

Sierra Nevada Region

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy Region includes more than 25 million acres in all or part of 22 counties and is organized into six Subregions:

North Sierra: Modoc, Shasta, Lassen Counties

North Central Sierra: Tehama, Butte, Plumas, Sierra Counties

Central Sierra: Yuba, Nevada, Placer, El Dorado Counties

South Central Sierra: Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne, Mariposa Counties

South Sierra: Madera, Fresno, Tulare, Kern Counties

East Sierra: Alpine, Mono, Inyo Counties

A Word from the Executive Officer

“Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.” President Theodore Roosevelt

Those words from one of our nation’s great conservationists sum up the work we do here at the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC). As we closed the books on our 8th year of existence, lots of hard work has resulted in lots of positive outcomes throughout our Region. And we’re confident this is work worth doing.

Thirty-eight million people call California home, and in one way or another each and every one of them have been touched by the Sierra Nevada. **More than 60%** of California’s developed water supply originates in the high elevations of the Sierra Nevada, and nearly half of the water that flows in to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta comes from the rivers of the Sierra Nevada. Recreational gems like Yosemite National Park, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Mono Lake, Mammoth Mountain ski resort, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park and millions of acres of national forests have 50 million visit days every year. Sierra forests and meadows filter and store water for millions of people and they store enough carbon to offset annual CO2 emissions

from 108 coal-fired power plants.

There are many organizations and individuals working hard to protect and restore the environmental, economic and social well-being of this Region. Sadly, the health of our forests, meadows, streams and communities are in decline, and California’s **primary source** of water is at risk.

Erosion, poor water quality and higher flood risks are expected consequences of these large damaging fires and the resulting **sedimentation impacts storage capacity** in our reservoirs, reducing the amount of water available for urban and agriculture users around the state.



Additionally, historic gold mining in California changed the landscape of the Sierra Nevada and the remnants of these mining activities are still with us today. The Sierra Nevada contains thousands of **abandoned mines** and the toxic substances associated with legacy mining, such as **mercury**, continue to be carried downstream to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay Delta and the San Francisco Bay. These substances impair water quality and impact public health.

Since its creation the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, along with a group of dedicated partners, has been working to preserve and improve Sierra benefits for all of California. Investing in activities and initiatives that improve forest health, protect water quality, and buffer the impacts of a changing climate have been the focus of SNC's efforts. The following summaries highlight some of the activities undertaken by the SNC during the 2012-13 fiscal year. Addressing these complex issues can be a daunting task, but we have roughly **38 million reasons** to face these challenges head-on.

We all stand to gain from a healthy Sierra Nevada, and we all stand to lose if the Sierra Nevada Region is allowed to fall victim to threats like catastrophic wildfire or mercury contamination. **Investing** in natural infrastructure, such as improving forest and watershed health, restoring meadows and streams in the upper watersheds, addressing water quality issues such as mercury contamination, and reducing the risk of large damaging fires is essential to ensuring that these shared benefits continue to exist in the future.



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.

