ANNUAL REPORT 2016
Sierra Business Council
Annual Report - 2016
MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

This last year has done more to highlight the challenges the Sierra Nevada faces than any year in recent memory. It has also reminded us that every challenge is an opportunity to be seized and that it is up to us to create a positive future.

Our focus in 2016 has been on increasing new business opportunities and access to capital, improving the region’s capacity to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change, and increasing advocacy on behalf of the region to ensure the Sierra has a meaningful voice in the decision-making processes.

In 2016 our climate team raised more than $10 million to support the construction of affordable housing in the Sierra Nevada to ensure more of our residents have an efficient, safe, and affordable place to live.

In 2016 our business innovation team provided technical assistance to 337 clients, leveraged more than $12 million in new investment in the region and directly contributed to 26 new business starts.

In 2016 our advocacy team focused on policy issues and dramatically increased the visibility of the Sierra region in the capitol. We fought for natural resource, housing, economic development and infrastructure funding. We advanced the message that urban and rural prosperity are connected and took that message to the urban centers to make the case.

Our focus in 2017 will continue to be on advancing business innovation in the region, mitigating climate change and increasing the Sierra voice to influence policy even more. We will remind policymakers and downstream users that the Sierra Nevada is more than a place to recreate, that it is full of hopeful communities working to foster a brighter future for the next generation.

Sierra Business Council’s message, that we can have a strong economy, vibrant communities, empowered people, and enduring respect for our environment at the same time, is more relevant than ever before.

Without you, our supporters, our network, our partners and our friends, none of our efforts would be possible and for that we are deeply grateful.

Steve Frisch
President, Sierra Business Council

Allan Pietrasanta
Chair of the Board
OUR MISSION

Sierra Business Council pioneers and demonstrates innovative approaches and solutions to increase community vitality, economic prosperity, environmental quality, and social fairness in the Sierra Nevada.

OUR VISION

In the Sierra Nevada, change and challenge create opportunities. Through innovation, integrity, and respect, Sierra Business Council harnesses these opportunities by implementing projects that model proactive change. Our goal is a diverse, inventive, and sustainable region where the economy is vibrant, the land is thriving, and the communities offer opportunity for all.
OUR VALUES

Integrity
We act with consideration toward all stakeholders, honoring the interests of the community, the environment and the economy simultaneously.

Prosperity
We strive to build a prosperous human and ecological community in the Sierra Nevada, defined as a community that is flourishing, with social and economic mobility and thriving natural systems.

Innovation
We help people create new ways to address complex, longstanding issues.

Stewardship
We consciously choose to encourage a society where there is commitment to the larger community.

Achieving Scale
We strive to achieve scale across the region for the values we promote by providing positive reinforcement for replicated behaviors.
OUR FINANCES

2016 Revenue

- Grants: 3.6%
- Major Donors: 19.1%
- Individual Donors: 1.3%
- Fee for Service: 1.1%
- Other Revenue: 74.9%

Donor Testimonial:

“My wife and I give to Sierra Business Council because we’ve been impressed over the years with SBC’s ability to represent the region on a broad range of issues, including water, energy, land conservation, regional planning, climate change, ecotourism, entrepreneurship, etc. It’s important to have SBC’s strong voice to ensure those resources are used wisely and to the benefit of the local population.”

Dan Martin & Bria Larson
Mill Valley, CA
2016 Expenses

- Energy: 35.2%
- Climate: 18.1%
- Advocacy: 16.8%
- Indirect/Operating: 7.9%
- Other Programs: 15%
- Fundraising Expenses: 15%
- Business Innovation: 1.5%
- 5.5%
We focus on helping small businesses in the Sierra start, grow, and thrive, because dynamic communities are one of the most important resources the region has to offer. By helping entrepreneurs realize their dreams of starting and maintaining a business, and by helping them implement sustainable business practices, we are fostering a more vibrant, economically independent region.

OUR FOCUS AREAS

BUSINESS INNOVATION

We focus on advocating on behalf of the Sierra Nevada because what happens here affects California, Nevada and the world. We supply two thirds of California’s and most of northern Nevada’s water supply. Sierra forests sequester hundreds of millions of tons of carbon threatened by wildfire. We advocate for Sierra communities and landscapes to get their “fair share” of state and federal funding. We hold our policymakers accountable.

