IRWMPS
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Create a GIS watershed directory
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Use the SNA list to identify what is being done and where (What is needed, money brought to watersheds, and identify what the problem is)
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Define and gain acceptance for # of watersheds in the SN
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Standardize criteria for watershed function in Sierra Nevada
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Identify who is getting Sierra Nevada water (incorporate user fees, make personal connections in targeted areas)
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Add on knowledge regarding land and air uses impacting watersheds
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Work with USFS to collect data about watersheds
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Sound science behind upper meadow restoration plans
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Improve watershed functions 5-10%
Watershed Protection	Auburn (Staff)	Avoid conflict over unintended consequences of restoration efforts
Watershed Protection	Sacramento KC	SNC should play a role in educating Sierra communities on the impacts of climate change on THEIR communities and how to adapt (Jeff Mount, UC Davis, has developed a map of meadows that can adapt to climate change stressors).
Watershed Protection	Sacramento KC	SNC should work to build credibility between regulating agencies (FWS, DFG, SWRCB, etc) and NRCS- facilitate conversations to streamline permitting process for restoration projects
Watershed Protection	Sonora	Fund healthy watershed planning efforts in upper Sierra watersheds
Watershed Protection	Sonora	Developing marketing and education plans emphasizing the importance of Sierra water on California ("Without the Sierra, California would be the Sahara")
Watershed Protection	Sonora	Continue funding existing watershed restoration projects
Watershed Protection	Sonora	Work with urban water users to fund water supply improvement projects in the upper watershed
Watershed Protection	Sonora	Focus remaining SNC funds on IRWMP projects, especially in the Southern Sierra and Madera County
Watershed Protection	Sonora	Develop a scientific advisory council similar to the CalFed Science Panel
Watershed Protection	Sonora	Provide support for the Sierra Nevada Research Institute for its snowpack study
Watershed Protection	Susanville	Create partnerships on private lands to initiate watershed restoration through something similar to the Bay Delta Initiative
Watershed Protection	Susanville	Engage the district ranger for the Plumas National Forest- take advantage of interested participants
Watershed Protection	Susanville	Continue grant funding for watershed restoration (for 2011 grant solicitations)
Watershed Protection	Susanville	Continue to support restoration projects on eastside rivers and streams; partner with other project organizations where feasible

Watershed Protection	Susanville	Work with communities in the Sierra to address issues of water conservation through keeping water in the Sierra. When thinking about water conservation in the Sierra, it is important to keep in mind western Nevada issues
Watershed Protection	Visalia	Assist mountain counties with an outreach campaign to demonstrate the value of watersheds with benefits from FERC relicensing
Watershed Protection	Bishop	Support or conduct educational and interpretive projects
Watershed Protection	Bishop	Conduct trainings on BMPs [for landowners]
Watershed Protection	Bishop	Leverage funding for private landowners and lessees that support BMPs
Watershed Protection	Bishop	Support invasive species/weed eradication
Watershed Protection	Bishop	Support project that improve water quality with an emphasis on those that can provide their own monitoring (rather than committing to SNC monitoring)
Watershed Protection	Bishop	Support volunteer-based stewardship
Watershed Protection	Bishop	Support restoration projects on private lands
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Legislative outreach
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Partner with other agencies
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Integrate with law enforcement on protection and enhancement
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Navigate systems (i.e. law enforcement)to better allocate volunteer efforts
Watershed Protection	Oroville	FERC process? Engage in
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Educating State on importance of protecting national state resources
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Establish database (SWIM)
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Watershed Education in schools
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Provide education regarding threats to water quality
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Provide education eg field trips
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Provide education eg science camps
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Link education to on the ground.
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Region-wide events/education practiced at local level
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Seminar on protection water quality for law enforcement
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Invasive species – provide funds /asst. to orgs that are working on private lands
Watershed Protection	Oroville	On state level – stop sales of invasive, education campaign on moving plant
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Provide hands on experience for students on private lands, watershed projects
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Develop education materials that fit with existing state curriculum for watershed ed
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Target ranchette properties for education
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Partner with RCDs/RC&Ds for education
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Land owner workshops
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Improved fish habitat and populations
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Fish ladders
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Leveraging others' dollars
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Leverage funds (ex. Steelhead rest.)
Watershed Protection	Oroville	ID suite of priority projects and fund accordingly
Watershed Protection	Oroville	SNC to support organizations that deal directly with landowners , on the ground
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Field trip fund
Watershed Protection	Oroville	SNC as match (NRCS as ex.) small parcels

Watershed Protection	Oroville	Funds for maintenance. Understand how other groups fund maintenance
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Provide resources to private landowners in upper watershed (tools, asst dealing with invasive Species)
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Invasive removal
Watershed Protection	Oroville	SNC provide GIS services to wk. with this on watershed level
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Information on the groundwater available and recharge
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Need more information and research
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Prepare policy on water storage
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Absent land owners and how to deal ID these parcels / chase for Butte County
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Maintaining international resources
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Trespassing, water rights
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Enforcement patrol
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Annual steward. award at county level
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Cost-share/incentive program for private land owners
Watershed Protection	Oroville	Leasing land for small scale agencies
Watershed Protection	Sacramento KC	Develop a way to strategically link climate change to watershed protection (align SNC policy with state policy on climate change).
Watershed Protection		Use local knowledge to solve water quality and supply problems
Watershed Protection		Develop cross walk science for decision makers
Watershed Protection		Reduce the risk of catastrophic fires and their impact on watershed health
Watershed Protection		Improve fuels treatment projects to improve water flow and supply
Watershed Protection		Fund restoration projects that may lead to permanent protective status (such as conservation easements)
Watershed Protection		Address multiple forest management and water yield needs by preventing erosion from roads, industry and mining. Carry out dredging activities to improve habitat and water supply
Watershed Protection		Conduct restoration pilot projects such as Phoenix Lake
Watershed Protection		Improve our understanding of watershed science
Watershed Protection		Fund studies on water retention in soils and groundwater supplies/sustainability
Watershed Protection		Enough science exists- focus funding on actual restoration efforts
Watershed Protection		Assist funding studies which identify key degraded areas, then assist in implementing restoration activities
Watershed Protection		Consdier watersheds as ecosystems

Background

As described at the last Board meeting, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) launched its first round of grant-making in Fiscal Year (FY) 2007-08 using the \$54 million allocated to it through Proposition 84, The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coast Protection Bond Act of 2006. Of that amount, approximately \$50 million was designated for distribution as local assistance grants to eligible grantees, while the rest is used to cover a variety of State costs, including SNC staff work and other services needed to support the program.

