SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

Board Meeting Minutes
July 25 and 26 2007

Town of Truckee
10183 Truckee Airport Road
Truckee, CA 96161

I. Call to Order

Vice Chairman Dahle called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM

II. Roll Call

Present: Louis Boitano, Brian Dahle, Byng Hunt, Allen Ishida, Bob Kirkwood, John Lloyd, BJ Kirwan, Byron Sher, Robert Weygandt, Carol Whiteside, Rose Comstock (alternate, North Central), Beth Pendleton, Bill Haigh, and Steve Schackelton

Absent: John Brissenden and Mike Chrisman

III. Approval of May 3, 2007 Meeting Minutes

There were no changes to the Meeting Minutes

Action: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Weygandt seconded a motion to approve the May 3, 2007 Board Meeting Minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comments

Mayor Richard Anderson presented the Board with the key to the town and welcomed everyone to Truckee.

V. Chairman's Report

Vice Chairman Dahle thanked everyone who participated in the tour the previous day. In particular, he thanked Truckee Donner Land Trust, The Trust for Public Land, Truckee River Watershed Council, Holliday Development and the Sierra Business Council for their assistance in arranging the various stops on the field tour.

Beth Pendleton, USFS, reported on the recent Sierra Nevada fires indicating that as of this time there are no significant fires in the Sierra Nevada. She indicated that fire agencies have been at their highest level of activity of the season with 70 fires to date. With extremely dry conditions at lower elevations, fire agencies face a challenging season ahead.

VI. Executive Officer's Report

Staff and Budget Update

Executive Officer Branham reported the hiring of Joan Keegan, Assistant Executive Officer. She will start on August 9th, Kerri Timmer was promoted to Mt. Lassen Area Manager. SNC is interviewing for the Mt. Whitney Area Manager, who will be based in Mariposa. The SNC has three positions currently posted for area office staff.

Branham welcomed Julie Griffith-Flatter to the Auburn program staff and noted the permanent hiring of Brittany Juergenson. On behalf of the SNC he also thanked Ken Jones for his contributions to SNC over the past year and a half, with the selection and establishment of the area offices, hiring of staff and in creating various organizational procedures. Branham recognized Bob Kingman for his is efforts in collecting much-needed items for victims of the Angora Fire, as SNC's sister agency, the California Tahoe Conservancy, had several employees affected by the fire.

Branham noted that the SNC is still waiting for passage of the State budget, noting that without a budget, no formal actions on the Proposition 84 grants can be taken. Branham noted that the issues in the budget process for SNC had been resolved favorably, and he thanked Assemblymember John Laird and all of the SNC partners who supported the SNC budget. Branham recognized Vickie Key and Dennis Hutcheson for their efforts in securing SNC's authority to conduct its own procurement.

Annual Symposium Update

Branham reported that staff continues to work on details for the first annual symposium. The symposium, which will focus on climate change in the Sierra, was originally to have been held in September, however has been postponed until December. Staff is working with the symposium committee consisting of Boardmembers Kirwan and Brissenden on planning for the event.

Board Meeting Schedule

Branham proposed to the Board either postponing or cancelling the September meeting until further notice. Boardmember Kirkwood asked if Sub-Region rotation would change if the meeting is cancelled, EO Branham stated it could be considered. Boardmembers Comstock and Dahle noted they are not available the first week in March 2008. The Board agreed to postpone the September meeting until further notice.

Response to Request for Task Force on Clearcutting

Branham reviewed the request made by members of the public at the Jackson Board Meeting, to establish a clearcutting task force. Branham indicated that he spoke to relevant parties as to whether the involvement of the SNC would be beneficial. He stated that most parties did not believe SNC's involvement would be

useful, most citing the fact that clearcutting is dealt with regularly by numerous other agencies. Given SNC's principle of bringing together willing partners, Branham indicated this issue did not seem to meet that criterion. Boardmember Sher thanked Branham for putting the request on the agenda, noting that it is the first public request made to the Board for an agenda item. Sher suggested that the fact that other agencies are dealing with an issue should not preclude the SNC from addressing it. The Board discussed the issue of public requests for items to be placed on the agenda, concluding that Branham should continue to work with the Chairman on agenda development. However, Board members should communicate their interest in items being placed on the agenda to Branham as well. The Board concurred with the recommendation that no task force on clearcutting be formed at this time.

Public Comment:
Barry Bolton, stated that he was one of those who requested the creation of a clearcutting task force at the Jackson Board Meeting. He said he appreciated the consideration that had been given to the request, and believes the issue of clearcutting in the Sierra Nevada cannot continue to be ignored.

2006-07 Action Plan Update
Bob Kingman notified the Board that the tasks in the 2006-07 Action Plan were substantially complete, with three items to be carried over to the 2007-08 Action Plan. Mr. Kingman said that at the next Board Meeting, there would be reports from the information technology rapids needs assessment that was part this year's Action Plan.

Education Communication Plan
Kingman noted the Education Communication Plan is in the 2006-07 Action Plan and it is critical to complete. Staff and consultants are working on the final draft. Steve Shackelton, NPS, stated that Yosemite National Park would be interested in assisting the SNC with the Education Communication Plan.

Partnership Activities
Branham stated that the SNC is working with Department of Water Resources on the California Water Plan Update 2009 – Regional Outreach Workshop on August 10th, in El Dorado Hills. The goal is to provide an overview of the California Water Plan from 2005-09 and share information on the regional focus and management strategies. He also reported that SNC will have a presence at the California State Fair this year; the SNC display will be a part of the Department of Boating and Waterways presentation.

Branham introduced Nancy Jo Riekse, head of the Placer Grown effort. Ms. Riekse thanked the Board for the opportunity and gave an overview of the programs available through Placer Grown. The program is aimed at promoting produce grown by smaller Placer County growers, through a wide range of activities.

Branham introduced David Mattocks, President of the Sierra Business Council (SBC). Mr. Mattocks noted that the State of the Sierra Report was an effort conducted through a partnership between the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and SBC. The report represents the third edition of the SBC's "indicator project" trending the social, natural, and financial capital of the Sierra Nevada. The report provides an understanding of the region's wealth by highlighting assets, recognizing issues that affect our quality of life, and offer sustainable opportunities to enhance and improve the Sierra Nevada.

VII. Deputy Attorney General's Report

Deputy Attorney General Christine Sproul said she had no report.

VIII. Central Sub-Region Counties Reports

Supervisor Weygandt said he had no report.

IX. Overview of the Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Update

Boardmember Beth Pendleton (USFS) and Crawford Tuttle (CalFIRE), presented a summary of the Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project (SNAMP) overview. The effort is designed to address a wide variety of issues facing the management of National Forests across the Sierra Nevada, including substantial research efforts relating to habitat, fire and other issues. There was discussion by board members relative to the need for activity to be taken during the time that the research is being conducted. Pendleton assured the Board that this would be the case.

X. Program Guidelines

Branham noted that the Program Guidelines before the Board reflected public comments and previous Board direction. He indicated that staff was recommending that the Board create a Sub-Regional committee consisting of the Sub-Regional representative and a statewide member, to assist staff in addressing priorities. Boardmember Kirkwood noted the importance of keeping the Sub-regional alternates informed of the committee conversations.

Branham explained the proposed process for notification of city and counties with the Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs). After board discussion, it was recommended that for SOG II grants a 10-day comment period be created and for all other grants, the comment period is 15-days.

Action: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Ishida seconded a motion to approve the proposed Program Guidelines with noted changes to the local government notification process. The motion passed unanimously.

XI. Grants Guidelines

Branham outlined changes that made to the Grants Guidelines, including the following:

- The SOG 1 maximum changed from $50,000 to $100,000.
- The Competitive Grants minimum changed from $50,000 to $100,000.
- Use of grant funds to pay off certain loans obtained for purposes consistent with the Guidelines is explicitly allowed.
- Funding on a one-time basis is now allowed for staff resources tied to a tangible outcome under the SOG 2 category.

Boardmember Sher commented that we should be careful with the use of bond funds for staffing purposes. Boardmember Lloyd concurred and asked that these expenditures be carefully tracked and identified to the Board.

Boardmember Comstock asked if a water agency could apply and Branham replied that any public agency and certain non-profits are eligible.

Boardmember Kirkwood suggested clarification of the language relating to capacity building to indicate that certain “pre-project” activities and seed money is what is intended.

Boardmember Dahle asked if the SNC could acquire water rights and if so would SNC hold the rights? Branham stated that SNC could acquire the rights, but like with other rights the desired outcome would be for some other entity to ultimately hold the rights.

Boardmember Kirkwood also asked that greater clarity be provided on pages 10 and 17 relative to a proposal being considered in the context of the surrounding land. Branham indicated that the recommendation includes providing staff with some editorial flexibility to deal with issues such as this.

Boardmember Comstock wondered why flood control is not specifically mentioned as a potential activity. Branham indicated that other portions of Proposition 84 specifically address flood control and that the section that provides SNC’s funding does not include that language. However, he indicated that flood control could be one of the benefits of a project that was otherwise consistent with guiding authority in Proposition 84 that affects the SNC.

Action: Boardmember Pendleton moved and Boardmember Kirkwood seconded a motion to approve Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines without modification. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. 2007-08 Action Plan

SNC Staff introduced the 07-08 Action Plan distributed in the Board packet. Some of the action items in the approved Strategic Plan are duplicated across a few of the program areas and are combined for the purpose of this Action Plan.

Action: Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Hunt seconded a motion to approve the 2007-08 Action Plan as presented by staff. The motion passed unanimously.

XIII. Environmental, Economic and Social Indices and Performance Measurements

Branham indicated that this issue is specifically addressed as part of the Strategic Plan and staff has spent a great deal of time thinking about and learning how to develop a set of performance measures. Branham and Bob Kingman presented a slide show to the Board, outlining a process to use for creating indices and performance measures that will allow the SNC to measure progress in carrying out our goals. Staff will provide the Board with a set of interim measures at the December meeting and an update on the overall project at that time.

XIV. SNC License Plate

Branham gave an overview of the process and the current status of the license plate and the legal issues surrounding the issuance of a plate needing DMV and CHP approvals. Staff has worked with Boardmembers Yamaguchi and Sher on the proposed design. Boardmember Ishida suggested adding Sierra Nevada Conservancy under the picture, to tie it back to SNC. Board discussed and agreed that the use of the term “California’s watershed” was appropriate. Branham stated the final memorandum of agreement between SNC and The Sierra Fund for purposes of marketing the license plate is awaiting board action from the Sierra Fund.

Action: Boardmember Sher moved and Boardmember Hunt seconded a motion to approve the final license plate design, allowing staff to make minor changes to design as necessary. The motion passed unanimously.

XV. Executive Officer’s Delegated Authority

Legal Counsel John Gussman reviewed changes to the Executive Officer’s Delegated Authority. Gussman noted that some of the changes had been presented to the Board at the time of the original delegation of authority to the Executive Officer; however, the Board had decided to table these until the SNC was ready to inaugurate its grants program. With the SNC about to receive and act on grant applications, staff is recommending that the proposed changes to the existing delegation be made.

Boardmember Kirkwood moved and Boardmember Boitano seconded a motion to approve the revised Executive Officer’s Delegated Authority, as proposed.

Boardmember Sher expressed a concern regarding the provision allowing the EO to award grants, relating to the total amount of SNC funds that might be disbursed under that authority. Following Board discussion, it was suggested that the EO's authority be limited to $50,000 grants, not to exceed a total grant award authority of $150,000 between Board Meetings.

Action: Boardmember Sher amended the previous motion and Boardmember Kirkwood seconded, to approve the Executive Officers Delegated Authority with the limitation of no more than $150,000 being awarded by the Executive Officer between Board meetings. The motion passed unanimously.

XVI. Review of the Board Agenda Development Process and Meeting Structure

Branham briefly reviewed the process used for agenda development and board meeting structure. Generally, the board felt that the current process was working well. Boardmember Kirkwood indicated that the field tours were particularly useful for focusing on Sub-Regional issues.

Boardmember Sher raised the issue of the Board taking positions on state legislation. Branham indicated that the SNC was expected to follow the process of other state departments, which includes review by the Resources Agency and the Governor's Office, prior to taking a position. Boardmembers Sher and Ishida expressed the view that the Board should be able to take positions independently. Branham indicated he would follow up with the issue and the matter would be discussed at the next Board meeting with Secretary Chrisman in attendance.

XVII. Board Members' Comments

There were no additional Board comments.

XVIII. Public Comments

There were no additional public comments

XIX. Adjournment

Action: Boardmember Ishida moved and Boardmember Hunt seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Vice chair adjourned the meeting at 1:30 PM.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
RESOLUTION 2007-001
As Adopted
July 26, 2007

Revised Delegation of Authority to the Executive Officer July 26, 2007

"The Sierra Nevada Conservancy hereby delegates to the Executive Officer the authority to administer the regular and day-to-day affairs and responsibilities of the Conservancy, including the functions and powers specified below, as necessary or appropriate for the sound management of the agency. The authority delegated herein shall be carried out in a manner consistent with applicable laws and regulations, State procedures, and Conservancy policies.

"The Executive Officer may delegate to other staff any part of his or her functions, powers, or authority, but the Executive Officer shall at all times be responsible for assuring that the affairs of the Conservancy are fully and faithfully discharged.

"The foregoing delegation to the Executive Officer includes the authority:

1. To appoint other Conservancy staff; to assign duties and functions to staff; to establish procedures governing staff operations; and to administer all Conservancy personnel matters.
2. To administer and oversee the Conservancy's budgetary and fiscal affairs, subject to the right of the Conservancy board to review and **provide direction on** the proposed annual budget.
3. To execute contracts and other instruments or documents on the Conservancy's behalf, as necessary in order to carry out the

resolutions of the Conservancy board, or any other authority delegated herein.

4. To administer and manage all real and personal property within the Conservancy's ownership or control; and to enter into agreements for the management of property owned or controlled by the Conservancy, including construction or maintenance of Conservancy facilities, *provided that*, prior to the execution of such agreements, the Conservancy shall have authorized the expenditure of funds for the purpose**.**

5. To lease and sub-let office space, to purchase or lease equipment, and to procure other materials, supplies, and technical services**, and to enter into contracts for such purposes, in such amounts as may be** necessary or appropriate to meet the ongoing needs of administration.

6. To enter into contracts for technical or other services, as needed for the purpose of program and project development or **planning:**

    a. in such amounts as may be necessary to carry out the Conservancy's Strategic Plan, Action Plan, or other adopted plan or policy resolution of the Conservancy board; and

    b. in amounts not to exceed $50,000 per contract, including extensions and amendments (or such other amount as may hereafter be authorized by the Conservancy), for program and project development or planning other than under (a) above.

7. To apply for funds for the support of the Conservancy's programs and projects; to negotiate and enter into agreements to accept funds, to make representations in support of such applications or agreements,

to assign or accept the assignment of grant funds and applications, and to meet agreed conditions; *provided,* that (a) all expenditures not previously authorized by the Conservancy, or within the Executive Officer's delegated authority, shall remain subject to Conservancy authorization; and (b) any agreement which, at the time it is executed, requires further Conservancy authorization before it can be implemented, shall be rescindable in the Conservancy's sole discretion and without liability to the Conservancy.

8. To prepare and issue public notices of Conservancy board meeting, and meeting agendas.

9. To place on the Conservancy's consent calendar (if any) matters which the Executive Officer believes to be non-controversial, subject to the right of any Conservancy board member to remove any item from the consent calendar, and subject to such other direction as the Conservancy may provide from time to time.

10. To reimburse members of the Conservancy board and members of advisory boards or committees established by the Conservancy, for their actual and necessary expenses, including travel expenses, incurred in attending board or committee meetings or in carrying out the other duties of their office; and to arrange for compensation to be paid, in the statutory amount, to members of the Conservancy who are entitled to compensation for attending meetings of the board.

11. To make determinations regarding the applicability of exemptions from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); and to prepare, circulate and file all documents which are necessary to comply with CEQA, *provided*, that the Conservancy reserves the authority to review, certify and adopt necessary findings in connection with

environmental impact reports and negative declarations.

12. To provide and make available technical information, expertise, and other non-financial assistance to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and tribal organizations to support program and project development and implementation.

13. **To award grants and enter into grant agreements, for purposes other than the acquisition or improvement of land, consistent with the Conservancy's enabling legislation and the grant and program guidelines adopted by the Conservancy board; *provided,* that (1) the total amount granted under any such grant or grants to any grantee, for a specific purpose or project, shall not exceed $50,000; (2) the Conservancy board shall be notified of each such grant by the next Conservancy board meeting; <u>and (3) the aggregate amount of such grants awarded between one Board Meeting and the next shall not exceed $150,000.</u>**

14. **With respect to any grant previously authorized by the Conservancy, in order to carry out the purposes of the board authorization:**

    a. **to amend and modify the terms of any such grant, including increases in grant awards of up to 10 percent; *provided*, that funds are available, within the budgeted appropriation, to cover any such increase; and *provided further,* that the original stated purpose of the grant remains unchanged;**

    b. **to authorize Conservancy grantees to accept from or convey to other appropriate entities or parties, on appropriate terms, leases, licenses, easements, options, and similar instruments or interests;**

c. **to exercise a power of termination, pursuant to Public Resources Code section 33344(e), on account of a grantee's breach of a material term or condition in a Conservancy grant for acquisition of real property; or to trigger the re-vesting of title to real property acquired through a Conservancy grant for acquisition of real property, pursuant to Public Resources Code section 33344(f), on account of the grantee organization going out of existence;**

d. **to designate the entity which will receive an interest in real property, pursuant to the exercise of a power of termination under Public Resources Code section 33344(e) or the re-vesting of title to property under Public Resources Code section 33344(f).**

15. To prepare, certify, and file documents pertaining to the adoption, amendment or repeal of regulations, and to conduct public hearings to receive comments on proposed rulemaking, as necessary to support the rulemaking activities and actions of the Conservancy.

16. To oversee the management of the Conservancy's records and to respond to requests for inspection or copies of Conservancy records under the California Public Records Act.

17. To represent the adopted positions of the Conservancy or, in the absence of such adopted positions, the views of the Conservancy staff, in communications with the Legislature, other public entities, and the public.

18. In coordination with the Office of the Attorney General, or other duly approved counsel:

    a. to defend against any legal actions brought against the Conservancy;

b. as necessary in order to protect Conservancy property or other interests against damage or loss, and with prior notification to the Conservancy, to file and prosecute legal actions on the Conservancy's behalf; and

c. to settle small claims court actions on the Conservancy's behalf, *provided,* that the Conservancy shall be notified of any such settlement no later than the following Conservancy board meeting.

19. With respect to monetary or non-monetary claims arising outside of litigation: to grant, deny, settle or compromise such claims if they are brought against the Conservancy; and to pursue, settle, or compromise such claims if they are brought on the Conservancy's behalf; subject to such dollar limits as the Conservancy may, by resolution, require for specific categories of claims; and *provided,* that the Conservancy shall be notified of any such settlement no later than the following Conservancy board meeting.

20. To designate a member of the staff to serve as Acting Executive Officer, or one or more members of the staff to perform specified functions of the Executive Officer, in the event that the Executive Officer is absent or becomes unable to perform his or her regular duties. In the event of the death or incapacity of the Executive Officer, any such designation shall survive, unless it expires by its own terms, or is rescinded or modified by the Conservancy board."

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Overview

The SNC's base budget consists of funding from the California Environmental License Plate Fund (CELPF). Commencing with the 2007-08 fiscal year, funding for the implementation of the SNC's programs is also provided from Proposition 84 bond funds. Proposition 84 allocates $54 million to the SNC, $17 million of which was appropriated in the 2007 Budget Act for local assistance grants and $500,000 to fund five positions and related expenses. It should be noted that the provisions of the section of Proposition 84 that allocates funding to the SNC addresses numerous program areas. However, a number of SNC statutory program areas may not be adequately addressed under Proposition 84.

Table 1 shows the SNC's budgeted and actual expenditures since it began operation. The reversion of nearly $1.4 million in each of the last two years was primarily the result of the fact that the SNC was not fully staffed during those fiscal years. However, full staffing levels will be achieved in the current fiscal year.

Table 1
SNC Budgeted and Actual Expenditures
2005-06 through 2007-08
(in thousands)

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
CELPF	$3,357	$3,816	$3,958
Reimbursements	200	200	200
Proposition 84	--	--	500
Total Operating Budget	$3,557	$4,016	$4,658
Local Assistance	--	--	$17,000
Total Amount Budgeted	$3,557	$4,016	$21,658
Actual Expenditures	$2,139	$2,660	--

Through October, the SNC has expended $506,964 or 11.37 percent of its $4.5 million operating budget (see Attachment 1). Monthly expenditures will increase during the remainder of the current fiscal year due to increased staff and increased use of experts from other state agencies through interagency agreements to help with evaluation of grant proposals. In addition, the SNC will acquire a grants management database during the second half of the 2007-2008 fiscal year at an estimated cost of up to $300,000.

Hiring of staff is nearly complete. With the exception of one position in Mariposa, all program staff are expected to be on board by the end of December. The SNC is currently advertising for a permanent Administrative Services Manager and will determine how best to fill our Staff Counsel position early in 2008.

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
SCHEDULE OF PERSONNEL SERVICES AND OPERATING EXPENDITURES
FY 2007-08

	Actual Jul 07	Actual Aug 07	Actual Sep 07	Actual Oct 07	Actual Nov 07	Actual Dec 07	Actual Year to Date	Total Year to Date + Projections	Budget	% Actual Budget Year to Date
Personnel Services										
Salaries and Wages	42,329	50,286	75,961	75,294			243,870	243,870	1,414,000	**17.25%**
Overtime	0	971	629	1,404			3,004	3,004	40,000	**7.51%**
Temporary Help	0	9,236	17,374	15,578			42,188	42,188	141,000	**29.92%**
Staff Benefits	14,726	18,000	24,181	22,488			79,395	79,395	480,000	**16.54%**
Total Personnel Services	**57,055**	**78,493**	**118,145**	**114,764**	**0**	**0**	**368,457**	**368,457**	**2,075,000**	**17.76%**
Operating Exp.& Equip.										
General Expense	0	0	0	3,923			3,923	3,923	63,000	**6.23%**
Printing	0	0	0	0			0	0	20,000	**0.00%**
Communications	0	3,267	3,094	822			7,183	7,183	40,000	**17.96%**
Postage	0	0	229	74			303	303	10,000	**3.03%**
Travel: In-State	0	512	1,325	5,114			6,951	6,951	100,000	**6.95%**
Travel-Out-State	0	0	0	0			0	0	2,000	**0.00%**
Training	0	0	100	534			634	634	20,000	**3.17%**
Facilities Operations	0	24,304	12,639	12,980			49,923	49,923	187,000	**26.70%**
Utilities	651	1,183	1,020	0			2,854	2,854	15,000	**19.03%**
Consultant Svcs., Interdept.	0	24	27	52,225			52,276	52,276	984,000	**5.31%**
Cons/prof Serv-External	0	306	0	1,083			1,389	1,389	740,000	**0.19%**
Consolidated Data Center	0	0	0	0			0	0	5,000	**0.00%**
Data Processing	0	0	136	1,148			1,284	1,284	4,000	**32.10%**
Pro Rata	0	0	0	0			0	0	44,000	**0.00%**
Equipment	0	0	11,064	0			11,064	11,064	144,000	**7.68%**
Other Items of Expense	0	351	332	40			723	723	5,000	**14.46%**
Total OE & E	**651**	**29,947**	**29,966**	**77,943**	**0**	**0**	**138,507**	**138,507**	**2,383,000**	**5.81%**
Grand Total	**57,706**	**108,440**	**148,111**	**192,707**	**0**	**0**	**506,964**	**506,964**	**4,458,000**	**11.37%**
									4,658,000	**Gov Budget**
								[1]	**-200,000**	**Reimbursements**
									4,458,000	**Total**
									506,964	**Expenditures**
									3,951,036	**Balance**

Proposed 2008 – 2009
SNC Board Meeting Schedule

2008

March 12 & 13 (South)

- Potential approval of Competitive Grants
- Potential approval of Strategic Opportunity Grants
- Review of Proposed 2008 - 09 Grants Guidelines

June 7 & 8 (North Central)

- Potential approval of Strategic Opportunity Grants.
- Approval of 2008 Grants Guidelines

October 1 & 2 (East)

- Potential approval of Strategic Opportunity Grants.
- Annual symposium.

December 3 & 4 (South Central)

- Potential approval of Strategic Opportunity Grants
- Potential approval of Competitive Grants

2009

March 4 & 5 (North)

- Potential approval of Strategic Opportunity Grants
- Potential approval of Competitive Grants
- Review of Proposed 2009 - 10 Grants Guidelines

June 3 & 4 (Central)

- Potential approval of Competitive Grants
- Potential approval of Strategic Opportunity Grants
- Review of Proposed 2009 -10 Grants Guidelines

October 7 & 8 (South)

- Potential approval of Strategic Opportunity Grants
- Annual symposium.

December 2 & 3 (North Central)

- Potential approval of Strategic Opportunity Grants
- Potential approval of Competitive Grants

Background

At the December 2, 2005 meeting of the SNC Board, a process was approved for the selection of a Headquarters Office for the Conservancy. A set of specific criteria was approved and Boardmembers Arcularius and Dahle were appointed to a committee to work with the Executive Officer and the Department of General Services (DGS) in developing a recommendation to the full Board. The criteria established were as follows:

Minimum Requirements

- Located within one of the following counties: Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Mariposa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra, Tehama, Tuolumne or Yuba
- No more than two hours travel time to Sacramento
- Year round access to office

Preferences

- Availability of interim and/or permanent office space (including the option of a "build to suit" building)
- Access to major north-south and east-west transportation corridors (I-5, Hwy 99, Hwy 395, I-80, Hwy 99 and Hwy 49)
- Access to high speed internet
- Access to meeting facilities for Board Meetings and other SNC meetings
- Convenient access for employees to schools, affordable housing, alternative transportation and other services
- Opportunity for Conservancy to contribute to the economic well-being of the community

In January 2006, the Department of General Services and the Conservancy notified local governments, media and interested parties within the target area of the Conservancy's interest in securing a headquarters office. The criteria adopted by the Board and other requirements of the State of California were made available to all interested parties. Following review of nearly 30 proposals, the committee, staff and DGS visited sites in 6 Sierra communities (Truckee, Colfax, Nevada City, Auburn, El Dorado Hills and Martell).