ADVOCACY

We focus on climate education, adaptation, and mitigation because the effects of climate change are already occurring and are among the greatest threats to the region. Increased wildfire risk, extended drought, shrinking snowpack, increased flood risk and decreasing tourism revenue are anticipated results. We can minimize risk and create opportunity by planning in advance and acting now.

CLIMATE ACTION
KEY PROGRAMS

Sierra Small Business Development Center

Budget: $313,558

The Sierra Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides free one-on-one consulting and workshops to small businesses on a variety of topics. The SBDC also sponsors special programs unique to the Sierra, including: low cost, flexible financing options, Spanish language start-up courses, Water/Energy Nexus Business Development, and so much more.

Major 2016 Accomplishment:

The Sierra SBDC provided 1,815 hours of free consulting to 337 small business clients, which leveraged a total of $12.3M in capital infusion and helped create 26 new businesses and 102 new jobs throughout the region.

Client Testimonial: Hans Wain
Trail Kitchens
www.TrailKitchens.com

"Through the Sierra Small Business Development Center, Sierra Business Council helped our business immensely in the critical phase of early operational funding and planning. Consultants helped us with funding options available for a low interest loan for our start up business, and then helped us further with the loan application, company presentation, and navigating the requirements necessary for a successful loan application.

Every young business should take advantage of the guidance and resources that Sierra Business Council can provide. They have done a lot to support our young company's development."
Sierra CAMP

Sierra Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Partnership

**Budget:** $177,713

Sierra CAMP empowers and convenes Sierra Nevada and downstream urban leaders from government, business, academia, and community groups to develop broader support for investment in the restoration of the Sierra Nevada region.

**Major 2016 Accomplishment:**

Sierra CAMP educated state policy makers on the unique needs of the Sierra through listening sessions and engaged hundreds of Sierra stakeholders through webinars on California climate, forestry, and biomass policy.

Learn More: www.sbcsierracamp.org

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Climate Planning

**Budget:** $313,637

Through Pacific Gas and Electric Company’s (PG&E) Government and Community Partnerships Program, SBC has assisted 26 local governments in meeting statewide goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including the development of nine energy action plans.

**Major 2016 Accomplishment:**

SBC has been successful in stimulating local economies by encouraging local developers to build more sustainable projects and matching these projects with statewide greenhouse gas reduction funding. To date, SBC's Climate Planning work has helped infuse $18M into such developments.

Learn More: www.sierrabusiness.org
Sierra Nevada Energy Watch

**Budget:** $892,796

Sierra Nevada Energy Watch (SNEW) is a local government partnership of SBC and PG&E. Overseen by the California Public Utility Commission, SNEW delivers cost effective energy efficiency measures and services to businesses, special districts, nonprofit organizations, and governments in 11 counties of the Sierra Nevada.

**Major 2016 Accomplishment:**

SNEW provided over $700,000 in incentives to small and medium businesses and municipalities reducing energy costs and emissions, including a notable project in Grass Valley that estimates show will save the community $7M over the lifetime of the project.

Learn More: www.sierrabusiness.org
The Lake Tahoe Water Trail (LTWT) is an endless 72-mile water route along the Lake Tahoe shoreline that links public beaches and their launch and landing sites to help paddlers have a safe and fun water adventure.

Major 2016 Accomplishment:

The LTWT created and printed 10 of the 20 permanent educational wayfinding signs that will reside along the shores of Lake Tahoe along with a redesigned brochure to safely guide and inform paddlers through the water trail.

Learn More:
www.laketahoewatertrail.org
Sierra Nevada Geotourism

**Budget:** $26,000

SBC and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy have partnered with the National Geographic Society to capture the history and heritage of the Sierra Nevada through an interactive website and print map featuring destinations nominated by those who know the region best.

**Major 2016 Accomplishment:**

The Sierra Nevada Geotourism MapGuide features over 1,900 destinations recommended by Sierra locals viewed by over one million visitors to the website from 104 different countries.

Learn More: www.sierranevadageotourism.org
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Carpenters 46
Acknowledgements

Thank you to our partners, donors, volunteers, and stakeholders throughout the Sierra Nevada and beyond who believe in the triple bottom line, the understanding that our communities, economy, and environment do best when working together. Our mission is emboldened, our resolve strengthened, and our efforts enlightened because of you.
Word Cloud generated from 2016 SBC Network Survey:
“What word comes to mind when you think of SBC?”