Since the beginning of the program, the SNC Board has authorized 221 grants totaling approximately \$40 million. That leaves about \$10 million more to be awarded.¹ Given the small amount of funding left and the desire to be as strategic as possible in its use, as well as wanting to address concerns expressed by Boardmembers, applicants, grantees and other stakeholders regarding the grant process to date, the Board directed staff to bring back a proposal for distributing the remaining funds. The purpose of this agenda item is to review how the Proposition 84 funding has been spent so far and make decisions about how the SNC should allocate the remaining funds.

Staff worked with a committee of the Board, made up of Supervisor Ted Owens, Central Subregion representative, and David Graber, Ph.D., of the National Park Service, to develop the proposal outlined in this report. Outreach meetings with local Fire Safe Councils, Resource Conservation Districts, agricultural landowners, land trusts and other stakeholder groups, yielded additional comments. The feedback received from these groups was used to create a final discussion document, which was released to the public for a three-week comment period ending May 19. Because the public comment period will close after the posting of these Board materials, staff will provide an update on comments received as part of the presentation to the Board at the June 2 meeting and may provide a written addendum to this staff report if the comments prompt changes to the recommendations included below.

To help the Board in its deliberations, staff compiled summary statistics on the SNC's grantmaking to date, included in Exhibit A to this staff report. You'll see in Exhibit A, Table 1 *Project Category Summary of Awards*, that the Board has awarded approximately three-quarters of the total \$40 million to acquisition or site improvement/restoration projects (Category One) and one-quarter of the funds to all other projects (Category Two), including pre-project activities such as environmental compliance that are necessary to prepare for a specific future acquisition or site improvement. Of the overall amount awarded, about 50 percent went to acquisition projects – either fee title or conservation easements – and the rest was split evenly

¹ Because grantees sometimes complete their projects under budget or, in some cases, have to actually decline a grant, the amount authorized or encumbered does not always match the amount spent. As a result, we anticipate having closer to \$12 million remaining for distribution. However, for purposes of this discussion we will refer to the amounts actually authorized by the Board to date.

between on-the-ground site improvement/restoration work (25%) and all other projects (25%).

Within the acquisition category itself, half of the \$20.6 million in awards supported fee title acquisition (13 projects for \$10,367,650) and the other half funded conservation easements (14 projects for \$10,275,190) – as described in Exhibit A, Table 4 *Acquisition Awards by Type*. Additional Subregional breakdowns of acquisition dollars by fee title and conservation easements can be found in Table 3 – *Acquisition Awards by Subregion*, and Subregional breakdowns by all project categories can be found in Table 2 – *Subregional Awards by Project Category*.

Current Status

Using the statistics above as a starting place, SNC staff is seeking guidance from the Board on a number of key policy-level questions that have arisen around how best to expend the final \$10 million. The Board's decisions about these policy-level questions may impact specific recommendations under the staff proposal below.

Policy-Level Questions for the Board:

- **Should we limit funding to only Category One Acquisition or Site Improvement projects, and discontinue funding of Category Two Pre-Project Due Diligence projects?** Given the limited resources available, should the SNC consider funding only Category One projects with the remaining \$10 million, to ensure maximum on-the-ground results?

Or, in recognition of the specific needs of certain applicant groups, such as fire safe councils, should we consider the possibility of funding certain Category Two projects, such as those for environmental compliance (CEQA)? If so, should we only fund Category Two projects if we do not have enough high-quality, high-benefit Category One projects to recommend? If feasible, should we consider “phased” grants, approving funds for Category Two activities, such as completing CEQA compliance, while reserving funds for project implementation upon completion of pre-project activities?

- **Within Category One (acquisition and site improvement projects) – should we focus the remaining funds on site improvement activities and not on acquisition?** Given the fact that we've spent far more on acquisitions than we have on direct improvement or restoration projects to date, should the SNC focus its remaining Category One funding as much as possible on site improvement/restoration? If so *how should we delineate that focus?*
 - *Allocate a predetermined higher percentage of funds to be awarded to site improvement/restoration projects vs. acquisitions;*
 - *Consider not funding any acquisition projects with the remaining funds;*

- *Use additional criteria or weighting of restoration vs. acquisition applications in the evaluation stage.*
- **If we continue funding acquisition projects at some level, should we limit awards to only fee title acquisition vs. conservation easements?** As noted above, the SNC has devoted significant funding to conservation easements to date. Some Boardmembers have voiced concerns regarding a) whether easements will actually keep working agricultural, ranch and forest lands in production over time, given the changing economy, and b) the large number of easement grants that have been awarded in certain geographic areas. Given these concerns, do we want to continue funding easements as a tool for the final \$10 million?
 - *If so, should we add or strengthen any specific criteria, such as level of threat of conversion, viability of ongoing agricultural operations, etc., to the evaluation of easement projects?*

There are a number of other more detailed grant program components, such as program duration, funding caps for individual grant awards, etc., for which we are also seeking the Board’s input and final approval. These are outlined below under “Staff Proposal.” While the staff has made our recommendations, we obviously await guidance and final approval from the Board.

The following outlines staff’s proposals for modifications to the FY 2011-12 and 2012-13 Proposition 84 grant program.

Staff Proposal

PROPOSAL	RATIONALE
<p>1. PROGRAM DURATION: conduct as a two-year program, covering FY 2011-12 and 2012-13, with the same general guidelines in effect across both fiscal years. Remaining funds would be split evenly between the two years, with a focus area for each year.</p>	<p>Spread the remaining funds over a longer period of time, since we don’t know when we might see the next infusion of project funding for the Region; allow applicants to plan ahead by letting them know upfront what the eligibility criteria will be for each year and when the funding will be available; provide more time for SNC staff to work with prospective applicants in each year; keep the process consistent for the remaining funds.</p>
<p>2. ELIGIBLE PROJECTS: limit eligible projects to those in one of the following two draft Strategic Plan Areas of Focus (one in each year) – <i>draft definitions</i></p>	<p>Make the grant program better reflect and support the strategic direction of the SNC, as identified in the three-year draft Strategic Plan currently under</p>

