

**PLACER COUNTY
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Thomas M. Miller, County Executive Officer
by Brett Storey, Senior Management Analyst 

DATE: February 24, 2009

SUBJECT: Approve, by Resolution, an application for grant funds by Placer County from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 Grants program, for a Watershed Improvement Zone on the American River, and appoint the County Executive Officer as agent of the County to execute necessary documents.

ACTION REQUESTED

That your Board approve, by Resolution, an application for grant funds by Placer County from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy Proposition 84 Grants program, for a Watershed Improvement Zone on the American River, and appoint the County Executive Officer as agent of the County to execute necessary documents.

BACKGROUND

As part of the general election held on November 7, 2006, the voters of the State of California passed Proposition 84 (Prop 84), the Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coast Protection Bond Act of 2006. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has received a total of \$17 million in Prop 84 funds for the current fiscal year. The intent of the SNC Prop 84 funding is to fund projects related to the protection and restoration of rivers, lakes and streams, their watersheds and associated land water, and other natural resources.

We have identified a project from the BOS approved Strategic Plan for the Wildfire Protection and Biomass Utilization program that is eligible for funding that supports fire mitigation, biomass utilization and the watershed restoration of the American River and are requesting the following from the SNC:

\$500,000 to assist in implementing forest thinning/watershed improvement projects; "Watershed Improvement Zone – American River Project" The pre-application summary submitted to the SNC is attached. Essentially the program would allow for forest thinning on public and private land to include removing the accessible biomass within the projects.

The United States Forest Service (USFS) Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD), Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) and private landowners are our partners and they have projects and funding lined up over the next 3 years. We

anticipate receiving matching project dollars for these operations from the USFS, Pacific Gas & Electric, Sacramento Municipal Utilities District, PCWA and the PCAPCD.

Staff estimates that we will have in excess of \$500,000 matching dollars by program conclusion between hard cash and in-kind dollars. This will be specific with the grant application. Each of these projects would be located within the American River (North and Middle Forks) area which encompasses many high risk fire areas of Placer County. A map is attached to show the areas and planned projects over the next 3 years.

Adoption of the attached resolution is a requirement of the application process for the SNC competitive grant program.

FISCAL IMPACT

Placer County is requesting \$500,000 of grant funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. There is no impact to the General Fund as a result of this action. All matching dollars are either in-kind or from outside funding sources. All funding would be added to the budget for the 3 years following the award.

Attachments

Resolution
SNC Grant Abstract
USFS Map of American River Ranger District

Before the Board of Supervisors County of Placer, State of California

In the matter of:

Resol: _____

A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDS BY THE CEO DEPARTMENT FROM THE SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY PROP 84 GRANTS PROGRAM FOR A WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT ZONE ON THE AMERICAN RIVER, AND APPOINT THE CEO AS AGENT OF THE COUNTY TO EXECUTE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS.

The following **RESOLUTION** was duly passed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer at a regular meeting held **FEBRUARY 24, 2009** by the following vote on roll call:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Attest:

Clerk of said Board _____

WHEREAS, the Legislature and Governor of the State of California have provided funds for the program shown above; and

WHEREAS, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has been delegated the responsibility for the administration of a portion of these funds through a local assistance grants program, establishing necessary procedures; and

WHEREAS, said procedures established by the SNC require a resolution certifying the approval of application(s) by the Applicant's governing board before submission of said application(s) to the SNC; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant, if selected, will enter into an agreement with the SNC to carry out the project; and

WHEREAS, the County has identified the Forest Thinning/Watershed Improvement and Related Biomass Removal Activities at a watershed improvement zone on the American River as valuable toward meeting its mission and goals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer that this Board:

(1) approves the submittal of an application for the Watershed Improvement Zone on the American River project; (2) certifies that the County of Placer understands the assurances and certification requirements in the application; (3) certified that the County of Placer will have sufficient funds to operate and maintain the resource(s) consistent with the long-term benefits described in support of the application; or will secure the resources to do so; (4) certifies that the County of Placer will comply with all legal requirements as determined during the application process; and (5) Appoints the County Executive Officer, or designee, as agent to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents including, but not limited to applications, agreements, payment requests and so on, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned project.

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**SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
Proposition 84 Grants Program
Pre-Application Form**

Date: 1/26/09

Project: Watershed Improvement Zone

Applicant: Placer County

Contact Person/email/phone: Brett Storey bstorey@placer.ca.gov 530 886-5334

Amount Requested: \$500000

Total Project Cost: \$1000000

Provide a general description of the project, including project goal, key actions or deliverables, and basic staffing and budget information: This project is proposed and sponsored by Placer County in partnership with the following organizations; Placer County Water Agency (PCWA), USDA Forest Service (USFS), Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD), Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), Sacramento Municipal Utilities District (SMUD), and Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI).

The Watershed Improvement Zone (WIZ) – American River Project is being proposed to develop a systematic method of creating a healthier watershed through implementation of landscape level projects that improve both the flow and quality of water into the north and middle forks of the American River.