Based on the review conducted, the committee and staff recommended that the Board select Auburn as the location to meet the Conservancy's immediate needs and continue the process to identify a suitable permanent home. It was determined that the future search would be limited to an area within roughly a 30 minute drive of Auburn, primarily to ensure that a move would not create a undue hardship on staff being hired.

Current Status

Since June 2006 SNC staff has been housed at the headquarters office in Auburn. The office meets the organization's needs and presents a positive work environment. The location has proven to provide good access to the major transportation corridors and generally meets the criteria established. The current lease extends through May 2009. A decision to relocate should be based on an opportunity to significantly improve organizational efficiency and more fully meet the selection criteria, including the items described below.

Earlier this year, the SNC opened and staffed its offices in Mariposa, Susanville and Bishop. While these offices will allow the SNC to more effectively cover the area within the Region, their presence does not significantly affect the criteria established for the headquarters office.

While the current office adequately meets our needs, there is an opportunity to explore other options that would allow the SNC to achieve additional benefits that the current location does not fully provide, including the following:

- The opportunity for a "green building" that is in keeping with the State's efforts to increase energy efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and generally reduce the impact on the environment
- The opportunity to utilize the facility for Regional educational and interpretive activities, consistent with our mission
- The opportunity for the SNC to contribute to the local community through public use of the SNC facility

Since opening the headquarters office, staff has continued to receive expressions of interest on the issue of selection of a permanent location. This includes parties in Auburn and surrounding communities, including the owners of the building in which we are currently housed. It would be prudent to take the actions necessary to resolve the question of "interim vs. permanent" in the next few months.

Recommendation

Direct the Executive Officer and staff to engage in an outreach process to determine the availability of a permanent headquarters location within 30 minutes of Auburn, based on criteria used in the previous search and the additional criteria described above. If feasible locations are identified, staff will consult with the Department of General Services on the viability of such sites. Based on the results of that process, staff will recommend a course of action to the Board by no later than the May/June 2008 meeting. The Board may also wish to appoint a committee to assist in this effort.

Background
The Strategic Plan identifies the need to develop performance measures and indicators to measure the success of SNC projects and programs, as well as progress toward improving the environmental, economic and social well-being of the Region. At the July 2007 meeting, the Board approved a process for the development and use of such performance indicators and measures at three levels:

- ***System indicators*** to measure the well-being of the Sierra Nevada region. Examples include average annual income of Sierra residents, measures of Regional water quality, and level of home ownership within the Region. ***Indices*** are groups of indicators.
- ***Program Performance Measures*** to track progress in achieving program goals and meeting the SNC's overall mission. Examples include the total number of acres protected by SNC-funded conservation easements, level of use of public lands, and measures of increased collaboration resulting from SNC-funded projects.
- ***Project Outcome Measures*** to track project efforts against the expected outcomes. Examples include miles of trails constructed, number of fish in restored streams, and number of archeological sites protected as a result for the project.

Development of indicators and for the SNC is progressing in two phases. Phase 1 involves the development of interim performance measures for projects being awarded Proposition 84 Grants during the 2007-08 grant cycle. These interim project and program measures, which are discussed below, are ready for Board review and approval. Phase 2 involves the development of a full set of recommended indicators and measures—along with an implementation plan—for presentation to the Board at its May/June '08 meeting.

Phase 1: Interim Project and Program Performance Measures
As the SNC begins to award grants for projects throughout the Sierra Nevada Region, it's important that we ask each grant recipient to report back to us on the success of their project and how it is contributing to the mission and goals of the SNC. This kind of performance reporting not only ensures accountability on the part of grant recipients, but provides the information needed by SNC staff, the Board, our partners, and others to:

- ***Determine the most efficient and effective solutions to Sierra issues***—having the ability to compare the results achieved by projects using different approaches to address the same issue will help everyone working within the Region to find the most effective solutions and the ones that will yield the greatest results for the amount invested.
- ***Make sound decisions regarding where to expend program funds***—knowing what it takes to achieve results within each program area will help the SNC Board and staff determine how to allocate funding to achieve progress in all program areas.

- ***Build support for future investment***—demonstrating to decision makers and voters that Proposition 84 funds yielded real results will make them more likely to support additional investment in the future.

To develop a recommended set of interim project and program measures, the SNC convened a small group of experts from the academic, government, and nonprofit sectors for a day-long workshop. The results from the workshop were further reviewed by workshop participants and others before staff developed a set of interim measures to recommend to the Board.

A key factor in determining the set of recommended measures is striking the appropriate balance between the need for performance data and the need to limit the burden placed on grant recipients. To that end, the recommended measures are ones that would be the most useful and should not impose undue burden on grant recipients. In addition, staff will be flexible in establishing specific performance reporting for each grant recipient based on the ability of each applicant to collect the data.

Recommended measures are divided into three categories:

Performance Reporting for All Projects— Every grant recipient would be required to provide the following information to the SNC when the project is complete (see Attachment A for further detail):

- Resources leveraged, including both resources leveraged to complete the project and resources leveraged as a result of the project.
- Impact on collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders, including the number of stakeholders involved in the project and indicators of increased cooperation among stakeholders
- How completion of this project improved capabilities of grant recipients, partners, or larger community.
- One-page description of project accomplishments, including direct and indirect benefits, as well as the “wow” of the project.

Measures Related to Certain Types of Projects— Some projects have similar desired outcomes, because they are a similar type of project. For example, a project to develop an informational pamphlet and a project to develop an interpretive exhibit are both educational projects. Both aim to educate their audiences and change their audience’s understanding or behavior related to a specific topic. Therefore, we can establish performance measures for both educational projects that reflect these basic shared outcomes: (1) the number of people or audiences receiving the information and (2) indicators of changes in understanding or behavior of their audience.

This is true for other types of projects as well. Therefore, staff has developed recommended measures for several categories of projects. These categories include: educational and interpretive projects; fire safe/fuel reduction projects; restoration projects; land and water conservation projects; water quality projects,

and; recreation projects. For each category of projects, there are two or three recommended measures with at least one measure of quantity and another measure of quality. A listing of the performance measures within each of the six categories can be found in Attachment B.

Project Specific Measures. Some projects may not fall within a predetermined category or may have unique aspects that call for different performance reporting. For these projects, staff will work with grant recipients to determine a small number of measures that will help us understand and evaluate their success. There will also be opportunities for the SNC to receive data that is already being captured by grant recipients for their own purposes or for reporting to other entities.

Once approved by the Board, interim performance measures will be built into the contracts the SNC has with each grant recipient. In order to help grant recipients collect the appropriate data and to ensure that the SNC receives like data across projects, the SNC will develop additional detail regarding each of the approved interim measures and provide education and assistance to grant recipients on how to collect and report information.

Phase 2: Developing a Full Set of Indicators and Measures

As the SNC rolls out the interim project and program measures for projects receiving grants during the current grant cycle, we are also embarking on a process to develop of a full set of performance measures that will build on the interim measures and also provide for additional research and public input. The process will be led by an outside consultant, who is expected to begin working on the project during the week of December 10th.

In addition to developing a recommended set of performance measures and indicators, the consultant will also develop an implementation plan, which will address:

- Recommendations for integration into overall SNC operations and decision-making, including grant requirements, congruence with the SNC Strategic Plan and evaluation of meeting the equitable distribution of resources requirement.
- Recommended outreach and training process to educate grantees and other stakeholders about collection and use of the measures and indicators.
- Methods for how the information will be gathered and used by SNC, its partners and others, including:
    - where the information will come from;
    - who will be responsible for updating the information;
    - who will maintain the data; and
    - who will have access to it .
- Recommended tools and processes for data collection, management, and reporting needed for successful implementation.

A draft set of performance measures and indicators will be brought to the Board in March. Following Board review and direction, public input will be sought through a series of workshops and web conferences. A final set of recommended measures and the implementation plan will be brought to the Board for review and approval at the May/June meeting.

Recommendation

Approve the proposed interim project and program performance measures. Staff will build these measures into Proposition 84 grant contracts for grants awarded during the current grant cycle and will proceed with development of the full set of indicators and performance measures.

Attachment A

Performance Reporting for All Projects after Project Completion

1. **Resources leveraged**
   - Resources leveraged to complete the project (matching funds, in kind contributions)
   - Resources leveraged as a result of the project
     - Example: completion of a required plan enabled an entity to apply for and receive project funding
     - Example: collection of project performance data resulted in approval of application for follow-on project
2. **Impact on collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders**
   - Number and diversity of people/entities involved in project
   - Increased cooperation/decreased conflict among stakeholders
     - Example: a new ongoing collaborative team was established as an outgrowth of this project
     - Example: as a result of this project, an expected lawsuit did not materialize
3. **Capacity building within Region**
   - Description of how completion of this project improved capabilities of grant recipients, partners, or larger community
     - Example: Grant recipient understands basic survey design and analysis after contracting for development of a survey to gauge the effectiveness of a new educational program
     - Example: Increase in the number of trained facilitators within the community as a result of training provided to individuals conducting project-related workshops
4. **One-page description of project accomplishments**
   - Description of the direct benefits of the project
     - Description of how the grant recipient was successful in accomplishing the intent of the project
   - Description of the follow-on or indirect benefits of the project
     - Example: The plan completed as a result of the project was implemented, resulting in the development of several new projects/programs
     - Example: The information developed as a result of the project study is being used by several organizations to improve decision making
     - Example: A conservation easement funded by a grant encouraged other landowners in the region to have conservation easements on their properties

- Example: A land acquisition funded by a grant is contiguous to public lands on two sides, resulting in the creation of a 10-mile long habitat corridor

- Description of the “wow” factor: is there anything about this project that gives you “goosebumps?”

Attachment B

Interim Project and Program Performance Measures by Project Type

1. **Educational and Interpretive Projects**
   - Number of people/key audiences reached
   - Increased knowledge and/or changed behavior
     - Survey results
     - Observable change in behaviors, e.g., amount of litter/vandalism as evidence of improved stewardship ethic

2. **Fire Safe/Fuel Reduction Projects**
   - Size of area treated and/or protected and types of treatment by area
     - Acres treated/protected
     - Length of wildland urban interface treated/protected
     - Number of parcels treated/protected
   - Value of area treated/protected, for example
     - Population at risk
     - Acres of habitat, number of homes protected
     - Proximity to water course

3. **Restoration Projects (Watershed, Habitat, Riparian)**
   - Size of area restored
     - Feet of stream channel restored
     - Acres of habitat/wetland restored
   - Other values achieved, e.g., fish populations, ground water levels

4. **Land and Resource Conservation Projects (including land acquisitions and easements)**
   - Size of area conserved
     - Acres under protection
     - Acres kept in production
   - Value of land conserved
     - Acres of sensitive species habitat protected
     - Acres of working landscapes preserved
     - Historical/archeological resources protected
     - Acres made available for public access

5. **Water Quality Projects**
    - Water quality impacts, e.g., level of contaminants
        - Amount of pollutant reduced
    - Other values achieved, e.g., public health, fish and wildlife populations, and public use
        - Increased number of visitors/users
        - Improved habitat conditions

6. **Recreation Projects**
    - Public Use
        - Number and diversity of visitors/users
    - Mitigation of impact on resources
        - Level of contaminants in nearby streams
        - Level of particulates in the air
        - Amount of habitat protected

Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Action Plan

July 2007 – June 2008

2007-08 Actions

Revised 11-14-07

Organizational and Staffing Overview

In order to successfully implement the 2007 – 2008 Action Plan, the SNC will use a combination of full time staff, retired annuitants and consultants. We will continue to work collaboratively with a variety of state, federal and local agencies, as well as non-governmental partners in gaining assistance, information and expertise.

The Executive Officer is primarily responsible for overseeing the effective completion of the 2007-2008 Action Plan. The Assistant Executive Officer and Program and Area Managers will have responsibility for coordinating and monitoring implementation of the 2007-2008 Action Plan. All SNC staff will consider the implementation of the action plan as a top priority.

Progress on implementing the Action Plan (and the Strategic Plan) will be regularly reported to the Board and on the SNC website.

The Process

As mentioned above, the SNC will work collaboratively with a wide range of partners in carrying out the actions called for in the 2007-2008 Action Plan. These actions will be completed through the implementation of projects funded by SNC Proposition 84 grants, providing facilitation and coordination support, participating in and sponsoring numerous meetings, conferences, and workshops, and providing technical support. It is also anticipated that outreach efforts in the state's major metropolitan areas will continue to occur in order to assure that these areas recognize the important benefits that accrue from the Region.

Organizational Strategic Goals

Seventeen Action Items were identified in the 2006-2007 Action Plan for completion. Significant progress has been made on most of those items, however completion of some will carry over into the 2007-2008 Action Plan.

Program Goals

The 36 actions called for in the program area of the Strategic Plan do not have specific timelines associated with them. SNC staff has identified a number of those actions that will be completed in 2007-08. These represent actions for which a clear deliverable is identified. Most of the remaining goals are ongoing in nature and will be achieved as part of the implementation of the SNC program, primarily through the awarding of grant funds. The SNC will continue to focus on implementing a single program across all of the issue areas, ensuring over time, equitable distribution of resources programmatically and geographically.

2007-08 Actions

Revised 11-14-07

Overarching Actions

1. Successfully award $17 million in Proposition 84 funds for projects that will contribute to the implementation of the SNC mission and the objectives of Proposition 84. (July 2007 – June 2008)
2. Develop and make available a list of resources, consultants, organizations, etc. with skills, expertise and knowledge to assist communities with projects consistent with SNC Program Goals (June 2008)
3. Identify specific funding sources that may complement the SNC activities in order to achieve Program Goals (April 2007)

Organizational Actions (Continued from 2006-07)

4. Develop, in collaboration with other organizations, environmental, economic and social well being indices to monitor the progress in the various program and geographic areas. The indices will identify the key indicators to be monitored and measured and clearly identify performance standards (June 2008)
5. Determine location of a permanent headquarters location that will meet the SNC's needs and add economic value to the community (June 2008)

Programmatic Actions

6. Identify critical information needs at the Regional and community level to assist in assessing resource protection needs (June 2008)
7. Develop a strategy to work in partnership with other governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties to identify information, assistance and resources needed to support community projects consistent with the SNC mission (June 2008)
8. Develop a strategy to partner with local governments to identify information, technical assistance and resources that would be of value in local land use decision making (June 2008)
9. Identify and support incentive-based programs that complement and enhance regulatory efforts to achieve environmental protection and sustainability goals. (January 2008)
10. Develop and make available a comprehensive guide to recreational and tourism opportunities in the Sierra, in cooperation with other organizations within the Region (June 2008)
11. Identify incentives to private and public landowners to manage the upper watershed to increase natural water storage and groundwater recharge (April 2008)

2007-08 Actions

Revised 11-14-07

12. In cooperation with local governments, identify strategies to reduce the wildland-urban interface fire risk created by building structures that are within or encroach upon adjacent wildlands. (April 2008)

# # # #

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
2007-08 Action Plan Update
November 19, 2007

	Timeframe for Completion				
Description	**1st Quarter**	**2nd Quarter**	**3rd Quarter**	**4th Quarter**	**Status**
Award $17 million in Proposition 84 funds					Board to approve first round of grants on December 6, 2007.
Develop a list of resources with skills, expertise and knowledge to assist communities with projects					Staff preparing to hire consultant to compile complete list
Identify specific funding sources that may complement SNC activities					Continued work on funding database and evaluation of other state funding sources
Develop environmental, economic and social well being indices to monitor progress in the various program and geographic areas.					Consultant to lead project scheduled to begin December 10, 2007.
Determine location of a permanent headquarters location					Process to be presented to Board on Dec. 6, 2007.
Identify critical information needs at the regional and community levels to assist in assessing resource protection needs					IT needs assessment completed. Workshops will be held in spring to gather input on this and next two action items.
Develop a strategy to work in partnership with other agencies and organizations to identify information, assistance and resources needed to support community projects					Workshops will be held in spring to gather input on this, prior action item and next action item.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy
2007-08 Action Plan Update
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Develop a strategy to partner with local governments to identify information, technical assistance and resources that would be of value in local land use decision making					Workshops will be held in spring to gather input on this and prior two action items.
Identify and support incentive-based programs that complement and enhance regulatory efforts to achieve environmental protection and sustainability					Developing a scope of work for consultant to compile regulatory requirements and existing incentives and conduct workshops.
Develop and make available a comprehensive guide to recreational and tourism opportunities in the Sierra					Working with partner agencies, non-profits, and contractors to compile data and create interactive web-based resource.
Identify incentives to private and public landowners to manage the upper watershed to increase natural water storage and groundwater recharge					Involved in development of a research project in the American River Basin to provide important information on this topic.
In cooperation with local governments, identify strategies to reduce fire risk created by building structures that are within or encroach upon adjacent wildlands.					Working with local governments to identify areas where investment of resources may reduce future wildfire risk associated with Wildland Urban Interface.

Background

In January 2007, SNC contracted with Velocity 7 to produce a 5-year Education and Communications Plan to support increased understanding of the importance of the Sierra Nevada within the region and throughout the state (Strategic Goal 3.4 under ***Increase Knowledge and Capacity***).

The primary purpose of the plan is to identify critical messages, target audiences, objectives, tasks, partnership opportunities and implementation options for reaching out to the many people with an interest in and/or a stake in the future of the region. It is SNC's intent to identify, work through and enhance existing efforts, wherever possible, taking advantage of opportunities for cooperative outreach and partnership in the region.

The process used to develop the plan included regular consultation with SNC staff, background research on similar plans produced by other entities, an evaluation of SNC's previous outreach efforts to identify what worked well and what needed improvement, and a series of outreach efforts with stakeholders within and outside the region. The outreach efforts were designed to solicit both *broad input*, meaning input from the widest possible range of stakeholders, and *deep input*, meaning more specific input from key constituency groups, who may already be conducting education and outreach in the region. Consultants used several tools including phone interviews, face-to-face meetings, a live videoconference with 25 participants, and a web-based survey to approximately 200 people that generated 43 responses (for a 22% response rate).

The consultant used results from this initial outreach effort to identify key target audiences, a consistent set of messages, and recommended strategies and implementation tools for reaching out to each major audience. The draft plan was posted on the SNC web site with an invitation for public input. The final draft plan is before the Board for discussion and direction to staff (Attachment A ***Executive Summary*** is attached; full plan is available on the SNC Web site or in electronic or hard-copy form upon request).

Plan Highlights

The plan identifies three primary audiences:

- **Inside Sierra Region** – people who live, work or recreate in the Sierra, such as residents, stakeholder groups, potential grantees, local elected officials and other decision-makers, state and federal officials working in the Sierra, teachers and schoolchildren within the region, recreation users and tourists living within the region, etc.;
- **Outside Sierra Region** – people from outside the region who are interested in or derive benefit from the Sierra's values, resources and economy, such as urban users of Sierra water and other resources, recreation users and tourists from outside the region, regional or statewide stakeholder groups, business leaders

and others that advocate for public investment in SNC program areas, and teachers and schoolchildren outside the region;

- **Local, State and Federal Decision-Makers** – the people who make decisions about current and future investment in protecting the region's values, resources and economic viability, such as key federal, state and local officials, members of the Legislature and their staff, etc.

A consistent set of core messages is included, to be reflected across all audiences, regions and program areas. The core messages include:

1. **The Sierra Nevada is critically important** – SNC communications need to support a common understanding of the tremendous range of economic, social and environmental benefits the Sierra Nevada region provides to the State.

2. **Those who live and work in the Sierra are stewards of the region's resources and economy** – it is important to the future of the region and the mission of the SNC that those who live and work in the region come to see themselves as stewards of those very qualities that make the region important.

3. **Investment is necessary to conserve the region's critically important resources and long-term economic vitality** – SNC communications should highlight, align with and support the need for dramatic new investment in the region's resources and communities by the state and federal governments, individual and corporate donors and private foundations.

4. **The SNC is the state's primary vehicle to conserve the region's resources and promote sustainable economic activity in the region** – the SNC has been authorized by the people of California to facilitate state investment in the region; SNC communications should affirm the Conservancy's role as a partner, facilitator and convener regarding critical resource and economic issues in the region.

The plan outlines specific strategies and tools for each major audience. For example:

***Inside Sierra Region* strategies**

- Establish SNC as a reliable source for solid, well-researched facts about the region
- Foster a sense of community stewardship among people who live and work in the Sierra
- Enhance the understanding of people who live, work and recreation in the Sierra about features unique and valuable to the Sierra, such as its Native American history, gold rush history, the railroad, Sierra small town character, wilderness habitat area, outdoor recreation opportunities, etc.

***Outside Sierra Region* strategies**

- Support youth educational programs that build long-term stewardship, knowledge and awareness of the history, culture and resources of the Sierra Nevada
- Educate water consumers outside the Sierra as to the importance of water conservation and watershed investments in the Sierra Nevada
- Support education and communication programs that align messages for recreation, tourism and wilderness opportunities in the Sierra Nevada.

***Local, State and Federal Decision-Makers* strategies**

- Cultivate, educate and train Sierra-based spokespeople spanning the range of SNC program areas who can represent local and regional successes and opportunities
- Educate and communicate with Legislators and Legislative Staff to build support for Sierra programs
- Communicate with and educate other State Agencies about Sierra needs and opportunities in order to encourage additional investment in the region.

Implementation Options

The consultant team offered a robust list of implementation ideas (for a full list of recommended potential actions, see Attachment B). To take on all of the ideas presented in the plan would require more staffing and other resources than are currently available. In order to make an initial determination regarding possible prioritization and sequencing of projects, the consultant team and SNC staff evaluated potential actions using the following criteria:

- whether the action could be achieved internally,
- whether it is already being undertaken in some form,
- whether it is achievable within a relatively short period of time,
- whether it is cost-effective, and
- whether it covers more than one SNC program area.

Using these criteria, the team identified four levels of implementation priority within each major audience:

- **Already in progress** that should continue, for example:
    - Sponsoring symposia to bring experts to the region (Inside Sierra Region);
    - Working with partners to educate existing state and federal agencies that are possible financial partners for SNC program areas regarding issues and potential projects in the region (Local, State and Federal Decision-Makers).

- **Priority 1** projects that should be undertaken in the short term, for example:

- Expanding the hard-copy and E-libraries of Sierra-related plans, reports, and other publicly available information, and better publicizing their existence and potential uses (Inside Sierra Region);
- Sponsoring and/or supporting iconic Sierra recreational opportunities, including Sierra Nevada Endurance Run, a Sierra mountain bike ride, Pacific Crest Trail hike, etc. (Outside Sierra Region);
- Establish regular communications with legislators and their staffs to keep them current on critical SNC strategic issues (Local, State and Federal Decision-Makers).

- **Priority 2** projects that could be undertaken over time, as partnerships and SNC resources allow, for example:
  - Traveling exhibit with information about the region and the work of the conservancy for display at different venues and events (Inside Sierra Region);
  - Developing an educational piece for airline pilots about areas of importance in the Sierra Nevada, outside of Tahoe and Yosemite, for pilots to use when pointing our Sierra features from the air (Outside Sierra Region).

- **"Iconic"** or high-profile projects that cover multiple Conservancy goals or program areas that would take more investment and time but would provide long-term benefits for the Conservancy, for example:
  - Develop a "Sierra Stewardship Day" with partner organizations to host different clean-up, restoration and other projects scheduled simultaneously throughout region, to strengthen people's connection to the places where they live (Inside Sierra Region);
  - Initiate and support efforts to develop an interpretive "Sierra Trail" network throughout the Sierra connecting culture, history, people, groups, historical sites, wilderness areas, etc., which would encompass efforts on behalf of many SNC program areas (Inside Sierra Region)
  - Work with sponsors to expand annual "Sierra in the Capitol" Days, to include a wide array of partners representing all SNC program areas. This high-profile event is the vehicle to cultivate, educate and train Sierra-based spokespeople to represent Sierra successes and opportunities to legislators, agency representatives, regional leaders, local constituencies and the media (Local, State and Federal Decision-Makers);
  - Develop an annual "Sierra Appreciation Week" for sponsorship (via resolution) by a Sierra legislator that incorporates history, environment, culture, economics and community elements scheduled to coincide with other high profile Sierra-based events, such as "Sierra in the Capitol" Days or the "Sierra Stewardship Day" (Local, State and Federal Decision-Makers);

Next Steps

We anticipate implementing strategies and tasks outlined in the plan, as well as related ideas that may come forward over time, through a variety of means:

a. general staffing and communications funding included in our base budget (note: we have set aside roughly $175,000 in our ’08-’09 budget and beyond for education and communications activities);
b. working in partnership with interested stakeholders both within and outside the region; and
c. awarding grants for specific outreach or education efforts consistent with the plan

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board direct the Executive Officer and staff to begin implementing education and communications actions that are consistent with the plan’s goals, audiences and messages, using available resources, which should be leveraged to the greatest extent possible through partnerships with other organizations and building on existing efforts.

Attachment A

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communication consists of information distributed by an entity such as the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), whether in person, in writing, over the airwaves or digitally. Effective communication serves to educate and inform constituents, engaging them in the organization's work and promoting policies and programs that create positive change and help achieve the organization's goals.

