

Background

In July 2006, the Board adopted a five-year Strategic Plan (Plan) for the SNC, which it subsequently revised at its December 2008 meeting. With a few exceptions, all of the actions contained in the Plan have been or are being accomplished or have been deemed to be ongoing activities of the SNC and have been built into our day-to-day operations.

In June 2010, the Board endorsed a process for the creation of a new Strategic Plan by September 2011. The process began with a Board workshop in June 2010 where Boardmembers and stakeholders brainstormed potential areas of focus for the new Plan. Following the Board workshop, a survey was sent out to SNC stakeholders and meetings held with SNC stakeholders and staff regarding potential areas of focus for the Plan. Based on this input, the Board adopted a set of nine potential areas of focus for the Plan at its meeting in September 2010.

Subsequently, staff gathered additional information and input on these nine potential areas of focus including information on work being done by other organizations in the Region within each potential area of focus, an assessment of potential sources of funding to support activities within each area, and potential roles and objectives for the SNC within each potential area of focus. Based on this additional information and in accordance with the factors listed below, the Board adopted five areas of focus for the SNC's new Strategic Plan at its meeting in December 2010:

- The statutory authority and program areas prescribed in the SNC's enabling legislation.
- Previous Board direction regarding where staff should direct their efforts and the resulting expertise and momentum that has developed within the organization in certain areas.
- Input from stakeholders and staff regarding where the SNC should focus over the next three years.
- The need to adopt a realistic set of focus areas for the new Plan given the limited resources of the organization and size and breadth of the Region and the issues that need to be addressed.

The five areas of focus adopted by the Board are:

- **Healthy Forests**—*Foster collaboration locally and Regionally in an effort to support a cohesive, economically viable, and sustainable approach to restoring forest ecological health, reducing fire risk and creating jobs consistent with SNC's Sierra Nevada Forest and Community Initiative (SNFCI).*
- **Watershed Protection and Restoration**—*Increase the long-term health and sustainability of watersheds in the Sierra Nevada, resulting in improved water quality, increased natural storage of water and improved habitat conditions.*
- **Agricultural Lands**—*Support the preservation of sustainable agricultural lands in the Region by providing Regional identity and coordination, supporting*

research and needed infrastructure, addressing potential threats and continued support for conservation easements.

- **Tourism and Recreation**—*Increase the level and diversity of sustainable tourism and recreation throughout the Sierra Nevada including use of public lands.*
- **Long-term Effectiveness of the SNC**--*Ensure the long term effectiveness of the SNC by securing sustainable sources of funding for our work, continuing to build the credibility of the organization, and continually assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of our operations.*

Current Status

At the time this staff report was written, staff were preparing to hold six workshops throughout the Region to gather input from stakeholders regarding the objectives and actions the SNC should pursue within the first four areas of focus. The workshops will be held in Auburn, Susanville, Visalia, Bishop, Chico, and Sonora. A mechanism is also being put in place for stakeholders to provide additional input via our Web site. In addition, meetings will be held with staff and key stakeholders as part of the process of developing a first draft of the Plan, which will be presented to the Board in June.

Next Steps

At the March Board meeting, staff will report on the results of the Strategic Plan workshops, meetings, and input gathered via the Web site. Based on all of this input, staff will prepare a first draft of the Strategic Plan to present to the Board in June. This will be followed by a public comment period and the presentation of a final draft Plan for adoption by the Board at its meeting in September 2011.

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. The Board may consider whether there is a need to appoint a new member to the Board subcommittee overseeing this effort since one of the members of the subcommittee no longer sits on the Board.