<p><i>and sample project types for each focus area are included for illustration purposes in Exhibit B, immediately following this staff report.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healthy Forests (including Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative) in FY 2011-12; - Ranching and Agricultural Lands in FY 2012-13. 	<p>development and slated for adoption in September 2011.</p> <p>Note: since the funding source, Prop. 84, is already watershed-based, staff recommends using Healthy Forests and Ranching/ Agricultural Lands as the areas of focus for the remaining two years. Regarding the other two strategic plan focus areas, Watershed Protection and Restoration will, by definition, be a primary outcome of any funded projects, due to the intent of Proposition 84, and Tourism and Recreation type projects generally have a harder time making a clear nexus to Proposition 84 goals, which is why they weren't chosen.</p>
<p>3. PROJECT CATEGORIES: give priority to high-benefit on-the-ground projects by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focusing Category One projects on restoration and site improvement over acquisition; - funding all high-benefit Category One projects before considering Category Two projects (Category Two projects would be eligible, but all available funding <i>could</i> be awarded to only Category One projects if there were enough high-quality applications); - limiting eligible Category Two projects to compliance and other activities, such as permitting, environmental review, environmental surveys and assessments, necessary to prepare future site improvement or restoration projects; this would eliminate funding for activities such as project design, project planning, appraisals, etc.; - considering phased projects, where eligible Category Two preparatory activities are approved, followed by approval of Category One project implementation activities once pre-project activities are completed. 	<p>Reflect the SNC Board's direction to prioritize on-the-ground results as much as possible with the remaining Proposition 84 funds; acknowledge the fact that the SNC, and to some extent other agencies, will likely have limited funding available for implementation of projects developed under Category Two.</p> <p>Considering the use of "phased" projects, where funds for Category One and Two are provided sequentially, or allowing the funding of certain Category Two projects if there were not enough high-quality, high-benefit Category One recommendations, may address some of the challenges faced by applicants in addressing such issues as CEQA.</p>

<p>4. FUNDING ALLOCATIONS / SUBREGIONAL POTS: award funding without a specific or guaranteed allocation by Subregion (however, geographic distribution and project diversity would be considered as part of the overarching evaluation criteria).</p>	<p>Focus remaining funds strategically and programmatically across the Region based on project benefits and not primarily on geographic location; however, geographic location will be considered as part of the overall evaluation process.</p>
<p>5. FUNDING CAPS: limit individual grant awards to smaller amounts, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Category One grants limited to \$5,000 to \$250,000 (formerly capped at \$1 million); - Category Two grants (if allowed) up to \$50,000 (formerly capped at \$250,000); - Phased grants (if allowed) limited to Category One amounts. 	<p>Better distribute the remaining funds across the Subregions (especially in the absence of guaranteed Subregional pots); make more efficient use of SNC funds through the encouragement of matching funds from other sources (Note: matching funds would not be required, but projects with committed matching funds may compete more favorably).</p>
<p>6. PRE-APPLICATION: require a pre-application as a prerequisite to submitting a full application. Pre-applications would serve a dual purpose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tool for project development; and, - tool for filtering the number of applicants invited to submit full applications, based on an enhanced eligibility and completeness review and other considerations, such as the connection to Proposition 84 and the SNC's program goals. 	<p>Provide maximum opportunity for potential applicants to develop viable, well-considered projects and submit full and complete applications for evaluation; provide a more useful tool for SNC staff and potential applicants to work on project development; offer a mechanism for screening project proposals at an earlier stage, resulting in a decision by the SNC as to whether a pre-applicant will be asked to go through the more time-consuming and potentially costly process of submitting a full application; help to ensure that applications that move into the full evaluation process are as complete and competitive as possible.</p>

Next Steps

Staff will report the results of the public comment period to the Board at the June 2 meeting, including any revised recommendations, if any, based on those comments. Following Board action at the meeting, staff will develop a timeline and revise the Proposition 84 Grant Guidelines and application materials as necessary, conduct outreach to stakeholders on the approved program, and launch the application solicitation for FY 2011-12 and 2012-13. Staff hopes to have the Grant Guidelines before the Board at the September Board meeting.

It should be noted that at this time there are still many questions surrounding the State budget and sale of bonds needed to fund future projects. SNC staff continues to monitor this situation, as it could lead to changes in the schedule of future grant rounds.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board: a) direct staff on the policy-level questions outlined above, b) approve the proposed changes to the FY 2011-12 and 2012-13 Grants Program outlined in the staff proposal, and c) direct staff to revise the Sierra Nevada Conservancy 2011-12 and 2012-13 Proposition 84 Grant Guidelines, providing for public comment, and bring the Grant Guidelines forward for Board action at a subsequent Board meeting.

Exhibit A

Table 1

Project Category Summary of Awards		
Project Category	Grant Awards	Amount Awarded
Acquisition Projects	27	\$20,642,840.00
Site Improvement/Restoration	49	\$9,053,497.00
Other Projects	145	\$10,243,763.00
Grand Total	221	\$39,940,100.00

Table 2

Subregional Awards by Project Category			
Subregion	Project Category	Grant Awards	Amount Awarded
Central	Acquisition Projects	4	\$3,925,750.00
	Education/Interpretation	9	\$570,112.00
	Monitoring/Research	7	\$555,098.00
	Planning	4	\$250,900.00
	Pre-Project Due Diligence	12	\$1,110,349.00
	Site Improvement/Restoration	11	\$3,530,137.00
Central Total		47	\$9,942,346.00
East	Acquisition Projects	1	\$735,000.00
	Education/Interpretation	4	\$123,851.00
	Monitoring/Research	4	\$260,300.00
	Planning	6	\$615,423.00
	Pre-Project Due Diligence	7	\$768,932.00
	Site Improvement/Restoration	5	\$510,720.00
East Total		27	\$3,014,226.00
North	Acquisition Projects	1	\$1,000,000.00
	Education/Interpretation	2	\$71,500.00
	Monitoring/Research	2	\$90,000.00
	Planning	1	\$48,400.00
	Pre-Project Due Diligence	9	\$597,425.00
	Site Improvement/Restoration	9	\$1,828,159.00
North Total		24	\$3,635,484.00
North Central	Acquisition Projects	12	\$7,701,900.00
	Education/Interpretation	4	\$161,864.00
	Monitoring/Research	2	\$74,010.00
	Planning	4	\$220,775.00
	Pre-Project Due Diligence	11	\$584,345.00
	Site Improvement/Restoration	7	\$1,523,725.00
North Central Total		40	\$10,266,619.00
Region-Wide	Acquisition Projects	2	\$2,000,000.00
	Education/Interpretation	7	\$482,859.00
	Monitoring/Research	4	\$255,784.00
	Planning	3	\$180,000.00
	Pre-Project Due Diligence	1	\$61,820.00
	Site Improvement/Restoration	3	\$190,800.00
Region-Wide Total		20	\$3,171,263.00
South	Acquisition Projects	3	\$1,690,190.00
	Education/Interpretation	5	\$179,051.00
	Monitoring/Research	2	\$99,424.00
	Planning	7	\$303,785.00
	Pre-Project Due Diligence	6	\$673,484.00
	Site Improvement/Restoration	6	\$747,175.00
South Total		29	\$3,693,109.00
South Central	Acquisition Projects	4	\$3,590,000.00
	Education/Interpretation	4	\$242,965.00
	Monitoring/Research	3	\$142,350.00
	Planning	9	\$1,095,301.00
	Pre-Project Due Diligence	6	\$423,656.00
	Site Improvement/Restoration	8	\$722,781.00
South Central Total		34	\$6,217,053.00
Grand Total		221	\$39,940,100.00

