



November 13, 2018

John Laird, Secretary
CCNR Grant Program
California Natural Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: CLSN Comments on Draft Cultural, Community and Natural Resources Grant Program Guidelines - Proposition 68

Dear Secretary Laird and staff of the California Natural Resources Agency,

On behalf of the Funding and Legislation Working Group and members of the California Landscape Stewardship Network (CA Network), we thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Cultural, Community and Natural Resources Grant Program draft guidelines. When some of our CA Network members met with you and your staff on August 21, 2018, you indicated that the CCNR funding program was an important one for the CA Network to explore. We are excited by the flexibility and potential of this funding source to encourage and add capacity to partnerships across the state seeking to steward lands together at a landscape scale.

This input captures the perspective of the CA Network's six current member collaboratives, consisting of 192 organizations, and an additional 75-100 collaborators across the state. Attached are documents that provide some background, including the vision and core principles of the CA Network. Respectfully, our comments are as follows:

Pages 1 and 2: Eligible Projects

- Item 4- Park, Water, and Natural Resources: State Conservancies are similar in some ways to other non-state managed landscape-scale stewardship collaboratives. Both play roles in regional planning and coordination and contribute funding toward regional priority projects. Staff and partners of the Sierra Nevada and Tahoe Conservancies are active participants in the CA Network. Efforts to steward landscapes across jurisdictional boundaries outside of State Conservancy boundaries could fulfill important regional coordination and funding roles that the Resources Agency could take advantage of. Additionally, some landscape-scale stewardship collaboratives within State Conservancy boundaries are fulfilling regional planning, coordination, and funding roles outside the scope of a State Conservancy's involvement. We encourage the Resources Agency to prioritize funding for landscape-scale stewardship efforts that fall outside State Conservancy boundaries, and to consider funding the work of collaboratives within a

State Conservancy boundary if they are providing support not otherwise provided by the State.

- Item 5- Community, Culture, and Education: A dedicated space where partner staff and community members can share ideas and work together, and where ongoing community programs can have a home base, is an important resource for building and sustaining participation in and support for long-term collaborative landscape-scale stewardship. For this reason, we encourage you to modify the language in this section to read “Visitor centers or nonprofit aquariums that educate the public about natural landscapes, aquatic species, wildlife migratory patterns, or stewardship of landscape and community.” This comment also pertains to the wording of Question 16 on page 14 in the draft guidelines.

Page 3: Community Access

- We recommend adding "restoration and stewardship activities" to the list of community access examples.

Page 7 (and Appendix I): Use of Project Property

- We ask that you allow flexibility in the format of the agreement. Some landscape-scale collaboratives have developed specific agreement templates they use to partner on projects, share resources, and work across jurisdictional boundaries. Specific examples can be provided upon request.

Pages 8 and 9: Concept Proposal Questions

These responses may also help to inform questions to be included on the full application beginning on page 11 of the draft guidelines.

- Question 3: We encourage you to ask about how the project addresses regional or landscape-scale needs, and how the project will benefit the land and communities tied to the land. It also seems the portion of Question 3 that asks about public benefit is explored in greater detail in Questions 4-7 since those questions ask about specific benefits the project will result in. It may be useful to focus responses to Question 3 on “a critical statewide need” as well as “regional or landscape-scale needs” as defined in collaborative and inclusive landscape-scale planning, shared scientific research, or coordinated work plan development.
- Questions 4-7: We appreciate that these questions focus on human benefits tied to conservation and stewardship activities.
 - Under Question 4, we suggest adding “e. Engage communities in long-term enjoyment and stewardship of the project area and surrounding landscape through ongoing opportunities to volunteer, fundraise for, interpret, learn about, or otherwise connect and build a lasting relationship with the landscape.”
 - Under Question 5, we suggest calling out efforts to support young people from diverse or disadvantaged backgrounds seeking future careers that would lead to a more diverse future workforce in land management fields.
- Question 11: We suggest adding to the existing question by asking how the applicant and project planning have resulted in conservation and community actions that support project goals beyond the scope of the individual project timeline. Examples could include

a planning process that has organized the community to participate in the health and successful outcomes of the project over time, a project that resulted in a larger coordinated conversation about addressing the impacts of climate change regionally, or a project that inspired the community to explore a new local funding source or fundraising effort that will continue to fulfill the goals of the original project over time.

