

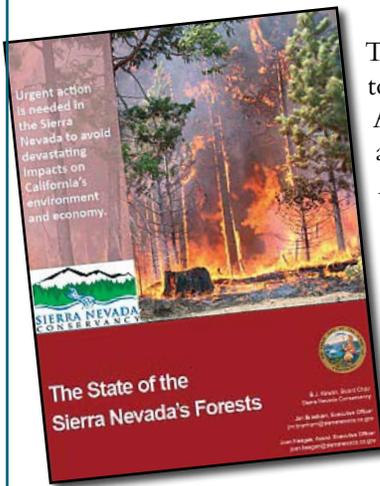
Partnership to Protect Our Sierra Nevada Forests

By Shane Fryer, *Alpine Watershed Group*



The Alpine Watershed Group (AWG), in partnership with Alpine County, has received a Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) grant to carry out fuels reduction work and provide community education about the nexus between forest fire and watershed health.

Our Sierra Nevada Forests are coming under increased threat. Climate change, decades of fire suppression and persistent drought are creating conditions that promote disease and allow for more intense forest fires. Sierra forest fires are getting bigger, more frequent and intense. The 2013 Rim Fire was California's largest in recorded history, costing \$127 million to fight, and millions more in restorations and lost habitat. These fires put California's and Nevada's water supply at risk, release additional carbon into our atmosphere, as well as threaten our natural resources.



The Alpine County Hazardous Fuels Reduction & Healthy Watershed Project was developed to further the protection of our watersheds and populated areas. This project helps address Alpine County's wildfire threat by treating fuels along County maintained roads. These fuels are at high risk of carrying wildfire into sensitive watershed resources and populated areas. Alpine County is unique in that it encompasses the headwaters of five major watersheds critical to both California and Nevada. The long-term availability of clean water in these rivers is dependent on the health of our forest and the streams that flow through them.

SNC has recently launched the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program, a collaborative effort focused on restoring the health of California's primary watersheds. Their recent "State of the Sierra Nevada's Forests Report" has gathered scientific information about threats to the regions forests. You can find this publication on the SNC website. Over the last decade SNC has invested over \$51 million in programs aimed at conserving the Sierra Nevada region's resources.

AWG would like to recognize our other partners who helped secure this SNC Grant. These partners include the Alpine Fire Safe Council, Cal Fire, Carson Ranger District of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Eastern Alpine County Volunteer Fire Dept., Woodfords Washoe Community Council, American Rivers, and South Tahoe PUD.

Please visit www.alpinewatershedgroup.org for more information about how you can become involved in watershed health.

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