Exhibit A

Table 3

Acquisition Awards by Subregion				
Project Category	Subregion	Project Results 1	Grant Awards	Amount Awarded
Acquisition Projects	Central	Fee title	4	\$3,925,750.00
	East	Easement	1	\$735,000.00
	North	Easement	1	\$1,000,000.00
	North Central	Easement	6	\$4,260,000.00
		Fee title	6	\$3,441,900.00
	Region-Wide	Fee title	2	\$2,000,000.00
	South	Easement	3	\$1,690,190.00
	South Central	Easement	3	\$2,590,000.00
		Fee title	1	\$1,000,000.00
Grand Total			27	\$20,642,840.00

Table 4

Acquisition Awards by Type			
Project Category	Acquisition Type	Grant Awards	Amount Awarded
Acquisition Projects	Easement	14	\$10,275,190.00
	Fee title	13	\$10,367,650.00
Grand Total		27	\$20,642,840.00

Table 5

Project Purpose Summary of Awards		
Project Purpose	Grant Awards	Amount Awarded
Climate Change/Carbon Sequestration	3	\$308,500.00
Habitat	20	\$7,421,944.00
Historical/Cultural	3	\$1,254,084.00
Natural Disaster Risk Reduction (Fire)	35	\$3,224,973.00
Natural Disaster Risk Reduction (Other)	2	\$152,635.00
Natural Resource	37	\$4,834,418.00
Recreation Use/Impact/Access	22	\$2,628,210.00
Resource Development	3	\$1,290,000.00
Resource Management	36	\$4,740,221.00
Water Quality	40	\$7,203,631.00
Working Landscapes	20	\$6,881,484.00
Grand Total	221	\$39,940,100.00

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Focus Area Descriptions and Project type examples

Healthy Forests

The SNC defines our Healthy Forests focus area to include the upland ecosystems that generally include conifer forest lands in the Sierra Nevada Region. Many forests in the Sierra are unhealthy stemming from past forest management practices, including fire exclusion. Consequently, these stands are often overly dense with small-diameter trees. This program aims to improve ecosystem conditions within the healthy forest focus area by funding projects that reduce the risk and consequence of large damaging fires and the restoration of ecosystem function in the watershed. Examples of potential projects include the following:

- Vegetation treatments, including thinning by mechanical means, prescribed fire or other fuel reduction activities, to increase forest resilience, improve habitat conditions and reduce the risk of large damaging fires;
- Meadow and riparian restoration to improve habitat function and water retention;
- Reforestation and implementation of suitable stand maintenance activities after wildfire, when appropriate;
- Ensure the retention and sustainability of forests, forest resources, and forest carbon over the long term through forest pest and invasive species treatments;
- Provide for the sustainable utilization of biomass resulting from activities associated with improving forest health; and,
- Collaborative forestry efforts resulting in on-the-ground forest restoration project plans and their associated environmental documents.

Ranch and Agricultural Lands

The ranching and agricultural lands area of focus is intended to support the persistence and sustainability of working rangelands and other agricultural lands; support opportunities for the expansion of sustainable ranching and agriculture; and promote the balance of ranching and crop production with protection of sensitive habitats such as wetlands and endemic plant communities. All projects on private lands must have a clear public benefit to be eligible for funding. Examples of potential projects include the following:

- Stream enhancement or watershed restoration and protection projects that contribute to improved use and management of agricultural lands, including the following:
 - Removal, replacement or improvement of structures, roads or stream barriers to reduce erosion, restore riparian integrity and provide for natural streamflow and stream structure.

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- Fencing or other management practices to prevent grazing along riparian corridors or meadows to restore, stabilize and/or re-vegetate where necessary.
- Restoration of native species in upland, riparian, wetland and aquatic ecosystems to promote natural ecosystem function and ecological services.
- Protection of ranching and agricultural lands from conversion to other uses through the use of conservation easements.
- Grazing management or agricultural management practices that improve overall habitat conditions for habitat or stream connectivity for fish and wildlife species across working landscapes.

To comment on the above described changes to the SNC Fiscal Year 2011-12 and 2012-13 Grant Program, please follow the link below and complete a short survey. Questions in the survey allow space for further comment. Comments and suggestions about the proposed grant program changes will only be accepted via the survey.

Background

The Secure Rural Schools and Communities Self-Determination Act (SRSCA) was enacted in the late 1990s to assist public lands counties that had traditionally received a 25 percent share of revenues from timber sales. As those timber sales decreased, the SRSCA compensated the counties with guaranteed payments from the federal government. The initial program was authorized and funded through 2007. Congress acted again to extend the program part of the financial assistance law, approving a four-year extension (PL 110-343 of Oct. 3, 2008.) The county payments provision is providing about \$400 million per year for the program for Fiscal Years (FY) 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011. The program which funds county services in 41 states where the federal government owns a significant amount of land, authorized in 2008, expires at the end of FY 2011 (September 2012).

Below is language contained in a recent letter signed by members of Congress from both parties:

“At the turn of the 20th Century, there was mounting opposition in Congress to the creation of forest reserves (now national forests). Congress realized that, due to the amount of private land taken out of economic development and a subsequent lack of tax revenues, the creation of public land would make it difficult for counties to provide basic services— namely schools and roads. To offset these effects, Congress passed the 1908 Act that specified 25 percent of all revenues generated from the national forests be shared with the counties where those revenues were generated to support public roads and schools. From 1986 to the present, these revenues, due to changes in federal forest policy and declining timber sales, have decreased precipitously (as much as 99 percent in some communities and on average by 70 percent nationwide).

Responding to this urgent need, Congress passed the SRSCA in 2000. For many rural counties once dependent on timber revenue, Secure Rural Schools (SRS) payments are the lifeblood of local schools and communities. This legislation also created highly successful “Resource Advisory Committees,” which have brought polarized groups together to conduct hundreds of restoration projects on national forests across the country without being litigated.

In 2007, the House and Senate reauthorized this important law passing a one-year extension of SRS payments to help rural counties avert a major financial crisis. In October 2008, Congress reauthorized the SRS legislation for four years as part of HR 1424, the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008. The reauthorization provides rural counties with four years of payments on a declining scale for fiscal years 2008-2011.

While the four year reauthorization of the SRSCA was a monumental legislative accomplishment that helped preserve and create jobs across America, rural counties will once again face a budgetary cliff after they receive the final SRS payment in FY 2011. In response to this ongoing issue, we need a meaningful and long-term solution that will help ensure rural communities have the resources they need to provide basic county services.”

A bipartisan coalition in Congress is supporting the reauthorization of this act, with significant support from state and local governments and a variety of other stakeholders. Importantly, the President's proposed FY 2012 budget includes a five year extension of the SRSCA. The President's proposal includes a 20 percent cut to the portion of funding that states receive directly under Title I with additional cuts expected to be made gradually in subsequent years. The proposal would also – after three years -- eliminate funding for states that receive less than \$10 million a year and proposes changing the program's budgetary distinction from mandatory to discretionary.

