



## Sierra Nevada Conservancy board to meet in Inyo

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With major decisions to be made in regards to the Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy has scheduled a busy week that includes a tour of the facility outside of Independence, the award of nearly \$5 million in grants and a reception.

The Conservancy's busy schedule will kick off Wednesday with a tour of the Fish Hatchery led by the Friends of the Hatchery to gather information before the Governing Board meeting Thursday. The field trip will begin at the main parking lot of the Best Western Frontier, 1008 S. Main Street in Lone Pine and conclude with a reception to be held at the Lone Pine Film Museum, 701 S. Main Street, from 5:30-7 p.m.

The following day, Thursday, the Conservancy Governing Board will meet at 9 a.m. at Boulder Creek RV Resort in Lone Pine to discuss a number of items, including approximately \$4.9 million in grant awards for projects that aim to restore Sierra Nevada forests to ecological health and prevent damaging forest fires.

The board will discuss the 200 grant applications submitted for this year's round of funding, which is made possible through California Proposition 84. "For this round of funding we received nearly 200 initial requests, which we have painstakingly reduced to 26 recommendations to the board," said SNC Executive Officer Jim Branham. "The large number of requests is a result of the poor condition of many of our forests throughout the Sierra and the growing threat of catastrophic fire."

The 26 grant applications to be submitted for board approval include the following cross-section of projects:

- Fuels Reduction (twelve projects, \$2.5 million)
- Forest Health/Restoration (seven projects, \$1.48 million)
- Meadow Restoration (four projects, \$473,422)
- Invasive Species Removal (two projects, \$73,867)
- Conservation Easement Acquisitions (one project, \$350,000)

(For a complete list of project names, types, funding amounts and locations, visit: [www.sierranevada.ca.gov/press-room/press-release/press-material/junaward...](http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/press-room/press-release/press-material/junaward...))

The board's agenda also includes a presentation on the SNC's work with the California Department of Fish and Game and Inyo County regarding the potential future use and management of the Hatchery, which is no longer utilized by DFG. Currently, the Friends of Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery oversee a portion of the facility for educational purposes.

"The historic Fish Hatchery is an icon in the Eastern Sierra and there is growing support for tapping into its economic and community benefits," said First District Inyo County Supervisor Linda Arcularius, who also serves on the SNC board. "The county, the SNC and DFG are working with the Friends of Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery to begin to identify its most beneficial uses in order to preserve this unique eastern Sierra asset."

The board will also consider approval of guidelines for the 2012-13 round of Prop 84 grants, which will be focused on the preservation of ranches and agricultural lands. If the guidelines are approved, the request for proposals could go out later in June.

The board meeting will be held at the Boulder Creek RV Resort, 2550 U.S. 395, in Lone Pine, from 9 a.m. to approximately 1 p.m. The public is invited to all SNC activities and time will be allotted for public comment at the board meeting.

Those who are interested in attending the field trip must provide their own transportation. To RSVP for the field trip and reception, visit [www.SierraNevada.ca.gov](http://www.SierraNevada.ca.gov) and look under "Announcements."