



# **PROPOSITION 84 PRESERVATION OF RANCHES AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS GRANT PROGRAM**

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

## **GRANT GUIDELINES Fiscal Year 2012-13**

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

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## I. Introduction

### A. Background

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) is a California state agency that initiates, encourages, and supports efforts that improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region, its communities, and the citizens of California. The SNC provides state funding through its Proposition 84 Grant Program for local projects in partnership with eligible nonprofits, tribes, and public agencies.

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

The Laird-Leslie Sierra Nevada Conservancy Act (Act), enacted in 2004 and commencing with [PRC Section 33300](#), established the SNC, and Sections 33343 and 33346 set forth the authority for SNC to award grants of funds in order to carry out the purposes of the Act. The SNC has adopted Program Guidelines and has adopted its Strategic Plan in accordance with the Act; these documents provide general direction for SNC's activities and serve as the basis for these Grant Guidelines.

### B. Purpose of Grant Guidelines and Grant Application Packet

The Grant Guidelines establish the process used by the SNC to solicit applications, evaluate proposals, and authorize grants under the SNC Proposition 84 Grant Program. They also explain the scope of, and the requirements for, grant applications. A Glossary of Terms is provided in [Appendix C](#).

**A Grant Application Packet (GAP) accompanies the Grant Guidelines, and includes more specific information and forms needed for each category of grant applications. For applicants who want more information about the administrative requirements once a grant is authorized, sample grant agreements for each of the Proposition 84 project types are provided at: [www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/managing-your-grant](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/managing-your-grant).**

## II. Grant Program Information

### A. Program Focus 2012-13

For Fiscal Year 2012-13, grant funds will be allocated to the Preservation of Ranches and Agricultural Lands area of focus as defined in the SNC Strategic Plan updated in September 2011. In order to be eligible to receive a grant award from the SNC in FY 2012-13, all projects must meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. Maintain a direct focus on Ranches and Agricultural Lands and provide a clear public benefit (as described below).
2. Meet the [Public Resources Code 75050](#) (Proposition 84) mandate that awards go only to projects that protect and restore rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources.
3. Be consistent with the SNC mission and program areas as described in [Appendix B](#).

Ranches and Agricultural Land activities, for the purposes of this grant program, include projects that support the long-term ecological values and economic viability of working ranches and other agricultural lands, and the health of their associated watersheds. Grants for Ranches and Agricultural Land projects will be allocated to two grant categories and will be awarded in one round.

For purposes of this grant program, projects on private property must demonstrate public benefit(s) (protection, restoration or improvement of natural resources, etc.) occurring beyond the private property in question. Examples include, but are not limited to, improvement in water quality or quantity, fish and wildlife habitat, and air quality. Applicants with questions regarding their project and the assessment of “public benefit” should contact SNC staff for more project-specific information.

### B. Grant Categories

Category One grants include site improvement/restoration projects and acquisition of conservation easements. Examples of potential Category One grant projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Projects to reduce erosion, restore riparian integrity or provide for natural stream flow and stream structure, including the following:
  - Removal, replacement or improvement of structures, roads or stream barriers
  - Construction of sediment basins, diversions or filter strips to remove or trap sediment or other pollutants to improve water quality
  - Utilization of vegetation on highly erodible areas to stabilize the soil, reduce damage from sediment and runoff into streams, ponds and riparian areas

2. Projects to manage grazing along riparian corridors or meadows, including fencing or new water storage, for the purpose of reducing erosion, improving habitat function, and/or improving water quality
3. Irrigation and water conservation projects to reduce agriculturally induced nonpoint-source pollution, including surface water and groundwater contamination; reduce soil erosion and sedimentation; and conserve ground and surface water
4. Meadow restoration to improve habitat and hydrologic function
5. Removal of noxious weeds and restoration of native species in upland, riparian, wetland and aquatic ecosystems to promote natural ecosystem function
6. Protection of ranches and agricultural lands and associated watershed resources (streams, meadows, wetlands) through the use of conservation easements
7. Grazing management or agricultural management practices that improve overall habitat conditions for habitat or stream connectivity for fish and wildlife species across working landscapes

Category Two grants are limited to pre-project activities that are necessary to prepare for implementation of a specific future on-the-ground Ranches and Agricultural Lands project that itself would meet the Category One requirements in these Guidelines. Examples of Category Two grant projects include work such as:

1. Acquiring permits for a specific project or set of projects
2. Completing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and/or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance for a specific project or set of projects
3. Performing appraisals for conservation easement acquisitions
4. Performing necessary studies and assessments, and developing necessary project designs related to a specific site or project
5. Preparing plans or supplementing existing plans that will result in a specific project or set of projects.

### **C. Ineligible Projects**

Examples of ineligible projects include:

1. Fee title acquisitions and associated planning activities.
2. Grants to service or repay bridge-loans.
3. Projects that consist solely of the purchase of equipment.
4. Projects that consist solely of maintenance activities.
5. Projects dictated by a legal settlement or mandated to address a violation of or an order (citation) to comply with any law or regulation.
6. Education, outreach, or event-related projects, unless these are an incidental part of a larger project that is eligible for SNC grant funds.

7. Projects to implement required mitigation measures unless they are included as a part of the overall implementation of a project eligible for SNC grant funds.
8. Projects that are conducted on private lands that do not demonstrate a clear public benefit.

This list is not exhaustive and is offered only as guidance to potential applicants. The SNC will make determinations of eligibility on a project-by-project basis during the pre-application phase and to the extent necessary during the evaluation phase of the application process. All questions related to the eligibility of a project should be referred to SNC staff as soon as possible.

#### **D. Eligible Applicants**

Grant funds may be authorized for:

1. Public agencies (any city, county, district, or joint powers authority; state agency; public university; or federal agency).
2. Qualifying nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations. "Nonprofit organization" means a private, nonprofit organization that qualifies for exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of Title 26 of the United States Code, and whose charitable purposes are consistent with the purposes of the SNC as set forth in Public Resources Code Section 33300 et seq.
3. Eligible tribal organizations (includes any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, or a tribal agency authorized by a tribe, which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and is identified on pages 9250-9255, inclusive, of Document 95-3839 (February 16, 1995) of the Federal Register, as that list may be updated or amended from time to time).

**NOTE:** As a general rule, organizations or individuals performing non-grant-related work for the SNC under contract are ineligible to apply for a grant from the SNC during the life of the contract. This policy applies to organizations that:

1. Contract directly with the SNC.
2. Are providing services as a subcontractor to an individual or organization contracting directly with the SNC.
3. Employ an individual, on an ongoing basis, who is performing work for the SNC under a contract, whether as the primary contractor or as a subcontractor.

Potential applicants who have a contract with or are doing work under a subcontract for the SNC and are contemplating applying for a grant should consult with SNC staff to determine limitations on eligibility.

## **E. Process**

**All applicants are required to comply with the SNC's pre-application process.** Pre-applications will be evaluated to confirm applicant and project eligibility, including relevance to the Preservation of Ranches and Agricultural Land focus area. SNC program staff will be available to provide assistance in the development of a pre-application.