Current Status

The Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Regional Coordinating Council identified this legislation as a key issue to Sierra Communities during the December 2010 meeting. More recently, during the March 2011 meeting, the Coordinating Council discussed this issue in greater detail and agreed to endorse the reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools Act in concept. A substantial amount of funds are provided to Sierra Nevada counties through this program including implementation of projects to reduce fire risk and improve community safety, restoring forest health and social programs to support families living below the poverty rate. The SNC staff is drafting a letter to express the Coordinating Council's support for this reauthorization.

Next Steps

SNC staff will continue to monitor progress on legislation to reauthorize the Act and keep the Board informed.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the Board support the reauthorization of the Act, including a provision that a portion of proceeds from stewardship contracts be allocated to local entities and direct the Executive Officer to convey the Board's position to members of the California Congressional Delegation and other interested parties.

Region 5				Full Funding Amount:		FY2011 payment as percentage of FY2010
				\$405,000,000 FY2010	\$364,500,000 FY2011	
Eligible County	NF acreage in county	Per Capita Personal Income (2008)	High 3 (State: 1988-1989- 1990)	Projected Transition Payment	Projected County Share of State Payment	
El Dorado	499,679	\$49,844	3,731,735	\$3,048,296	\$760,475	24.95%
Placer	342,664	\$45,708	1,869,883	\$1,242,357	\$375,525	30.23%
Nevada	181,211	\$42,857	923,007	\$581,425	\$219,192	37.70%
Plumas	1,159,073	\$38,525	7,738,761	\$5,475,137	\$2,562,310	46.80%
Amador	78,116	\$36,707	590,108	\$480,441	\$240,425	50.04%
Shasta	747,319	\$34,527	3,657,885	\$3,027,136	\$1,797,763	59.39%
Humboldt	337,013	\$33,249	2,010,877	\$1,588,338	\$1,018,527	64.13%
Tuolumne	612,489	\$36,092	2,684,816	\$1,933,451	\$1,246,753	64.48%
Butte	135,218	\$32,349	912,233	\$675,302	\$451,751	66.90%
Calaveras	80,297	\$34,528	362,709	\$257,078	\$175,017	68.08%
Mendocino	179,276	\$36,162	666,694	\$521,814	\$358,668	68.73%
Alpine	408,085	\$42,000	947,354	\$730,413	\$520,282	71.23%
Lake	256,069	\$32,099	964,072	\$748,494	\$566,830	75.73%
Siskiyou	2,370,921	\$32,681	7,860,582	\$6,992,573	\$5,529,864	79.08%
Mariposa	179,448	\$33,137	680,241	\$475,072	\$395,508	83.25%
Sierra	447,683	\$31,323	2,195,180	\$1,393,872	\$1,307,431	93.80%
Tehama	396,003	\$27,008	2,258,117	\$1,806,412	\$1,720,912	95.27%
Trinity	1,464,392	\$27,631	7,257,168	\$5,830,434	\$5,573,259	95.59%
Yuba	42,824	\$27,099	271,706	\$180,254	\$179,028	99.32%
Colusa	65,027	\$36,361	246,017	\$190,282	\$190,473	100.10%
Fresno	986,846	\$30,997	3,038,676	\$2,075,728	\$2,093,420	100.85%
Lassen	620,284	\$26,721	3,656,447	\$2,923,784	\$2,961,856	101.30%
Del Norte	462,692	\$25,980	2,826,568	\$2,236,480	\$2,315,683	103.54%
Modoc	1,383,648	\$32,196	3,021,990	\$2,522,139	\$2,783,472	110.36%
Glenn	204,106	\$30,374	709,962	\$541,789	\$703,878	129.92%
Madera	414,290	\$26,225	1,243,241	\$840,082	\$1,241,388	147.77%
Kern	377,837	\$30,047	285,197	\$326,795	\$616,284	188.58%
Tulare	891,096	\$28,610	739,792	\$819,790	\$1,707,359	208.27%
Santa Barbara	629,922	\$47,957	55,519	\$55,742	\$269,524	483.52%
Ventura	559,666	\$46,787	49,803	\$50,215	\$248,239	494.35%
Monterey	311,033	\$44,764	26,915	\$27,161	\$171,006	629.61%
San Luis Obispo	191,539	\$40,635	16,686	\$16,817	\$120,531	716.70%

Background

On April 6th, 47 individuals from 23 three diverse organizations took part in the 8th annual Sierra Day in the Capitol – a day dedicated to raising awareness among State Legislators and their staff about the importance of the Sierra Nevada and the benefits the Region provides to the entire State of California. This year SNC staff worked closely with the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association and other organizations to form the theme and supporting materials for the event. Sponsorship of Sierra Day in the Capitol increased from 19 organizations to 25 this year and included the following organizations:

- Bear-Yuba Partnership
- California Cattlemen's Association
- California Council of Land Trusts
- California Forestry Association
- California Land Management
- California Rangeland Trust
- California Ski Industry Association
- California Trout
- Mountain Counties Water Resources Association
- Nevada County Land Trust
- Northern Sierra Partnership
- Pacific Forest Trust
- O.A.R.S.
- Pacific Forest Trust
- Placer Land Trust
- Planning and Conservation League
- Regional Council of Rural Counties
- Sierra Business Council
- Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council
- Sierra Foothill Conservancy
- Sierra Nevada Alliance
- Sierra Water Workgroup
- Southern Sierra Partnership
- The Sierra Fund
- The Trust for Public Land

In addition to sponsoring, Mountain Counties Water Resources Association joined three other Sierra Day donors, Cardno Extrix, Kennedy/Jenks Consulting, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Behee from Tuolumne County, who contributed to the development of informational media for the day and lunch for the participants.

Sierra Day participants, including SNC Boardmembers John Brissenden and Bob Kirkwood, convened at the Stanford Mansion and began the day with an overview by Jim Branham, SNC Executive Officer, and other informational presentations. The group was looking forward to two scheduled speakers, California Natural Resources Secretary John Laird and State Senator Tom Berryhill; but unfortunately each was called away at the last minute for emergency meetings, so neither was able to attend. Another event partner, The Trust for Public Land, provided participants with a primer on how to communicate effectively with Legislators and their staff.

In the afternoon, 14 teams of enthusiastic Sierra Nevada supporters descended on legislative offices in the Capitol and delivered their message – centered on the theme: “Looking to the Source: Watersheds of the Sierra Nevada” – to more than 65 legislators

and staff using maps, fact sheets, and other information. Group members talked about the journey of Sierra Nevada water, area of origin and beneficial use issues, and the benefits to the State of investing in the Sierra Nevada Region.

