



**Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG)  
Joint Powers Authority**

**STAFF REPORT**

**To:** ESCOG Joint Powers Authority  
**From:** Elaine Kabala, ESCOG Executive Director  
**Subject:** 1) Authorize Executive Director to Submit Application for Sierra Nevada Conservancy Sustainable Recreation, Tourism, and Equitable Outdoor Access Funds

**Meeting date:** October 22, 2025

**Prepared on:** October 14, 2025

**Attachments:** A) Sustainable Recreation, Tourism, and Equitable Outdoor Access Grant Program Guidelines

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**BACKGROUND:**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Sustainable Recreation, Tourism, and Equitable Outdoor Access Directed Grant Program aims to support innovative efforts to enhance, promote, and develop sustainable recreation and tourism opportunities and increase access for all to public lands in the Sierra-Cascade region.

Program goals include improving access to nature and outdoor recreation opportunities, reducing impacts of overuse on natural and cultural resources, and supporting the development of sustainable recreation economies.

Eligible projects are encouraged to demonstrate implementation of priority projects identified through a collaborative process. The Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Initiative collaboratively planning process identified toilet infrastructure in recreation destinations as a region-wide concern.

**ANALYSIS:**

ESCOG has been in conversations with the Bishop Area Climbers Coalition (BACC) to submit a grant for toilet infrastructure to be placed in Pine Creek Canyon. Initial conversations were initiated by the Mammoth Lakes Trails and Public Access Foundation in their role as Sierra Jobs First Industry Sector Coordinator to identify regional funding to implement the Sierra Jobs First Strategic Plan goals for Sustainable Recreation and Tourism. The BACC has worked with the USFS Inyo National Forest to identify two locations in Pine Creek Canyon for toilet

placements and complete all necessary permitting to apply for funding and implementation. The two locations include the Pine Creek Canyon Climbing Area and the Pine Creek Canyon trailhead, both popular recreation destinations with no toilet infrastructure. The Inyo National Forest would provide engineering drawings and public works labor to prepare the site for installation.

For efficiency of scale, staff is also requesting authorization to include potentially two additional vault toilets to be placed in recreation sites in Inyo and Mono Counties, contingent on the sites meeting environmental permitting requirements at the time the application is submitted to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Locations that have been considered by Inyo and Mono County staff include the upper Millpond Park parking lot, the West Portal view site between June Lake and Lee Vining, and Lundy Canyon.

Concept proposals are due December 1, 2025. If approved, the SNC will request a final proposal due March 1, 2025. SNC Governing Board announcements will be made in June 2026. Staff has held meetings with Regional Representative Matt Driscoll, who has confirmed the proposal is consistent with the grant goals and guidelines.

Each grant has a maximum award of \$500,000. A estimated project budget is included below:

| Item Description  | Cost         |
|---|--------------|
| 4 CXT Double Vault Toilets, including installation and delivery | \$424,000.00 |
| Project Management  | \$15,000.00  |
| Administrative Costs (not to exceed 15% of direct costs)        | \$2,250.00   |
| Total   | \$441,250.00 |

**BUDGET IMPACTS:**

There are no budget impacts associated with this item.

**LEGAL REVIEW:**

ESCOG Counsel John-Carl Vallejo has reviewed this item and found that it complies with the law.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) Authorize Executive Director to Submit Application for Sierra Nevada Conservancy Tourism and Sustainable Recreation Prop 68 Funds.