

Background

In June 2013, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Governing Board approved Grant Guidelines for the Grant Round beginning in fiscal year 2013-14. This grant round will be SNC's final awards using funding from the Proposition 84, Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006 (Proposition 84). The Grant Guidelines from this round identified that in addition to complying with Proposition 84 requirements and SNC's mission and program goals, projects will need to meet established criteria in the focus areas of Healthy Forests and Abandoned Mine Lands.

As a reminder, this round has no final application due dates. Applicants may contact SNC Staff at any time while funding remains and staff will work with potential applicants to develop project proposals. All proposals will be evaluated by a SNC internal evaluation team, with assistance from technical experts (during this round, staff may notify potential applicants that their project will not likely score highly enough to be recommended). In those instances, a full proposal will not be invited and the potential applicants will be provided an explanation to support this decision. Those projects that will provide the greatest benefit by meeting identified evaluation criteria will be presented for Board approval. Staff will present projects at each Board meeting until funding is exhausted.

Current Status

Funding available is estimated at approximately \$2.8 million, a \$200,000 increase from our June estimate, based on a number of factors resulting from closing of projects.

Staff released public notification of this Grant Round on June 27, 2013. Since that time, staff has been busy working with potential applicants to determine the eligibility and readiness of their projects. As of the posting date of this report, up to 30 projects had been identified at different levels of development, potentially requesting more than \$10 million in funding. Staff expects to bring the first set of project recommendations forward for Board action in December, 2013.

For this round, staff expects the number of projects presented to the Board at any given meeting to be much smaller than in the past. This provides an opportunity for Boardmembers to review any or all projects being evaluated. Staff do not anticipate using Board Subregional committees as in the past, however will make certain that Subregional representatives are aware of proposed projects in their Subregion. It should be noted that, with these limited funds and such a great need for work and investment throughout the Sierra Region, staff are making significant effort to find and leverage other sources of funding. As part of this final Grant Round, SNC is working with the Wildlife Conservation Board as they administer their Proposition 84 funded [Forest Conservation Program](#), identifying Sierra projects that may qualify for award of these funds and notifying applicants of its availability. Staff is also coordinating with the California Conservation Corps (CCC) on potential use of CCC crews for projects.

Recommendation

This is an informational item only; no formal action is needed by the Board at this time, although Boardmembers are encouraged to share their thoughts and comments.