The following is a draft education and communications plan for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC). SNC will strive to implement this plan through partnerships and existing programs with a variety of stakeholders. The plan presents a roadmap for the SNC's communications over the next five years. The plan is divided into five sections:

- **Section I** consists of a description of the methodology used to develop the plan and a summary of the plan's contents.
- **Section II** includes general information about the Conservancy.
- **Section III** contains communications plan goals and objectives, principles of communication, target audiences, obstacles to successful message delivery, key messages, and specific strategies, tools and tactics to achieve SNC's communications goals.
- **Section IV** includes a list of high priority actions the Conservancy could consider undertaking in the near-term.
- **Section V** is an appendix section with information on the public outreach process used to solicit input for development of this plan, as well as recommendations for internal protocols and processes to help implement the actions outlined in this plan.

Methodology

Throughout the process of developing the plan, the V7 Consultant team worked closely with SNC Executive Officer Jim Branham, Program Manager Bob Kingman, Outreach & Partnership Program Coordinator Kerri Timmer, and Funding & Resource Development Coordinator Marji Feliz.

In addition to working with SNC staff, Consultants researched various sources to develop this plan. Background research included:

- a survey of Communication and Education Plans produced by similar government agencies, and research into methodologies for initiating and carrying out a similar planning process (see Appendix A for full list of sources consulted);

- a survey of how other region wide groups described the Sierra region (see Appendix B);
- an evaluation of the Conservancy's previous outreach and education efforts and materials and a review of existing stakeholder lists generated from these efforts (see Appendix C).

Consultants then conducted extensive outreach to solicit both specific input from key constituency groups, as well as broader input from a wide range of key stakeholders throughout the region (see Appendix D for list of public outreach participants). Tools to solicit input included:

- phone interviews and a series of face–to-face meetings with key Sierra-based partners;
- meetings with partners in major urban areas, including Sacramento, San Francisco/Oakland and Los Angeles;
- a live videoconference for close to 30 participants;
- a web-based survey (see Appendix F for survey questions) to collect input more broadly from a wide range of key stakeholders throughout the region.

Ideas gleaned through this public outreach effort (see Appendix E for full list) inform the strategies, tools and tactics outlined in this plan and serve as examples of specific actions that could be taken to implement some of the strategies.

Target Audiences

SNC's broad mission and multiple program areas require two-way communication with a number of target audiences both within and outside the region – covering all of the program areas and geographic Sub-Regions. The general audiences for communications from SNC are: a.) people who live, work or recreate in the Sierra; b.) people both inside and outside the region who derive benefit from the Sierra's values, resources and economy; and c.) the people who make decisions about current and future investment in protecting the region's values, resources and economic viability.

The Consultant team broke those general categories down into more specific targets based on the recommended strategies listed in Section III of this plan.

Key Messages

Based on background research and public input, this plan recommends a consistent set of messages that can be reflected across audiences, regions and program areas. These messages include:

1. **The Sierra Nevada is critically important – SNC communications need to** support a common understanding of the tremendous range of economic, social and environmental benefits the Sierra Nevada region provides to the state;

2. **Those who live and work in the Sierra are stewards of the region's resources and economy** – it is important to the future of both the region and the SNC that those who live and work in the region come to see themselves as stewards of those very qualities that make the region important;

3. **Investment is necessary to conserve the region's critically important resources and long-term economic vitality** – SNC communications should highlight, align with and support the need for dramatic new investment in the region's resources and communities by state and federal government, individual and corporate donors and private foundations.

4. **The SNC is the state's primary vehicle to conserve the region's resources and promote sustainable economic activity in the region** – the SNC has been authorized by the people of California to facilitate state investment in the region; SNC communications should affirm the Conservancy's role as a partner, facilitator and convener regarding critical resource and economic issues in the region.

Major Recommendations

The plan includes a series of targeted strategies, tools and tactics for accomplishing the SNC's education and communications goals. From that list of tools and tactics, Consultants identified a variety of Implementation Options. In keeping with its Strategic Plan goals and guidelines, the SNC will seek to implement this education and communications plan in cooperation and collaboration with a variety of governmental and non-governmental partners.

In addition, Appendix H contains a set of recommendations for the internal organization to help the SNC more effectively implement the recommendations included in this plan and, ultimately, achieve its education and communication goals.

Attachment B

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

Taking action on all of the ideas presented in this plan would take a tremendous amount of time and resources. In order to make an initial determination regarding possible prioritization and sequencing of projects, all of the potential actions were evaluated against the following criteria:

- whether the action can be achieved internally,
- whether it is already being undertaken in some form,
- whether it is achievable within a relatively short period of time,
- whether it is cost-effective, and
- whether it covers more than one program area.

Using these criteria, three levels of priority are recommended within each audience:

- Projects already in progress that should continue to be implemented
- Priority 1 projects: These are projects that could be undertaken in the short term that require little time, effort and funding. They can mostly be achieved by SNC staff
- Priority 2 projects: These are projects that could be undertaken over a longer period of time that demand more resources and funding than Priority 1 projects

All recommendations depend on available funding and other resources.

In addition, there are a number of highly effective, "iconic" programs that cover multiple Conservancy goals or program areas that would take more investment and time than Priority 1 and 2 Projects but would be high profile projects with long-term benefits for the Conservancy. It is recommended that the Conservancy implement these as soon as possible, given available resources.

Numbers next to each action detailed below relate to tasks as described in the previous section on Strategies/Tools/Tactics.

Priority Projects

<u>Inside Sierra Region</u>

Projects already in progress

1.2.1.1 continuing to hold regular interactive community meetings for residents of each SNC Sub-Region on timely issues affecting the Sierra, in general, and/or specific Sub-Regions;

1.2.2 continuing to utilize web-based conferencing and other technology tools to increase communication throughout the Region;

1.2.3 sponsoring symposia (such as the Climate Change symposium scheduled for December 2007) to bring experts to the Region to educate interested stakeholders about important issues to the Sierra Nevada Region and what they can do to address them;

1.3.1 Providing additional informational elements to the website and better publicizing it to local leaders and stakeholder groups. (see Appendix H for more detail).

1.3.3 securing public opinion research for the Region and making it available to stakeholders and decision-makers.

Priority 1 Projects

1.2.4 encouraging NGO and agency partners to include Sierra –based educational tracks or presentations at their conferences for SNC and/or its partners to provide information on Sierra issues.

1.3.2 expanding the existing physical library (housed at the Placer County main branch) and E-library (which provides electronic access to plans, reports, studies, assessments, handbooks and other publicly available information relating to the geographic area and purposes of the SNC) and better publicizing the two libraries' existence and potential uses.

2.2.1 identifying middle schools, high schools, charter schools and home-schools requiring senior projects and/or other community service; working with partners in the Region to identify possible community service projects related to SNC and partner goals; and sending a memo to project advisors or counselors from those schools outlining potential projects and how to get involved.

2.4.3 providing recognition at SNC Board meetings or project-related events of local people and organizations and showcasing the valuable work they are doing within SNC Sub-Regions and program areas.

Priority 2 Projects

1.1 Provide information about the Sierra Region and the work of the Conservancy through a traveling exhibit for display at county libraries, government offices, schools, and as part of Regional festivals, conferences or other public events. Display would include a kiosk with informational materials, photographs, maps and possibly a slideshow video illustrating topics of Regional interest, such as local history, recreation resources, local farmers markets, recent SNC-funded projects, etc. Develop several different versions of the content tailored to different audiences and messages.

2.3.1 developing new materials and/or more broadly disseminating existing materials to property owners and their advisors regarding economic incentives and tools for land conservation, fire protection, and other hazardous risk reduction, in cooperation with partner organizations.

2.4.1 encouraging and partnering with grant recipients to host events celebrating successful projects — linking local elected officials to the successes so they start feeling connected to SNC.

2.4.2 developing informational signage, when appropriate, for projects funded by the SNC

High Profile Projects

2.1 Develop a "Sierra Stewardship Day" for residents throughout the Region, with river or trail clean-ups, restoration projects, photo days, etc., to strengthen people's connection to the Region where they live. Aspects of this could include; working in coordination with or under the auspices of existing programs: including local sponsors and participation from local and Regional stakeholder groups; inviting local and Regional media; and devising a mechanism for reporting accomplishments in real time (e.g. pounds of trash removed in clean-ups, number of acres or river or trail miles restored, etc.).

3.1 Initiate and support efforts to develop an interpretive "Sierra Trail" network throughout the Sierra connecting culture, history, people, groups, historical sites, wilderness areas, etc., which would encompass efforts on behalf of many SNC program areas, including economic development, historic preservation, art, environment, year-round tourism, and more.

<u>Outside Sierra Region</u>

Priority 1 Projects

3.1.2 sponsoring and/or supporting iconic Sierra recreational opportunities, including the Sierra Nevada Endurance Run, a Sierra Ride (for biking), and a Pacific Crest Trail Hike;

Priority 2 Projects

3.1.4 developing an education piece for airline pilots about areas of importance in the Sierra Nevada outside of Tahoe and Yosemite for pilots to use when pointing out Sierra features.

High Profile Projects

1.1 Develop a schools program, with partners, to educate youth outside the Sierra about how the Sierra is important to their lives.

2.1 Develop an urban water education plan, with partners, to communicate with urban water users about the importance of the Sierra Nevada to environmental and economic health of the state, including water quality and water quantity.

Local, State and Federal Decision Makers

Projects already in progress

1.3 Identify opportunities in grant awards for applicants to demonstrate how the project will provide educational opportunities about the Sierra Nevada and the SNC for children, schools, communities and business partners.

1.4 Identify opportunities in grant awards for applicants to demonstrate how the project will communicate and educate local and state policy-makers, and agency representatives and elected officials.

2.5.3 Meet regularly with key constituencies and partners active in the State Capitol as a means of educating them about Sierra issues and encouraging them to reflect those issues in their work

3.2 Work with partners to educate existing state and federal agencies that are possible financial partners for SNC program areas

Priority 1 Projects

2.3 Establish regular communications with legislators and their staff to keep current on critical SNC strategic items.

2.5.1 Develop relationships with legislators in order to encourage SNC representation at legislative or NGO conversations about existing and proposed new state bonds that could support SNC programs.

Priority 2 Projects

1.2 Develop a program to inform Sierra partners, including regular web-based informational-sharing sessions;

High Profile Projects

1.1 Work with sponsors to expand annual "Sierra in the Capitol" Days, to include a wide array of partners representing all SNC program areas. This high-profile event is the vehicle to cultivate, educate and train Sierra-based spokespeople to represent Sierra successes and opportunities to legislators, agency representatives, Regional leaders, local constituencies and the media.

2.1 Host regular "Capitol in the Sierra Days" to provide an opportunity for local elected officials, state and federal legislators and their staff and agency representatives to visit the Region to personally experience the Region's value and to better understand Sierra opportunities, existing projects and current and future needs.

2.2 Develop an annual "Sierra Appreciation Week" for sponsorship (via resolution) by a Sierra legislator that incorporates history, environment, culture, economics and community elements scheduled to coincide with other high profile Sierra-based events, such as "Sierra in the Capitol" Days or the "Sierra Stewardship Day

3.1 Produce an annual conference highlighting investment in the economic and environmental well-being of the Region, including successful projects and cumulative results

Background

In November 2006, California voters passed Proposition 84, which included an allocation of $54 million of bond funding for the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC). In January the Governor proposed, and the legislature approved, $17 million in grant funds for the SNC for fiscal year 2007-08. It is anticipated that the additional bond funds will be appropriated over the next two fiscal years.

During the first half of 2007 the SNC held a series of workshops to assist in the development of Program and Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines. At the July 2007 meeting, the Board approved final guidelines that define eligible project and grant types, grant size limits, availability of funds, selection criteria and how to apply for funding.

The Board also approved a plan to allocate the grant funds as follows: $9 million has been allocated for a Competitive Grants Program and $8 million for Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs). Of the $8 million in SOG funding, $1 million has been allocated to each of the six SNC Sub-Regions, and $2 million for Region-wide projects. Eligible entities can apply for SOGs at any time throughout the fiscal year and staff may present recommendations for consideration at any Board meeting.

In August the SNC publicly announced the availability of Proposition 84 SOG funding and invited eligible entities to Submit applications for projects. As part of the grants solicitation, the SNC established October 1st as the last day an application could be submitted and still have the potential to be considered at the December meeting. The SNC received a total 71 complete applications by that date, representing a total of 82 projects (two block grant applications were received which include11 individual projects). The total dollar amount requested for all projects was $8,507,774.

Applications for Competitive Grants were received through November 15 and are currently being evaluated. It is anticipated that Competitive Grant Awards will be made at the March 2008 Board Meeting. SOG applications received prior to December 30, 2007 may be considered at the March 2008 meeting as well.

Project Development and Evaluation Process

The SNC Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines encourage potential applicants to consult with SNC staff prior to submitting applications. Many applicants have taken advantage of this consultation and report that it has been very helpful in developing their projects and applications. The consultations have also been beneficial for SNC staff by providing them with a better understanding of potential projects and increasing the likelihood that applications address the purpose of Proposition 84 and the mission of the SNC.

Immediately following the October 1 submittal deadline, program staff began reviewing all applications for completeness and applicant eligibility. Most applications were complete and well presented.

Upon determining that an application was complete and eligible for funding, the SNC began communicating and consulting with city and county officials and appropriate water agencies regarding project proposals within their jurisdictions. In accordance with direction provided by the SNC Board, these local entities were given 10 business days to provide comments back to the SNC for SOG Category 2 grants (less than $50,000 for projects other than acquisition or site improvement) and 15 business days for all other grants. In addition, the SNC attempted to make personal contact with affected entities in an effort to ensure that the local governments are aware of the proposed projects and are provided an opportunity to comment. The Sub-Regional representatives on the SNC Board were also notified at this time, providing an opportunity for them to communicate with the affected entities as well.

SNC program staff also met and consulted with representatives from Department of General Services (DGS) Environmental Services Branch and the office of the State Attorney General to discuss CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) requirements for the SNC and proposed projects. This review resulted in a number of projects being deferred for possible consideration due to necessary environmental review and documentation requirements. The SNC is working closely with DGS to resolve outstanding issues on proposed projects so that they may be considered for funding in the future. It should be noted that this issue is one that could result in challenges in awarding grants on a timely basis. SNC staff will continue to work with DGS, legal counsel and applicants to ensure that environmental documentation is completed on a timely basis.

SNC program staff evaluated project applications using the evaluation criteria contained in the Guidelines:

1) Contribution to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources;
2) How the project addresses one or more of the SNC program goals;
3) Demonstrated cooperation, community support and leveraging.

All applications were required to provide evidence of their ability to implement the project and meet environmental requirements. Through the course of the evaluation, staff interacted with numerous applicants to gather additional information and resolve outstanding issues.

During the first week of November project proposals were reviewed with the Board's Sub-Regional committees regarding Sub-Regional priorities and any issues or concerns related to specific projects.

<u>Summary of Applications Reviewed</u>
A total of sixty-nine applications requesting $8,144,987 million were determined to be eligible for Proposition 84 grant funding and were reviewed by staff.

Each of the six Sub-Regions produced applications for a broad spectrum of local projects and several applications were submitted for projects of Region-wide significance. Funding requests from Sub-Regions varied substantially and reflected a strong interest in the SNC program. Indications are that many more applications are being prepared by entities in all Sub-Regions for consideration at future meetings.

The Conservancy received two applications for block grants from the California Fire Safe Council. One in the amount of $41,874 to fund four SOG 2 projects, and one in the amount of $403,431 to fund seven SOG 3 projects.

A significant number of projects are not being recommended for funding at this time. In many instances, these projects may lack environmental documentation or may need additional information/refinement. Staff will continue to evaluate these applications along with new SOG submissions received prior to December 30, 2007. Recommendations for funding will be made for Board action at the March 2008 meeting.

A number of potential policy-level issues have been identified during our first round of evaluations. They are as follow:

1) In the event that each Sub-Region SOG allocation ($1 million) is not committed by the March 2008 board meeting, the board may wish to consider possible reallocation options.
2) CEQA compliance issues are proving to be difficult for applicants to meet. Staff is developing alternatives to help applicants better understand and prepare for CEQA requirements.
3) Grant amount limits may be re-evaluated to better address the needs of applicants and types of projects. Staff anticipates bringing draft modifications to the Grants Guidelines to the Board in March 2008.

Projects Recommended for Funding

A spreadsheet showing project specific information and individual project evaluations with summaries have been compiled as an attachment to this report (Attachment A). Projects identified in Attachment A are being recommended to the Board for approval at this time. We believe these projects most strongly met the evaluation criteria described above, have demonstrated the ability to be implemented on a timely basis, and meet all environmental review and documentation requirements (at this time 3 projects in the North Sub-Region continue to be evaluated for environmental compliance and may not be available for approval at this meeting).

In some cases the recommended grant amount is less than the amount requested. This is primarily the result of some proposed expenditures being ineligible or elements of the projects needing additional refinement before being funded.

Staff is recommending authorization of $2,796,188 (see Table 1) in grant funding, which would add to significant investments committed by applicants totaling more than $13 million.

Table 1

Sub-Region	Eligible Projects	Recommended Projects	Allocation	Total Requested	Total Recommended
Region-Wide	13	11	$2 Million	2,835,577	682,810
North	13	6	$1 Million	1,152,517	469,019
North Central	6	5	$1 Million	219,530	175,030
Central	25	11	$1 Million	2,129,475	559,668
South Central	11	8	$1 Million	1,082,945	467,945
South	8	5	$1 Million	501,844	276,617
East	3	2	$1 Million	223,099	165,099
TOTAL	**79**	**48**	**$8 Million**	**8,144,987**	**2,796,188**

Region-Wide Significance: $682,810
Eleven projects are being recommended for funding as projects with Region-Wide significance. One project is being recommended for funding through a sub-grant from a California Fire Safe Council Block grant. Projects recommended for funding under this category will complete research, assessments, appraisals, educational efforts, and publications for much or all of the SNC jurisdictional area.

North Sub-Region: $469,019*
Six projects are being recommended for funding in the North Sub-Region. Projects would complete environmental review of potential future projects and approximately 2311 acres of watershed restoration and fuels treatment. Five of these projects are located in Lassen County, while the sixth included multiple counties. * (At this time 3 projects in the North Sub-Region totaling $250,219 continue to be evaluated for environmental compliance and may not be available for approval at this meeting).

North-Central Sub-Region: $175,030
Five projects are being recommended for the North-Central Sub-Region to complete appraisal work, educational efforts, environmental review for potential future projects, and protection of 35 acres of riparian habitat area. The projects are proposed in Plumas and Sierra counties.

Central Sub-Region: $559,668
Eleven projects are being recommended for the Central Sub-Region to complete interpretive signage, due diligence studies and appraisals, educational efforts, assessments, and environmental review for future potential projects. Two projects are being recommended for funding through sub-grants from the California Fire Safe Council Block grants. The projects are proposed in El Dorado, Placer, Nevada, and Yuba counties.

South Central Sub-Region: $467,945
Eight projects are being recommended for the South Central Sub-Region to conduct fire-safe and biomass projects, complete appraisals, environmental assessments, complete Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and conduct monitoring. Four projects are being recommended for funding through sub-grants from the California Fire Safe Council Block grants. Projects are proposed in Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Tuolumne counties.

South Sub-Region: $276,617
Five projects are being recommended for the South Sub-Region. One is to conduct initial planning for the development of a Kern River Preserve Visitor Facility. Four projects are being recommended for funding through sub-grants from the California Fire Safe Council Block grants. Projects are proposed in Fresno, Kern, and Tulare counties.

East Sub-Region: $165,099
Two projects are being recommended for the East Sub-Region to conduct watershed assessments and complete a trails master plan. Projects are proposed in Mono and Inyo counties.

Reporting of Executive Authorizations
The SNC received four applications requesting Executive Officer approval prior to the Board meeting. Consistent with the SNC Board Resolution 2007-001 and the Proposition 84 Grants Guidelines, projects in Table 2 were authorized grant funding by the Executive Officer based on the time-sensitive nature of the projects. The other two applications are included in the recommendations for Board approval at this meeting.

Table 2

Project Title	Reference#	Grantee	Description	Dollar Amount
Love Creek Working Landscape Conservation Easement	SNC 070153	Pacific Forest Trust	Negotiation, due diligence work, and monitoring to facilitate easement donation	$25,000
Sierra Buttes/Lake Basin Land Appraisals	SNC 070170	Sierra County LT	Appraisal work for future acquisitions	$41,000
TOTAL				**$66,000**

Staff Recommendation
Staff recommends the Board authorize Strategic Opportunity Grants listed in Attachment A, and further authorize staff to enter into all necessary contracts or agreements and file the appropriate CEQA documentation with the State Clearinghouse for all projects. This recommendation represents a total of thirty-nine grants to support or implement forty-eight projects and $2,796,188 in funding.

Agenda Item X Attachment A
RECOMMENDED GRANTS APPLICATIONS
December 06, 2007

Fund Category	Sub-Region	Reference #	County	Project Title	Grantee Organization	Amount Requested	Amount Recommend
Region Wide SOG $2m	Region Wide	SNC 070019	Multi-County	Engaging Sierra Participation in California Water Plan Update 2009	Sierra Nevada Alliance	$ 40,000	$ 40,000
		SNC 070020	Multi-County	Sierra Nevada Alliance: Land and Water Project	Sierra Nevada Alliance	$ 200,000	$ 150,000
		SNC 070071	Multi-County	CSFC Block II Fuel Treatment Monitoring and Educational Publication	University of California Davis	$ 55,620	$ 55,620
		SNC 070098	Multi-County	Sierra Nevada Science Institute: Development of a Timeline and Business Plan	Friends of Deer Creek	$ 49,500	$ 32,500
		SNC 070102	Multi-County	Stewardship Contracting Workshops	Sierra Business Council	$ 48,027	$ 46,440
		SNC 070137	Multi-County	Comprehensive Interpretive Plan - Yosemite National Park and Surrounding Communities	Yosemite National Park	$ 23,250	$ 23,250
		SNC 070143	Multi-County	Biomass Removal on National Forest System Lands	Placer County	$ 49,500	$ 49,500
		SNC 070148	Multi-County	Environmental Benefits of Grazing Educational Tour and Video	Nevada County RCD	$ 71,344	$ 68,000
		SNC 070162	Multi-County	Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project	University of California, Berkeley, Center for Forestry	$ 383,836	$ 123,000
		SNC 070171	Multi-County	Sierra Water Trust: Building Capacity in the Sierra Nevada to Assess and Fulfill Critical Flow Augmentation Needs	American Rivers	$ 45,000	$ 45,000
		SNC 070173	Multi-County	California Rangeland Trust Sierra Nevada Rangeland Assessment Project	California Rangeland Trust	$ 49,500	$ 49,500
	Region Wide Total					**$ 1,015,577**	**$ 682,810**
Region Wide SOG $2m Total						**$ 1,015,577**	**$ 682,810**
Specific Region $1m ea	North	SNC 070144	Lassen	South Knob Sagebrush Steppe Watershed Restoration Project	Lassen County Fire Safe Council	$ 51,720	$ 51,720
		SNC 070146	Lassen	South Knob Sagebrush Steppe Watershed Restoration Project/Ash Valley	Lassen County Fire Safe Council	$ 99,999	$ 99,999
		SNC 070152	Lassen	McBride Springs/Willow Creek Restoration Planning and Development Project	Pit RCD	$ 33,100	$ 33,100
		SNC 070155	Lassen	Buffalo-Skedaddle Landscape Management and Restoration Initiative	BLM	$ 98,500	$ 98,500
		SNC 070161	Multi-County	Pit River Planning and Development Project	Pit RCD	$ 137,300	$ 137,300
		SNC 070180	Lassen	Buffalo-Skedaddle Landscape Management and Restoration Initiative - Project Coordinator	Bureau of Land Management	$ 48,400	$ 48,400
	North Total					**$ 469,019**	**$ 469,019**
	North Central	SNC 070104	Plumas	Plumas Co. FSC Educational and Publication Development Project	Plumas Corp.	$ 27,000	$ 27,000
		SNC 070149	Multi-County	Sierra Valley Sub-Basin Modeling Project	High Sierra Rural Alliance	$ 29,000	$ 29,000
		SNC 070167	Sierra	Filippini Ranch Riparian Restoration	Resources for Humanity	$ 92,000	$ 92,000
		SNC 070168	Plumas	Sulphur Creek Bank Stabilization Demonstration Project Environmental Review	Plumas Corp., Feather River Coordination Resource Management	$ 7,500	$ 7,500
		SNC 070169	Plumas	Sulphur/Barry Creek Confluence Restoration Project Environmental Review	Plumas Corp., Feather River Coordination Resource Management	$ 19,530	$ 19,530
	North Central Total					**$ 175,030**	**$ 175,030**
	Central	SNC 070012	Multi-County	Yuba River Wildlife and Recreation Area; Conservation and Acquisition Program Phase 1	The Sierra Fund	$ 45,000	$ 45,000
		SNC 070065	Nevada	(CFSC Block Grant 1) FSCNC Defensible Space Advisory	Fire Safe Council of Nevada County	$ 10,632	$ 10,632
		SNC 070072	Yuba	CFSC Block II Inventory and Geographic Reference of Firefighting Water	Yuba Watershed Protection & Fire Safe Council	$ 64,900	$ 64,900
		SNC 070127	Nevada	Nevada County (FIRST) Defensible Space Education & Compliance	Fire Safe Council of Nevada County	$ 49,500	$ 49,500
		SNC 070136	Placer	Phase 2, Lower Squaw Creek Restoration	Truckee River Watershed Council	$ 49,900	$ 49,900
		SNC 070138	Placer	Eastern Placer Creek Signage	Placer County Planning Department	$ 15,000	$ 15,000

Agenda Item X Attachment A
RECOMMENDED GRANTS APPLICATIONS
December 06, 2007

Fund Category	Sub-Region	Reference #	County	Project Title	Grantee Organization	Amount Requested	Amount Recommend
Specific Region	Central	SNC 070139	Placer	Esoteric Fraternity Property - Due Diligence Studies	Placer County Department of Facility Services	$ 40,000	$ 38,000
		SNC 070141	Placer	Low Impact Development Guidebook	Placer County Community Development Resource Agency	$ 45,000	$ 45,000
		SNC 070151	Placer	American River Educational Outreach Publications	Protect American River Canyons	$ 48,500	$ 48,500
		SNC 070160	El Dorado	South Fork American river (SFAR) Water Quality and Recreation Study	El Dorado Irrigation District	$ 118,236	$ 118,236
		SNC 070175	Nevada	Assessing and Restoring Deer Creek Watershed	The Sierra Fund	$ 75,000	$ 75,000
	Central Total					**$ 561,668**	**$ 559,668**
	South Central	SNC 070050	Calavaras	(CSFC Block Grant 1) Defensible Space Inspection Program	Calaveras Foothills Fire Safe Council	$ 19,625	$ 19,625
		SNC 070052	Amador	CFSC Block II 2007, Pioneer / Volcano Planning Unit Community Wildfire Protection Plan	Amador Fire Safe Council	$ 50,000	$ 50,000
		SNC 070053	Amador	CFSC Block II 2007, Pine Grove Planning Unit, Community Wildfire Protection Plan	Amador Fire Safe Council	$ 50,000	$ 50,000
		SNC 070055	Mariposa	CFSC Block II CWPP, Planning, Coordination and Education Expenses	Mariposa County Fire Safe Council	$ 69,911	$ 69,911
		SNC 070109	Mariposa	Oakvale Ranch	American Land Conservancy	$ 7,500	$ 7,500
		SNC 070156	Tuolomne	Tuolumne County Water Quality Plan Coordinated Watershed Management Program	Tuolumne County RCD	$ 48,500	$ 48,500
		SNC 070157	Calavaras	Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions Project (CHIPS)	Central Sierra RC&D	$ 48,629	$ 48,629
		SNC 070176	Amador	Amador County Watershed Stewardship Project	Amador Community Foundation	$ 173,780	$ 173,780
	South Central Total					**$ 467,945**	**$ 467,945**
	South	SNC 070031	Fresno	(CSFC Block Grant 1) Community Wildfire Protection Plan	Oak to Timberline Fire Safe Council	$ 1,617	$ 1,617
		SNC 070032	Fresno	(CFSC Block Grant 1) Prevention/Education Program and Council Development	Oak to Timberline Fire Safe Council	$ 10,000	$ 10,000
		SNC 070034	Tulare	CFSC Block II Southern Tulare County-Community Wildfire Protection Plan	Tulare County Resource Conservation District-Sequoia Fire Safe Council	$ 54,000	$ 54,000
		SNC 070035	Tulare	CFSC Block II Northern Tulare County-Community Wildfire Protection Plan	Tulare County Resource Conservation District-Sequoia Fire Safe Council	$ 59,000	$ 59,000
		SNC 070178	Kern	Audubon California Kern River Preserve Visitor Facility Planning Project	Audubon California Kern River Preserve	$ 152,000	$ 152,000
	South Total					**$ 276,617**	**$ 276,617**
	East	SNC 070163	Mono	(MLTPA CAMP) Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Concept and Master Planning	Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation	$ 120,099	$ 120,099
		SNC 070164	Multi-County	Eastern Sierra Citizen Watershed Assessments	Friends of the Inyo	$ 45,000	$ 45,000
	East Total					**$ 165,099**	**$ 165,099**
Specific Region $1m ea Total						**$ 2,115,378**	**$ 2,113,378**
Grand Total						**$ 3,130,955**	**$ 2,796,188**

Grant # 070019: Engaging Sierra Participation in California Water Plan Update 2009

Applicant: Sierra Nevada Alliance

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $40,000

Purpose: Outreach program to engage diverse stakeholders from the Sierra Nevada region in the California Water Plan Update public process.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for the grant is $40,000.