Full applications will be reviewed by a panel consisting of technical experts and SNC staff. Site visits may be requested as part of the evaluation process. Applications will be awarded points in accordance with the evaluation criteria described in [Section IV](#) of these Guidelines.

Geographic distribution of projects will be considered in determining project awards; however, unlike previous grant cycles, funding will be awarded without a specific or guaranteed allocation by Subregion.

## **F. Consultation and Cooperation with Local Agencies**

In compliance with the SNC's governing statute, local government agencies, such as counties, cities and local water districts, are notified of eligible grant projects being considered for funding in their area.

For all applications under consideration, SNC staff will notify the county and/or city affected and public water agency (when appropriate), and request comments within 15 business days following notification. For this grant round, agricultural commissioners will also be notified of projects proposed within their jurisdiction. The SNC will make all reasonable efforts to address concerns raised by local governments. The individual SNC Boardmembers representing each geographic Subregion within the SNC boundary will also be notified and may wish to communicate with the affected entities as well.

If an applicant has a project-specific resolution of support from the affected city and/or county or water agency, it should be included in the application package in order to facilitate the overall assessment process.

## **G. Grant Provisions**

For each awarded grant the SNC develops an individual grant agreement with detailed provisions and requirements specific to that project. Please be aware that if authorized to receive a grant from the SNC, the provisions listed below will also apply:

1. Actual awards are conditional upon funds being available from the State.
2. Grant-eligible costs may be incurred by the grantee only after the grantee has entered into a fully executed agreement with the SNC; only these costs will be eligible for reimbursement.

3. Per the grant agreement, grantees must be prepared to maintain a level of documentation that will satisfy State auditing requirements to support the claim of eligible costs.

For conservation easement acquisition projects the following provisions are also pertinent:

1. Grants to nonprofit organizations for acquisition are subject to specific legal requirements, including a requirement that the deed or other acquisition instrument contain a power, on the part of the State, to cause the property interest to re-vest in the State, or in another public agency or nonprofit organization designated by the State, if the existence of the acquiring organization is terminated, or if the grantee violates the purpose of the grant through breach of a material term or condition thereof. (Public Resources Code Section 33344). Grant applicants should take note that language deemed sufficient in other State grant programs may not meet the above legal requirements, as the SNC's governing statute has specific requirements to be met in this regard.
2. If the project applicant intends to transfer the responsibility for the project to a third party in the future, the transfer must conform to the assignability process detailed in the grant agreement. SNC shall be notified 60 days in advance of any planned transfer of an interest in the real property. Any transfer shall be subject to approval of the SNC, and a new agreement sufficient to protect the public interest shall be entered into between the SNC and the transferee.

A sample grant agreement that specifies these requirements can be found on the SNC Web site at [www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/managing-your-grant](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/managing-your-grant). The SNC will provide assistance to the grantee to ensure the grantee's clear understanding and interpretation of the terms and conditions of the grant.

### III. Applying for a Grant

**Note: See Grant Application Packet (GAP) for required forms and additional application information.**

#### A. Pre-Application Requirement

Applicants are required to complete and submit a pre-application form to SNC by the date posted on the SNC Web site. All pre-application information and forms will be available on the SNC Web site. Any pre-application that is submitted after the deadline will not be eligible for an invitation to submit a full application. The following basic project information is required in the pre-application:

1. Grant application type.

2. Project name.
3. Applicant name and address.
4. Applicant type.
5. Applicant's authorized representative.
6. Person with day-to-day responsibility for management of the grant, if awarded.
7. Project description. For projects occurring on private land, include information about the resulting public benefit.
8. Whether an applicant has reason to believe a potential conservation easement site may have toxic contamination.
9. Funding and budget information.
10. Project location, including latitude and longitude.
11. Status of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance (for federal applicants, applicants using federal funding, or projects on federal land, National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA] status will also need to be provided).
12. Type and status of land tenure for the project (site improvement projects only).
13. Appraisal status (conservation easement acquisition projects only).
14. Articles of incorporation, IRS letter, and bylaws (nonprofit organizations only).

## **B. Use of Pre-Application**

Pre-application information, as described in Section A, will be evaluated to confirm applicant and project eligibility. Eligible applicants whose projects comply with the Proposition 84, SNC mission and program areas, and focus area criteria will receive an invitation to submit a full application. Pre-applications will also need to demonstrate that the applicant is fully aware of and has a specific plan to comply with CEQA requirements, as well as applicable NEPA requirements. SNC program staff will be available to provide assistance to invited applicants in developing the elements of a full application. Applicants invited to submit full applications will not need to resubmit information already submitted in the pre-application.

## **C. Multiple Pre-Applications**

An individual entity will be limited to submitting no more than three project pre-applications. Multiple projects may not be submitted on a single pre-application. Applicants should consult with SNC program staff on any questions related to submission of multiple pre-applications.

## **D. Project Location**

Project eligibility, including geographic eligibility, will be assessed during the pre-application phase of this grant solicitation process. Generally, funds must be expended within the statutory boundaries of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for a project to be eligible. Certain types of projects which involve implementation outside the boundaries of the Region may also be eligible if they

meet all guideline requirements of the SNC and have a direct benefit to the Region. These might include physical projects located just outside the boundary which result in tangible benefits to resources within the boundaries of the SNC. Applicants should consult with SNC staff when such projects are being considered. See [Appendix A](#) or [www.sierranevada.ca.gov/maps/snc-region](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/maps/snc-region) for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's boundaries.

## **E. General Information**

Applicants who have received an invitation to submit a full application will be able to find all needed materials and forms on the SNC Web site or from any SNC office by request. All full application materials are due and must be either delivered to the SNC headquarters office in Auburn by 5:00 PM on the application due date or postmarked no later than the due date. Any full application that is delivered or postmarked after the deadline will not be considered for evaluation. Files must be delivered in the format specified in the Grant Application Packet (GAP). Applications that are deemed incomplete or ineligible may not be processed or evaluated by the SNC.

## **F. Category One: Site Improvement/Restoration or Conservation Easement Acquisition**

### **1. Overview**

As described earlier in this document, only site improvement and/or restoration projects and conservation easement acquisitions in the SNC's stated Ranches and Agricultural Lands focus area will be eligible for grant awards in the 2012-13 Category One grant round. The funding range for individual Category One grants is \$5,000 to \$350,000.

Examples of potential Category One grant projects include, but are not limited to:

- Projects to reduce erosion, restore riparian integrity or provide for natural stream flow and stream structure, including the following:
  - Removal, replacement or improvement of structures, roads or stream barriers
  - Construction of sediment basins, diversions or filter strips to remove or trap sediment or other pollutants to improve water quality
  - Utilization of vegetation on highly erodible areas to stabilize the soil, reduce damage from sediment and runoff into streams, ponds and riparian areas
- Projects to manage grazing along riparian corridors or meadows, including fencing or new water storage, for the purpose of reducing erosion, improving habitat function, and/or improving water quality
- Irrigation and water conservation projects to reduce agriculturally induced nonpoint-source pollution, including surface water and groundwater contamination; reduce soil erosion and sedimentation; and conserve

- ground and surface water
- Meadow restoration to improve habitat and hydrologic function
- Removal of noxious weeds and restoration of native species in upland, riparian, wetland and aquatic ecosystems to promote natural ecosystem function
- Protection of ranches and agricultural lands and associated watershed resources (streams, meadows, wetlands) 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.