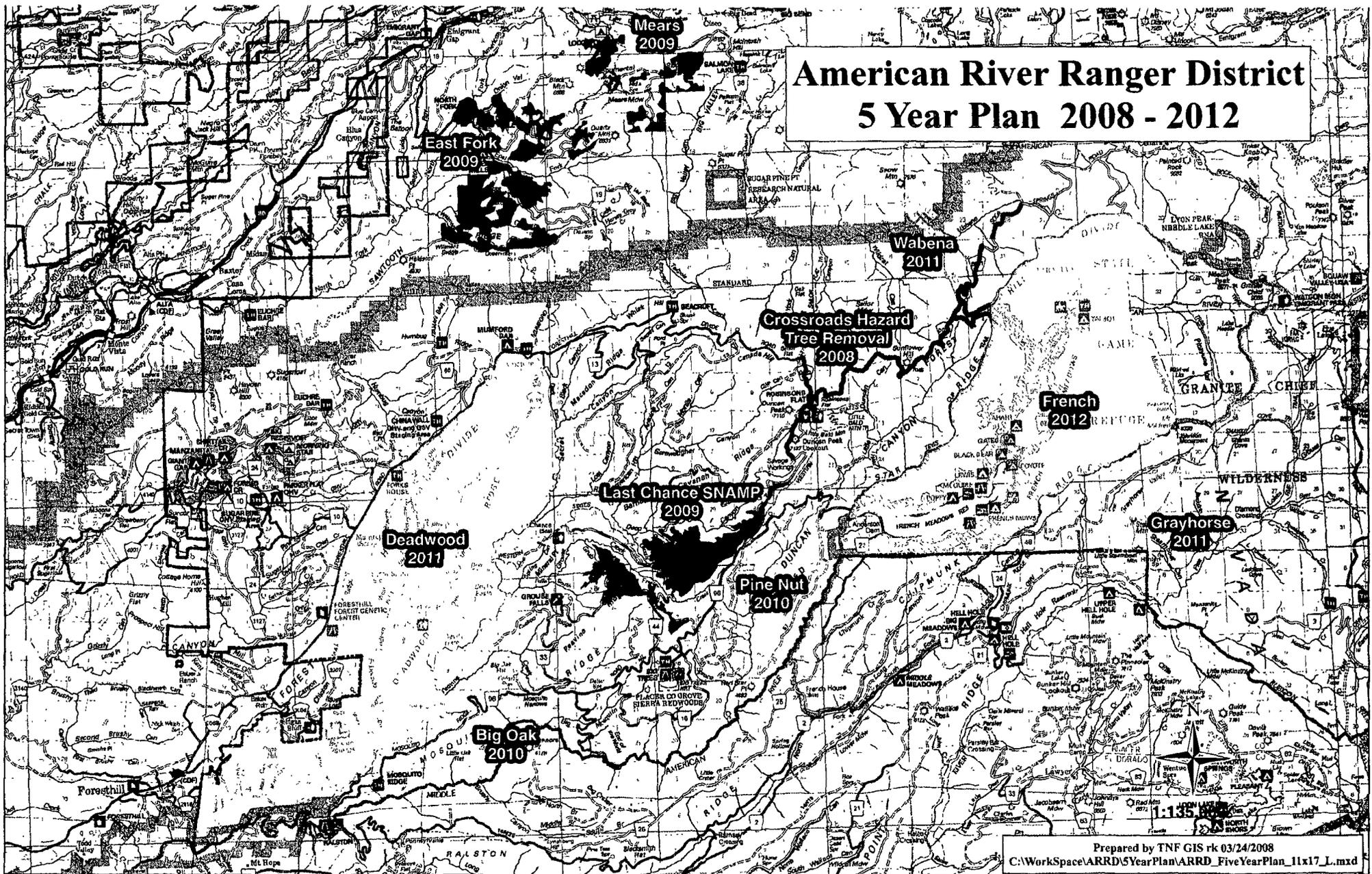
As fuels reduction projects are planned and implemented on public and private lands in the American River watershed, Placer County proposes to coordinate project activities to ensure that excess biomass materials are removed and utilized effectively. Current excess biomass disposal practices include use of fire (broadcast burns), pile and burn or treat and scatter. Placer County proposes that in order to mitigate impacts on sensitive resources (air, water, soil) from fuels reduction activities and optimize watershed health, excess biomass materials should be recovered rather than burned or left to decay. Currently a multitude of projects are moving forward in the American River watershed and this proposed program would allow all projects within the watershed to efficiently share planning, implementation and other resources to facilitate and significantly increase the value of landscape level treatments within the watershed.

Several of Placer County's partners are proposing landscape level projects and are funded to implement these projects in the coming years. For example, the Tahoe National Forest has numerous forest fuels treatment/forest restoration projects in the American River watershed starting in 2009 and operating through 2012. One of the planned projects will be implemented in concert with a significant research project

(Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project) that is set to monitor watershed response to various levels of landscape level treatments. Currently SNAMP is not funded to facilitate removal of excess biomass materials.

Additional project partners include:

- PG&E. Currently seeking opportunities to support projects that increase the sequestration of carbon by promoting healthier forests.
- PCAPCD. Now proposing a carbon mitigation program that would invest land developer funds (from GHG offsets) in support of forest restoration and fuels treatment to provide healthier trees to sequester carbon, remove material rather than burn or decay and then create green energy from the waste.
- PCWA. Currently seeking opportunities to promote stewardship while increasing the quality and quantity of water generated in the American River watershed.



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