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is updating the California Water Plan. The Sierra Nevada Alliance will conduct active outreach and mobilize diverse stakeholders invested in water in the Sierra Nevada Region to gain their participation in regional and state water planning for the California Water Plan 2009.

Letters of Support:
None

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The Sierra Nevada Alliance is submitting to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy this full proposal requesting $40,000 in support for our work engaging diverse Sierra stakeholders in participating in the California Water Plan Update 2009.

Department of Water Resources (DWR) California Water Plan (CWP) is California's Strategic Plan for Action for water. Input from Sierra agencies, organizations, and others who manage, use and enjoy Sierra waters will ensure a strong statewide plan that meets the Sierra and California's needs. DWR is using meetings and workshops to encourage local entities to share information on regional water issues, data availability, local efforts and recommendations on water planning. However, DWR does not have regional staff in the Sierra or relationships with diverse stakeholders in the area. Consequently DWR could benefit from assistance in reaching out and ensuring diverse stakeholders participate and share information, issues, and plans.

The Sierra Nevada Alliance will conduct active outreach and mobilize city and county staff, resource conservation districts, water agencies, watershed

groups, land trusts, conservation groups, fire safe councils, and others invested in water in the Sierra to gain their input and participation in regional and state water planning for the California Water Plan 2009.

1. Mobilize Sierra participation in DWR CWP 2009 regional meetings, statewide meetings and written comment opportunities. We would reach out to broad stakeholders, compile outreach materials focused on Sierra interests, and phone stakeholders to ensure they are aware of opportunities to participate. We would offer scholarships to help strapped agencies, organizations and others participate.
2. Assist in orienting the DWR staff assigned to the Sierra region for the CWP update and the CWP Advisory Board members. The Alliance would put together a diverse stakeholder orientation team, compile materials to orient staff and Advisory members and meet as a team with these leaders to share basic Sierra information. We would offer stipends to the diverse stakeholder team for their time creating materials and meeting.
3. Produce a quarterly electronic news bulletin sharing information about the latest CWP activities and upcoming opportunities for input. This bulletin would crafted with an eye to what is the most interesting for Sierra stakeholders.
4. Organize at least Six CWP information sessions at regional gatherings. Having DWR workshops or information sessions featured at existing stakeholder regional conferences and gatherings. This is bringing DWR to the Sierra stakeholders, versus only bringing the stakeholders to DWR.

Grant # 070020: Sierra Nevada Alliance: Land and Water Project

Applicant: Sierra Nevada Alliance

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $200,000

Purpose: Funding to support the Sierra Nevada Alliance Land and Water Project through 1) the expansion of Community Forums; 2) the production of an additional 500 Land and Water Policy Guides; and 3) a training program in Best Management Practices to establish new projects conducting free site visits.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant at $150,000, a $50,000 reduction from the amount requested. SNC staff will further review this portion of the application for possible future consideration.

The project expands an existing nonpoint source pollution program to expand outreach efforts to additional communities throughout the Sierra Nevada Region. The project educates community resource management programs about best management practices and policies that may be used in landscaping and land use design to protect land and water resources.

Letters of support included with application:
None

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Applicant:

The Sierra Nevada Alliance is submitting to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy this full proposal requesting $200,000 in support for our Land & Water Project. Sierra watersheds are impaired from a variety of land use activities resulting in increased sediment runoff, as well as alterations to flow, habitat and pH. This project would help protect Sierra watersheds by educating individuals and city and county policy makers about opportunities to change land use practices to protect watershed health in the Sierra. The program would educate communities about model land use policies that protect watersheds and educate and inspire private landowners to adopt best landscaping practices that protect their watershed.

The State Water Resources Control Board has provided Proposition 40 funds for the Alliance to do a series of activities to reduce nonpoint source pollution. An additional grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy will allow us to expand our outreach to city and county land use planning agencies,

watershed groups and individual homeowners to reach a greater number of people throughout the Sierra.

The Alliance is proposing to do 12 Watershed and Land Use Practices Community Forums. The Alliance is creating a Land Use Model Policies to Protect Water Quality Guide for counties and cities in the Sierra Nevada. The guide will include information on county and city policies such as riparian corridor ordinances, zoning ordinances, general plan elements, subdivision regulations, post construction urban runoff and hydromodification management policies from around the state and nation that address NPS pollution.

The Sierra Nevada Alliance would train community leaders and provide support to them to host community education forums that engage local stakeholders, agency staff, city and county decision-makers to discuss how land use practices impact their watersheds and what changes in land use they can implement in their community. We are requesting support to expand the number of forums from 4 to 12 (8 additional forums). We also request support to produce an additional 500 Land & Water Policy guides to distribute at the additional forums and to mail them to all planning commissioners and city and county elected officials in the Sierra.

The Alliance would also train watershed programs, Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) and other community resource management programs to establish new projects conducting free site evaluations and Best Management Practice (BMP) recommendations for Sierra homeowners. This is modeled on Tahoe's BMP programs, but focused on voluntary implementation. The Alliance is asking for Conservancy support to conduct a series of trainings in five to eight communities to help them start these BMP consultation programs and distribute a Sierra landscaping guide regarding these model BMPs in these communities.

Block II
Grant # 070071: Fuel treatment, Monitoring & Educational Publications Research, University of California, Davis

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080061)

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $55,620

Purpose: This request is to analyze previously collected information (including year of retreatment, treatment costs, treatment methods, forest fuel composition, canopy cover, timber production, if any, and projected fire behavior) from as many as 25 projects conducted by the Forest Service and Fire Safe Councils over the past several years and develop a simple model that will relate maintenance retreatment to flame height. This will allow Fire Safe Councils to evaluate the effectiveness of previous treatments and estimate when retreatment is needed.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $55,620.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

In 2006, the grant request (in the paragraph below) was partially funded by BLM. The project will use the 2006 partial funding to collect most of the data in the field and required postponement of the remaining work. This request is to analyze the data and develop a simple model that will relate maintenance retreatment to flame height. This will allow Fire Safe Councils to evaluate the effectiveness of previous treatments and estimate when retreatment is needed to provide a flame height of less than four feet, in the treated area. The four foot parameter is a standard by most fire agencies that below that value allows all fire fighting
options to address wildfire.

Over the past 4 years millions have been spent to reduce hazardous fuels on thousands of acres in "Communities at Risk" to improve community and watershed protection. Fuel reduction projects that benefit property owners are being implemented by Fire Safe Councils with little information on the actual efficacy of the treatment or the potential long term maintenance requirements. Questions are now being asked about maintenance requirements and the costs. Fuel reduction project implementers are also asking if the prescription used was appropriate in light of vegetation regrowth. For example, in some locations they are finding that the canopy may have been thinned too

heavily which results aggressive shrub growth. Fire Safe Councils and property owners will benefit from science based information on fuel reduction prescriptions, project monitoring and long term maintenance requirements.

This information needs to be developed and presented to the Fire Safe Councils and others in a logical manner that describes treatment standards and site responses that estimate the retreatment time to maintain a desired fire behavior standard. The project will gather retrospective information from as many as 25 projects conducted by the Forest Service and Fire Safe Councils over the past several years. The information collected will include year of retreatment, treatment costs, treatment methods, forest fuel composition, canopy cover, timber production (if any), and projected fire behavior.

The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) has a mission of applied research and education through its field and campus faculty. The strength of UCCE is that it has the connection of the knowledge of the field with the linkage of the Campus Specialists, students and research faculty. This continuum of knowledge allows for optimum understanding of the problems faced by local Fire Safe Councils and the methods to correctly research and publish information that can be useful to constructing fuel treatments that optimize the expenditure of funds with the clear understanding of the maintenance requirements. UCCE has extensive experience in implementing and managing grants. Past successful work includes the building ignitability research and education. They have also work on goat grazing for fuel reduction. Much of the work can be seen at **http://firecenter.berkeley.edu/toolkit/homeowners.html**

University researchers and educators have been working with Fire Safe Councils throughout the state. They have provided training to the State Fire Safe Council on Building ignitability demonstrations and Sixth Grade Wildfire curriculum. They have been providing education to the San Diego area after the 2003 fire. Two fire safe Councils have been started and chaired by University staff.

Grant # 070098: Sierra Nevada Science Institute: Development of a Timeline and Business Plan

Applicant: Friends of Deer Creek

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $49,500

Purpose: Assessment of need for a regional water quality resource center and laboratory in the Sierra Nevada and development of a business and implementation plan for this center.

Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant with a reduction in the requested amount. SNC Staff worked with the grant applicant to focus the grant request on the market assessment, timeline and business plan, removing three line items from the original budget (a contingency in the amount of $4500, and the development of a course catalog and video training) thereby reducing the amount of the total grant request by $17,000. Total recommended amount for the grant is $32,500.

The Friends of Deer Creek would like to establish a water quality resource center to provide inexpensive laboratory and scientific services to communities within the Sierra Nevada Region. The laboratory would be more readily accessible to local organizations and local governments than laboratory services outside of the region and provide services that are aligned with specific issues facing water resources within the Sierra. The center will also be used as a training facility for monitoring projects and restoration work within the region. The needs assessment, business and implementation plan is the first step towards bringing the water quality resource center to fruition.

Letters of Support:
Wolf Creek Community Alliance
South Yuba River Citizens League
Bill Ray, State Water Resources Control Board
City of Nevada City
U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer
Yuba/Bear Watershed Council
Gold Country Flyfisherman's Association
Lake Wildwood Lake Committee
Nevada County Bicyclists
49er Rotary
El Dorado County Irrigation District

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Friends of Deer Creek is seeking funds for the purpose of assessing the need for a regional water quality resource center and laboratory in the Sierra Nevada, and to develop a business and implementation plan for this center. Our vision of this facility includes a reference library, visitor's center, training center and expanded laboratory, all functioning as a comprehensive resource for river monitoring groups, governmental agencies and the general public throughout the Sierra Nevada. The Sierra Nevada Science Center timeline and business plan will set the parameters and requirements for 1) the kinds of services offered;
2) how we propose to provide the services; 3) how we would pay for the services; 4) the types of groups that would most use the facilities offered. The need for this kind of resource in the Sierra Nevada is evident; consequently we feel it is time to develop the plan for its implementation. The Tinnery, an 1880-era, 3,000 square foot building in the heart of Nevada City, has already been set aside to house the Institute and will serve as a central resource for watershed groups, citizens, agencies and visitors. The establishment of the Sierra Nevada Science Institute is predicated on developing a viable business and implementation plan and using that to acquire funding for the renovation of the building and set-up of the institute.

The funding of the future Sierra Nevada Science Institute will provide a vital resource for people throughout the Sierra who share similar environmental challenges. It will provide laboratory services, training, and scientifically rigorous protocols, in a highly cost-effective manner that can equip other groups of citizens to become stewards of their own resources. Sierra Nevada watershed groups and others would no longer be trained from outside groups or have to send water quality or biological samples to labs in areas outside of our region and could keep the economic benefits inside the Sierra. Continued revenue for the resource center would come from fees generated by the lab and training activities, and the sale of items of general interest in the science institute. Friends of Deer Creek, situated at the heart of Gold Rush country, stands ready to become a regional resource for all of our neighbors who, like us, are dealing with the calamitous environmental effects of our gold mining history and recent growth activities.

We feel that a regional science institute will allow more frequent, in-depth investigations in the region due to the convenience and lower cost for sample analysis. The local training center would enable more watershed groups to do monitoring and hopefully, be able to remediate with common solutions more of the problems with which many Sierra communities are grappling (i.e. algae blooms, E.coli contamination, heavy metal contamination, nutrients from wastewater treatment effluent). Our vision of the institute includes the use of a videoconferencing system to train watershed groups in rural areas of the Sierra, a system currently being used by the Sierra Rural Health Network in Nevada City. We also plan to use FoDC's newly published "Bug Book" as a training aid

so that other Sierra Nevada watershed groups can identify their own macroinvertebrates and use them as health indicators. In addition, Friends of Deer Creek has found a city-approved, commercial building in Nevada City whose owner has agreed for it to become a Sierra Nevada science institute and laboratory. Logically, the owner's willingness to use the building is predicated on a business plan which investigates potential funding sources for developing the institute, and provides an assessment of the market for Institute services, including types of laboratory analyses, training and outreach needed by watershed groups, agencies and individuals.

Above, we have outlined the scope of work for which we are requesting $49,500 in support from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 Category 2 Strategic Opportunity Grant Program.

Grant # 070102: Sierra Best Value Stewardship Contracting Workshops

Applicant: Sierra Business Council

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $48,027

Purpose: Organize and conduct a series of stewardship contract training workshops to encourage sustainable land management practices.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant with a minor reduction to the amount requested to correct for ineligible costs. The total recommended amount for the grant is $46,440.

The project conducts workshops throughout the Sierra Nevada Region in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to support a federal pilot program. The program allows the federal agencies to enter into stewardship contracts with community partners for up to ten years to support watershed health, sustainable rural communities, restoration and maintenance of healthy ecosystems, and enhancement of recreational opportunities. The purpose of the workshops is to introduce the stewardship contract program to Sierra Nevada communities to encourage sustainable land management.

Letters of Support:
Institute for a Sustainable Environment at the University of Oregon
Sierra Economic Development Corporation
Watershed Research and Training Center
U.S. Forest Service American River District

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

2. Project Summary

The project proposed by the Sierra Business Council (SBC) includes the coordination of two two-day workshops and two one-day workshops in subregions covering the Sierra Nevada. To conduct these workshops, the Sierra Business Council will work in partnership with the Watershed Research and Training Center based in Hayfork, CA, the Institute for a Sustainable Environment, University of Oregon, based in Eugene, OR, the ten National Forests and Bureau of Land Management in the Sierra Nevada region of California.

In 1999, the Forest Service was first authorized to enter into 28 pilot project agreements in order to manage natural resources in cooperation with local communities. In 2003, USFS and BLM were authorized to continue the program through 2013 and were given permission to enter into stewardship contracts with community partners for up to ten years. These stewardship contracts cover a range of projects designed to contribute to watershed health, the development of sustainable rural communities, restoration and maintenance of healthy forest ecosystems, and enhancement of recreational opportunities.

To date, over 300 stewardship contracts have been approved nationwide, with El Dorado National Forest leading the way in California, currently working on over two dozen projects. Although the term of the contracts can be up to ten years, only one ten-year project is currently underway, on the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest in Arizona. Some of the benefits of this long-term partnership include reducing fire risk on 150,000 acres, reducing the costs of forest thinning by 50%, eliminating litigation around public land management debates, and the creation of over 400 jobs.

One obstacle to effective collaboration and developing long-term projects and contracts that achieve multiple social, economic, and environmental goals is the lack of agency capacity. A second challenge is a lack of trust among community partners and the federal land management agencies. Third, federal agencies have limited financial resources and consequently challenging public relations to manage. These factors drive the federal agencies to look for projects with impressive and quick results, so they establish high-acreage, low-cost, single-purpose targets, such as fuel reduction. The contracts approved in California are generally these short-term projects that serve single purposes, most of which are fuels reduction. Short-term contracts fail to implement the multiple socioeconomic and environmental benefits that are possible with long-term contracts. There is a need in the Sierra to provide education and support to develop long-term contracts.

The workshops that SBC is proposing to conduct are intended to fill that need. Agency staff, community partners, contractors, and other interested parties will focus on developing innovative and collaborative, long-term multiple benefit stewardship projects in the Sierra Nevada focusing on water quality, forest restoration, and rural sustainable development goals. The format will be structured around overcoming barriers to developing meaningful collaborations between the Forest Service and community partners in the Sierra region. Through its Forestry Program, the Sierra Business Council has spent two years building these partnerships to enable cooperation and collaboration on forest solutions and has identified stewardship contracting as a pivotal tool in applying these partnerships to on-the-ground projects.

Grant # 070137: Comprehensive Interpretive Plan: Yosemite National Park and Surrounding Communities

Applicant: Yosemite National Park

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $23,250

Purpose: Develop a long range interpretive plan consisting of annual implementation plan and media database.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant for the proposed $23,250.

The Comprehensive Interpretive Planning process coordinates with gateway communities surrounding the park to identify common themes to educate visitors. The plan develops the overall approach to connecting the public to the Merced and Tuolumne Rivers, both designated Wild and Scenic Rivers, and their watersheds, to support protecting them for future generations.

Letters of Support:
Yosemite Fund
Yosemite Institute
Yosemite Association
Ansel Adams Gallery
Sierra Club
DNC Parks and Resorts at Yosemite

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

"The care of rivers is not a question of rivers, but of the human heart."
– Tanaka Shozo

People protect what they love and care about. Public love and caring for natural resources is not achieved through law enforcement or resource management, though these are critical elements of resource protection. Interpretation and education is the pathway to facilitating enduring connections between people and our natural and cultural heritage. These connections, in the mind and the heart, are what make resource protection possible through active stewardship, volunteerism, responsible recreation, and life-style choices.

The Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP) for Yosemite National Park will develop the overall approach to connecting the public to two Wild and Scenic

Rivers and their watersheds. The Merced and Tuolumne Rivers both originate in Yosemite National Park and visitor use and enjoyment of these resources directly impacts the quality of water and associated natural resources. A comprehensive approach to interpreting these resources, engaging all partners and local communities in the process, is necessary to ensure long-term protection of natural and cultural resources through visitor understanding and enjoyment.

Of particular significance, the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan will identify how the myriad partners in interpretation and education fit in meeting overall goals and objectives. Educational partners exist throughout gateway communities and within Yosemite National Park itself. Examples include Yosemite Association, Yosemite Institute, Y-explore Guides, Evergreen Lodge, Sierra Club, Mariposa Mining and Mineral Museum, Yosemite Railroad, SFPUC/HHWP, affiliated tribal organizations, USDA Forest Service, and the city's of Groveland, Mariposa, Lee Vining, and Oakhurst. Each of these partners will have a seat at the table and help craft the future of Interpretation and Education in Yosemite, and particularly as it relates to the Wild and Scenic Rivers.

Additionally, the Merced Wild and Scenic River Plan and Tuolumne Wild and Scenic River Plan are both in development process right now, making the timing of this Comprehensive Interpretive Plan even more ideal and urgent. Each of these planning processes can inform the other and lead to a multi-disciplinary approach to connecting the public to these vital resources and protecting them for future generations.

Total cost: $46,500

Grant # 070143: Biomass Removal on National Forest Land

Applicant: Placer County

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $49,500

Purpose: Coordinate the removal of woody biomass material from National Forests located within the SNC service area. The material will be removed as a byproduct of fuel-load reduction efforts and will be utilized as a source of clean, renewable energy.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for the grant is $49,500.

The Biomass removal project helps to protect landscapes associated with the overall health of sierra watersheds and contributes to a net reduction in greenhouse gases through generation of clean energy. The project leverages over $1,000,000 in matching investments in the region.

Letters of Support:
Placer County Board of Supervisors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Project Name: Forest Biomass Removal from National Forest Lands

2. Project Summary

This project is proposed and sponsored by Placer County, in a partnership, with the following organizations; USDA Forest Service (USFS), Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD), and Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI).

Placer County will serve as the lead partner in the implementation of this project. The primary objective of the Forest Biomass Removal from National Forest Lands Project is the removal of multiple tons of woody biomass material from National Forests located within the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC) service area. Placer County proposes that the woody biomass material will be removed as a byproduct of fuels treatment activities and that this byproduct be recovered as fuel for clean, renewable energy rather than it's current fate which is typically pile and burn or leave on site. These amounts will produce air pollution reduction amounts which will be used in other studies to calculate the affect on contributions to AB32.

The project will facilitate the removal of these tons of woody biomass from three National Forests (NF) located within the Sierra Nevada range; Tahoe National Forest, El Dorado National Forest, Plumas National Forest.

SPI, in conjunction with an environmental settlement with the PCAPCD has allocated $1 million to support fuels treatment activities on these National Forest lands. This settlement resulted in a mutual agreement to provide benefits to the citizens of the surrounding areas including portions of nine counties; Alpine, Amador, Butte, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sierra and Yuba. The affected area covers portions of the following three Sub-Regions of the SNC; North Central, Central and South Central.

Specific projects sites will receive fuels treatments consistent with existing Land Management Plans for the National Forests and treatments will be implemented with the assistance of USFS and SPI foresters to ensure that projects are targeted to produce lasting effects on the landscape and are accomplished in conjunction with other relevant public and private ecosystem projects that enhance forest and watershed health. It is anticipated that initial, Phase I projects will target forested landscapes the have already been treated and have biomass material piled and available for recovery and processing as biomass fuel. Phase II projects will target those landscapes that are ready for treatment and have already received NEPA/CEQA review and approval. Phase II projects may be coordinated to support fire clean-up or fire restoration efforts.

Clearly implementation of Phase I and II projects will have lasting, long term benefits ranging from improved air quality to enhanced watershed values. This project will include a final report and the development of a communication plan to inform the public of these net benefits and to encourage similar public/private stewardship partnerships.

Total biomass removal projects implemented as a result of this partnership are projected to cost approximately $1.2 million over Phases I and II. The total SNC grant request (for planning, management and public information) amounts to $49,500.

Grant # 070148: **Environmental Benefits of Grazing Educational Tour and Video**

Applicant: Nevada County RCD

Grant Type: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $71,344

Purpose: Plan and coordinate 10 multi-regional workshops on the environmental benefits of grazing, and produce educational video.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of the grant with a reduction of requested contingency funds. Total recommended amount for the grant is $38,000.

The workshops and educational video will introduce and encourage best management practices for grazing activities within the Sierra Nevada region. These tools will increase the use of practices that will protect rivers, lakes, streams within the Sierra Nevada. The workshops and video will include information from two university sources that support the practice of grazing as a method to retain open space and economic diversity in the region while protecting other resources within the watershed. There appears to be greater recognition among diverse user groups that there are mutual benefits to retaining rangeland. These workshops and the video will facilitate further discussion and encourage best management practices for rangeland/watershed health.