## 2. Site Improvement Requirements

- All pre-applications, including those for projects to be implemented on federal and tribal lands, are required to address how CEQA compliance will be achieved. (See Section III H on Environmental Documentation for more information).
- All full applications are required to identify and state progress and projected dates of completion for all permits necessary to complete the project.
- Full applications must include site and topographic maps, as well as site photos.
- Land Tenure:  
Applicants must submit documentation to the SNC showing that they have adequate tenure to, and site control of, the properties to be improved or restored<sup>1</sup>. Proof of adequate land tenure includes, but is not necessarily limited to:
  - Fee title ownership.
  - An easement or license agreement, sufficient for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.
  - Other agreement between the applicant and the fee title owner, or the owner of an easement on the property, sufficient to give the applicant adequate site control for the purposes of the project.

For projects involving multiple landowners, all landowners or an appointed designee must provide written permission to complete the project.

- Land Tenure Requirements: Alternate Process  
When an applicant does not have tenure at the time of application, but intends to establish tenure via an agreement that will be signed upon grant authorization, the applicant must follow the alternate land tenure process by submitting a template copy of the proposed agreement, Memorandum

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<sup>1</sup> Adequate site control is the power or authority to conduct activities that are necessary for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement.

of Understanding (MOU), or permission form at the time of application. Once a project has been authorized for funding by the SNC Board, the applicant must submit documentation of land tenure before a complete grant agreement can be executed. Applicants are encouraged to submit this information in an expeditious manner. If this information is not provided within 90 days of Board authorization, the SNC may choose not to fund the project.

### **3. Conservation Easement Acquisition Requirements**

The SNC will accept applications to acquire conservation easements (fee title acquisitions are not eligible for grant funding in this cycle).

- Any conservation easement acquisitions must be from willing sellers.
- The terms under which the conservation easement is acquired shall be subject to the SNC's approval, per the requirements of the Public Resources Code 33343.(b).
- All interests to be acquired must be in perpetuity.
- A grant application to acquire a conservation easement is required to specify all of the following:
  - The intended use and past use of the property
  - The manner in which the land will be managed
  - The proposed easement language
  - A complete acquisition schedule
  - How the cost of ongoing management will be funded
- Applications are required to include a recent appraisal (two paper copies and an electronic version [CD]); see Appendix F for applicable requirements according to California State appraisal regulations. All appraisals will be reviewed by the California Department of General Services. Appraisals are requested at the time of full application submittal, but applicants will have 60 days from the application due date to provide the SNC with a completed appraisal. Any applicant taking advantage of this delay does so at its own risk, as the SNC cannot guarantee that necessary reviews will be conducted in time to meet the Board schedule.
- If applicable, the application must indicate the applicant's intent to transfer the responsibility for the project to a third party in the future and, if known, must also identify the third party and include evidence that the third party is aware of the responsibility and willing to assume the long-term management of the project.
- The SNC may require applicants to provide a Phase I or Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (toxics report) on any property proposed for conservation easement acquisition, if there is reason to believe the site may have toxic contamination. The pre-application should include any known information about possible toxic contamination and applicants should consult with SNC staff early in the process to determine if the potential for toxic contamination may affect the funding of the project.

## **G. Category Two: Pre-Project Grants**

Category Two grants are limited to pre-project activities that are necessary to prepare for a specific future on-the-ground project that meets the SNC grant program criteria. In other words, Category Two grants encompass pre-project activities for the types of projects that would be eligible for a Category One grant according to these Guidelines. The maximum amount for individual Category Two grants is \$75,000.

Examples of Category Two grants include work such as:

1. Acquiring permits.
2. Completing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance.
3. Performing appraisals for conservation easement acquisitions.
4. Performing necessary studies and assessments, and developing necessary project designs related to a specific site or physical project.
5. Preparing plans or supplementing existing plans that will result in a specific project or a set of projects.

## **H. Environmental Documents**

The SNC must comply with The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) when it authorizes grants. The type, cost, timing, and amount of documentation needed to satisfy CEQA requirements can vary greatly depending on the type and scope of the proposed project and the type of applicant. The SNC will act as the CEQA Lead Agency ***only*** for a project which qualifies for an exemption from CEQA, but ***not*** for those projects requiring a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

At the time of application submission, the applicant is responsible for providing an adopted EIR, Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Notice of Exemption, if a public agency has acted to provide CEQA compliance. If the EIR, Negative Declaration, or Mitigated Negative Declaration will be adopted by another public agency within 30 days of application submission, consult with SNC staff to determine if an extension can be granted. However, under no circumstance will the SNC accept one of the above CEQA compliance documents more than 30 days after the application deadline.

If the applicant believes the project is exempt from CEQA, the application should provide adequate information for the SNC to determine whether an exemption applies, including all available environmental assessments or reports.

[Appendix E](#) describes the requirements for CEQA compliance for this grant program. Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to consult with SNC staff during

the pre-application period as CEQA compliance can require a significant amount of time to complete and affect your ability to complete a full application.

#### **I. Projects with Uncertain Treatment Area**

If a project's geographic area or deliverables cannot be fully determined at the time of application because the applicant is trying to maximize treatment, the grant application must indicate the minimum and maximum numerical objective (deliverables) that the project will likely achieve. Examples of these types of projects include, but are not limited to, vegetation clearing activities, revegetation projects, or invasive plant removal projects. Environmental review documentation for these projects must cover the maximum area proposed.

#### **J. Eligible Costs**

Only direct project costs for items within the scope of the project and within the time frame of the project agreement are eligible for payment. Costs related to project-specific performance measures and reporting are required to be addressed in the project budget.

As a part of a site improvement project, costs of monitoring activities to establish pre- and post-project conditions such as, but not limited to, biological, chemical, or physical tests to monitor or evaluate a project's efficacy are eligible.

Eligible administrative costs must be directly related to the project and may not exceed 15 percent of the project implementation cost. Grantees with projects that are funded from multiple grants must develop and apply an administrative cost allocation methodology in identifying eligible administrative costs within each grant. SNC staff is available to provide assistance in determining eligible administrative costs.

The purchase of equipment as a part of a grant may have limitations and requirements; grantees interested in purchasing equipment with grant funds should consult with SNC staff during application development.

#### **K. Ineligible Costs**

Indirect expenditures billed as a percentage of implementation costs are not eligible for reimbursement. These are expenses that involve ongoing operations, or repair or maintenance costs, regardless of whether the repair or maintenance may last more than one year.

Proposition 84 funds may not be used to service or retire debt previously incurred by an eligible applicant in connection with the applicant's acquisition of a real property interest.

In addition, grant funding may not be used to establish or increase a legal defense fund or endowment, make a monetary donation to other organizations, or pay for food or refreshments.

