ANNUAL REPORT 2017
Sierra Business Council
Dear Friends,

2017 was a great year in the Sierra Nevada. We are finally beginning to see breakthroughs in critical areas of policy, regional advocacy and economic development, and the concerted effort to tackle climate change continues to expand.

Sierra Business Council’s focus in 2017 has been increasing new business opportunities by creating regional sources of investment capital, improving our communities’ capacity to adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change, and increasing advocacy to ensure the Sierra has a fair share of financial resources to manage our natural assets.

In 2017, our business innovation team served more than 340 clients with technical assistance. We began managing local micro-lending programs to provide critically needed expansion and start up funding for triple bottom line focused businesses.

Our climate and business teams partnered in 2017 with American Renewable Power to restart the Loyalton biomass co-generation facility, creating dozens of jobs and providing an important market driver to help underwrite forest restoration and wildfire mitigation in the northern Sierra Nevada.

Additionally, our advocacy team dramatically increased the potential for funding available in the Sierra.

We helped to secure up to $492 million for the region in two natural resource bond measures on the California ballot.

In 2018, we will concentrate on improving opportunities for business innovation, including increasing housing and broadband connectivity, securing funding for natural resources and scaling climate solutions, particularly around forest management.

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 and more embedded in the new generation of leadership in our region than ever before.

Without you, our supporters, our network, our partners and our friends, none of this would be possible. 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.
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 RESOURCES**

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**
OUR FINANCES

2017 Revenue:

$2,464,950

- Grants (18.30%)
- Fee for Service (67.70%)
- Major Donors (2.50%)
- Individual Donors (0.50%)
- Other Revenue (11%)
2017 Expenses:

- Energy (24.90%)
- Climate (20.70%)
- Advocacy (2.30%)
- Business Support (25.90%)
- Other Programs (7%)
- Fundraising (5.40%)
- Ind. Operating (13.80%)

$2,220,551
In the fall of 2017, Truckee Yoga Collective contacted the Sierra SBDC for assistance with their soon-to-be-open yoga studio.

The owners requested help with business structuring and marketing, so our team matched them with two expert consultants.

The owners and consultants worked together to create a marketing strategy for the grand opening as well as brand positioning through 2018.

Finally, the team devoted time to the implementation of that strategy, including pricing, branding, and a digital marketing strategy designed for both social and email marketing.

Client Testimonial:
Meghan Ruiz, Owner, Truckee Yoga Collective
www.TruckeeYogaCo.com

“Truckee Yoga Collective contacted the Sierra SBDC shortly before opening the studio in October 2017. We received quality, professional support and advice, specifically around our desired area of interest: social media marketing.

With the help of the SBDC, especially Hillary Talbot, our membership continues to grow beyond the initial 90 that bought our grand opening special.”
Sierra CAMP

Sierra Climate Adaptation & Mitigation Partnership

**Budget:** $177,713

Sierra CAMP is a public-private, cross-sector partnership working to promote climate adaptation and mitigation strategies across the Sierra Nevada region.

**Major Accomplishment:**

Sierra CAMP further educated our region on the effects of climate change via policy workshops, research presentations and community listening sessions.

Learn More: www.sbsierracamp.org

Climate Planning

**Budget:** $307,866  

Through Pacific Gas and Electric Company’s (PG&E) Government and Community Partnerships Program, SBC has assisted 28 local governments in meeting statewide goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including the development of nine energy action plans.

**Major Accomplishment:**

The Climate Planning Team worked to develop Energy Action Plans for the City of Sonora and Placer County and completed a Greenhouse Gas Re-Inventory and forecasting of 2050 emissions for the Town of Truckee.

Learn More: www.sierrabusiness.org
Sierra Nevada Geotourism

**Budget:** $25,000

Sierra Business Council and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy partner 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 Accomplishment:**

The Sierra Nevada Geotourism MapGuide has helped travelers get off the beaten path by featuring nearly 2,000 destinations and events recommended by Sierra locals, viewed by over one million visitors to the website from 109 countries all across the globe.

Learn More: www.SierraNevadaGeotourism.org

Lake Tahoe Water Trail

**Budget:** $24,178

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 Accomplishment:**

The LTWT has created and printed 11 of the 20 permanent educational wayfinding signs that will reside along the shores of Lake Tahoe as well as developed the Paddler Water Safety and Stewardship brochure to safely guide and inform paddlers through the water trail.

