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Rim Fire Recovery Efforts Garner \$842,000 Grant



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Tori James, MML News Reporter

Sonora, CA – Rim Fire restoration efforts are \$842,000 richer today, courtesy of a grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to support targeted activities underway.

The monies, earmarked for restoration efforts in the Cherry Creek Watershed, will help the Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (YSS) collective bring back meadows, springs and deer habitat as well as replace undersized culverts on Stanislaus National Forest lands. The latest infusion from the Conservancy brings its contribution to \$1 million, as it funded earlier YSS work to complete the restoration plans.

Clearly enthused by the news, YSS Chair Chris Trott states, "It is YSS's number one goal — to help with the restoration of the Rim Fire footprint — and we have been actually working with this grant [application] for over a year. So, we are anxious to get started." He adds, "This is just the beginning, actually. It is going to require much more work than this, but we are happy to use this money to go a long ways toward restoring the Cherry Creek Watershed." According to YSS, the Cherry Creek Watershed was one of the most damaged areas during the 2013 Rim Fire.

When asked to guesstimate a total needed for Rim Fire Restoration, Trott takes a long deep breath. Mulling the gravity of the damage and efforts already underway, he shares, "You know, it wouldn't surprise me...not including reforestation, because the Forest Service has estimated that reforestation and biomass removal out there is going to cost upwards of \$70 million...it is difficult...as it is a long-term project. I would say, [it is] easily another \$30 million to \$50 million above and beyond the reforestation costs and this grant."

As its mission states YSS is a collaborative group of diverse interests working together to assist the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Yosemite National Park and private land managers in achieving healthy forests and watersheds and in developing recovery and restoration plans for the Rim Fire and other areas in need of rehabilitation. It currently lists 22 member organizations and includes the Sierra Nevada Conservancy among its six liaison members. For more about YSS, click [here](http://yosemitestanislaussolutions.com/)(<http://yosemitestanislaussolutions.com/>).

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