If ineligible costs are included in the project budget, they could result in the project being deemed ineligible in total. In some cases, the project may be approved for funding with the total amount of the award reduced by the amount of the ineligible costs. In that event, SNC will contact the applicant to confirm that the project is still viable. Applicants should avoid including ineligible costs in the application and should contact SNC staff with questions.

#### **L. Performance Measures and Reporting**

Performance measures are used to track progress toward project goals and desired outcomes. They provide a means of reliably measuring and reporting the outcomes and effectiveness of a project and how it contributes to the SNC achieving its programmatic goals.

Applicants must propose project-specific performance measures at the time of full application submittal. Detailed information and recommended performance measures can be found in [Appendix D](#) of this document. Applicants may also propose alternative performance measures, which will be subject to the approval of SNC staff if the grant is authorized. The proposed measure(s) will be finalized in consultation with SNC staff prior to grant agreement approval. Please refer to the Evaluation Criteria, Section IV, for further description of how performance measures will be considered as part of the application.

All grantees will be required to provide periodic progress reports and a final report. The final report must include data related to the project performance measures. See [www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/managing-your-grant](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/managing-your-grant) for additional information on the required content of these reports.

#### **M. Audits**

Applicants should be aware that under the grant agreement, all expenditures claimed in carrying out the project remain subject to audit by the State of California for three years after the final payment or anytime during the conduct of the agreement. Potential applicants should note that during that timeframe they are expected to maintain detailed records necessary to support funding claims and to make them available upon request at all reasonable times for inspection, examination, monitoring, copying, excerpting, transcribing, and audit.

### **IV. Ranches and Agricultural Lands Grant Proposal Evaluation Criteria**

Applications will be evaluated using the following criteria to determine which projects are consistent with the requirements of Proposition 84, and also provide the greatest contribution to achieving the protection and sustainability of ranches and agricultural lands while supporting the Program Goals and mission of the SNC. Additional criteria

used to evaluate applications include: project quality and readiness, cooperation and community support, long-term maintenance and sustainability, and project category preference.

Full applications must include a complete, clear and concise description of all project activities. The description must also include detail on the project's location, purpose, goals, outcomes, design or methodology, staffing, and costs. Applications will be awarded points as described below. The maximum number of points possible for each application is 100.<sup>2</sup>

### **A. Proposition 84 Land and Water Benefits and SNC Program Goals and Mission (Maximum 40 points)**

Evaluators will be looking for project descriptions that clearly explain the goals, purpose, activities and outcomes of the project to assist in an evaluation of the following two areas, with a maximum of 40 points available:

#### **1. Consistency with the Goals of Proposition 84 (Maximum of 20 points)**

Evaluators will consider how the project will contribute to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds, and associated land, water, and other natural resources.

#### **2. SNC Program Goals and Mission (Maximum of 20 points)**

Evaluators will consider how well the project aligns with the SNC's mission and program areas (listed in [Appendix B](#)). Projects will be evaluated based on their contribution to the preservation of Ranches and Agricultural Lands in the Sierra Nevada Region, as defined in these Guidelines. Projects that provide substantive benefits across multiple program areas, as well as address the SNC's "triple bottom line" of environmental, economic, and social well-being, will receive a higher score.

### **B. Project Quality and Readiness (Maximum of 45 points)**

Evaluators will consider whether the application exhibits a complete, realistic and attainable plan for success. Project Quality and Readiness will be evaluated in the areas listed below. Applicants should ensure they include information that clearly describes project outcomes that preserve ranches and agricultural lands and responds to the noted questions in each area.

#### **1. Purpose, Goals, and Outcomes (Maximum of 25 points)**

- Does the project have clearly stated purpose, goals and outcomes?
- Does the applicant propose using identified best management practices and/or appropriate scientific information in achieving project deliverables?
- Is the project part of a larger plan, and/or is complementary work being

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<sup>2</sup> Final scores from Category One and Category Two projects will be calculated based on a normalized scale due to the difference in the total points possible for each category.

planned or implemented in the surrounding area? If so, how does it relate to the overall goals and deliverables?

- Is the proposed project consistent with the appropriate jurisdiction's (city/county) general plan?
- If the project includes removing materials from the land, such as biomass, is there an intended use or purpose for the materials?

Applicants should also consider the following:

- For stream enhancement and restoration projects, including grazing management and noxious weed removal, will the project contribute to one or more of the following: reduced erosion, restored riparian integrity, the promotion of natural ecosystem function, or water quality protection or improvement?
- For meadow restoration projects will the project contribute to improved habitat conditions, hydrologic function, or stream connectivity for fish and wildlife species?
- For conservation easements, will the project contribute to protecting against the threat of conversion to another use, the protection of natural resources, improved water quality or increased habitat connectivity?

Projects with activities on private lands will have to address the clear public benefit of these activities.

## **2. Workplan and Schedule (Maximum of 5 points)**

- Does the workplan adequately describe the specific tasks and schedule needed to complete the project and achieve the stated outcome(s)?
- Is the workplan realistic and does it describe the specific roles of all partners involved in the project?

## **3. Budget (Maximum of 5 points)**

- Are the budgeted amounts adequate and appropriate to achieve the stated outcomes?
- Is the applicant providing in-kind resources? Are other parties that may benefit from the project contributing?
- If the project is to be conducted wholly or in part on private land, is it anticipated that activities performed under the grant will directly generate revenues? If so, how will the revenues be utilized to benefit the project? If funding other than SNC funding is needed for project completion, what is the status of other funding? Who is participating and what is their contribution and relationship to the project?
- Is the project cost-effective (i.e., does the cost of the project seem appropriate based on the deliverables described)? Is information included to demonstrate its cost-effectiveness?

**4. Restrictions, technical documents, and agreements – Category One projects only (Maximum of 5 points)**

- Are permits, agreements, and technical documents necessary for the implementation of this project? If so, are they in place? If not, is there a clear and feasible plan to secure them prior to project implementation?
- Are there property restrictions and/or encumbrances that could adversely impact project completion?

**Note: CEQA/NEPA compliance requirements are provided in more detail in [Appendix E](#).**

**5. Organizational Capacity (Maximum of 5 points)**

- Does the applicant possess the capacity to complete the project as proposed?
- Does the applicant, including current staff, have experience in completing similar projects?
- If appropriate, does the applicant have project partners and/or contractors with expertise necessary for project completion?
- If the applicant has entered into other grant agreements with the SNC, has the applicant performed in compliance with agreement requirements?

**C. Cooperation and Community Support (Maximum of 5 points)**

Evaluators will consider if the application demonstrates community support from a diverse range of stakeholders. Projects that were developed through a collaborative group or a process that included public input will receive a higher score.

**D. Long-term Management and Sustainability (Maximum of 5 points)**

For Category One projects evaluators will consider whether the application clearly describes how the long-term management of the project will be accomplished and financed.

For Category Two projects applicants should describe the plan to procure resources for future implementation of the project, including identification of funding source(s) for project implementation/completion.

**E. Project Category Prioritization (Maximum of 5 points)**

In scoring grants, the SNC will use the following prioritization methodology. Each application submitted will automatically be assigned a point value based on project type. Priority weighting is awarded to Category One restoration and site improvement projects over all other project types.