Letters of Support:

- High Sierra Resource and Development Area
- El Dorado Resource Conservation District
- Placer County Resource Conservation District
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- California Cattleman's Association
- Fire Safe Council of Nevada County
- Nevada County Land Trust
- Bear River Watershed Group
- Nevada County Farm Bureau

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Project Summary

"Environmental Benefits of Grazing"
Regional Educational Tour and Video Project

This educational project is a multi-effort, multi-regional educational workshop tour in the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Region designed to increase awareness and support of our working landscapes (ranches) and their associated environmental watershed benefits. By increasing awareness and support of working landscapes, diverse groups can collaboratively start working together to achieve common goals for protecting watershed health. Ranchers hold the key to the remaining "open space". These large parcels of privately owned land support vegetation that prevents soil erosion and protects water quality, support large numbers of plant and wildlife including imperiled species, allow for better water infiltration as well as providing social and economic benefits. This project will build capacity, education and understanding of how grazing supports and helps protect the natural resources and watersheds, and provides fuel reduction benefits for communities.

These rangelands, and the species that rely on these habitats, largely persist today due to experienced grazing management techniques and other positive land stewardship practices of the ranchers and they are committed to a healthy future for their working landscapes. Oak rangelands are a critical foundation of California's ranching industry and rural communities, and are often located in the fastest growing counties. As a result, rangelands are at significant risk of conversion to development and other uses, leaving these natural resources in the Sierra Nevada lost forever.

The Nevada County Resource Conservation District will plan, coordinate and advertise ten multi-regional educational workshops, develop the workshop materials and binders, coordinate production of a professional video, coordinate speakers and travel arrangements, and provide a final report on the success of the project. Local Resource Conservation Districts will also provide planning, coordination and advertising for the workshops that will be strategically located throughout the Sierra Nevada Conservancy region. Planning efforts will be coordinated with the Outreach Committee of the California Rangeland Coalition and its many partners. The tangible products from this project will be the workshop binders and the professional video. We anticipate these products will have far reaching applications and they will be available on multiple websites.

This project meets Prop 84 goals of contributing to the protection of watersheds and associated lands, water and other natural resources in addition to meeting five of the seven Sierra Nevada Conservancy's goals. The project has numerous supporters and its many partners are signatories to the California Rangeland Resolution. (see attached)

Grant # 070162: Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project

Applicant: University of California - Berkeley

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $383,836

Purpose: To develop improved public participation in decision-making and planning process governing public lands and watershed resources.

Staff Recommendation:
Staff recommends authorization of the project at a reduced amount of $123,000. The reduction includes a proposed waiver of UC administrative fees and one year of the proposed two year program. Subsequent funding may be sought to fund additional year of program at a later date.

The project will help to improve management of much of the publicly owned land in the Sierra Region for purposes that include habitat and watershed health.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Project Name: Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project

2. Project Summary

A century of fire suppression and a rapidly changing climate have placed the Sierra Nevada's forests and residents under the threat of catastrophic wildfire. Consequently, the record of decision regarding the US Forest Service's Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (SNFPA 2004) adopts "an integrated vegetation management strategy with the primary objective of protecting communities and modifying landscape-scale fire behavior to reduce the size and severity of wildfires." The goal of this proposal is to support an innovative three-party adaptive management approach that creates a collaboration of scientists, managers, and stakeholders to implement this strategy. The outcome sought is improved information about how to manage Sierran ecosystems in ways that improve forest health, protect water and wildlife resources, reduce fire hazard, and maximize opportunity to build support among stakeholders rather than generate controversy. We seek support for enhancement of efforts to integrate the public—often referred to here as stakeholders—into the project. This includes outreach through meetings and workshops, field participation in science, and a unique, cutting edge interactive website with a spatial/geographical interface.

One innovative aspect of the integrated vegetation management plan is an explicit landscape planning approach epitomized by an emphasis on fireshed assessments. Fireshed assessment is an interdisciplinary process to change fuels and vegetation at the landscape scale (Bahro and Barber 2004). It includes the strategic placement of treatment areas across the landscape (SPLAT, Strategically Placed Landscape Area Treatments) to limit wildland fire spread (Finney 2001). Despite the sound conceptual underpinning of strategic fuel treatments, there is uncertainty regarding their efficacy in modifying fire behavior and concern about potential impacts on wildlife and water resources. Moreover, given the history of debate over land and resource management in the Sierra Nevada, a lasting solution must engage stakeholders and promote active public participation in all phases of the process. To address these uncertainties, a partnership of federal and state agencies requested the help of the University of California (UC). This resulted in a proposal for the Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project (SNAMP), with the goal of developing an unprecedented three party model for public forest management. UC researchers are committed to acting as an independent third party with expertise in ecosystem science and participatory processes. After more than 2 years of a planning process that integrated public participation and input, SNAMP was launched on May 1, 2007. We have selected two study sites where the US Forest Service is implementing fireshed management: the northern site is on the Tahoe National Forest (SNC Central Region) and the southern site is on the Sierra National Forest (SNC Southern Region) (Figs 1 and 2).

The UC science team's third party role is a unique experiment in US public land management. The UC science team is striving to provide independent, high quality scientific information about Forest Service management outcomes that will contribute to the resource management knowledge base. Yet perhaps even more importantly, given that public controversy about public land management is one of the main constraints and costs of management, the science team, by inviting public/stakeholder participation in the scientific process, and offering public accountability, seeks to build understanding and trust among the US Forest Service, UC, and the

public. The effectiveness of this extraordinary, three party (Forest Service, UC, and public/stakeholder) configuration of the adaptive management process will be evaluated as part of the project. It is our belief that the participation of a third party "monitor," like UC, facilitates public trust. Yet our capacity to engage the public and to study the adaptive management process is constrained by both the availability of funding and federal restrictions on research interviews. Support from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy would alleviate these constraints. We are convinced that an adaptive management process with third party participation – one that includes thoughtful experimentation and meaningful discussions among scientists, managers, and the public – is the best way to address more than two decades of uncertainty and controversy surrounding the management of federal forests. Through this process of dynamic collaboration, our hope is to make a lasting contribution to the environmental and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada.

Total costs for the Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project during the first two years of this seven year project is $2,6000,000. Total grant request from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy is $383,835 ($250,873 of direct support).

Grant # 070171: Sierra Water Trust: Building Capacity in the Sierra Nevada to Assess and Fulfill Critical Flow Augmentation Needs

Applicant: American Rivers

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $45,000

Purpose: Build capacity, train and provide technical assistance to groups working in the Sierra a non-regulatory, market-based approach to the acquisition of water rights from willing sellers, and the dedication of these rights to in-stream flow needs.

Staff Recommendation: Staff is recommending authorization of the project as proposed. Total amount recommended is $45,000.

The Sierra Water Trust project will help build the capacity of groups working within the Sierra by providing training and education in the acquisition of water rights to increase the long-term effectiveness of stream, river, and lake restoration and protection projects in the region.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Applicant:

The overall goal of this project entitled "*Sierra Water Trust: Building Capacity in the Sierra Nevada to Assess and Fulfill Critical Flow Augmentation Needs*" is to improve water quality and increase aquatic function and biodiversity in Sierra rivers and creeks. Specific objectives in support of this goal are to:

1. Build capacity of Sierra organizations to use water rights acquisition as a tool for stream restoration;
2. Improve capacity of Sierra organizations to examine watershed problems in a broader hydrologic context;
3. Facilitate the use of river science in managing and monitoring water rights acquisition; and
4. Promote sustainable solutions to watershed problems through strong public-private partnerships.

Ultimately, this project will contribute towards restoring and protecting the degraded creeks, streams, and rivers and ecologically endemic aquatic life of the Sierra. Its chief contributions – ensuring permanent protection through systematic water acquisitions; building capacity; facilitating stewardship; and advancing restoration – will help preserve the lifeblood of the Sierra.

Sierra Trust Water Principles

1) *Voluntary transactions based on "willing seller, willing buyer*
2) *Part of the larger context of managing water to maximize uses and benefits, including consumptive and ecosystem needs*
3) *Based on scientific knowledge and social and local economic conditions*
4) *Accomplished through partnerships*
5) *Includes on-going, long-term monitoring and accountability*

Grant # 070173: Sierra Nevada Rangeland Assessment Project

Applicant: California Rangeland Trust

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $49,500

Purpose: Complete an assessment of 12 -16 working ranches where landowners have expressed interest, in order to prioritize the properties for acquiring conservation easements.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant at the proposed level of funding requested – $49,500.

The Sierra Nevada Rangeland Assessment Project is central to the California Rangeland Trust's effort to prioritize those working landscapes with interested landowners in the Sierra Nevada for acquisition of conservation easements. This assessment is necessary to determine which properties provide the highest environmental and economic benefit to the Region along with protection of the watershed.

Letters of Support:
California Cattlemen's Association
Sierra Business Council

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The California Rangeland Trust (CRT) is a California non-profit corporation whose mission is to conserve the open space, natural habitat and stewardship provided by California ranches. The Rangeland Trust currently holds conservation easements on over 178,000 acres throughout California. Of that, 28,282 acres are located within the Sierra Nevada region, and was achieved by collaborating with organizations such as the Wildlife Conservation Board, The Nature Conservancy and Sierra Business Council.

The Rangeland Trust requests a grant to hire a certified range manager familiar with the Sierra Nevada region to conduct an assessment of the resources on 12 to 16 ranches including watersheds, streams, rivers, wildlife habitat, rangeland, cultural and historical resources. The project is called the California Rangeland Trust Sierra Nevada Rangeland Assessment Project. This analysis will guide CRT in prioritizing ranches with the highest environmental value and economic benefit to the Sierra Nevada region. The Rangeland Trust will then prioritize the

ranches selecting the most strategic working cattle ranches to apply for grant funding for the acquisition of a conservation easement. The assessment will help leverage commitments from one agency for matching funds from the others, and to identify potential strategic partnerships with other land trusts in the Sierra Nevada Conservancy area to further leverage resources. The acquisition funding will be requested from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy as well as the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Department of Conservation, the Department of Water Resources and any other appropriate state and federal agency.

The budget for the assessment project would be $1,500 to $5,500 per ranch, for a total request of $49,500. This will include a report to the Conservancy on the assessment.

The Rangeland Trust has accepted applications from willing ranch owners who each have contacted CRT to help them obtain a conservation easement over their respective ranch. These lands are located in the following subregions of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy: East Sierra, North Central Sierra, North Sierra, South Central Sierra and South Sierra. The ranches range in size from 600 acres to 14,500 acres, for a total of nearly 50,000 acres. Currently, CRT does not have the internal technical capacity to conduct an important assessment of the Sierras' resources. The assessment would provide CRT guidance in applying for grants to obtain easements on these ranches. Hiring a certified range manager to conduct the assessment of the Sierra ranches would build critical capacity for the organization.

A conservation easement on a Sierra Nevada ranch will permanently protect the rivers, streams and watersheds that flow through the ranch, as well as the wildlife and the magnificent vistas that define the region. In addition, conservation of working ranches will have a direct benefit for the economy of the Sierra Nevada region by supporting the economic viability of those ranches and helping to maintain the critical mass of productive rangeland necessary to sustain agriculture in the area. Often the conservation of a strategic ranch will lead other ranchers in the area to seek conservation, thereby expanding conservation in key areas of the Sierra Nevada.

California Rangeland Trust has the opportunity to conserve many more acres of unique Sierra Nevada rangeland in perpetuity with a grant from Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Without funds to support this important work, the ranches will continue to be under threat of subdivision and conversion to nonagricultural uses.

Grant # 070144: South Knob Sagebrush Steppe Watershed Restoration

Applicant: Lassen County Fire Safe Council

Grant Type: SOG 1

Amount Requested: $51,720

Purpose: Restore 136 acres of sagebrush steppe biome through removal of western juniper and the implementation of a Stewardship Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of the grant as submitted. Total grants funds would be $51,720.

Restoration of the sagebrush steppe biome would improve overall watershed health. This project is being completed in cooperation with private lands adjacent to public lands and would meet multiple agency restoration objects as defined in the Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystem Project, a partnership of local government, non-profit organizations and tribal groups in the area.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. A NEPA Categorical Exclusion was completed by the Bureau of Land Management for the project.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

> Western juniper (*Juniperus occidentalis*) currently occupies over 2.5 million acres of rangeland in northeastern California. This constitutes a ten-fold expansion of juniper range over the past 130 years. It is generally agreed that this increase is the result of fire suppression and livestock grazing management. Studies have shown that the conversion of sagebrush steppe biome to juniper woodland and juniper encroachment into the eastside forests is having deleterious impacts on our watersheds, soils and wildlife habitat. The climax condition of the expanding juniper community often becomes one of complete dominance where virtually all other forbs and forage disappear, springs dry up and erosion accelerates. Resource agencies agree that invasive juniper has had a destructive effect on sage grouse, mule deer, elk and sand hill crane habitat. Thick stands of juniper also pose a substantial risk of wildfire that could threaten lives and property. Watersheds are suffering severe degradation from the expansion of juniper throughout the west.
>
> The project area is primarily sagebrush steppe uplands that have been severely encroached by western juniper. The restoration of these ecosystems

through the removal of juniper and the implementation of adaptive range management techniques will restore the water cycle and re-establish the native plant community. This will result in a beneficial impact on land and water.

The reduction of hazardous fuel loads will reduce the threat of a catastrophic fire that could have a devastating impact on the watershed.

Grant # 070146: South Knob Sagebrush Steppe Watershed Restoration Project - Ash Valley

Applicant: Lassen County Firesafe Council

Grant Type: SOG 1

Amount Requested: $99,999

Purpose: Remove invasive western juniper in order to enhance habitat and watershed health and support local biomass industry.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for the grant is $99,999.

The project will directly improve habitat and watershed health in Ash Creek, a tributary of the Pit River, in Lassen County. It is part of a larger landscape initiative – the Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative – that has already restored more than 5,000 watershed acres over the past four years.

Letters of Support:
William Flournoy
US Fish and Wildlife Service

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Project is a wet meadow/sagebrush steppe watershed restoration project at the headwaters of Ash Creek, a tributary of the Pit River, in Lassen County. It is being implemented on a landscape scale that includes both private and BLM lands. This application covers the private land and a companion application covers the BLM (public) land.

It is being implemented by the Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC) Cooperative Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Initiative (CSSRI), a partnership of local government, non-profit and tribal groups that has already restored more than 5,000 watershed acres over the past 4 years. LCFSC is the lead and applicant for this project.

The primary restoration activities are the removal of invasive western juniper through biomass utilization and the implementation of adaptive range management techniques across a working landscape of public and private land.

Project will aid in restoring and conserving the Region's physical and living resources; aid in the preservation of working landscapes; reduce risk of wildfires; improve water and air quality; assist the Regional economy and enhance public lands. It will restore and protect habitat for numerous endangered species and species of concern.

The project is part of the larger CSSRI initiative that is currently implementing $2.8 million dollars of watershed restoration projects across Lassen, Modoc and, potentially, Shasta Counties. Most of the initiative's administrative needs are being funded by the Lassen and Modoc County Boards of Supervisors, the ultimate sign of local and regional support. We are also working in tandem with a parallel USFS/BLM project that focuses primarily on public lands. CSSRI has primarily focused on private lands but we are beginning to implement cross boundary treatments across the public lands as well.

CSSRI has completed 10 landscape scale site specific restoration plans, this being one, and a 2.2 million acre regional restoration plan. The planning effort was funded with financial support from NRCS, the Central Valley Water Quality Control Board, the Pit RCD, Susanville Indian Rancheria, LCFSC and the Lassen County RAC. The implementation phase is partially funded by a half million dollar NRCS Conservation Innovative Grant with the goal of spreading CSSRI juniper/sagebrush restoration prescriptions across the entire western landscape of the United States.

LCFSC is asking SNC for $99,999 and we will use these funds to expand our $400,000.00 South Knob project that will begin this fall.

Grant # 070152: McBride Springs/Willow Creek Restoration Planning & Development

Applicant: Pit Resource Conservation District

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $33,100

Purpose: Complete restoration design, project coordination, CEQA compliance and permitting for proposed future restoration projects in the area.

Staff Recommendation: The staff recommendation is to authorize this grant as proposed. Total grant funding would be $33,100.

The project would provide the necessary design and associated environmental review to begin restoration efforts on sensitive meadow and stream habitat. The Project could provide education elements for future restoration planning on meadow and flood plain areas.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The Pit Resource Conservation District (Pit RCD) proposes a planning and development project to address restoration and fuels management needs at McBride Springs, a degraded wet meadow/fen ecosystem that is part of the headwaters of Willow Creek, a tributary to the Pit River. Total project area is approximately 400 acres. Exact area of disturbance for eventual project implementation will be identified under the proposed study, but will likely be a much smaller area.

The Pit RCD, in cooperation with the Parks Ranch and Modoc National Forest, proposes a comprehensive fuels treatment and stream/wetland/fen restoration strategy for the project area, as identified in the Pit RCD Watershed Management Strategy. The Park Ranch and Modoc NF are project supporters and will contribute in-kind services to the project.

The dominant feature of the project site is a dehydrated middle-elevation meadow/fen. Historically, this ecosystem featured saturated hydric meadow soils and fen-like mats of floating vegetation. Channel degradation has effectively drained the meadow. Because recovery of fen ecosystems has not yet been widely practiced in the Pit River watershed, a more detailed study of the site is

needed to ensure that a feasible and effective restoration strategy is designed. Other degraded wet meadow/fen systems are known to occur in the watershed, and successful design and ultimate restoration of this proposed project may be useful for future projects.

The proposed project will deliver all steps necessary for completion of a project design that is ready for implementation, including environmental assessment, stakeholder coordination, design details, monitoring methods, CEQA/NEPA and permitting.

The proposed project will directly address four SNC program goals: Working landscapes, public lands, regional economic support, and water quality. It will indirectly address other SNC goals: Disaster mitigation (through fuels treatment and meadow rehydration), and Recreation and Tourism (improve visuals on Hwy 139). The proposed project will contribute to the conservation of living resources through restoration of an uncommon ecosystem (a fen) as well as important aquatic, riparian and terrestrial habitats.

Budget: Personnel $ 2,000, Operating Expenses (permit fees, publication costs, etc.) $ 6,100, Contract Services $24,500; Total sum requested: $33,100. In-kind and matching funds: $19,200; Total Project Value: $ 52,300.

Grant # 070155: Buffalo-Skedaddle Landscape Management and Restoration Initiative

Applicant: Bureau of Land Management

Grant Type: SOG 1

Amount Requested: $98,500

Purpose: Improve habitat and enhance watershed health by removing invasive western juniper and Scotch thistle.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for the grant is $98,500.

The project is the first proposed project within one of 10 identified project areas comprising a landscape-scale initiative for restoring sagebrush steppe habitat, which supports sage-grouse and many other sagebrush-dependent species. This initiative implements a stakeholder-developed strategy to provide habitat protection, conservation and restoration of this important watershed component.

Letters of Support:
Lassen County Board of Supervisors
Department of Fish and Game

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse. A NEPA Categorical Exclusion was completed by the Bureau of Land Management for the project.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The Norte Springs and Cold Springs Mountain Sage-grouse habitat Enhancement Project proposed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), consists of treatment of 1,150 acres of western juniper and 300 acres of Scotch thistle to directly improve nesting and summer brood-rearing habitat conditions for sage-grouse. The project area is in northern Lassen County approximately 8 miles east of Madeline, CA in the area of Cold Springs Mountain and Dodge Spring. These lands are public lands managed by BLM. Land uses include cattle grazing, dispersed recreation activities, and adjacent agriculture. Critical resources include increasingly impacted sagebrush steppe vegetation, wildlife habitat, water sources, meadows, riparian, and archaeology.

The project is the first proposed project within one of ten identified project areas comprising a landscape-scale *Initiative* for restoring sagebrush steppe habitat

which supports sage-grouse and many other sagebrush-dependent species within the Buffalo-Skedaddle (sage-grouse) Population Management Unit (PMU). This *Initiative* implements a stakeholder-developed *Conservation Strategy* for this PMU which, in turn, is part of a national Department of Interior priority for sage-grouse/sagebrush restoration and links to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, and the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA). This MOU identifies, among numerous objectives, the State's leadership role in convening working groups to develop state and local conservation plans, and the land management agencies' roles in providing habitat protection, and conservation and restoration. The Buffalo-Skedaddle Conservation Strategy is a grass-roots product of this nationally-driven process.

Integral to the project, and a major goal of the overall *Initiative*, is a locally-driven implementation component. The project utilizes local organizations such as Resource Conservation Districts (RCD), Resource Conservation and Development Districts (RC&D), and other non-profit organizations for project administration, oversight, and implementation. Local involvement is intended to help the community develop infrastructure to support ecosystem restoration and to keep funding directed back into the county to support jobs and other benefits.

The project area falls under the umbrella of the multi-agency, multi-governmental, and multi-jurisdictional Sage Steppe Ecosystem Restoration Strategy (draft August 2007). This strategy, covering 6.5 million acres in northeastern California, focuses on the invasive juniper issue and its impact on the ecosystem. The strategy identifies appropriate restoration methodologies by ecological condition, and provides guidelines for design and implementation of effective restoration treatments. These guidelines provide a tool for identifying economically viable areas where restoration can yield biomass for energy production. This tool is integrated into the Buffalo-Skedaddle *Initiative* ensuring maximum utilization and economic benefit from individual projects.

Grant # 070161: Pit River Planning and Development

Applicant: Pit Resource Conservation District

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $137,300

Purpose: Complete restoration design, project coordination, CEQA compliance and other permitting requirements for proposed future restoration projects in the Pit River watershed.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended grant amount is $137,300.

This project would prepare the way for implementation of watershed restoration and water quality enhancement in the Pit River, which is listed as an impaired water body under the federal Clean Water Act.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The Pit RCD proposes this project to address restoration and fuels management needs for four representative project sites associated along the main stem of the Pit River, as identified in the Pit RCD Watershed Management Strategy (WMS). These sites offer challenges requiring detailed, site specific study and design in order to address a range of resource problems: Soil/bank erosion, water quality, aquatic, riparian and terrestrial habitat degradation, and adverse effects on the working agricultural land affected by these conditions. These conditions are typically associated with water quality stressors – temperature, turbidity and sediment – cited in the listing of the Upper Pit River as an impaired water body under the Federal Clean Water Act.

The four sites represent challenges associated with channel downcutting and loss of flood plain connectivity, irrigation diversion structures and their associated impoundments, channelization and a range of associated undesirable environmental conditions. A total of two river miles will be studied for future treatment in detail under this proposal. It is expected that results of this effort will be helpful in future treatment of many river miles of similar conditions in the vicinity.

The four study sites are working farms and ranches and will be addressed in voluntary cooperation with the four landowner families. The sites are representative of conditions that are common in the Pit RCD, and should serve as models for future treatments at many other sites.

The proposed project will directly address three SNC program goals: Working landscapes, regional economic support, and water quality. The proposed project will contribute to the conservation of living resources through restoring important aquatic, riparian and terrestrial habitats.

The goal of this proposal is the delivery of four project plans that are fully permitted and ready for implementation. The proposed project will also be featured in public outreach and education efforts.

The proposed project is also consistent with treatment of conditions identified in the Pit River Watershed Assessment as contributing to stressors to water quality in the Upper Pit River. The proposed project is consistent with the CalFed Bay-Delta Authority's goals and objectives, and is consistent with the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) basin plan for the Sacramento/Central Valley watershed.

Budget: Personnel $ 9,600; Operating Expenses (permit fees, publication costs, etc.) $21,600; Contract Services $100,100; Total sum requested: $137,300. In-kind and matching funds: $ 6,400 Total Project Value: $ 143,700.

Grant # 070180: Buffalo-Skedaddle Landscape Management and Restoration Initiative

Applicant: Bureau of Land Management

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $48,400

Purpose: Hire a Project Coordinator to oversee design and development of landscape-scale rangeland and habitat restoration projects in the Buffalo-Skedaddle area of eastern Lassen County.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for the grant is $48,400.

The project coordinator will be a key element to the success of the Buffalo-Skeddadle Landscape Management and Restoration Initiative. The coordinator is necessary to oversee the activities that have been identified in a conservation and land management strategy designed collaboratively between state and federal resource agencies, county government, and local stakeholders to improve rangeland and watershed health.

Letters of Support:
Lassen County Board of Supervisors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

This grant proposal seeks funding for 'Project Coordinator' position which will be a key element of the Buffalo-Skedaddle Landscape Management and Restoration Initiative (*Initiative*). The coordinator's main role will be to assist in the survey, design and implementation of restoration projects currently identified under the umbrella of the Initiative. While this effort is of importance and high priority to each of the agencies and organizations involved, it is also extremely ambitious and broad in area and scope. We currently lack an individual who can be exclusively dedicated and focused to the Initiative and facilitate its progress. To be successful on a landscape scale we need a point-person to coordinate activities and help keep other team members on track.

This *Initiative* implements a conservation and land management strategy described in several locally developed management plans including the Buffalo-Skedaddle Sage Grouse Conservation Strategy (2005), the Sage Steppe Ecosystem Restoration Strategy (2007), the Resource Management Plans for the Eagle Lake and Alturas BLM Field Offices (2007) and the Lassen County General Plan (2000). Each of these planning efforts represents significant collaboration between state and federal resource agencies, county government, and local stakeholders. Each at a varying scale and context has identified the need and opportunity to improve rangeland watershed health, productivity and habitat value through a proactive approach to management of juniper and sagebrush rangelands.

Currently, ten (10) potential project sites have been identified as priority locations (see map attached). These projects primarily address either, invasion of western juniper into existing sagebrush plant communities, invasion of cheatgrass which chokes out perennial bunch grasses and native forbs, and areas where restoration of sagebrush is needed to improve biodiversity and habitat value. The identified projects have a high likelihood of success of meeting resource objectives, and given the nature of the projects and the land tenure of the area, investment in this *Initiative* will have a positive ecological, economic and cultural impact for a long period of time.