To further emphasize the theme, Sierra Day sponsors mounted a display on the wall outside the Governor's Office showing the journey of water from the Sierra Nevada to other parts of the state. The display included large-format photographs illustrating the beneficial uses of Sierra water both within and outside the Region, a relief map of California showing the Region and its watersheds, and panels showing three key municipal water districts (Los Angeles, San Francisco, and East Bay Municipal Utilities District) and maps of where in the Sierra their water originates, which are included as [Exhibit A](#) to this staff report.

Current Status

Sierra Day in the Capitol received mostly positive reviews from participants. There was a little disappointment, understandably, in the last-minute loss of the morning session speakers. All were looking forward to an address from Secretary Laird and Senator Berryhill. However, people seemed pleased with the experiences they had meeting with legislators and staff, who were impressed that such a diverse group of interests had come together to deliver a unified message about the importance of the Sierra Nevada. News of the day's activities was carried on local radio, interviews on three local radio stations and in the *Capitol Alert*.

Next Steps

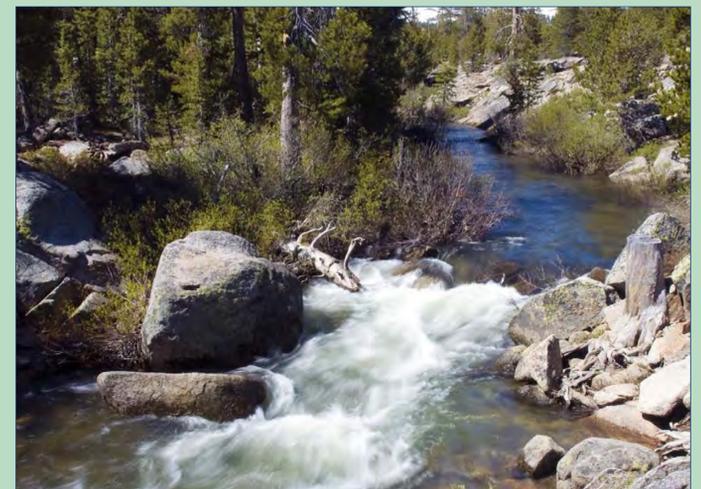
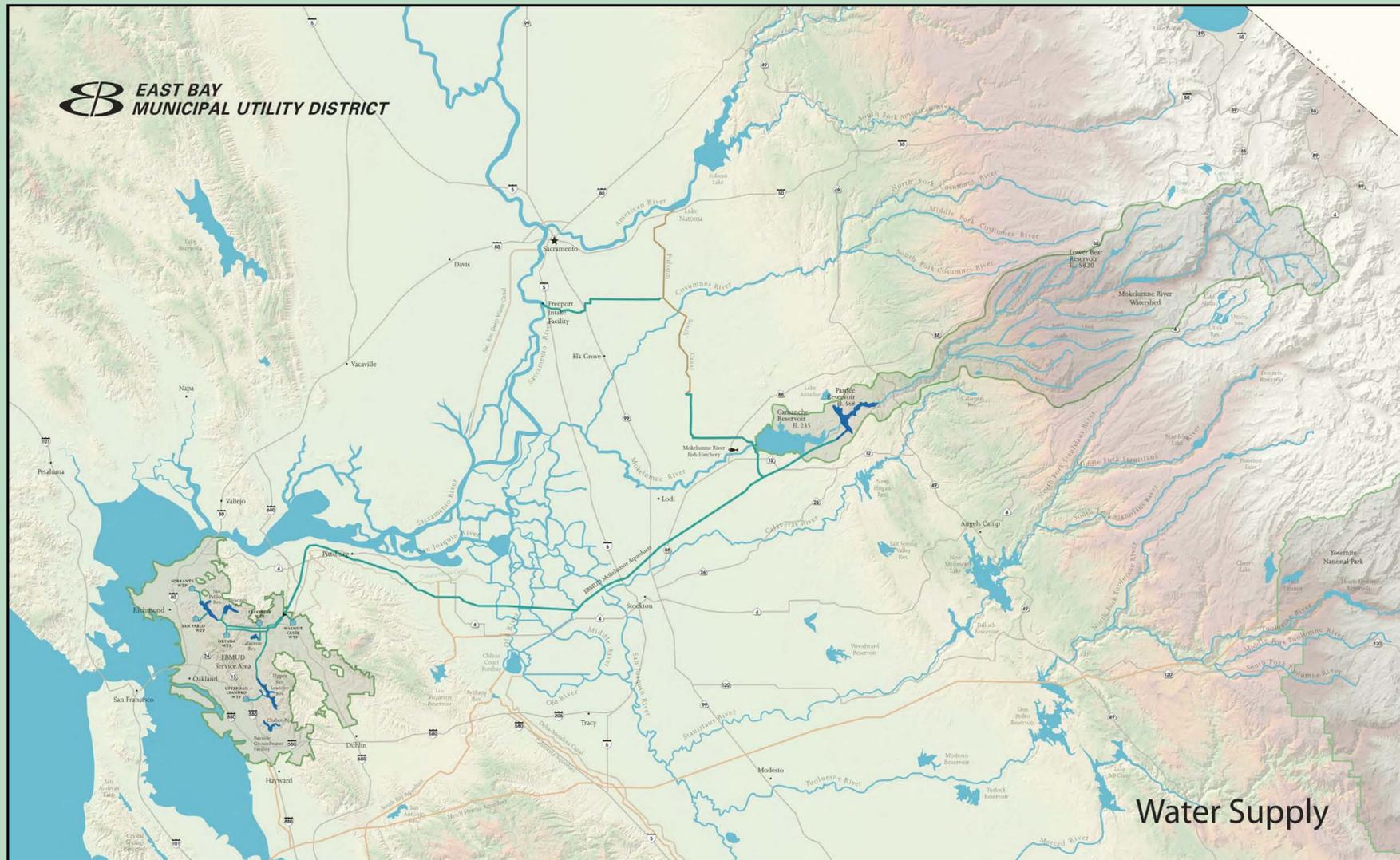
We hope to get more groups and individuals to participate in next year's Sierra Day in the Capitol and to further build on the message that investment in the Sierra Nevada is needed to protect and enhance benefits that the Region provides to California.

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 on how to make next year's event an even greater success.

