

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

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

Applicant: Yosemite-Sequoia Resource Conservation and
Development Council

Project Title: The North Fork Community - Scale Biomass Project

Subregion: South

County: Madera

SNC Funding: \$ 70,049

Total Project Cost: \$111,082

Application Number: 565

Final Score: 81.50

PROJECT SCOPE

This project is located on the site of a former lumber mill zoned for heavy industry in the town of North Fork, just south of Bass Lake in Madera County. Required infrastructure is in place. The facility is next to a recycled lumber operation and adjacent to the Sierra National Forest where fuel will be removed, within the Upper Joaquin River and Fresno River Watersheds. This project completes major pre-development tasks allowing for the financing and construction of a small scale (1 MW) combined heat and power bioenergy facility on the North Fork Mill Site. This will lead to implementation of a clean energy facility project which provides an economic value to biomass removed from forests for restoration purposes, serving as a model for community-scale biomass in the Sierras. Phase I - feasibility analysis – has been completed, as has an Memorandum of Understanding with a bioenergy developer. This project will help move the project through Phase II – The Design and Permitting/ California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Phase and will fulfill the pre-requisites to move into Phase III – construction and deployment.

The overall focus is to complete CEQA requirements, with the added advantage that the write-ups in the initial study will be targeted to be maximally useful for any further permitting needs. The proposed scope of work and activities include the completion of the initial study for the CEQA process, including utilizing the initial study for other permitting needs; and conducting a community awareness campaign geared to increase community knowledge base of such facilities. This will include hosting two public information meetings and publishing two news articles.

Development of infrastructure that utilizes and provides economic value for woody biomass is a vital element of the sustainable protection of watersheds, forests and other natural resources. Promoting such restoration work meets SNC's goals of reducing the risk of wildfires, protecting and improving water and air quality, and conserving the Region's physical resources. In addition, it addresses the SNC's triple-bottom-line by supporting economic, job-generating activities in North Fork, a low-income community that has suffered from economic dislocation due to the closure of its timber mill. This economic use of biomass was recognized as important in the recent SNC staffed Willow Creek Collaborative Forest Planning process. In addition to preventing catastrophic wildfire, fuel reduction removes excessive fuels resulting in less intense managed fires. Low intensity beneficial fires remove natural fuels, restore nutrients to soils and produce small, natural openings that allow for vegetative undergrowth, resulting in increased forest health, diversity and habitat.

This project leverages \$41,033 in matching funding and in-kind support from the Yosemite-Sequoia RC&D, Reliable Renewables, TSS Consultants and the North Fork Community Development Council.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Communications and community support - Negotiation with County completed	December 2012 – April 2013
Stakeholder informational meeting - Public Meeting #1	April 2013
CEQA process - Project Description Completed	April– June 2013
Submit 6 Month Report to SNC	June 2013
CEQA Process - Environmental Checklist Disciplines completed	June –August 2013
Stakeholder informational meeting - Public Meeting #2	September 2013
At least 2 Newspaper articles published	December 2012- November 2013
CEQA process management Project management and site visits completed	December 2012- November 2013
Response to initial study comments/Completion of CEQA	July-October 2013
Submit SNC Final report, including final studies results and CEQA documents	November 2013
FINAL PAYMENT/FINAL PAYMENT REQUEST	January 1, 2014

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Direct*	\$60,912
Indirect**	\$3,046
Administrative***	\$6,091
GRAND TOTAL	\$70,049

- * Direct: Direct costs are expenses necessary to acquire, construct, or to adapt property to a new or different use, or to improve property including land, buildings and equipment. The property/expense must have a useful life longer than one year.
- ** Indirect: Expenses involve ongoing operations, repair or maintenance costs, regardless of whether the repair or maintenance may last more than one year.
- *** Administrative: Expenses associated with the administration of a project and may not exceed 15 percent of the total SNC grant request for direct and indirect costs

PROJECT LETTERS SUPPORT/OPPOSITION

- Support
 - North Fork Community Development Council
 - Bass Lake Ranger District – U.S. Forest Service
 - TSS Consultants
 - California Senator, Berryhill
 - North Fork Chamber of Commerce
 - Reliable Renewable - Vendor

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Measurable changes in knowledge or behavior