



## Funding Healthy Forests

*The Union staff  
September 29, 2011*

A state agency is soliciting grant bids for its “Healthy Forests” grant program.

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is making \$5 million available for assorted environmental projects designed to benefit the Sierra Nevada's distinctive forests and associated meadows.

Funding will be provided to projects that center on wildland fire reduction or ecological restoration, said Pete Dufour, spokesman for the SNC.

Application materials and grant guidelines — which were recently approved by the SNC governing board — are posted on the SNC website. Applicants must submit pre-application documents before Oct. 21, 2011.

Public agencies, eligible nonprofit organizations whose purposes are in concert with the mission of the Conservancy and federally recognized tribes are encouraged to apply.

After an initial review period, applicants whose projects are deemed viable will be invited to submit a full application.

SNC governing board members are expected to make a final allocation decision relating to this round of grants in June of 2012.

Funding for these projects is provided through Proposition 84, the Safe Drinking Water Bond Act, passed in 2006.

In its first five years, SNC has authorized about \$40 million in Prop. 84 grants for more than 220 projects throughout the Sierra Nevada region, Dufour said.

Projects include fuels reduction, conservation easements and acquisitions along with watershed and habitat restoration.

SNC retains \$10 million from the original 2006 allocation. The money will be distributed over the current and next fiscal years, with a specific focus area assigned for each year.

The focus for fiscal year 2012-13 will be projects relating to ranching and agricultural lands.