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

Budget: $843,158

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 Accomplishment:

SNEW has served over 1,500 clients, providing nearly $4 million in rebates to those customers, resulting in a reduction in energy use and greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to 2,371 homes' electricity use for an entire year.

Learn More: www.sierrabusiness.org

Client Testimonial:
Bill Pruett, Energy Education Specialist
Rocklin Unified School District
www.RocklinUSD.org

“In 2015, we were introduced to SBC by our Pacific Gas and Electric representative. SBC did a site audit of Rocklin High School and that summer we did a complete interior and exterior LED lighting upgrade. We realized a savings of approximately $70,000 a year.

In the summer of 2017 we did additional LED lighting upgrades on six of our campuses. Again, SBC assisted us and followed up with detailed inspections when the work was complete. One of the sites was also inspected by the California Energy Commission and passed with flying colors. I have received numerous complements from neighbors and staff about the new lighting on all of these sites.

We are planning on doing additional lighting upgrades and will absolutely use Sierra Business Council again.”
KEY PROGRAMS

Gold Country Broadband Consortium

Budget: $150,000

In 2017, SBC took over a $150,000 grant to help increase internet access and use in Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Sierra, and eastern Alpine counties. GCBC was formed to leverage regional, state and natural resources as an investment in improving and expanding broadband access.

Major Accomplishment:

The Gold Country Broadband Consortium collected over 100 speed tests from residents in the region, which will help identify pockets of unserved areas and connect SBC with communities in need to help bridge the digital divide.

Learn More: www.SierraBusiness.org

Partner Testimonial:

Michael P. Anderson  
President, Clientworks, Inc.  
www.clientworks.com

“As soon as Sierra Business Council assumed administration of the Gold Country Broadband Consortium in 2017, I could tell they were ready to get to work. Having served as a volunteer technical consultant with the Gold Country Broadband Consortium since 2012 as the owner of Clientworks, an IT services company based in Nevada City, my involvement has been predicated on the critical broadband needs of my rural business clients.

SBC’s renewed resolve to create both a comprehensive broadband plan for the consortium’s five-county area as well as adopt a keen focus on helping specific projects break ground has been a huge shot in the arm for economic development in the Sierra Nevada.”
Government Affairs

**Budget:** $40,000

SBC’s Government Affairs team is a well-respected voice for the Sierra in Sacramento. Engaging on issues including rural equity, natural resource protection, access to broadband, and building climate resiliency, SBC works with partners to drive funding to the region, bridge the urban-rural divide, and strengthen local communities.

**Major Accomplishment:**

2017 marked two major victories for the Government Affairs team and the Sierra Nevada region.

California’s legislature voted to extend the Cap-and-Trade program to 2030 with specific benefits to the Sierra. The agreement ensures California will continue to reduce harmful emissions while supporting economic growth.

SBC also successfully advocated for the inclusion of $142 million for natural resource and watershed protection projects in the Sierra in Proposition 68. In addition, SBC engaged with the proponents of a November Water Bond, which, if successful, will direct an additional $350 million to the Sierra Nevada.

**Community Testimonial:**

Jeff Darlington, Executive Director
Placer Land Trust
www.placerlandtrust.org

“Sierra Business Council’s thoughtful and strategic approach to addressing regional issues through statewide advocacy has allowed Placer Land Trust, and many other similar organizations, to amplify our impact in the areas we work. SBC’s ongoing work on Cap-and-Trade funding, Proposition 68, and other state funding initiatives has positioned PLT and its partners to usher in a new era of land conservation throughout the Sierra Nevada.”
Our Board of Directors

Allan Pietrasanta, Chairman
J. Rousek Toy Company

John Singlaub, Vice Chairman
Ascent Environmental, Inc.

Steve Noll, Treasurer
Design Workshop

Betony Jones, Secretary
Fourth Sector Strategies

Mercedes de la Garza
Reno/Tahoe Architect

Richard Morrison
Former Bank of America

Tim Frank
Sustainability Consultant

Dennis Meyer
Andregg Psomas

Charles Segerstrom
Energy Efficiency Consultant

Bill Feyling
Carpenters 46

Image Courtesy Loren Clark
Thank You

We want to thank and acknowledge our partners, donors, volunteers, and supporters 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. Together we are making the region an even better place to live, work and recreate in.
Word Cloud generated from 2016 SBC Network Survey:
“What word comes to mind when you think of SBC?”