1. Site improvement projects (5 points).
2. Pre-project activities that ready on-the-ground site improvement projects (2 points).
3. Acquisition of conservation easements (1 point).

4. Pre-project due-diligence projects that ready the acquisition of conservation easements (0 points).

In addition to the technical evaluation, SNC staff will consider geographic distribution of proposed projects when developing recommendations for the SNC Board.

## APPENDIX A

### Program Geographic Area

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

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

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

See: [www.sierranevada.ca.gov/maps/snc-region](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/maps/snc-region) for a general map of the Region; however, applicants should contact staff to verify whether the project is located in an eligible area.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **SNC Mission**

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

### **SNC Program Areas**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy was created as a state agency to do all of the following, working in collaboration and cooperation with local governments and interested parties:

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

## APPENDIX C

### Glossary of Terms

Unless otherwise stated, the terms used in the SNC Proposition 84 Grant Guidelines and Grant Application Packet shall have the following meanings:

Acquisition – To obtain ownership of permanent interest in real property through conservation easements. Leaseholds and rentals do not constitute Acquisition.

Administrative Costs – Administrative costs include any expense which does not relate directly to project implementation. Similar to the traditional definition of ‘overhead,’ administrative costs include rent, utilities, travel, per diem, office equipment and supplies, services such as internet and phone, etc.

Applicant – The entity applying for a SNC grant pursuant to these guidelines.

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

Appraisal - An estimate of the value of real property or other specific interest in real property.

Authorized Representative – The officer authorized in the Resolution to sign all required grant documents including, but not limited to, the grant agreement, the application form, and payment requests. The authorized representative may designate an alternate by informing SNC in writing.

Best Management Practice – A practice or combination of practices considered to be the most effective means (including technological, economic, and institutional considerations) of meeting a particular goal or achieving a particular end.

Biological/Other Survey – An evaluation or collection of data regarding the conditions in an area using surveys and other direct measurements.

Board – The Governing Board of the SNC as established by PRC Section 33321.

Bond or Bond Act – Proposition 84, The Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Public Resources Code Section 75001 et seq.).

California Public Agency - Any state agency, board, or commission, any county, city and county, city, regional agency, public district, redevelopment agency, or other political subdivision.

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

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

CEQA Lead Agency-The lead agency is the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project which may have a significant effect upon the environment. Under CEQA a public agency is any state agency, board, or commission, any county, city and county, city, regional agency, public district, redevelopment agency, or other political subdivision.

CEQA/NEPA Compliance – Activities a public agency performs to meet the requirements of CEQA or NEPA.

Collaborative Process – Willing cooperation between stakeholders with different interests to solve a problem or make decisions that cut across jurisdictional or other boundaries; often used when information is widely dispersed and no single individual, agency or group has sufficient resources to address the issue alone.

Condition Assessment – Characterization of the current state or condition of a particular resource.

Conservancy – The Sierra Nevada Conservancy as defined in Public Resources Code Section 33302 (b).

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

Cost Allocation Plan - A plan for equitable distribution of administrative costs for a project that has multiple funding organizations or a grantee that is administering multiple grants. The plan should follow generally acceptable accounting standards. The Cost Allocation Plan to be used for these projects should be retained in accounting files as required in the grant agreement.

Data – A body or collection of facts, statistics, or other items of information from which conclusions can be drawn.

Design/Permit – Preliminary project planning or identification of methodologies or processes to achieve project goals, and the process of obtaining any regulatory

approvals or permits necessary from appropriate governmental agencies in order to conduct the work of the project.

Easement – An interest in land entitling the holder thereof to a limited use or enjoyment of the land in which the interest exists, or to restrict the use or enjoyment of the land by the owner of the fee title.

Eligible Costs – Expenses incurred by the grantee during the agreement performance period of an approved agreement, which may be reimbursed by the SNC.

Enhancement – Modification of a site to increase/improve the condition of streams, forests, habitat and other resources.

Environmental Site Assessment – Phase I, Phase II or other reports which identify potential or existing contamination liabilities on the underlying land or physical improvements of a real estate holding.

Executive Officer – Executive Officer of the SNC appointed by the Board, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 33328, to manage the Conservancy.

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

Fee Title – The primary interest in land ownership that entitles the owner to use the property subject to any lesser interests in the land and consistent with applicable laws and ordinances.

Fiscal Sponsor – An organization that is eligible to receive SNC Proposition 84 grants and is willing to assume fiscal responsibility for a grant project, although another entity would carry out the grant scope of work.

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

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

Grant Agreement Performance Period – The period of time during which the eligible costs may be incurred under the grant, and in which the work described in the grant scope must be completed.

Grant Agreement Term – The period of time that includes the agreement performance period, plus time for all work to be billed and paid by the state. This period is the same as the beginning and ending dates of the agreement.

Grantee – An entity that has an agreement with the SNC for grant funds.

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

Infrastructure Development/Improvement – The physical improvement of real property, including the construction of facilities or structures (such as bridges, trails, culverts, buildings, etc.).

In-kind Contributions– Non-monetary donations that are utilized on the project, including materials and services. These donations shall be eligible as “other sources of funds” when providing budgetary information for application purposes.

Land Tenure – Legal ownership or other rights in land, sufficient to allow a grantee to conduct activities that are necessary for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement. Examples include: fee title ownership; an easement for completion of the project consistent with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement; or agreements or a clearly defined process where the applicant has adequate site control for the purposes of the project.

Model/Map – Representations to visually show the organization, appearance or features of an area or subject.

Monitoring/Research – To search, observe or record an operation or condition with tools that have no effect upon the operation or condition.

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

NEPA – The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. NEPA is a federal law requiring consideration of the potential environmental effects of proposed project whenever a federal agency has discretionary jurisdiction over some aspect of that project. For more information, refer to: <http://ceq.hss.doe.gov/index.html>

NEPA Lead Agency-The federal agency having responsibility for providing compliance with NEPA for a proposed project on federal lands.

Nonprofit Organization– A private, nonprofit organization that qualifies for exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of Title 26 of the United States Code, and whose charitable purposes are consistent with the purposes of the SNC as set forth in Public Resources Code Section 33300 et seq.

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

Outreach Materials – Audio, visual and written materials developed to help explain a particular topic or subject.

Performance Measure – A quantitative measure used by the SNC to track progress toward project goals and desired outcomes.

Plan – A document or process describing a set of actions to address specific needs or issues or create specific benefits.

Planning – The act or process of creating a plan.

Pre-Project Due Diligence – The analysis necessary to identify all aspects influencing a project and determine the risks associated with a project.

Preservation – Protection, rehabilitation, stabilization, restoration, development, and reconstruction, or any combination of those activities.

Preservation of Ranches and Agricultural Lands – Activities occurring on ranches and farms that result in sustainable economic, ecological, and social benefits to communities, people, and their environments.

Project – The work to be accomplished with grant funds.

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

Proposition 84 – See Bond.

Public Agencies – Any California public agency, public university, or federal agency.

