

Background

Sierra Day in the Capitol, an informative and awareness-raising event, has become an annual occasion to bring diverse groups of individuals and organizations together in Sacramento to provide information to State legislators and their staff on important issues and opportunities involving the Sierra Nevada. For years the event was organized under the auspices of two Sierra-wide organizations, The Sierra Fund and Sierra Nevada Alliance. Although the SNC has participated in prior years, last year was the first time the SNC played a role in coordinating the collective efforts of the partner groups to organize the day's events.

Current Status

Sierra Day in the Capitol is scheduled for April 6th this year. We are once again working with a broad array of partners and anticipate that the number of participants from last year's event will grow. A significant and exciting change for this year's event is the decision of the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association to combine their annual day at the Capitol with Sierra Day in the Capitol, resulting in a stronger showing of unanimity about the importance of the Region to the rest of the State.

The following organizations continue to support this event and have confirmed sponsoring this year:

The Sierra Fund
Sierra Nevada Alliance
Sierra Business Council
Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council
Mountain Counties Water Resources Association
Trust for Public Land

Many sponsors from last year, and some new additions, have indicated they will participate again this year as well. We will continue to cultivate old and new partners.

The anticipated focus of the day's activities, pending confirmation with the organizing committee, will be educating California's decision-makers about the importance of the water resources from the Sierra Nevada to the State of California. The Sierra Nevada Water Report, being developed by the Water Education Foundation (WEF) with funding from the SNC, will provide pivotal talking points for participants to explore during the legislative visits. WEF is an impartial, nonprofit organization whose mission is to create a better understanding of water resources and foster public understanding and resolution of water resource issues through facilitation, education and outreach.

In addition to team meetings with individual legislators and staff, we are working to secure display space on the long wall outside the Governor's office, as well as in the shadowbox across from the Governor's Office, as we did last year. We anticipate

developing maps and other display materials to help illustrate how water from the Sierra ends up in urban taps, valley agricultural fields and coastal ocean tides.

Sierra Day culminates in a reception at the Stanford Mansion, to be followed immediately by the Sierra Business Council's annual Visionary Awards event.

Next Steps

The sponsoring organizations have formed a steering committee to oversee development of the day's events and materials. Various members of the committee will also be taking on the tasks associated with putting together the materials and activities for the day.

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 on how to make this year's Sierra Day in the Capitol a great success. Boardmembers are encouraged to sign up for the day's event on the registration sheet provided.