- Question 14: We suggest adding a question that asks how an acquisition will play a role in a larger landscape-level vision for conservation and land stewardship, as well as community resiliency. This comment also pertains to the section on Acquisition Projects on page 16 of the draft grant guidelines.
- Questions 15 and 17: Landscape-scale stewardship collaboratives often function under formal working agreements and seek to work together over long-periods of time to achieve shared stewardship visions. A positive outcome from working in this way is that land managers and community members end up with a demonstrated track record of successful cross-jurisdictional communication and project prioritization, planning, and implementation. We encourage this question to ask for clear evidence of a depth of working relationships among project partners, provided through examples of projects completed by working together, formal agreements among partners, or a shared vision or other examples of dedication to working together beyond an individual project timeline.
- Questions 18-20: Landscape-scale stewardship collaboration results in many partners in agencies and the community combining strengths to achieve successful outcomes and support for a shared and inclusive vision. We feel that every community member living on or adjacent to a landscape benefits from and has a role to play in the stewardship of that landscape. We suggest asking for responses to these questions that contain clear examples of policy, collaborative efforts, social research, and/or programs that ensure an applicant has a demonstrated track record of inclusive community involvement and support, and the delivery of a variety of community benefits. If the applicant does not have a track record delivering on community benefits, we suggest they show a strong relationship with a community partner who has a strong record delivering these benefits during and beyond the scope of the project timeline, or show they plan to utilize an approach that has been successful elsewhere.

Page 10: Project Summary

- We suggest asking how the project plays a role or fits into a larger vision for landscape-scale conservation or stewardship as demonstrated in adopted plans, regional project prioritization, findings from regional scientific research, or by other means.

Page 11: Full Proposal Project Data Questions

- Question 6: We ask that you consider adding a performance measure related to the number of community members engaged in restoration, stewardship, or education activities. We also suggest you allow applicants to volunteer additional metrics they may be able to collect and report on based on access to researchers, statistical models, or other tools or resources they have available to them. Since landscape-scale stewardship collaboratives include a broad range of partners, they often are able to gather data and explore the impacts of their projects in ways that individual agencies are not.

- Question 7: As you do later in the full application (on page 15), we ask that you consider calling out in-kind contributions by project partners here.

Pages 12-14: Project Need

- Questions 6 and 7: Agency partners spend a great deal of time in a landscape-scale stewardship collaborative building trusted relationships and identifying the highest priorities for projects and programs that address a shared vision. We encourage you to recognize regionally prioritized projects as strong examples of compelling or urgent projects.
- Question 11: We recommend that you also ask if a larger impact to the landscape will result from not funding the project. For instance, will not funding the project result in critical funds being diverted from other priority projects that are waiting on the project in the application? Will not funding the project impact a long-term vision for addressing landscape-scale issues?
- Question 15: We encourage responses to include both qualitative and quantitative data. Under item d., we encourage asking how the project will improve community involvement and investment in stewardship activities.

Finally, starting on page 16, we deeply appreciate the questions under the headings of “Organizational Capacity,” “Collaboration,” and “Additional Project Characteristics.” These questions speak to many of our comments above, and allow room for practitioners of landscape-scale stewardship to talk about the innovative and unique impacts and benefits this approach brings to project implementation and meeting expectations of Prop 68 funding established by voters and Resources Agency staff.

The members of the California Landscape Stewardship Network appreciate your time and consideration of these suggestions and thoughts on our alignment. We look forward to sharing more information with you in the near future, including examples of projects and programs that illustrate our priorities and values, and impacts of the landscape-scale stewardship approach.

Sincerely,



Kevin Wright
Chair, Funding and Legislation Working Group of the CLSN
Tamalpais Lands Collaborative (One Tam)

Cc:

Darcie Collins, League to Save Lake Tahoe
Josh Hugg and Mel Askay, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
Shelana deSilva, Save the Redwoods League
Mike O’Connell, Irvine Ranch Conservancy
Kim Caringer, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Matt Sagues, Marin Municipal Water District
Lisa Baldinger, East Bay Regional Park District
Matt Leffert and Sharon Farrell, Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
Note: This feedback does not replace any feedback submitted by individual agencies and organizations included on this letter.

Attachments:

- Meeting the Challenges of 21st Century Conservation
- CLSN Vision and Core Principles
- CLSN Principles of Investment