Public Benefit – Benefits accruing to the general public, clarified in this document with regard to publicly-funded work on private lands. These types of projects must demonstrate benefits (protection, restoration, or improvement of natural resources) beyond the private property in question, in order to be accepted as eligible for potential grant awards.

Ranches and Agricultural Lands – Lands managed to produce goods and commodities from the natural environment (most commonly actively-managed farms and ranches). For the purposes of this grant program, production of wood products does not apply. These lands often provide important contributions to habitat, biodiversity, water quality, air quality and open space that benefit everyone.

Region – The Sierra Nevada Region as defined in Public Resources Code Section 33302 (f).

Region-wide – Providing benefits that affect the overall breadth of the SNC Region or multiple Subregions within the Region.

Resilience – The ability of an ecosystem to regain structural and functional attributes that have suffered harm from stress or disturbance.

Resource Protection – Those actions necessary to prevent harm or damage to natural, cultural, historical or archaeological resources, or those actions necessary to allow the continued use and enjoyment of property or resources, such as acquisition of conservation easements, development, restoration, preservation or interpretation.

Restoration – Activities that initiate, accelerate or return the components and processes of a damaged site to a previous historical state, a contemporary standard or a desired future condition including, but not limited to, projects for the control of erosion, the control and elimination of exotic species, fencing out threats to existing or restored natural resources, road elimination, and other plant and wildlife habitat improvement.

Revenue – Revenues generated from a project as the direct result of the provision of public funds, excluding funds provided to reimburse expenses.

Site Improvements – Project activities involving the physical improvement or restoration of land.

SNC – Sierra Nevada Conservancy.

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

Study/Report – Research or the detailed examination and analysis of a subject.

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

Tribal Organization – An Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, or a tribal agency authorized by a tribe, which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and is identified on pages 9250-9255, inclusive, of Document 95-3839 (February 16, 1995) of the Federal Register, as that list may be updated or amended from time to time.

Working Landscape(s) – Lands producing goods and commodities from the natural environment (such as farms, ranches, and forests in timber production). For many communities, these lands are an important part of the local economy, culture, and social fabric.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Performance Measures**

Performance measures are used to track progress toward project goals and desired outcomes. They provide a means of reliably measuring and reporting the outcomes and effectiveness of a project and how it contributes to SNC achieving its programmatic goals.

All grantees are required to report on performance measures for their projects. Certain information will be asked of all projects. This includes data related to four quantitative performance measures if applicable to the project:

1. Number of People Reached
2. Dollar Value of Resources Leveraged for the Sierra Nevada
3. Number and Type of Jobs Created
4. Number of New, Improved or Preserved Economic Activities

In addition to the information that will be asked of all projects, grantees will report on performance measures (usually one to three) related to their specific project.

### **Submitting Performance Measures in the Grant Application**

You must propose project-specific measures as part of your grant application. Generally, you will select these measures from the pre-approved list developed by the SNC. However, you also have the option of proposing a different measure in your application if you believe it would be more appropriate for your project. Final Performance Measures will be determined in consultation with SNC staff, but it is highly recommended that the applicant work with SNC staff during the pre-application process to concur on the appropriate Performance Measures prior to application submission.

The Performance Measures you select should be directly applicable to your project's goals, outcomes, and deliverables. Approved measures become part of a grantee's final grant agreement.

The four Performance Measures listed above that are required of all projects should be addressed in the grant application as to if and how they are applicable to the project.

The applicant is not expected to conjecture the quantitative outcomes of the Performance Measures in the grant application, but merely to list and discuss their applicability.

### **Selecting Project-Specific Performance Measures**

1. You should begin the process of selecting project-specific performance measures by referring back to the project category you selected for your project.

The table on the following page provides a list of the recommended measures that are most likely to be relevant for projects in each category. A description of all of the measures follows the table. Examine your project purpose, goals, desired outcomes, and deliverables (from your project general description). Select measures that will help you determine whether and how well these have been achieved. (If you are unclear on which measure/s to select or have questions, please contact SNC staff.)

2. Review your project workplan and budget to ensure you have factored in the time and cost to gather and report performance measure-related information. For each Performance Measure, a detailed description of information gathering and reporting requirements is provided on the SNC Web site:  
[www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/managing-your-grant/detailed-performance-measure-descriptions](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/managing-your-grant/detailed-performance-measure-descriptions)
3. You may find that the performance measures listed below are not relevant to your project. SNC encourages the development of performance measures most appropriate for your project. Development of new measures should be done in consultation with SNC staff, because it requires their approval. When proposing a new performance measure, keep in mind that the measure should directly relate to a specific project goal, outcome, or deliverable. Consider performance measures that can be tracked using accepted methods to ensure that your data will be consistent and defensible. For any new performance measures proposed for your project, provide the following information:
  1. Clear definition
  2. Data collection method(s)
  3. Data sources
  4. Target values

### **Reporting Performance Measures Outcomes in the Progress and Final Reports**

Grantees must report on all Performance Measures that are incorporated into the grant agreement in the Progress Reports (when interim measurement is applicable) and the Final Report, in accordance with the Detailed Performance Measures descriptions.

Grantees are also required to provide qualitative, or narrative, information in their final project reports as requested on the Final Report form.

## Performance Measures by Project Category All Grants

<b>A. Common to All Categories</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of People Reached</li> <li>2. Dollar Value of Resources Leveraged for the Sierra Nevada</li> <li>3. Number and Type of Jobs Created</li> <li>4. Number of New, Improved, or Preserved Economic Activities</li> </ol>
<b>B. Common to Site Improvement &amp; Acquisition Categories</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Kilowatts of Renewable Energy Production Capacity Maintained or Created</li> <li>6. Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected or Restored</li> <li>7. Number of New Recreation Access Points</li> <li>8. Number of Special Significance Sites Protected or Preserved</li> <li>9. Tons of Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided</li> <li>10. Measurable Changes in Knowledge or Behavior</li> </ol>
<b>C. Acquisition Only</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Acres of Land Conserved</li> </ol>
<b>D. Site Improvement Only</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Acre Feet of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced</li> <li>13. Acres of Land Improved or Restored</li> <li>14. Acre Feet Per Annum of Streamflow Improved</li> <li>15. Feet of Trail/Path Length Constructed or Improved</li> <li>16. Mass of Pollutants Reduced Per Year</li> </ol>
<b>E. Pre-Project Planning</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments</li> <li>18. Percent of Pre-Project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation</li> <li>19. Measurable Changes in Knowledge or Behavior</li> </ol>

### Performance Measure Descriptions

The following Performance Measures (PMs) have been developed to meet SNC's initial needs as it launches its programs and provides initial grant funding for several project types. These PMs, along with a brief description of each, are listed below in five broad categories: Performance Measures for All Projects, Performance Measures Common to Site Improvement and Acquisition Projects, Performance Measures for Acquisition Projects, Performance Measures for Site Improvement Projects, and Performance Measures for Pre-Project Planning Projects.

#### **A. Common to All Categories**

##### **1. Number of People Reached**

Number of People Reached measures progress of information-sharing and education efforts and inclusiveness of other project efforts such as plan development.