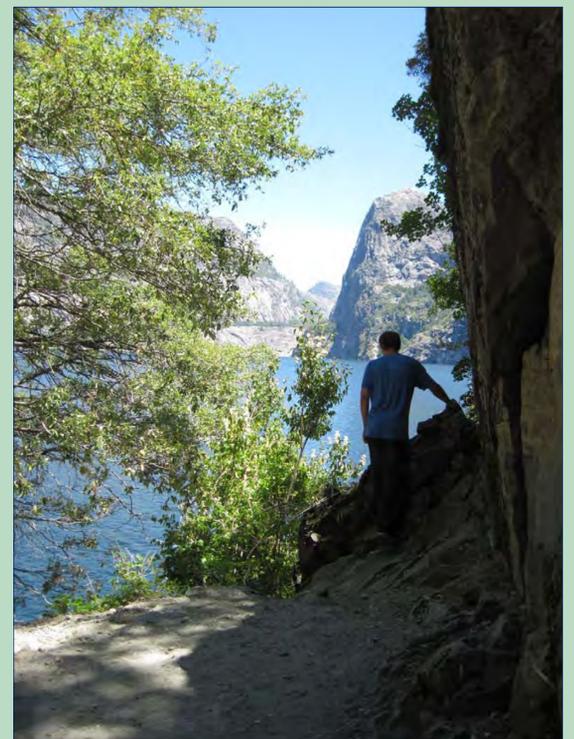


East Bay MUD: The Journey of Sierra Nevada Water





San Francisco: The Journey of Sierra Nevada Water





Los Angeles: The Journey of Sierra Nevada Water



Background

The ***California Water Plan***, also known as ***Bulletin 160***, is a document produced by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) to serve as a framework for water managers, legislators, and the public to consider options and make decisions regarding California's water future. The plan, updated every five years, presents basic data and information on California's water resources, such as water supply evaluations and assessments of agricultural, urban, and environmental water uses, as well as goals, objectives and strategies to address the State's water needs.

DWR's intent for the Water Plan is to: 1) meet water code requirements, 2) receive broad support among those participating in California's water planning, and 3) be a useful document for the public, water planners throughout the state, legislators and other decision-makers.

Work on the next five-year update, which is scheduled for release in 2013, began last year. Given the substantial contributions of Sierra watersheds to the overall State water picture, the SNC worked with DWR and the 2013 update facilitators to be added to the State Agency Steering Committee (SASC) overseeing the development of the 2013 Update.

The SASC represents the executive branch in the development of the plan through the active participation of 27 agencies, boards, departments and commissions that have a statutory and/or policy nexus to the water plan. A list of SASC members is included as Exhibit A to this report.

The SASC is informed by a Public Advisory Committee as well as regional and topic-area caucuses, a Tribal Advisory Committee, federal agencies and the Statewide Water Analysis Network, the science arm of the effort. The goal of the collaborative SASC is to develop a more comprehensive Water Plan update. It does this by integrating into the final document issues related to water supply, water use efficiency, water quality, flood management, and environmental stewardship, as well as the respective missions, goals and priorities of the involved agencies.

Current Status

As part of the SNC's efforts to improve relationships with other State agencies and communicate the importance of the Sierra Nevada to those who live and work outside of the Region, we view the addition of the SNC to the SASC as an important achievement. We have already begun consulting with various stakeholders in the Sierra Nevada to let them know about this unprecedented opportunity to influence the issues, strategies and recommendations that get addressed in this next update to the California Water Plan.

The 2013 Update will include a number of new goals and objectives that relate to the Sierra, including: working through the existing Integrated Regional Water Management

(IRWM) program, better integrating federal and tribal goals and issues into the planning approach, and tapping more heavily into local knowledge to identify regional diversity and unique attributes that need special attention. DWR, under the auspices of the SASC, will hold regional meetings around the state several times a year, working with stakeholder-based “design teams” to assist with the content and outreach for each regional meeting. Regional teams will also be convened to develop regional reports that become part of the water plan. These reports describe current conditions, unique objectives, locally developed priorities and recommendations for resource management strategies by region.

While there is no single hydrologic region that includes the entire Sierra Nevada, DWR does have what is called an “overlay” for the mountain counties area, covering primarily the western portions of Plumas County in the north to Madera County in the south. A map showing the current hydrologic regions and overlay areas is included as Exhibit B to this staff report. One of the SNC’s goals has been to encourage other agencies and entities to recognize the Sierra Nevada as a distinct Region. In a possible step toward that goal, DWR is considering expanding the Mountain Counties overlay area to include much more of the SNC Region – at least on the western side – from Modoc in the north to the western foot of the Tehachapi’s in Kern County. A map showing the possible expansion area is included as Exhibit C.

Next Steps

The SNC plans to continue working with stakeholders in the Region to identify and put forward key messages and objectives for the Sierra Nevada, as well as to generate Regional and Subregional stakeholder participation in the planning workshops. In addition, we will be leading efforts on the design team for both the regional outreach meetings and development of the regional plan for the mountain counties, along with other key partners such as the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association. And finally, the SNC will participate in the caucus group addressing potential financing for strategies and recommendations included in the update.

In a related effort, the SNC is also involved on the State Interagency Team for the Delta Plan, a legislatively mandated effort designed to achieve the co-equal goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. This plan is being developed by the Delta Stewardship Council as a requirement of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009.

While the primary planning area for the Delta Plan is limited to the statutorily defined Delta, the draft plan does contemplate certain actions in the secondary planning area, which includes the upper watersheds of the Sacramento River and areas outside of the Delta that receive exported water. Because so much of the inflow to the Delta comes from the Sierra Nevada, the SNC believes it has a critical role to play in the development of this plan, as well.

SNC staff will continue to explore opportunities to engage on a variety of other efforts taking place affecting the Delta and other water policy issues in order to better facilitate understanding of and appropriate involvement among Sierra stakeholders in these efforts.

Recommendation

This is an information item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments.