Expected duties of the Project Coordinator include the following:

- Coordinate project design efforts across the Alturas and Eagle Lake BLM Field Offices working with staff biologists, archeologists, and other resource professionals and/or contractors
- Assist and coordinate NEPA and CEQA documentation and processes
- Work with resource professionals and academics to review and develop effective monitoring protocols
- Coordinate restoration efforts on private land according to direction and guidance of the Honey Lake Valley RCD
- When possible assist with grants or community development efforts to expand restoration and resource management opportunities and or funding

Grant # 070104: Plumas County Fire Safe Council Educational and Publication Development Project

Applicant: Plumas County Fire Safe Council

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $27,000

Purpose: Educate the public on reducing structural ignitions and hazardous fuels on Plumas County watersheds as a means of protecting habitat, water quality and water quantity.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $27,000.

This proposed project complements other fuels reduction work going on in the County and uses education about fire hazard and fire safety on private land as a means of reducing the negative impacts associated with catastrophic fire on vegetation and soil in the watershed and downstream water quality and quantity.

Letters of Support:
Cal-Fire, Butte and Lassen Ranger Units
U.S Forest Service, Plumas National Forest, Lassen National Forest
UC Extension
Plumas County, Board of Supervisors
Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association
Plumas County Fire Warden
Plumas Rural Services
City of Portola
Feather River Conservation District

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Summary from Grant Application:

The Plumas County Fire Safe Council (PC FSC) seeks to expand our educational efforts and conduct from 6-8 community meetings or workshops in conjunction with the University of California Cooperative Extension, US Forest Service (Plumas & Lassen National Forests') and California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (Butte & Lassen Ranger Units').

PC FSC's mission is, “To reduce the loss of both natural and manmade resources caused by wildfire through pre-fire activities". Our Council supports numerous rural communities within the County, most of which have either a small volunteer fire department or (on about 20% of the private land base) no organized fire protection. The

majority of wildfire protection in Plumas County is provided by the Plumas NF under agreement with CAL Fire. The County's CWPP, which the Board of Supervisor approved in April of 2005, identifies 61 "communities at risk" of fire originating on public lands is 66% of the County is comprised of public lands.

Plumas County experiences about 150 wildland fires per year, a number of which are multiple ignition events caused by lightning. Plumas NF records, covering much of the County, show wildfires burning 12,000 acres per year, most by catastrophic stand-replacing fires. In 2007 more than 100 fires have burned 100,000 acres.

Project Tasks Include:
1) Conducting community presentations and Firewise & Fire Safe workshops - Educational meetings and workshops will focus on the concepts of home and community survival from wildfire. Six to eight Workshops will target Plumas County citizens, homeowners' developers, builders, architects and businesses on home survivability, defensible space, & community hazardous fuel reduction. Workshops will provide educational information and materials which support the presentations. Material will include preventing home ignitions (including structural design information a well as homeowner information), California's new Fire Safe Building Standards in the Wildland Urban Interface, creating and maintaining effective defensible space (including case histories), reducing hazardous fuels to protect the forests adjacent to and within our communities (including success stories).
2) Enhancing and maintaining PC FSC's website (www.plumasfiresafe.org). Our website will be broadened with additional educational information for our citizens to include self paced slide shows for key aspects or our fire prevention messages. Some of the subjects to be expanded include: protecting homes & communities in a wildfire, homeowner responsibilities in protecting your home before a wildfire. Additionally information and links may be added which further our mission.

Total estimated cost for this project is $56,000 of which $28,000 (50%) is cash match.

Grant # 070149: Sierra Valley Sub Basin Modeling Project

Applicant: High Sierra Rural Alliance

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $29,000

Purpose: Develop a geographic information system and model of the Sierra Valley sub-watershed of the Upper Feather River.

Staff Recommendation: The staff recommends authorizing the grant as submitted. Total grant funds would be $29,000.

This project would provide a valuable tool for future regional planning efforts within the watershed. Data sharing and informative geo-spacial mapping would provide a basis for future project evaluation within significant watersheds.

Letters of Support:
Plumas-Sierra Counties, University of California Cooperative Extension

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

This project proposes to create a geographic information system (GIS) and model of the Sierra Valley sub-watershed.

We will utilize available resource maps of the Sierra Valley sub-watershed of the Upper Feather River to aid Sierra and Plumas County and the City of Loyalton in land use planning. Ensuring decisions which impact the Feather River Watershed by local jurisdictions are informed by sound environmental analysis will promote the State's goals of improving water quality and securing water storage for a dependable source of water for hydropower, drinking, irrigation and ecosystem services; and control flooding while improving the local economy, protecting working landscapes, physical, cultural, historical and living resources, and enhancing public use and enjoyment of public lands.

The proposed project will address all of the Conservancy goals. The assessment will act as the foundation for a multitude of projects supporting Conservancy goals. It will generate information about the link between groundwater, surface water and biological resources; infrastructure and capital improvement needs and provide a basis for evaluating the economic benefit to the State of upper watershed conservation and protection. The valley has an unknown capacity to store water through its aquifer and vast wetlands. Maximizing this potential can avert flooding and ameliorate drought effects as well as secure resources for

hydropower and carbon sequestration. Significant opportunities for tourism and recreation exist. The Valley is a site rich in Native American and Euro-American history, a world renowned birding location and a hot springs resort.

The project will provide environmental data facilitating satisfaction of CEQA requirements by specific projects such as constructing a facility capable of hosting cultural and sporting events; as well as, archiving and displaying cultural resources and providing educational opportunities; and expanding walking and bike trails in connection with a guesthouse circuit. Working landscapes are the backbone of the functioning ecosystem found in the Valley.

The project will document and assess the relationship between working landscapes and state water goals; potentially broadening the role of conservation easements and ecosystem markets. Local jurisdictions must weigh an overwhelming amount of multifaceted, interrelated watershed wide data to make and implement sound policy decisions within the Sierra Valley. This project will equip local land use decision-makers with a tool capable of predictive modeling of complex interacting systems.

Grant #: 070167 Filipini Ranch Riparian Restoration

Applicant: Resources for Humanity

Grant Category: SOG 1

Amount Requested: $92,000

Purpose: Conduct site improvement and restoration activities on 24 acres in the upper Feather River watershed.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed, for a total of $92,000.

This project would restore riparian habitat along approximately one mile of creek at the upper reaches of the Feather River. Currently this area is heavily impacted by cattle. This project would remove the immediate cause of impact and provide for restoration of the creek and streamside.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The Filippini Ranch, a private family ranch, consists of about 1200 acres in the Sierra Valley area of Plumas County. The current use of this acreage is cattle production. The riparian areas along approximately one mile of stream course on the ranch have been heavily impacted by cattle grazing. This stream course is part of the headwaters of the Middle Fork Feather River. This project excludes 25 acres along the one mile stream from cattle and re-establishes riparian vegetation that will protect and enhance anadroumous fish, water quality, neotropical migratory birds and riparian values. Specifically, the project involves the construction of about 2 miles (one mile on each side of river) of cattle exclusion fence set back approximately 100 feet, on each side of the stream from the banks edge of the stream course. Along the exclusion area, adjacent to the stream course, we will plant a variety of native riparian plant species for neotropical migratory bird habitat, soil retention, fish and wildlife enhancement, solar cooling of the stream and water quality enhancement. The trees (including willows) will be spaced approximately 15 to 20 feet apart while the shrubs and understory will be planted between the trees in a pattern suitable for bird life and erosion control. An irrigation system will be provided to assist the establishment of the new vegetation during the dry season.

The total project cost is $193,000

Key Elements:

A. Water Quality Protection & Enhancement

B. Implementation of Riparian Corridor (currently none)

C. Soil Stabilization & Reduced Sedimentation

D. Creation of Habitat for Flora & Fauna

E. Fisheries Enhancement

F. Prototype Project for the vast Sierra Valley & Headwaters of the Feather River

G Extensive Collaboration with Community Groups & Schools in the area

H Maintenance Plan of 25 Years

I. Economic Benefit to Local Community both Short & Long Term

Grant # 070168: Sulphur Creek Bank Stabilization Demonstration

Applicant: Feather River CRM/Plumas Corp.

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $7,500

Purpose: Complete CEQA documentation, public outreach, survey and permitting process**.**

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for the grant is $7,500.

A relatively small infusion of funding will allow a model project to move forward toward implementation, demonstrating best management practices for bank stabilization on ranchland in the Feather River watershed.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

This project would provide a demonstration to landowners in the Sulphur Creek watershed of the type of restoration that is most feasible for bank stabilization in this severely eroded section of Sulphur Creek. The project would treat approximately 700 feet of actively eroding vertical bank on Sulphur Creek located 300 feet upstream of Highway 89.

Approximately 500 feet of bank would be laid back to a 1:1 slope. The toe of the slope would be planted with whole willow bushes and cuttings from nearby sources. The bank slope would be planted with willow wattles and other local native shrubs and seeds in steps that would break up the slope length and prevent rill erosion. Approximately 3,600 cubic yards of material would be cut from the slope, and 400 yards used to build the toe. Remaining material would be used to reduce 200 feet of over-steepened terrace slopes upstream of the cut slope, and to fill an abandoned meander bend. These areas would also be planted.

Seven boulder vanes would be installed to direct flow away from the newly sloped banks, into the center of the channel. Boulder vanes consist of a line of boulders that angle out from the slope toe, upstream at a 25-30 degree angle. Each vane would be constructed of 38 cubic yards of 3-4 foot diameter angular rock. To prevent scour, boulder vanes include footing boulders, as well as the

boulders that are placed at bankfull elevation. Boulder vanes locally increase velocity, thus maintaining pool habitat as well as directing flow.
The Sulphur Creek Watershed Analysis and Restoration Strategy, completed by the FR-CRM in 2004, determined that bank stabilization within the entrenchment at the lower end of Sulphur Creek would be the most effective treatment for this area.

This grant application seeks funding to complete the CEQA process for the project. The landowners have already paid for the wildlife, botany and cultural resource surveys that are needed to complete the CEQA and permitting process. Once CEQA has been completed and permits received, we will apply to the CalTrans Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEM) for implementation funding. CEQA and permits are needed before the project can be considered for that source of funding, however, the project does meet all other eligibility criteria.

Grant # 070169: Sulphur- Barry Creek Confluence Restoration & Environmental Review

Applicant: Feather River RC&D/Plumas Corp

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $19,530

Purpose: Complete surveys for sensitive plants and wildlife, cultural resources, CEQA and NEPA documents and permitting for restoration project.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for the grant is $19,530.

Completion of the environmental documentation, surveys and permits would allow this project to move toward implementation, reconnecting existing channels to their natural floodplains and reducing erosion and sedimentation that negatively affects water quality.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Prior to degradation, Barry Creek entered Sulphur Creek on a meadow floodplain. Both channels are currently downcut to an elevation six to eight feet below the surface of the floodplain. The proposed project would reconnect these channels to the floodplain using the “plug-and-pond” technique. The existing entrenchment leads to several synergistic and self-reinforcing conditions. The primary dysfunction is that flood flows have become trapped within the entrenchment rather than spreading out onto the floodplain. This puts pressure on the banks that leads to bank erosion and further widening until an adequate floodplain has been eroded out at the lower entrenched elevation. The widening and downcutting continues at the project site. The high flows and velocities within the entrenched channel have developed the capacity and competency to carry excessive sediment and bedload to downstream reaches. This material would have been deposited on the floodplain before the entrenched condition. It is the loss of the depositional function of the channel/floodplain that the project primarily seeks to address. Additional benefits of channel/floodplain function restoration are groundwater storage, and attendant riparian vegetation and habitat that are restored when the channel is lifted back up onto the floodplain.

The proposed project would convert 775 feet of the entrenched Barry Creek channel and 600 feet of the entrenched Sulphur Creek channel into a series of eight total ponds and plugs. The low flow of both channels would be re-routed into existing remnant channels on the floodplain, and would confluence at the floodplain elevation. 400 feet below the confluence, the channels would be directed (because of an existing topographical valley constriction) onto a constructed step-pool rock/earth grade control structure that would drop the restored Sulphur Creek channel back down to its entrenched elevation below the project.

The pond and plug technique is an economical way to eliminate a dysfunctional channel. The plugs (that fill the entrenchment to the floodplain elevation) effectively eliminate the entrenched channel as the floodplain drain. The ponds provide the soil for the plug building. The ponds and plugs are part of the floodplain. Elevation of water in the ponds is a reflection of the elevation of groundwater. All exposed soil areas, including the soil plugs and around the top edge of the ponds would be vegetated with locally collected native material.

Grant # 070012: Yuba River Wildlife Recreation Area: Conservation and Acquisition Program Phase I

Applicant: The Sierra Fund

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $45,000

Purpose: Complete project development, property appraisals, and environmental assessments for three properties spanning 14.5 miles of the Yuba River.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of the grant as proposed. Total recommended funding is $45,000.

The Priority Acquisition Project Phase 1 would complete a multi-partner Yuba River Wildlife Area Conceptual Protection Plan (CAPP) prepared by the California Department of Fish and Game for 81,000 acres and 20 miles of the Yuba River and complete appraisals necessary for the acquisition of 3 high-priority properties within the CAPP, and develop acquisition and long-term management plans for the acquisitions. The acquisition will provide protection for riparian/aquatic habitat for special species and provide opportunities for public access to a public resource that are currently limited.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The Yuba River Wildlife Area: Priority Acquisition Project Phase I includes project planning, property appraisals and environmental assessments of three major property holdings spanning approximately 14.5 miles and 4,400 acres of the Yuba River corridor.

This Project represents an historic opportunity to acquire the highest priority conservation targets of the Yuba River Wildlife Area Conservation Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP). The CAPP coordinates California Department of Fish and Game's acquisition and management activities on more than 81,000 acres of the Yuba River corridor to support protection of threatened and endangered fisheries and other species as well as hunting, fishing, recreation and increased public access.

This Project also supports the goals and objectives of the Yuba River Conservancy effort, a multi-agency collaborative that has idenfified and prioritized public access, recreation and wildlife opportunities on this river corridor since 1999 and the Trust for Public Land's (TPL) Yuba Foothill Project, which directs land and water conservation efforts along the Yuba River and throughout a 20 mile north-south blue oak woodland corridor.

Conservation planning and river protections have been discussed, funded and planned in earnest for more than 10 years on the Yuba River, however, this set of acquisition projects represent the most substantial and serious opportunity for these critical parcels to become conservation properties during this time. All three property owners are willing sellers and a Memorandum of Understanding detailing the partnership between Trust for Public Land and each property owner for the appraisal and assessment Phase is attached.

Block I
Grant # 070065: Fire Safe Council of Nevada County Defensible Space Advisory Visits

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080151)

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $10,632

Purpose: The overall purpose of this project is to familiarize property owners and homeowners with the Public Resource Code pertaining to owner responsibility to provide the required clearances completed for the overall protection of their property and the associated watershed.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $10,632.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Summary from Grant Application: Nevada County is well-known as a retirement community for people looking for a rural lifestyle escaping an urban environment. Many move to the Sierra foothills from Southern California and the San Francisco Bay area with little to no knowledge of the wildfire danger present in the wildland urban interface. Some are enamored with the forested landscape and don't understand that living in a heavily vegetated rural environment is a natural disaster waiting to happen. The FEMA DAM 2000 Multijurisdictional, Multi-Hazard, Mitigation Plan identifies community education as a priority for addressing this problem. The FSC of Nevada County Defensible Space Advisory Visit (DSAV) program began in 2006 and works with individual residents to provide one-on-one, case-by-case education about the wildfire threat and the options available to assist them in meeting not only their defensible space goals, but true land stewardship of their property. Our program teaches how a one size defensible space does not fit all landscapes and residences. We seek to enlighten residents about fire behavior and the effects on their particular circumstances. A large portion of Nevada County homes are surrounded by walls of Manzanita and other robust vegetation and invasive weeds. Through the council's Defensible Space Chipping Program and Special Needs Program, we offer solutions in order to address the problem of ladder fuel vegetation and inadequate defensible space.

Many county residents are still working to meet the increased defensible space requirement. Many are confused about what to clear in order to comply with the law. The DSAV has been successful in helping landowners assess their individual setting

and make informed planning decisions. Tools and referrals to resource professionals offer the added assurance of quality and guidance from licensed providers. Referrals to other organizations who provide financial assistance programs are also provided to encourage aggressive action to reduce fuels on their property.

Our DSAV volunteers were trained by California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection (CDF) professionals to provide comprehensive information in relation to enforcement inspections. We continue to work closely with fire officials to ensure program quality. CDF personnel continue to serve the program as technical advisors for questions as they arise. During the advisory visit, the homeowner is presented with a comprehensive packet of information including "Fire Wise is Fire Safe", a "Fire Wise Plants for Nevada County" plant book, "How to Manage the Vegetation on Your Property" an application for free chipping as well as a number of other publications pertaining to fire prevention and preparedness. During the visit, the volunteer advisors will conduct a walk through of the property with the resident and make recommendations as to how to create effective and aesthetically pleasing defensible space. After the visit, the FSCNC conducts a survey to ascertain the residents opinion of the program and what, if any, action they will take after receiving the education. In order to reach interested residents FSCNC staff will make presentations to community groups, talk on local radio shows, provide printed advertisements to local media outlets as well as homeowner's association newsletters.

The outcome of this program will be 500 households of Nevada County citizens are more educated and better prepared for the next wildfire that strikes in Nevada County with adequate defensible space around their homes and overall fuel reduction on the landscape of their property. The Fire Safe Council anticipates that program participants will share this information with their friends and neighbors, increasing the number of households through neighborhood awareness of the Fire Safe Council and their programs to assist them in creating and maintaining defensible space for their homes and along evacuation routes.

Block II
Grant # 070072: Inventory & Geographic Reference of Fire Water Resources Research, University of California, Davis

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080064)

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $64,900

Purpose: This project results in geographic information to locate fire-fighting water resources. Firefighters will have electronic maps which provide faster presentation of information on how to gain access to water to fight the fire. In addition a review of threatened and or endangered species such as Laynes Bitterweed, Elderberry and the Red Legged frog will be indicated per the water sources surveyed.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $64,900.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The Yuba County foothills have been impacted greatly by two devastating fires, Williams (1997) and Pendola (1999). A total of 135 homes were lost and much impact on water quality of the Yuba River watershed by both of these fires.

During those fires, it was identified that directing outside fire agencies brought in to fight the fire to water was the weak link in the system. To address that fire fighting limitation, this project will contract with five fire districts to use Global Position Systems (GPS) to locate and inventory water sources in their jurisdiction. Information that can be placed in the meta file will include the gallons available, access, and water transfer system. The sites will be marked with standardized signs at the same time.

A contractor will be hired to transfer the data into a Global information System (GIS) layer. The layer will be provided along with other fire information to California Dept. of Forestry and Fire Protection, Yuba County Office of Emergency Services, and US Forest Service. This will allow for the data to be available for Incident Command use during a fire. Maps will be produced for each Fire District that can be placed in each fire fighting vehicle. This will provide for optimization of attack given the known location of water sources. The YWP&FSC coordinator will provide project management. High Sierra RC&D Council will provide the project fiscal management. This project results in geographic information to locate fire fighting water resources. Firefighters will have

electronic maps which provide faster presentation of information on how to gain access to water to fight the fire.

Grant # 070127: Nevada County FIRST Defensible Space Education and Compliance Program

Grant Category: SOG-2

Amount Requested: $49,500

Purpose: Provide compliance support, volunteer appreciation, program supplies and program coordination for fire safety and watershed protection activities in Nevada County.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $49,500.

The project would help to reduce hazardous fuels and protect the watersheds and associated landscapes of Nevada County from the negative effects of catastrophic wildfire.

Letters of Support:
Cal-Fire, Nevada, Yuba, Placer Unit,
County of Nevada, Board of Supervisors
Nevada County, Information and General Services Department
Banner Mountain Homeowners Association
Natural Resources Conservation Services, USDA
Town of Truckee, California
Nevada County Resource Conservation District

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Throughout Nevada County, many residents/private homeowners have begun the process of reducing the hazardous fire fuel loading around their private holdings in an attempt to protect their property, landscape, and the watershed from catastrophic wildfire. Nevada County is rated high in the Cal-Fire Watershed Assets at Risk FRAP Project. Nevada County is rich with watercourses and is home to one wild and scenic river, has high potential for erosion after a fire, has Pacific Gas and Electric hydroelectric plants, and is host to various riparian areas with endangered species and recreational water areas. Nevada County's development has taken place in the wildland urban interface which has the potential to adversely affect the watersheds in the event of wildfire. These issues are intertwined as one affects the other when, after a disastrous wildfire incident, the associated watershed and water supply system can be adversely affected by soil runoff, erosion, and vegetative debris accumulation. In addition, if structures are consumed by the wildfire, household and other toxic chemicals can be introduced into the watershed. The program consists of a team of trained,

qualified, defensible space advisors who conduct one-on-one home consultations with residents.

The educational visit mirrors a PRC-4291 compliance inspection, but offers advice and solutions on how to effectively create defensible space on the individual's property. Each home setting is unique and often in mountainous areas 100 feet is not adequate to protect a structure from an approaching wildfire. Our advisors provide education on vegetation types, wildfire behavior, construction materials and techniques, evacuation planning, the burn permit process and cost-share programs that may assist landowners in reaching their goals. The program was implemented in 2007 and has been successful in creating neighborhood projects to clear hazardous fuels.

The Fire Safe Council of Nevada County offers a free chipping program and Special Needs Assistance Program, which provides free clearing to qualified low-income seniors and physically disabled persons. Adding an additional compliance officer through the Nevada County Fire Marshal's office will provide a mechanism to enforce the law and not allow residents to become complacent to the growing fuel load condition around them.

The cost of the program is $62,700. Volunteer advisors and Cal Fire trainers will provide an in-kind cost share of $5,400. The Fire Safe Council of Nevada County will provide a cash match of $7,800 for volunteer mileage, awards and appreciation and program supplies. The total grant funds requested are $49,500 for a one-year compliance officer, volunteer appreciation, program supplies and program coordination and administration.

Grant # 070136: Phase 2- Lower Squaw Creek Restoration

Applicant: Truckee River Watershed Council

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $49,900

Purpose: Develop a common vision for restoration goals and determine the preferred course of action to complete planning for the restoration of Lower Squaw Creek.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorizing the grant as submitted. Grant funds would total $49,900.

Bringing the partners together to complete the selection of a preferred action would further the ability of the group to begin implementation of needed restoration of the creek. Funding of future phases of creek restoration work may be dependent upon the success of this effort.

Letters of Support:
Placer County Board of Supervisors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Work proposed in this grant will support the next phase of work for the Lower Squaw Creek Restoration Project. Located in Olympic Valley, Lower Squaw Creek includes a 2-mile reach of stream and adjacent meadow floodplain. The restoration plan is supported by a broad group of stakeholders, including local landowners, government agencies, local utility districts, and environmental groups. Agreeing on next steps is a crucial juncture of the project.

Work completed to date includes several detailed technical analyses of the creek and
groundwater conditions affecting Lower Squaw Creek (LSC). Specific efforts include:

- A Groundwater Characterization Study (West Yost Report, 2005).
- A Watershed Characterization Report (University of Nevada – Reno)
- A sediment source assessment for the upper watershed (Bullard *et al*., 2002)
- A number of studies in support of a TMDL promulgated by Lahontan RWQCB
- A report describing conceptual creek and meadow restoration alternatives (Philip Williams & Associates, Ltd. [PWA], 2007)

This grant ($49,900 from SNC with $50,100 matching) will support the following objectives of this next phase of work:

- **Establish a common stakeholder vision.** Community workshops will facilitate gaining support for a preferred conceptual restoration alternative from those previously set forth in the 2007 report by PWA. These facilitated workshops will outline the timing, cost, benefit, and resulting configuration for the restoration plan and allow stakeholders to participate toward a unified vision. Gaining stakeholder and landowner support is crucial in the success of restoring LSC.
- **Better understand Well/Aquifer/Creek interactions**. Olympic Valley's primary water supply is from the groundwater aquifer beneath the Squaw Creek meadow. Widespread public concern about potential creek/meadow impacts from groundwater extraction will be addressed by: 1) a technical workshop comprised of a small, focused group of groundwater, hydrology and geomorphology experts with specific knowledge of the Squaw Creek system to discuss the state of existing knowledge, evaluate available data, frame the potential impacts, and outline methods to further our understanding of these impacts; and 2) an initial creek/groundwater interaction study that will use existing resources and data to evaluate the scale of potential creek and meadow impacts from various groundwater extraction rates and methods.
- **Technical Feasibility Studies**. Remaining funds (if available) will be used to address one or more critical factors that affect the feasibility of proposed alternatives as described in the conceptual alternatives report (PWA, 2007). Gaining a collective vision for success (both in terms of stakeholder consensus and technical needs) is a crucial element of this phase of the project. Subsequent phases will include a detailed feasibility assessment of the selected restoration alternative, development of project plans and necessary environmental documents, and project implementation.

Grant # 070138: Eastern Placer Creek Signage

Applicant: Placer County Planning Department

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $15,000

Purpose: Help educate watershed users and the public about their role in protecting watershed health and water quality through installation of signs at creek crossings in Eastern Placer County.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for the grant is $15,000.

The Eastern Placer Creek Signage Project will help to educate residents and visitors about Sierra watersheds and the habitat they provide. The project will complement and add to completion of watercourse signage throughout the county.

Letters of Support:
Placer County Board of Supervisors

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The Eastern Placer Signage Project, an effort to identify the streams and rivers of eastern Placer County, involves placing blue-and-white metal signs with streams' names, a uniform logo, "No Littering No Dumping," and where appropriate "Trout or Salmon Habitat" on them throughout the unincorporated area of Placer County (sample below). The Sierra Nevada Conservancy logo will be placed on the back of the signs. Eighty signs will be placed at 40 different creek crossings along 17 different waterways stretching from Auburn to Squaw and Martis valleys near Lake Tahoe.