**2. Dollar Value of Resources Leveraged for the Sierra Nevada**

The Dollar Value of Resources Leveraged provides a measure of the additional resources contributed to SNC funded projects by grantees and other partners. The total value is based on other funds provided by external sources, valuation of volunteer hours, and the value of in-kind contributions made by a project.

**3. Number and Type of Jobs Created**

Number and Type of Jobs Created provides an accounting of the full-time equivalent jobs created by SNC-funded activities. Information provided should describe whether the job is expected to be temporary or long-term.

**4. Number of New, Improved, or Preserved Economic Activities**

New, Improved, or Preserved Economic Activities measures the types, quantities, and, where appropriate, estimated dollar values of new, improved, or preserved activities, products, and services resulting from the project.

**B. Common to Site Improvement and Acquisition Projects**

**5. Kilowatts of Renewable Energy Production Capacity Maintained or Created**

The Kilowatts of Renewable Energy Production Capacity maintained or created is based on the California Energy Commission's (CEC's) standards for renewable energy eligibility and includes energy generation capacity from biomass, wind, solar, small hydroelectric and other qualifying sources.

**6. Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected or Restored**

Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected or Restored provides a measure of a project's contribution to water quality, riparian property values, habitat, and stream connectivity. Information provided should indicate whether the stream bank is being protected or restored.

**7. Number of New Recreation Access Points**

Number of New Recreation Access Points measures improvements in recreation access by: type of access points, recreation type, and change in capacity.

**8. Number of Special Significance Sites Protected or Preserved**

Number of Special Significance Sites Protected or Preserved records the total number of sites with important cultural or natural features that are protected from development or other adverse impacts.

**9. Tons of Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided**

Tons of Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided demonstrates the value of Sierra ecosystem resources in reducing the effects of climate change. Potential project types can include conservation forest management, renewable energy generation, and industrial process improvements. The carbon reductions included in this performance measure will be informed by and linked, as appropriate, to standard approaches and protocols such as those published by the California

Climate Action Registry.

**10. Measurable Changes in Knowledge or Behavior**

Measurable Change in Knowledge or Behavior tracks the effects of educational and interpretive efforts to improve appreciation for and stewardship of Sierra Nevada resources. Examples of behavioral change include increased Firewise landscaping and removal of noxious weeds on private property. Examples of change in knowledge include improved student understanding of climate change and increased public acceptance of prescribed fire.

**C. Common to Acquisition Projects**

**11. Acres of Land Conserved**

Acres of Land Conserved includes areas that have been conserved through acquisition, including easements. This performance measure provides an accounting of the extent of landscape and natural resources conserved by SNC activities. Information provided should include the method of conservation (acquisition or easement) and the primary purpose of conservation (recreation, open space, working landscapes, etc).

**D. Common to Site Improvement Projects**

**12. Acre Feet of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced**

Acre Feet of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced measures the benefits of water conservation and efficiency projects and particular restoration efforts that impact timing of flows. These actions benefit both local residents and the people of California who receive their water supply from the Sierra Nevada. Project activities can include: meadow restoration to enhance runoff timing or incentive programs such as converting to drip irrigation to reduce demand.

**13. Acres of Land Improved or Restored**

Acres of Land Improved or Restored tracks efforts to reduce the risk of natural disasters, such as catastrophic wildfire, and improve natural resource conditions, such as site productivity and wildlife habitat, through site improvement. Information provided should identify whether the acres protected have been categorized by importance or priority rating through another agency or program, such as acres of critical habitat, or acres in moderate, high and very high fire hazard areas, as delineated by the CALFIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zoning Map.

**14. Acre-Feet per Annum of Streamflow Improved**

Acre-Feet per Annum of Streamflow Improved measures the changes in flow conditions in a given stream or river resulting from a project. This performance measure directly addresses improving water quality and habitat, since flow can be a controlling driver in these issues. Subcategories include: water conservation or efficiency projects dedicating conserved water to instream flows, actions that result

in changes in management, short-term leases of water for instream flows, and permanent transfers through acquisition of a water right.

**15. Feet of Trail/Path Length Constructed or Improved**

The Feet of Trail/Path Length Constructed or Improved incorporates paved and unpaved multi-use urban, hiking, OHV, equestrian and other trails and paths. Information provided should identify the length, type of trail/path and type of use.

**16. Mass of Pollutants Reduced Per Year**

The Mass of Pollutants Reduced Per Year indicates the pollutant reduction effectiveness of restoration, water quality, and air quality projects. Current projects focus on reducing sediment and mercury pollution; however, additional pollutants may be targeted in future projects. Information provided should identify the pollutant type/s to be reduced and the amount of reduction.

**E. Common to Pre-Project Planning Projects**

**17. Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments**

The Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments is a measure that may be relevant for a wide variety of projects. Plans and assessments help communities plan for resource use, qualify for targeted funding, and support understanding of conditions and management options. Examples of anticipated subjects include fire protection, water resources, land use, tourism development, habitat surveys and many more.

**18. Percent of Pre-Project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation**

Percent of Pre-project and Planning Efforts Implemented measures progress in moving SNC-funded projects from initial stages of collaboration and planning to on-the-ground actions and acquisitions.

**19. Measurable Changes in Knowledge or Behavior**

Measurable Change in Knowledge or Behavior tracks the effects of educational and interpretive efforts to improve appreciation for and stewardship of Sierra Nevada resources. Examples of behavioral change include increased Firewise landscaping and removal of noxious weeds on private property. Examples of change in knowledge include improved student understanding of climate change and increased public acceptance of prescribed fire.

## APPENDIX E

### California Environmental Quality Act Compliance

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) is a State agency, and SNC actions to approve grants are discretionary decisions subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). When SNC is initiating or making discretionary decisions such as providing financial support to entities for grant projects, the SNC must ensure that it complies with CEQA. This CEQA requirement applies to all decisions to award funds to eligible grant applicants, including entities that are not California Public Agencies per CEQA, such as federal agencies, tribal agencies and organizations, and nonprofit (501(c)(3) organizations. Agencies or organizations that are not a California Public Agency do not have the authority to adopt or certify CEQA environmental documents.

The requirements for CEQA compliance will vary according to the proposed activities. ***As the necessary steps for CEQA compliance are determined project by project, and compliance can be a time consuming process, all applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with SNC staff during the pre-application process to determine how best to meet the CEQA requirements.***

The California Environmental Quality Act is the State of California's environmental review process. **Projects** are defined by CEQA as: The whole of an action that has potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. Specifically, related to the SNC grant program: A **Project** includes an activity which is funded, in whole or in part, through public agency contracts, **grants**, subsidies, loans, or other assistance from a public agency, such as the SNC.

Applicants should note that the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines were revised in 2011 to provide guidance to public agencies on how to address the issue of greenhouse gas emissions in draft CEQA documents. Along with all of the usual CEQA topic areas, this issue must be addressed, as applicable. For a revised CEQA Guidelines Initial Study Checklist, [click here](#). The SNC also encourages applicants to review the current provisions of CEQA, the statute, and the CEQA Guidelines, which are the regulations adopted by the Secretary for the Natural Resources Agency to implement CEQA. The statute and the Guidelines can be found on-line at <http://ceres.ca.gov/ceqa/>. Permitting requirements may be applicable to your proposed activities, and permitting processes may also be subject to CEQA review. The description below provides a broad overview of the level of CEQA for different project activities.