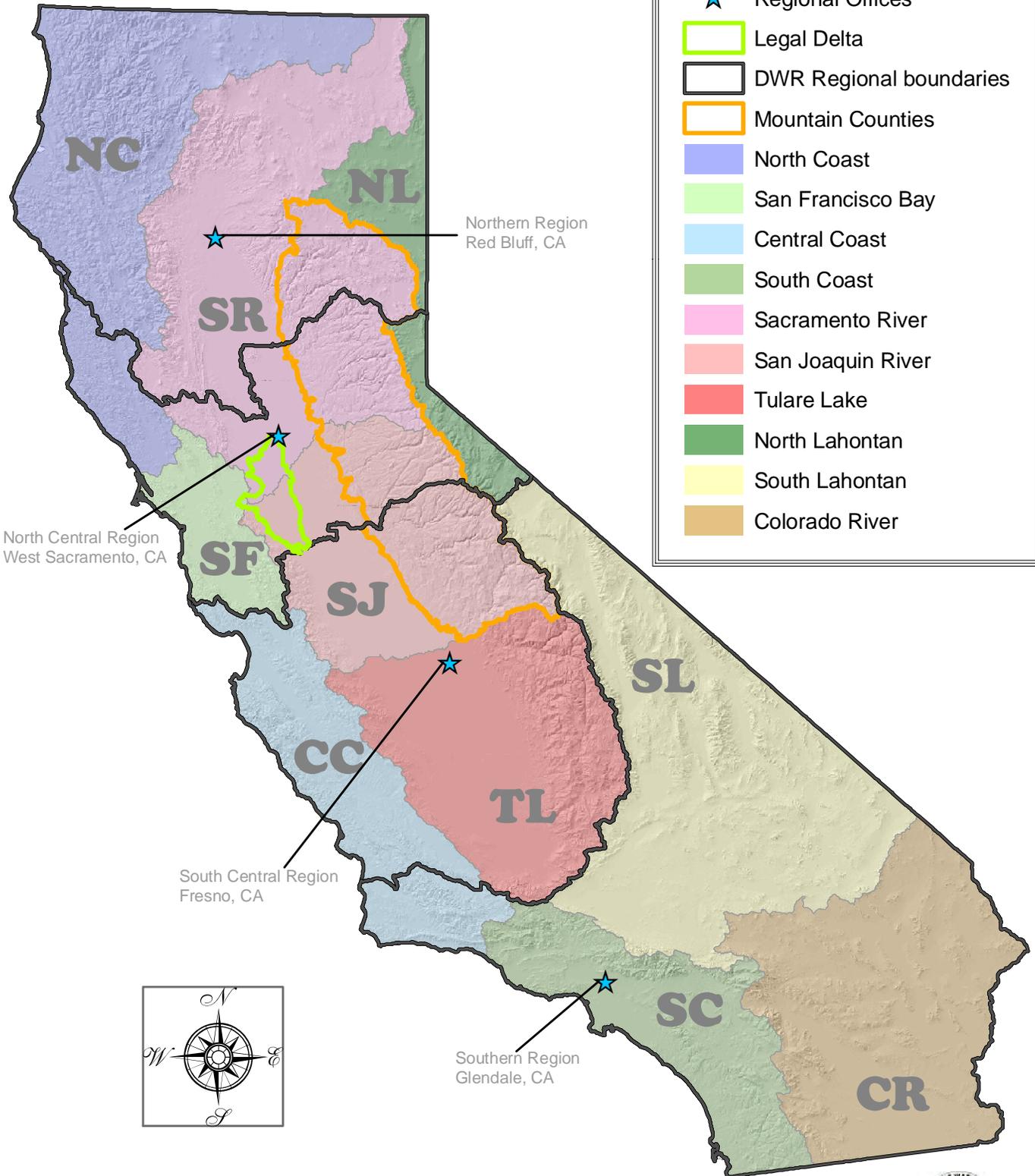
UPDATE 2013
CALIFORNIA WATER PLAN
STATE AGENCY STEERING COMMITTEE
Last updated 03/22/11

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Hydrologic Regions & Overlay Areas of Interest



Western Sierra Overlay Area

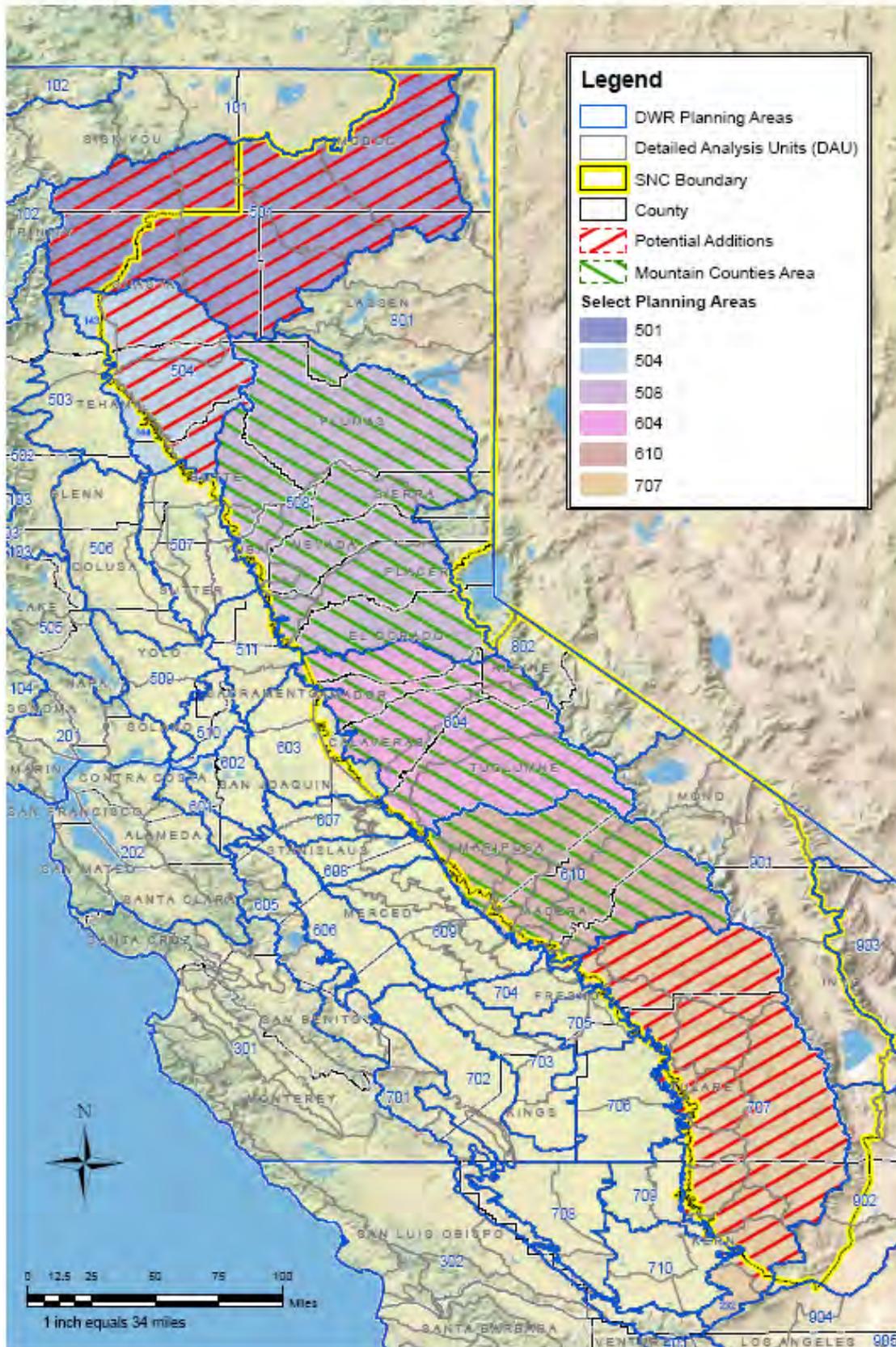


Figure 2 Map showing Mountain Counties Area, the Sierra Nevada Region, and existing DAUs and PAs. Map courtesy of North Central Region office.