Placer County is seeking $15,000 in Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 funding to assist with this program. The County's contribution is $7,400.

Sample Placer Creek Crossing Sign

The County previously signed 54 crossings in the western portion of the county. By knowing the names of the streams we drive across every day in our communities, citizens of, and visitors to, Placer County will gain a sense of ownership and protectiveness. Signage will also help educate the public about their role in water quality and protection of critical fisheries habitat.

Grant # 070139: Esoteric Fraternity Property Due Diligence Studies

Applicant: Placer County

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $40,000

Purpose: Complete an appraisal, erosion study, Phase I environmental analysis and historical/cultural survey in support of future acquisition of and site improvements to this property in the North Fork American River watershed.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed with a reduction of requested contingency funds. Total recommended amount for the grant is $38,000.

The Esoteric Fraternity Property is identified as high a priority for acquisition by the Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program (Placer Legacy). These due diligence reports are necessary for County staff to negotiate acquisition of this property.

Letters of Support:
Placer County Board of Supervisors

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

PROJECT NAME: Esoteric Fraternity Property – Due Diligence Studies

2. Project Summary

Award of the requested Strategic Opportunity Grant will support acquisition of this property, ownership of which will result in a variety of improvements. Such improvements will include water-quality enhancements through fuel-load reduction and trail/road maintenance, preventing runoff into Clipper Creek and the North Fork of the American River. Additionally, the award will support the County's steps toward acquisition to secure a historical resource that presents unique recreational, historical, and public safety opportunities. The cost estimate to engage and complete a variety of studies that will facilitate real property negotiation and determine the scope of future site improvements is $63,000. These include: trail and road assessment with respect to erosion control, appraisal, phase I site assessment, Architectural Historical Survey, oral living-history interview and documentation, and artifact / book inventory and condition assessment. We have $10,000 pledged to the effort by the Placer Legacy program. We have dedicated $13,000 of in-kind County staff time. The total grant being requested is $40,000. The total project budget is $63,000.

The Esoteric Fraternity property is comprised of one 89.0 acre parcel, which sits on the west rim of the American River Canyon in Applegate. The parcel abuts BLM land in the canyon to the east, and is connected to the river by an existing trail network. These trails were established through volunteer efforts by the Meadow Vista Trail Alliance, and over time, the trails and existing, on-site roads have become rutted by run-off depositing sediment into the Clipper Creek and the North Fork of the American River. As public access to the American River from Applegate is limited, acquisition of this property not only offers a remarkable opportunity to address those access limits, but to improve and maintain the trails and roads, and establish erosion control measures to protect the quality of local waterways.

The Esoteric Fraternity property was purchased from Leland Stanford in 1892 and was established as a retreat to accommodate members and their monotype printing and book-binding operation, distribution of which was world wide. The residence and print shop were constructed from on-site clay and lumber materials, and contain historical artifacts that embody the history of this unique fraternal organization including: one-of-a-kind/first edition books, turn-of-the-century furnishings, a monotype printing press, and assorted book production equipment. This site is a strong candidate for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Sites, and for designation as a California State Landmark. Coupled with this, the opportunities for fire-safety improvements and trails-access to the river make this the highest rated property that the Placer Legacy program has considered.

The sole surviving member of the Esoteric Fraternity is Fred Peterson, a man in his early 70's, who embodies the history of this undocumented group. The completion of oral history, architectural survey, and item inventory studies are needed to capture the history of this unique group.

The County is in the process of negotiating to secure this resource through fee-title acquisition. Successful acquisition of this site will result in the following positive actions and effects: 1) trail and road improvement for access and watershed protection, 2) fuel load reduction for safety and watershed protection, 3) conservation of the property, 4) preservation of the history: physical and oral, and 5) public access for historical education and to trailheads that lead to the American River.

The funding being requested through the SNC grant will facilitate pre-acquisition studies by: 1) assessing the trail and road conditions and identifying erosion issues that impact the water quality of Clipper Creek and the North Fork of the American River, and 2) assessing and addressing the preservation of the structures, artifacts, and oral history.

Grant # 070141: Low Impact Development Guidebook

Applicant: Placer County

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $45,000

Purpose: Development of a Low Impact Development (LID) Guidebook for reducing runoff volume and contamination in the Sierra Nevada Region, Built Green demonstration/pilot project sites and LID workshops for the public.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for the grant is $45,000.

The Low Impact Development Guidebook will help to reduce contamination of Sierra watersheds by providing guidelines for preventing degradation of water quality and natural resources, managing storm water more efficiently, protecting groundwater and drinking water supplies, and helping communities grow more attractively.

Letters of Support:
Placer County Board of Supervisors

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Pursuant to the requirements of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Strategic Opportunity Grant program under Proposition 84, the County of Placer is submitting a $45,000 Strategic Opportunity's grant to develop a *Low Impact Development Guidebook*. Total project cost is $85,000. Key project tasks for our Sierra Nevada Conservancy grant project are:

1. Low Impact Development Guidebook: Reducing Runoff Volume and Contamination in the Sierra Nevada Region
2. LID / Built Green Demonstration Projects
3. LID Workshop

Low Impact Development (LID) has been defined as an innovative storm water management approach with a basic principle that is modeled after nature: manage rainfall at the source using uniformly distributed decentralized micro-scale controls. The primary benefits of LID are:

1. To prevent degradation of water quality and natural resources,
2. To manage storm water more efficiently and cost effectively,

3. To protect groundwater and drinking water supplies, and
4. To help communities grow more attractively.

There are countless examples of jurisdictions that have proactively revised their development policies, codes, growth and management plans and implemented LID technologies to manage storm water at its source and collect rainwater for secondary use. Placer County's goal is to be one of the most progressive Foothill Sierra Nevada communities with respect to alternative storm water management. An LID Guidebook begins that process. Placer County will build upon the work initiated by the Sierra Nevada Alliance's land and water policy paper by implementing many of the strategies recommended in their plan.

Both the guidebook and pilot projects will address site planning strategies and techniques to re-examining the arrangement of buildings, roads, parking areas, site features, and storm water management plans. The guidebook will offer an innovative alternative approach to urban stormwater management that uniformly or strategically integrates stormwater controls into multifunctional landscape features where runoff can be micromanaged and controlled at the sources. With LID, every urban landscape or infrastructure feature (roof, streets, parking, sidewalks, and green space) can be designed to be multifunctional, incorporating detention, retention, filtration, or runoff use and water storage.

Our project will directly protect and improve water quality, reduce the risk of flooding, and indirectly protect, conserve, and restore the region's physical and living resources and enhance the public's use of public lands and waterways by improving water quality. In addition to achieving several SNC Program Goals, this project will contribute to the preservation of local watersheds and other natural resources, as required by Proposition 84.

Grant # 070151: American River Educational Outreach Publications

Applicant: Protect American River Canyons

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $48,500

Purpose: Complete revision of the *American River Guide Book* and Confluence Parkway brochure, and produce an educational PowerPoint presentation CD for use in public outreach and education.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant at the proposed level of funding requested - $48,500.

The American River Educational Outreach Publications project is vital to the Protect American River Canyon's purpose to educate individuals and organizations regarding the natural, historical, environmental, and recreational resources located in the canyons of the American River. This will update and expand the organization's tools to promote the protection and enjoyment of the American River Canyons area.

Letters of Support:
Auburn State Recreation Area

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Change is inevitable… change is constant
-Disraeli 1867

Overview:
As we write this grant proposal the abandoned Auburn dam diversion tunnel is being closed. The American River is being restored to its natural channel at the former Auburn dam site. Approximately 6 miles of river from the Confluence of the North and Middle Forks of the American River are scheduled to be opened to the public in Spring of 2008 having been closed for over 25 years.
To meet the increased demand for visitor information Protect American River Canyons wishes to collaborate with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to partner with PARC in:
1. The revision of the American River Guide Book, first published in 1989 with over 12,000 in circulation.
2. Publishing a revised American River Confluence Parkway visitor guide pamphlet to access the reopened and restored stretch of river
3. Creating an American River Wild & Scenic power point presentation CD focusing on the long-term protection of the watershed.
A well-informed public is more inclined to take good care or our Sierra Nevada resources. A complete revision of PARC's 350 page American River Guide book, first published in 1989 with over 15,000 copies in circulation, coupled with a new Confluence Parkway pamphlet and power point presentation CD will provide much needed up-to-date recreational information and create the opportunity to highlight American River resource conservation. PARC will emphasize low impact recreational activities that do not threaten water quality or forest health. We will partner with California State Parks and CALFIRE to provide information on safe trail use, river recreation and camping guidelines.
With public support and support from the managing agencies we can translate river-canyon stewardship into meaningful land reform on the county level. Currently, ASRA is under intense pressure from private property development on the canyon rim. Placer and El Dorado Counties can expect sustainable economic benefits by initiating reasonable building guidelines on American River properties under their jurisdiction that protect the scenic integrity of the canyon rim area. Our book, pamphlet and power point proposal will allow PARC to begin capacity building for long term river protection.

SNC Program Goals
PARC's goals are consistent with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's goals to nurture a well-informed public that will desire to take better care of our Sierra Nevada natural resources.

a. The revised river guide book, visitor guide pamphlet and power point program will provide accurate up-to-date information on American River recreation, and natural and cultural history -enabling the public to responsibly and safely pursue recreational opportunities in the Auburn State Recreation Area.

Grant # 070160: **South Fork American River Water Quality & Recreation Study**

Applicant: El Dorado Irrigation District

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $118,236

Purpose: Complete a study on the South Fork American River, which will include baseline data, a laboratory list and analysis for microbial source tracking, a cost analysis including avoided costs, a methods and implementation guide. Public education handouts and a public watershed education day are also among the deliverables.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant at the proposed level of funding requested -- $118,236.

The South Fork American River Water Quality & Recreation Study will build upon baseline water quality data collected at Silver Lake over the past three years and contribute to regional knowledge through scientific analysis, public outreach, and multi-agency collaboration.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Water quality is one of the most valuable assets of the Sierra Nevada region, and indeed the South Fork American River (SFAR) watershed. As the State continues to grow, resource managers need a better understanding of the effects of various recreational activities (a fast-growing management challenge) on water quality. The SFAR Water Quality and Recreation Study will contribute to regional knowledge through scientific analysis, and organizational and public outreach, complimenting partner work within the watershed and educating the region on the findings.

This project will build upon the baseline water quality data gained in the past three years by El Dorado Irrigation District (EID) at Silver Lake. Water quality data will be collected at locations throughout the SFAR watershed. The sampling sites will be determined by the project partners at a meeting in January, and the number of sites will be between 10 and 14. Samples will be collected at the same site each time, through a simple grab sampling method. Each sample will be analyzed for phosphorous and nitrate content, total

coliform, and total E. coli. A maximum of 6 sites will have microbial source tracking (MST) analysis (coliform speciation).

Each site will be sampled before and after three holidays during the recreation season - Memorial Day, July 4th, and Labor Day. These holidays were chosen because they represent the variety of the recreational season. The pre-Memorial Day sampling represents a baseline, or control, as there is very little activity in the watershed before this time. EID has low reads for this time of year for past baseline activity. Timing is important when collecting water samples; samples gathered early in the recreation season, mid-season, and late-season enable the analysis to include variations in water quality based on temperature (E. coli is affected by temperature). The sampling regime includes before and after holidays because the project focuses on water quality responses to recreation. Getting a before- and after-holiday read helps the analysis to hone in on those effects, as there are high visitor counts during holiday weekends throughout the watershed.

The project will include a public outreach component. Basic data will be posted on kiosks near to the sampling sites, along with watershed information. The Watershed Education Day will add to this public education with an active component. The event will involve participants in the process of sample collection and problem analysis. In addition to public information and the Watershed Day, project partners will implement public meetings in which key stakeholders will be personally notified and the data and analysis will be publically discussed.

Regional/organizational outreach is essential for the information export. The grant will help to pay for this outreach, which will be completed in the form of two yearly and one final report circulated to regional water and land managers. Outreach will also involve a presentation of the findings at one of the many annual California water conferences (at the end of the two year project).

Grant # 070175: Assessing and Restoring the Deer Creek Watershed

Applicant: The Sierra Fund

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $75,000

Purpose: Complete a Watershed Plan for the Deer Creek Watershed and identify and prioritize implementation projects.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed. Total recommended amount for grant funding is $75,000.

This is a planning grant to incorporate the last portion of Deer Creek into the existing management plan for this watershed.

Letters of Support:
none

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

Assessing and Restoring the Deer Creek Watershed Proposed Project
The Tsi-Akim Maidu Tribe and the Friends of Deer Creek propose to work with area leaders and scientists to develop a plan for assessing and restoring the larger Deer Creek watershed, and to infuse any watershed restoration work with cultural and historic sensitivity. This work will be based on seven years of water quality, land use and restoration data, while also deeply informed by cultural and historical knowledge of the area.

A Deer Creek restoration plan exists for the upper two-thirds of the watershed, but needs to be revised and extended to the lower third of the watershed, which bears the cumulative impacts from upstream development, before it can serve as an effective tool for watershed restoration. SNC funding would be used to assess this existing plan,
complete it to include the entire watershed, and prioritize implementation projects.

Key Tasks
Working in partnership, the Tsi-Akim Tribe and Friends of Deer Creek will:

I. Complete a Watershed Plan for the entire Deer Creek watershed including all scientific, cultural, environmental, economic and demographic factors. The watershed plan requires two activities to make it complete:
    a. Review the existing plan with the Tsi-Akim Maidu Tribe

b. Extend the plan to include the lower watershed.

II. Formulate an implementation strategy for the watershed plan that highlights specific restoration projects, project partners, and funding opportunities.

Project Budget

The budget for this 9-month planning project is $75,000. This includes $40,000 for Friends of Deer Creek researching and writing the plan, $30,000 for outreach and engagement of the Tsi-Akim Maidu Tribe members, leaders and scientists, and $5,000 for administrative support.

Submitted By:

Tsi-Akim Maidu Tribe
760 South Auburn
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 274.7497

Partner:

Friends of Deer Creek
132 Main Street
Nevada City, CA 95959
(530) 265.9060

Fiscal Sponsor:

The Sierra Fund
409 Spring Street
Nevada City, CA 95959

Block I
Grant # 070050: Calaveras Fire Safe Council, Defensible Space Inspection Program

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080006)

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $19,625

Purpose: The overall purpose of this project is to familiarize property owners and homeowners with the Public Resource Code (PRC) 4290 pertaining to owner responsibility to provide the required clearances completed for the overall protection of their property and the associated wildlands & watershed.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $19,625.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Summary from Grant Application:

The problem is that many communities and sub divisions are unable to comply with PCR 4291 requiring 100' clearances around structures due to the lack of available VIP Inspectors. These communities have been unable to provide an adequate number of volunteer inspectors to conduct PRC 4291 compliance inspections, thus making this essential program less than adequate or non existent. The desired outcome is to supplement the nearly nonexistent VIP Program with dedicated staff that can perform the required inspections and compliance reviews. Our goal in this pilot program is to inspect and bring into compliance a minimum of 4200 homes according to PRC #4291 standards.

The desired outcome is to supplement the nearly nonexistent Volunteers in Prevention (VIP) Program with dedicated staff that can perform the required inspections and compliance reviews. Our goal in this pilot program is to inspect and bring to compliance **4200** homes according to **PRC #4291** standards. We will be able to measure our progress by requiring monthly reports from these inspectors as to inspections made and compliance to those inspections. These desperately needed inspections will provide the information homeowners need to make them more fire safe, in turn making their subdivisions and communities safer from wildland fire.

Block II
Grant # 070052: 2007 Pioneer-Volcano Planning Unit, Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan (CCWPP)

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080083)

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $50,000

Purpose: The development and completion of a Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan (**CCWPP)** is vital for the preplanning, prioritization and a continued reference guide from which conservation principles can be considered when approaching any of the project areas listed within such as; Fuel Reduction-Watershed Protection Projects, Fire-Watershed Protection Outreach Education, Public Resources Code 4290 Inspections, Defensible Space Planning, Monitoring of Projects, Designating Appropriate Research Projects, and Collaboration and Coordination among; Protection, Environmental, Cultural Agencies, Conservation Organizations, Forest & Conservation Industry, User Groups and Concerned Citizens.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $50,000.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The Amador Fire Safe Council prepared a generic county-wide wildfire protection plan (CWPP), which was approved by CDF, Amador County and local fire agencies in 2006. This CWPP is divided into nine planning units, but the prescriptions are generic in nature. Amador County's terrain varies from rolling grasslands in the west to heavily populated foothills in the central and eastern portions of the county. This planning area has one of the highest population bases in the county, and is also the highest condition class and fire regime. While the generic plan identifies numerous potential projects to mitigate the threat of damaging wildfire, it does not contain area-specific solutions designed with broad local stakeholder input.

It has always been the intent of the Amador Fire Safe Council to develop a specific CWPP for each of the 9 planning units. The relative wildfire risk of each unit has been assessed and the units ranked in order of risk. This grant creates a Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the Pioneer/Volcano Planning unit, an area abutting undeveloped wildlands to the east and representing the most at-risk planning unit in the generic

CWPP. In addition, the eastern portion of the county, in the wildland-urban interface, sees heavy recreational use by thousands of visitors each year.

By involving the community in this project, we will affect community acceptance of the plan. We will prioritize projects for the area and be able to reduce the size and intensity of wildfires originating within undeveloped areas, reduce damage to at-risk communities, and protect undeveloped areas from fires originating from adjoining communities and adjoining state and Federal lands.

Block II
Grant # 070053: 2007 Pine Grove Planning Unit Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080084)

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $50,000

Purpose: The development and completion of a Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan (**CCWPP)** is vital for the preplanning, prioritization and a continued reference guide from which conservation principles can be considered when approaching any of the project areas listed within, such as; Fuel Reduction-Watershed Protection Projects, Fire-Watershed Protection Outreach Education, Public Resources Code 4290 Inspections, Defensible Space Planning, Monitoring of Projects, Designating Appropriate Research Projects, and Collaboration and Coordination among; Protection, Environmental, Cultural Agencies, Conservation Organizations, Forest & Conservation Industry, User Groups and Concerned Citizens.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $50,000.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:
The Amador Fire Safe Council prepared a generic county-wide community wildfire protection plan (CWPP), which was approved by CDF, Amador County, and local fire agencies in 2006. This CWPP is divided into nine planning units, but the prescriptions are generic in nature. Amador County's terrain varies from rolling grasslands in the west to heavily populated foothills and mountains in the central and eastern portions of the county. This area has one of the highest population bases in the county, and also has one of the highest condition classes and fire regimes. In addition, the eastern portion of the county, in the wildland-urban interface, sees heavy recreational use by thousands of visitors each year. While the generic plan identifies numerous potential projects to mitigate the threat of damaging wildfire, it does not contain area-specific solutions designed with broad local stakeholder input.

It has always been the intent of the Amador Fire Safe Council to develop a specific CWPP for each of the 9 planning units, because each unit has a unique geography, condition class, and population base. The relative wildfire risk of each unit has been assessed and the units ranked in order of risk. This grant will begin the process by funding development of a local plan for the second ranked at-risk unit, the Pine Grove

unit. By involving community stakeholders in this project, we will affect community acceptance of the plan. We will prioritize projects for the area and be able to reduce the size and intensity of wildfires originating within undeveloped areas, reduce damage to at risk communities, and project undeveloped areas from fires originating from adjoining communities and state and federal lands.

Block II
Grant # 070055: Mariposa County Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080202)

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $69,911

Purpose: The development and completion of a Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan (**CCWPP)** is vital for the preplanning, prioritization and a continued reference guide from which conservation principles can be considered when approaching any of the project areas listed within such as; Fuel Reduction-Watershed Protection Projects, Fire-Watershed Protection Outreach Education, Public Resources Code 4290 Inspections, Defensible Space Planning, Monitoring of Projects, Designating Appropriate Research Projects, and Collaboration and Coordination among; Protection, Environmental, Cultural Agencies, Conservation Organizations, Forest & Conservation Industry, User Groups and Concerned Citizens.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $69,911.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:
Wildland fire is the number one natural disaster that threatens the lives, property, resources and vast watershed of Mariposa County. The Community Conservation and Wildfire Protection Plan (CCWPP) is designed to assist communities in balancing fire safety with resource values and watershed protection for Mariposa County as well as California's Sierra Nevada Region.

The CCWPP will identify communities at risk within Mariposa County, prioritize fuel reduction and mitigation efforts, identify outreach education efforts, identify research efforts and develop a blueprint to reach certain watershed protection-fire safety goals. The plan also will scientifically define areas of concern thus allowing for prioritization of protection/mitigation efforts and proper conservation of historical, archaeological, natural resource and watershed values.

The CCWPP will be developed collaboratively and involve Mariposa County Fire, Cal Fire, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Mariposa County OES, Mariposa Public Utilities District, Southern Sierra Mi-Wuk Nation, Mariposa Resource Conservation District, U.S.D.A. Natural Resources

Conservation Service, Upper Merced River Watershed Council, Mariposa County High School ROP Fire Technology Class Grizzlies Fire Department, Southwest Interface Team (SWIFT) and private landowner concerns.

The CCWPP community outreach and education program is designed to educate developers, homeowners, citizen groups and visitors to the concepts of fire prevention, fuels management, fire management and natural resource conservation education.

The CCWPP is a blueprint of actions that are necessary in order to provide guidelines for present and future protection measures, fuels modification projects and conservation mitigation efforts to protect life, property and natural resources.

The CCWPP project area affects the Chowchilla River, North & South Fork Merced River and Fresno River watersheds, including the watersheds of numerous lakes, reservoirs, creeks, gulches and meadows (for complete list and maps please see attached.) The project area has a history of extreme fire behavior. Heavy fuel loading and steep terrain combine to create a condition under which fires in the area have a rapid rate of spread and burn at very high intensity, therefore severely damaging soils. This is supported by recent fire history (1996 Stumpfield Fire, 1961 Harlow Fire, 1962 Timberlodge Fire and 1959 & 1968 Nelson Cove Fires.) We cannot immediately affect climate or topography, therefore treating fuels is essential to prevent large and damaging wildland fires. Fuel treatment, when done properly, is also the most effective way to improve and protect our watersheds. Modifying, reducing and removing hazardous fuels increases the quantity and quality of water available, while decreasing the likelihood of occurrence of large and damaging wildland fires, which lead to soil damage, erosion and runoff into creeks, streams, rivers and lakes. Another benefit of proper fuel treatment is significant improvement in wildlife habitat. As a result of this project the Chowchilla River, North & South Fork Merced River and Fresno River watersheds will be less vulnerable to soil damage and erosion caused by large, high intensity wildfires, with outcomes from prioritized fuels projects including increased quality and quantity of water available in the watersheds, improvement of wildlife habitat and improved forage for grazing.

The Mariposa County Fire Safe Council has begun work on our countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) using the Society of American Foresters handbook “Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan” as our guide document. However, when we applied for and were awarded the BLM grant we are currently working under to assist fire agencies in completing the plan, we believed it to be 70% completed. We still expect to complete a first draft CWPP by the end of the BLM grant term. The Council needs this additional funding to hire a contractor to complete our countywide CCWPP by adding technical, conservation and watershed elements to the draft as specified in the “Sierra Nevada Community Conservation and Wildfire Protection Plan Guidebook.” This proposal will be in lieu of the previous proposal submitted to the California Fire Safe Council, since other grant funds were made available for that proposal.

This CCWPP is our number one priority as it is required to access funding from local, state and federal sources to continue critical fuel treatment throughout Mariposa County. Mariposa County Fire has also informed us that, when completed, our CCWPP will drive the completion of our DMA-2000 Plan, which will open additional doors to disaster mitigation funding. Funding from all sources will continue to improve quality of life for our residents and visitors as well as improve the health of the Sierra Nevada watershed in which we live.

Grant # 070109: Oakvale Ranch Appraisal

Applicant: American Land Conservancy

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $7,500

Purpose: Completion of an appraisal for a conservation easement.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant for the requested $7,500.

The Oakvale Ranch consists of oak woodlands, sensitive species habitat, and a third generation ranching operation. The conservation easement will protect the lands from development and support the current owners to continue sustainable land management practices.

Letters of Support:
California Rangeland Trust
Mariposa County Board of Supervisors, District III

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application: In late 2006, the American Land Conservancy (ALC) was contacted by the Preston Family regarding the sale of a conservation easement in southern Mariposa County. The Preston Family homesteaded the 4,005 acre ranch (initially 160 acres) in the mid-1850's and has run cattle on the property since. ALC is applying for a Category 2 Strategic Opportunity Grant of $7,500 to cover the cost of an appraisal. ALC is requesting the Executive Officer to authorize this grant given the timing of this project.

The primary resources are ecological and agricultural. Roughly 60 percent of the 4,005 acres is oak woodland; the remaining land is annual grassland with potential for vernal pools. A number of species use these oak woodlands for habitat including deer, wild pigs, dove, quail, geese, raptors, and rodents.

The Preston Family has been raising cattle on the ranch for over 150 years. Present use is a full calving cattle ranch with calve weaning weights averaging 650 pounds. The third generation currently manages the ranch, but is expected to be joined by members of the fourth generation in the coming years. The family has utilized responsible land stewardship practices during its tenure, protecting habitat along the way.

This project is near conservation easements held by the Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC) and the California Rangeland Trust (CRT), as well as The Nature Conservancy's Merced Grasslands project. This project is also within an area that has been identified as critical and important for protection by the California Rangeland Conservation Coalition.

ALC will be partnering with the California Rangeland Trust (CRT) on the overall project; CRT will be holding the conservation easement. ALC is in discussions with the California Farmland Conservancy Program and the Department of Fish and Game, Region 4 (for Wildlife Conservation Board Oak Woodlands Conservation Program funding) for conservation easement funding.