For activities that meet the CEQA definition of a Project, the CEQA environmental review process is completed by a California Public Agency acting as a CEQA Lead Agency (please see the Glossary). The Lead Agency is responsible for determining if the proposed activity is a "Project" or is "Not a Project" for purposes of CEQA. If you are an applicant that is **not** a California Public Agency, contact your Project Lead to

discuss what level of CEQA review and permits may be applicable to your project. The SNC will only act as a lead agency for grant projects in this grant cycle when the proposed activities are considered “Not a Project” per CEQA or the project qualifies for a CEQA exemption (either a Categorical Exemption or a statutory exemption). The SNC may act as a responsible agency (supporting agency) when a permit or other action subject to environmental review under CEQA requires another California Public Agency to act first as the lead agency under CEQA and to conduct environmental review resulting in the approval of a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or an Environmental Impact Report.

➤ **Not a Project under CEQA**

If the proposed activity does not meet the CEQA definition of a project, then review under CEQA would not be required. Applicants are advised to consult with SNC staff prior to submission of a pre-application to determine if any information is needed to support the claim of “not a project.”

➤ **Categorical and Statutory Exemptions**

Specific types of activities have been identified as exempt from environmental analysis under CEQA; classes of Categorical Exemptions and Statutory Exemptions may be found in the CEQA Guidelines and the statute. If you are a California Public Agency submitting an application, you are responsible for filing a signed, filed and stamped copy of a Notice of Exemption for a categorically or statutorily exempt project.

**For all applicants**, including public agencies, all available environmental assessments or reports that have been conducted must be submitted so that SNC can determine whether a finding of exemption is appropriate.

**SNC will file a Notice of Exemption for all projects determined to be Categorically Exempt from CEQA upon authorization by the SNC Board.**

➤ **Negative Declaration and Mitigated Negative Declaration**

A CEQA Lead Agency is responsible for conducting an Initial Study for projects which are not categorically or statutorily exempt. If the Initial Study shows that a project will not have a significant impact on the environment, a Negative Declaration may be prepared and adopted by the CEQA Lead Agency. When impacts are identified that can clearly be reduced to a level of insignificance by adopted mitigation measures during project implementation, a Mitigated Negative Declaration may be prepared and adopted by the CEQA Lead Agency. The public notice, document preparation, and public review for these documents may require several months to complete. Documentation of completed CEQA review for proposed grant projects must be provided with the application.

**The SNC will NOT act as the CEQA Lead Agency for any project requiring a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report.** The applicant is responsible for providing an approved Negative Declaration or Mitigated Negative Declaration from another CEQA Lead Agency analyzing potential impacts of the project. The CEQA Lead Agency must have discretionary authority to approve the environmental document, which means an agency must have jurisdiction by law over the activity (see CEQA §15366) that requires it to make a decision or issue an approval (see CEQA §15352), and to have discretion [not ministerial review] that allows it to condition its approval or change the project to protect the environment (see CEQA §15357).

➤ **Environmental Impact Report**

If the CEQA Lead Agency determines through an Initial Study that a project may result in a potentially significant impact to the environment, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required. The public notice, document preparation, and public review for an EIR may take up to two years to complete. Documentation of completed CEQA review must be provided with application.

**The SNC will NOT act as the CEQA Lead Agency for any project requiring a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or Environmental Impact Report.** The applicant is responsible for providing an approved Environmental Impact Report analyzing potential impacts of the project. The CEQA Lead Agency must have discretionary authority to approve the environmental document, which means an agency must have jurisdiction by law over the activity (see CEQA §15366) that requires it to make a decision or issue an approval (see CEQA §15352), and to have discretion [not ministerial review] that allows it to condition its approval or change the project to protect the environment (see CEQA §15357).

**Consistency with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)**

Projects must comply with both NEPA and CEQA requirements if they are from federal applicants, applicants using federal funding, or are conducted on federal land. The project applicant is responsible for providing information at the time the application is submitted, including NEPA documents and all available environmental assessments or reports, that demonstrates that the project qualifies for an exemption from CEQA. **The SNC will act as the CEQA Lead Agency only if the project qualifies for an exemption under CEQA.**

## APPENDIX F

### Appraisals

#### **REGULATIONS FOR THE SUBMITTAL OF APPRAISAL REPORTS TO THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE ACQUISITION OF CONSERVATION LANDS (UPDATED AS OF 2/22/12):**

Appraisal reports prepared for the acquisition of any land or interest therein by or with funding from an “acquisition agency” as defined in Public Resources Code Section 5096.501(a) must conform to the following minimum standards in order to be considered for Appraisal Review by the State.

(a) Appraisal reports shall be prepared and signed by an appropriately Licensed or Certified Real Estate Appraiser in good standing (pursuant to Part 3, commencing with Section 11300 of Division 4 of the Business and Professions Code, and the California Code of Regulations, Title 10, Section 3701).

(b) Appraisal reports shall include descriptive photographs and maps of sufficient quality and detail to clearly depict the subject property and any market data relied upon, including the relationship between the location of the subject property and the market data.

(c) Appraisal reports shall include a complete description of the subject property land, site characteristics and improvements. Valuations based on a property's development potential shall include:

(1) Verifiable data on the development potential of the land (e.g., Certificates of Compliance, Tentative Map, Parcel Map, Final Map).

(2) A description of what would be required for a development project to proceed (e.g., legal entitlements, infrastructure).

(3) Presentation of evidence that sufficient demand exists, or is likely to exist in the future, to provide market support for the development.

(d) Appraisal reports shall include a statement by the appraiser indicating to what extent land title conditions were investigated and considered in the analysis and value conclusion (a Preliminary Report should be included as an attachment to the appraisal report when available).

(e) Appraisal reports shall include a discussion of implied dedication, prescriptive rights or other unrecorded rights (see Civil Code Sections [801-813](#), [1006-1009](#)) that may affect value, indicating the extent of investigation, knowledge, or observation of conditions that might indicate evidence of public use. If the appraiser has no knowledge of or has not observed such conditions, a statement to that effect shall be included in

the appraisal report. (This regulation does not require the appraiser to render an opinion regarding the legality of any such unrecorded right.)

(f) Appraisal reports including more than nominal value for specialty interests, including but not limited to timber, water, minerals, or carbon credits, shall include a separate valuation prepared and signed by a certified or registered professional qualified in the field of specialty interest. This valuation shall be reviewed and approved by a second qualified, certified or registered professional, considered by the appraiser, and appended to the appraisal report.

Note: Authority cited: Section 5096.517, Public Resources Code. Reference: Sections 5096.501 and 5096.517, Public Resources Code.

### **CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES (DGS) APPRAISAL SPECIFICATIONS**

All appraisals must be completed and signed by a State of California Certified Real Estate Appraiser who certifies that the appraisal is in compliance with the [Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice](#) as currently adopted by the Appraisal Standards Board of the Appraisal Foundation.