This project would contribute to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land, water, and other natural resources by helping to protect a considerable landscape in the Yosemite foothills. This project would also further conservation efforts started by SFC and CRT. Furthermore, this project would address the SNC program goal of aiding in the preservation of working landscapes.

Grant # 070156: Tuolumne County Water Plan

Applicant: Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $48,500

Purpose: Expand the established monitoring program to support the Tuolumne Water Quality Plan implementation.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant for the requested $48,500.

The project better defines the locations and sources of contaminants in the watershed to assist multiple agencies in directing their limited resources to eliminate fecal coliform contamination. Furthermore, the project increases participation in the volunteer monitoring program to educate more community members about watershed stewardship. The Board of County Supervisors is providing an in-kind donation of $23,000 to this project.

Letters of support:
County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors
Tuolumne Utilities District
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Summerville Union High School District

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application: The Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District (RCD) proposes purchasing bacterial sampling equipment and professional laboratory services to better define the location and sources (e.g., human, cattle, domestic pets) of fecal contamination in surface waters countywide as necessary to assist multiple agencies in directing their limited resources most effectively to reduce and eliminate fecal contamination by implementing programs identified in the Regional Water Quality Control Board approved *Tuolumne County Water Quality Plan* (2007). The project provides a model for local communities throughout the Sierra Nevada to involve students and community volunteers in partnership with water districts, government agencies and special districts to reduce fecal contamination of Sierra Nevada waters.

Consistent with the USEPA's recommended multi-indicator assessment approach to responding to fecal coliform levels exceeding state standards, the RCD will acquire IDEXX bacterial sampling and analysis equipment to identify *E. coli* and *Enterococcus* "hot spots" countywide. Bacterial analysis will be

undertaken by trained volunteers (professors and teachers from Columbia Community College and Summerville Union High School who are current members of the RCD's established Tuolumne County Stream Team volunteer water quality monitoring program) and their students. Volunteers will be trained by the State's Clean Water Team. Samples from identified coliform "hot spots" will be forwarded to a professional lab to identify the sources and quantify the relative contributions of human and non-human sources of fecal coliforms.

The resulting data will be used:

- By the RCD, in partnership with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, to target public education and stewardship programs aimed at reducing sources of coliform contamination associated with agricultural and residential practices;
- By local schools to encourage student interest in science and ecology through hands-on participation, monitoring and evaluation of local waters in their "own back yards;"
- By the Tuolumne Utilities District to refine study boundaries for wastewater regionalization and connection studies and actions;
- By the RCD to promote community interest and participation in improving water quality through direct involvement in water quality monitoring and designing programs to improve water quality (building capacity and the ability of the community to design, develop and carry out its coordinated watershed management program through participating in monitoring and assessment activities)
- By the Tuolumne County Environmental Health Department to expand its understanding of the effectiveness of on-site septic systems in variable soils countywide

Total project cost is $73,000.00. The RCD has $24,500 available in the form of water quality monitoring equipment and $1,000 in cash from Tuolumne County. Total grant funding requested is $43,500.00.

Grant # 070157: **Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions (CHIPS)**

Applicant: Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $48,629

Purpose: Completion of a business plan, staff salaries and equipment purchases to support training for healthy forest management.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant at the proposed level of funding requested.

The CHIPS proposal is the next phase in a three part project that the Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development began in 2005 to support preservation of the Mokelumne River, restore healthy forests, lessen fire risk, and increase economic revitalization. This training phase is vital in creating a sustainable model for vegetation management, fuels reduction, biomass utilization, and small-wood enterprise creation.

Letters of Support:
Calaveras County Board of Supervisors
San Joaquin Delta College
Calaveras County Probation Department
Calaveras Foothills Fire Safe Council
CALCO Logging
Sierra Forestry Legacy
Calaveras County Public Works Director
Mother Lode Job Training
Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency
Calaveras County Water District
Calaveras County Community Development Agency

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:
(Chipper Crew Training, Work Experience, and Business Creation component)

The CHIPS (Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions) Project is developing local business solutions to access and utilize small diameter wood and underbrush from private and public lands in northwestern Calaveras County. The goal of CHIPS is to lessen the area's extreme fire threat, create healthy public and private forestland, and protect watersheds within four forks of the Mokelumne River while also building a viable model of socioeconomic revitalization to an economically-depressed area.

CHIPS is a locally- developed and directed collaborative project designed to address environmental and social needs in ways that successfully and sustainably meet stakeholders' needs as well as benefit the land and Mokelumne watershed for the long-term. In its first phase (March 2005-present), CHIPS developed a working organizational structure, produced technical feasibility and initial marketing studies, trained community members in skills as diverse as truck driving, heavy equipment operation, bookkeeping and clerical skills, and began generating revenue from sale of landscape chips through diverting forest products from the local waste stream.

This application for funding will complete funding needs to begin implementation of CHIPS Phase 2. Toward this end, $96,500 has been awarded from USDA Rural Development as well as substantial in-kind donations pledged from numerous community and regional partners. This grant request will allow Phase 2 to move forward in a timely and successful manner.

In Phase 2 CHIPS will train chipping crews who will provide fire fuel reduction services throughout the project area as well as secure materials for later CHIPS activities such as manufacture of wood pellets, posts and poles, composition fire logs, craftsman woodworking products, and energy generation. Once in motion, Phase 2 will include on-the-job training for participants, resulting in removal of high-density fuel buildup within weeks of project commencement and will also start generating income to eventually provide CHIPS' economic sustainability.

Objectives for Phase 2 over the next year include lessened fire danger, increased watershed protection, and healthier forest conditions accomplished through implementation of a Chipper Crew training program with a multi-faceted educational component and work experience for 18-24 currently unemployed or underemployed local residents, which will lead to jobs for these trainees providing needed vegetative management services. Organizationally, in Phase 2, CHIPS will meet important benchmarks in its business planning and development to assure long-term sustainability and success.

Budget:
Phase 2 Total: $349,205.
Other funds: $179,148. I
n-kind: $121,428.
Requested from SNC: $48,629.

Grant # 070176: Amador County Watershed Stewardship Project

Applicant: Amador Community Foundation

Grant Type: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $173,780

Purpose: Prepare a portion of the countywide watershed assessment and implementation plan.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant for the requested $173,780.

This watershed assessment will contribute to the completion of the Amador County Watershed Stewardship Project, a countywide watershed plan. Upon completion of the plan, funds will be expended for restoration projects. The project currently has $495,000 in matching funds, $100,000 of this to implement conservation projects in the upper portion of the watershed.

Letters of Support:
Amador County Board of Supervisors
City of Jackson

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application: The Amador County Watershed Stewardship Project is a new initiative of the Amador Community Foundation. Through this Project, the Foundation is committed to bringing together all relevant public and private stakeholders to enhance public awareness about watershed management efforts, increase public participation in the process of watershed assessment, planning and restoration and to create incentives for public and private landowners to engage in land stewardship and pollution prevention on their lands.

The first phase of this Project is the Jackson Creek Watershed Management and Conservation Program (hereinafter “Program”). The Jackson Creek Watershed is a sub-watershed of the Mokelumne River watershed in Amador County. The upper watershed includes the sub-basins of the North Fork Jackson Creek, Middle Fork Jackson Creek, and South Fork Jackson Creek upstream of their confluences near the center of the City of Jackson. The Program was initiated in 2007 to develop a common understanding of the general opportunities, constraints, and strategies for natural resource protection, water conservation and integrated land and water management in the upper portions of the Jackson Creek Watershed. The Program will also assist landowners and cooperating resource agencies in prioritizing stewardship actions and projects in the

watershed and marketing the Plan's vision to outside agencies and prospective partners.

This proposal requests $122,830 in matching funds from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to help complete a watershed assessment and project implementation plan that will: (1) create a unified and accepted understanding of current watershed conditions, trends, and linkages by integrating physical, biological, archeological, economic and social elements; (2) develop a water supply and management plan for the watershed; (3) educate local stakeholders and inform local and regional land-use planning; (4) strategically focus conservation efforts; and (5) maximize benefits and minimize impacts from infrastructure projects.

In addition to the overall watershed assessment and plan, this proposal requests $50,950 in matching funds to complete an important site-specific management plan for arguably the most important aquatic resource in the watershed, the New York Ranch Reservoir. The Reservoir and adjacent lands support high quality wetlands and riparian woodlands and abundant wildlife. In cooperation with the Amador Water Agency, the California Dept. of Fish and Game and the Foothill Conservancy, this proposal seeks additional funding for stakeholder outreach, synthesis of the on-going hydrologic data collection efforts, and development of a draft management and implementation plan for the Reservoir.

Block I
Grant # 070031: CWPP Development Oak to Timberline Fire Safe Council

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080136)

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $1,617

Purpose: The development and completion of a Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan (**CCWPP)** is vital for the preplanning, prioritization and a continued reference guide from which conservation principles can be considered when approaching any of the project areas listed within such as; Fuel Reduction-Watershed Protection Projects, Fire-Watershed Protection Outreach Education, Public Resources Code 4290 Inspections, Defensible Space Planning, Monitoring of Projects, Designating Appropriate Research Projects, and Collaboration and Coordination among; Protection, Environmental, Cultural Agencies, Conservation Organizations, Forest & Conservation Industry, User Groups and Concerned Citizens.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $1,617.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Summary from Grant Application:

The nearly 217,000 acres of public and private lands of this council's influence is bordered by the Sequoia National Forest, Giant Sequoia National Monument and Kings Canyon National Park of eastern Fresno and Tulare Counties. We sit solidly within the Kings River Watershed to the north and Kaweah River Watershed to the southeast which offers an array of wildlife habitats, recreational activities as well as being a vacation destination for visitors from all over the world. Within these boundaries are private homes, ranches, schools, churches, youth camps, businesses and wildlife refuges. It has been 52 years since our last significant sized fire.

If the 50 year wildfire rule were to be applied, we are overdue for "the big one" and our Communities are anything but prepared! All effective work plans require a solid foundation from which to operate. The CWPP is the catalyst this council needs to organize our future development and direction. With this project funded, we will be able to create, duplicate and advertise this defining document in accordance with the State and National Fire Plan beginning with Community Risk Assessments which will become the framework of our future projects by prioritizing project areas. With our CWPP completed, we will be able to begin fulfilling our mission of mobilizing our foothill and

mountain communities to become fire safe by developing and implementing our fire hazard mitigation plan. With the investment of approximately 150 volunteer hours in the research, development and writing of our CWPP, funding the duplication and publication of our plan will allow us to finalize the creation of this all important document.

Once completed we will:
1. Have completed 7 Communities At Risk Plans plus the incorporation of 3 additional communities into in our CWPP which are not listed as "at risk" but are still part of this Council's community.

2. Have a completed CWPP which will become the basis of all operations our FSC will undertake in the years to come. Our fuels reduction projects will be identified and prioritized. Being a living plan, we will update it as necessary.

3. With all the above completed, within our budget and time frame, a final report will be prepared and sent to our grant funders, CA FSC, CA Fire Alliance, and a press release to local media will be submitted about the successful conclusion of this project.

4. With the CWPP written, published and approved by all appropriate agencies, each community at risk as well as this FSC will have a plan of attack. Not only will this document bring us together as property owners, businesses, fire agencies, local governments and local organizations, it will help support future funding requests and solidify our direction in the coming years.

5. Our communities are famous for supporting a hard working, results oriented organization. We have already generated great support but to take it to the next level, we need the CWPP. As we mobilize and begin our fuels reduction projects that show results, we will see greater community participation which creates community action and fire safe compliance.

Block I
Grant # 070032: Oak to Timberline Fire Safe Council, Prevention, Education Program and Council Development

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080142)

Grant Category: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $10,020

Purpose: This project results in the continued development and delivery of outreach fire and watershed protection documents, pamphlets and programs. The development of a mobile traveling program that can be used at homeowner's association meetings, community gatherings, school programs, and local festivals, to promote fire and watershed protection.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $10,020.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Summary from Grant Application:

The nearly 217,000 acres of public and private lands of this council's influence is bordered by, with some inclusion, the Sequoia National Forest, Giant Sequoia National Monument and Kings Canyon National Park of eastern Fresno County. We sit solidly within the Kings River Watershed to the north and Kaweah River Watershed to the southeast which offers an array of wildlife habitats, recreational activities as well as being a vacation destination for visitors from all over the world. Within these boundaries are private homes, ranches, schools, churches, youth camps, businesses and wildlife refuges. It has been 52 years since our last significant sized fire. If the 50 year wildfire rule were to be applied, we are overdue for "the big one" and our communities are anything but prepared.

From the Mono Indians who settled this land, to the longtime residents and ranchers, to the huge population growth of "Urbanites" moving out of the congested cities into subdivisions of our WUI, the need to implement community action is immediate and imperative as these Stakeholders have become dangerously complacent. Our nation's Christmas tree, the General Grant, is just a few short miles uphill from our foothill and mountain communities which makes fire prevention, education and fire safe practices even more paramount.

With the funding of this project, this council will be able to purchase the needed office supplies and equipment to reach our Stakeholders with flyers, brochures and information packets. The monies will also be utilized to develop and implement our community fire safe prevention/education programs by creating a power point presentation to be used at our monthly meetings as well as local events and organization meetings. Using these materials, we will also develop a children's education program for Dunlap School designed to reach our future Stakeholders. These programs will be ongoing, even beyond the 18 month completion date, and will be staffed by our Board of Directors and committees created for specific events and programs. Once the initial expense is funded, sustainability will be relatively inexpensive as materials need to be duplicated.

As the old saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". If we can mitigate even one fire by our prevention/education programs and community outreach, then all efforts are rewarded.

Block II
Grant # 070034: South Tulare County Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080046)

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $54,000

Purpose: The development and completion of a Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan (**CCWPP)** is vital for the preplanning, prioritization and a continued reference guide from which conservation principles can be considered when approaching any of the project areas listed within such as; Fuel Reduction-Watershed Protection Projects, Fire-Watershed Protection Outreach Education, Public Resources Code 4290 Inspections, Defensible Space Planning, Monitoring of Projects, Designating Appropriate Research Projects, and Collaboration and Coordination among; Protection, Environmental, Cultural Agencies, Conservation Organizations, Forest & Conservation Industry, User Groups and Concerned Citizens.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $54,000.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

We will be continuing to implement and promote fuel load reduction and wildfire education projects in Tulare County. In order to do this, the Tulare County RCD and the newly formed Sequoia Fire Safe Council will facilitate the development of a CWPP within Tulare County.

We have divided the County into three geographic areas Northern Tulare County, Southern Tulare County, and the Reservation. This project would focus on the development of a Southern Tulare County CWPP in which it would focus on communities at risk (CAR) and at risk communities adjacent to federal land and incorporate federal projects. In doing this we would incorporate multiple watersheds within Southern Tulare County. In addition to identifying areas in need of hazardous fuel removal, an educational component will be developed to increase fire safety in areas close to the Bureau of Land Management, and the US Forest Service.

Desired outcomes would be: An assessment of the landscape defining areas of concern and how to mitigate these concerns in order of priority for an extremely large area (a

little less than half of Tulare County watersheds). The results of this project will be explained to the public taking into account community assessments. This will undoubtedly increase the awareness of the risk many households face today. This CWPP will benefit the people of Tulare County and the Sequoia Fire Safe Council in a variety of ways. The Sequoia fire Safe Council is just starting out so, this will create a base for the fire safe council to work from in the future.

Block II
Grant # 070035: Northern Tulare County Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan

Applicant: California Fire Safe Council (# 080010)

Grant Category: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $59,000

Purpose: The development and completion of a Community Conservation Wildfire Protection Plan (**CCWPP)** is vital for the preplanning, prioritization and a continued reference guide from which conservation principles can be considered when approaching any of the project areas listed within such as; Fuel Reduction-Watershed Protection Projects, Fire-Watershed Protection Outreach Education, Public Resources Code 4290 Inspections, Defensible Space Planning, Monitoring of Projects, Designating Appropriate Research Projects, and Collaboration and Coordination among; Protection, Environmental, Cultural Agencies, Conservation Organizations, Forest & Conservation Industry, User Groups and Concerned Citizens.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant as proposed at the recommended funding level of $59,000.

Letters of Support:
California Fire Safe Council Inc. Board of Directors

CEQA: The proposal is not defined as a project according to CEQA.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

We need to implement and promote fuel load reduction and wildfire education projects in Tulare County. In order to do this, the Tulare County RCD and the newly formed Sequoia Fire Safe Council will facilitate the development of a CWPP within Tulare County. We have divided the County into three geographic areas Northern Tulare County, Southern Tulare County, and the Reservation. This project would focus on the development of a northern Tulare County CWPP in which it would focus on communities' at risk (CAR) and at risk Communities adjacent to federal land and incorporate federal projects, In addition to identifying areas in need of hazardous fuel removal, an educational component will be developed to increase fire safety in areas close to the Park Service, Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

Desired outcomes would be: An assessment of the landscape defining areas of concern and how to mitigate these concerns in order of priority for an extremely large area (half of Tulare County watersheds). The results of this project will be explained to the public taking into account the community assessments. This will undoubtedly increase the awareness of the risk many households face today. This CWPP will benefit the people

of Tulare County and the Sequoia Fire Safe Council in a variety of ways. The Sequoia fire safe council is just starting out so this will create a base for the fire safe council to work from in the future.

Grant # 070178: Audubon California Kern River Preserve Visitor Facility

Applicant: Audubon California Kern River Preserve and National Audubon Society

Grant Type: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $152,000

Purpose: Develop blueprints for a modular visitors' center with environmental design features.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant for the requested $152,000.

The project blueprints include a visitors' center, natural history museum, interpretative signage, nature trails accessible from the center, native landscaping, community conference center, research space for visiting university researchers and office space. The visitors' center replaces the existing facility which is located in a flood plain and is under capacity to serve the existing number of annual visitors. The center educates visitors on the environmental threats to the area and watershed stewardship practices.

Letters of Support:
County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors
Tuolumne Utilities District
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Summerville Union High School District

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application: Audubon California's Kern River Preserve is a 3,400-acre wildlife sanctuary along the South Fork Kern River in Weldon, California. The Preserve is contiguous with private lands under conservation easements and public lands managed by the California Department of Fish and Game, US Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

There is strong interest among community members and Audubon to develop a facility to host the growing number of visitors coming to the Kern River Valley to enjoy the region's natural amenities. Audubon proposes to build a 5-6,000 sq. ft. green modular structure on the Kern River Preserve with a large common area, parking area and trails to serve the needs of the community and visitors. This building will incorporate the best solar power, energy and water conservation, environmentally sustainable materials and design features that are commonly available "off-the-shelf" and suitable for regular home and business applications. This building will serve a model for home and business construction in this region.

Audubon is seeking a $152,000 grant to hire architectural, planning and engineering firm(s) by competitive bid to plan and design the facility. During Phase I, the contractor(s) will be expected to develop blueprints for the buildings. Our intention will be developed collaboratively and will be available to other communities with a similar need in the Sierra Nevada.

Aside from hosting visitors, the new center will include office space, natural history museum, gift shop, community teleconferencing conference center, and research space for visiting university researchers. The center will also include a patio for community gatherings, interpretative signage, nature trails accessible from the center, and native landscaping. Audubon estimates that the complete project including construction and an endowment will be approximately $5 million and anticipates launching a campaign to complete the project by 2010.

The Kern River Preserve's current infrastructure is limiting our programming and is limiting our ability to meet community and visitor needs. Our current outreach and office facilities are in building over 70 years old that were moved to this site in the 1950's. The meandering South Fork Kern River is moving toward these buildings increasing the risk of flooding.

With substantial portions of the Southern Sierra Nevada under growing pressure from sprawling development, the need for community conservation education is paramount. The Kern River Preserve and Kern River Valley communities are fast becoming a destination for nature tourists. With our new center we will work to educate the public and accommodate more visitors. We believe that this plan and ultimately, our state of the art facility will serve as a model for residents and other communities for the entire Sierra Nevada.

Planning Grant Proposed Budget: Audubon will contract for the following services:

Phase I – Plan Development and Feasibility	
Architectural and Engineered Plan for Building	$135,000
CEQA Compliance	$27,000
Sub Total Phase I	$162,000
Less cost share	-$10,000
Total request Phase I	$152.000

Grant # 070163: **Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Concept and Master Planning (CAMP)**

Applicant: Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation

Grant Type: SOG 3

Amount Requested: $120,099

Purpose: Complete the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Concept and Master Plan.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant for the requested amount of $120,099.

The project provides a long-term plan to implement and steward a sustainable system of four-season trails and public access that will provide enjoyment and the protection of natural areas.

Letters of support:
Mammoth Mountain Ski Area
Town of Mammoth
Mammoth Ranger Station

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:
The Town of Mammoth Lakes has been described as "a town within a park," as its Urban Growth Boundary defines the town within Inyo National Forest, effectively containing a 4.5-square-mile urban environment within hundreds of square miles of public lands. Residents and tourists alike come to Mammoth for its abundant and spectacular natural beauty, peaceful seclusion, and, most notably, the numerous outdoor recreation activities this landscape affords, from fishing, mountain biking, and camping, to skiing, snowmobiling, and snowshoeing. Mammoth serves as a premier portal to the Eastern Sierra, hosting approximately 2.8 million visitors annually, and is a top recreation destination for Southern California.

MLTPA CAMP's overarching goal is to connect people to nature easily, safely, and enjoyably, and to help preserve the beauty and health of Inyo National Forest and its resources by keeping the Urban Growth Boundary porous, yet well planned. This will be accomplished by a multi-agency partnership in which the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, the USFS, and MLTPA, among others, cooperatively engage two teams of planning consultants (natural surface and urban specialists) to work with the

jurisdictional entities and the public to evaluate current trails and public access systems, then make recommendations to improve their internal flow as well as their connectivity to one another. The result of this effort will be an actionable trails and public access master plan for the Town of Mammoth Lakes and the land within its Urban Growth Boundary that will seek to guarantee access to public lands in anticipation of the town's impending build-out. Though master plans for bikeways and Class 1 pathways within the urban limit exist, these documents date from the early 1990s and have not been revised to match Mammoth's explosive growth in the last decade; furthermore, these plans reflect little if any attention paid to how people actually move from the urban setting of the town to the natural settings of the forest. When completed, CAMP's proposed master plan will seek to enhance the visitor experience, promote "feet first" mobility as identified in the Town's recently revised and adopted General Plan (August 2007), promote the stewardship and sustainability of trails and recreation areas on public lands, and reduce or eliminate adverse impacts on water, land, and other natural resources.

MLTPA is responsible for initiating the CAMP process and for bringing local agencies, private-sector interests, and jurisdictions into the partnerships necessary to turn the idea of CAMP into a reality. Initially budgeted at $475,133, the CAMP project was focused through MLTPA's work with Jurisdictional, Funding, and Planning Partners. Determining that the Town of Mammoth Lakes should hold and administer the consultant contracts, and coming to consensus with Jurisdictional Partners as to the desired scope of work, the CAMP budget was revised to $356,898. Through its Funding Partners MLTPA has been able to secure cash commitments of $225,000, leaving a project balance of $131,898. After deducting budgeted contingencies per SNC guidelines, MLTPA is submitting this application for $120,099, which represents the balance of the revised CAMP budget and the funds necessary to deliver to the Town of Mammoth Lakes a trails and public access master plan for consideration and adoption, and the ultimate fulfillment and completion of the MLTPA CAMP project.

Grant # 070164: Eastern Sierra Citizens Watershed Assessment

Applicant: Friends of the Inyo

Grant Type: SOG 2

Amount Requested: $45,000

Purpose: Completion of water quality studies in the headwaters of the Owens River, Mono Basin and Mount Whitney watersheds.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends authorization of this grant for the requested $45,000.

The project expands a citizen-based water quality monitoring program to include additional sites to assess stream systems, identify water quality problems and restoration-oriented solutions, and measure the efficacy of place-based citizen stewardship. The program goal is to improve watershed and habitat quality and sustain diverse recreational uses.

Letters of Support:
Mammoth Ranger Station
Sierra Nevada Alliance

CEQA: A Notice of Exemption will be filed with the State Clearinghouse.

Project Description Summary from Grant Application:

The project proposed by Friends of the Inyo includes monitoring of riparian and adjacent upland wildlife habitat at six locations in Mono County and three locations in Inyo County. The selected sites include the following: Glass Creek (one site) and Deadman Creek (two sites) in the Upper Owens River Headwaters; Mill Creek (two sites) and Wilson Creek (one site) in the Mono Basin; and Lone Pine Creek (three sites) in the Owens Lake watershed.
The goals of monitoring are:
. design and execute scientifically credible studies that assess the condition of the aforementioned stream systems;
. screen for potential water quality problems and identify potential workable solutions, particularly as they apply to restoration activities; and
. measure the efficacy of place-based citizen stewardship and restoration projects as they relate to addressing water quality and habitat condition and sustainable recreational use.

This proposal builds upon current monitoring at the six Mono County sites and adds new monitoring locations at three more sites in Inyo County, expanding the monitoring and potential restoration to other drainages. Eastern Sierra Water

Watchers, a citizen-based water quality monitoring group under Friends of the Inyo, will perform water quality monitoring to demonstrate the project's quantitative impacts and/or the need for restoration activities. Friends of the Inyo, after assessment of early results from the Mono County sites, have begun some restoration activities.

Monitoring sites were selected in partnership with the Inyo National Forest (Forest Service) and the Mono Lake Committee for their significant impacts to downstream water quality. Most sites are popular areas of high recreation use including off-road vehicle driving, camping, fishing and hiking, which contributes to the degradation of the riparian and upland habitat. The Mono Basin sites include historic mining use, a fish rearing operation, irrigated sheep pasture, Highway 395, and water used by a power plant.

Friends of the Inyo is respectfully requesting $45,000 in a grant from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for Jan-Dec 08.
Friends of the Inyo has secured matching funds of $11,000.
In-kind volunteer labor will provide $26,160 value to the project.