MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear friends,

The past year witnessed some of the Sierra Nevada’s greatest sorrows alongside historically momentous successes. We lost forest areas and entire communities to catastrophic wildfires, then passed legislation and committed to collaborative efforts to help prevent it from happening again. We voted to secure significant funding for the Sierra’s parks and natural resources and set new bar for funding for the Sierra. We’ve seen the housing crisis grow to new peaks and fostered a stronger urban/rural connection to tackle it. The impacts of climate change and income inequality have reached our region, our communities, and our doorsteps. We’re answering them with the triple bottom line.

Sierra Business Council’s focus in 2018 has been increasing advocacy to ensure the Sierra has a fair share of financial resources to manage our natural and social assets, increasing new business and housing opportunities by creating regional sources of investment capital and supporting smart growth projects, and improving our region’s capacity to adapt to and mitigate climate change.

We managed local micro-lending programs to provide critically needed expansion and start up funding for local entrepreneurs. We managed a down payment assistance program for first-time homebuyers. Our team also worked diligently to gather the data needed for internet service providers to increase broadband connectivity.

Our climate and business teams collaborated with partners to restart the Loyalton biomass co-generation facility, now Resource Regen, creating dozens of jobs and providing a market-driven underwriter for forest restoration and wildfire mitigation in the northern Sierra.

Our advocacy team saw the fruits of the past four years’ labor in the support and passage of Proposition 68, securing a historic $142 million for the Sierra/Cascade region. Additionally, we sponsored our first piece of legislation, a bipartisan bill that will help to preserve and restore Sierra Nevada watersheds through the Sierra Nevada Conservancy’s Watershed Improvement Program.

In 2019, we will concentrate on increasing triple bottom line innovation, including improving renewable energy and housing opportunities, securing funding for wildfire prevention and natural resources, and scaling climate solutions throughout the region.

Sierra Business Council’s message, that we can have a strong economy, vibrant communities, a healthy environment and empowered individuals simultaneously, is more relevant and more possible today 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. We hope you will join our efforts in 2019.

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

The Sierra Nevada region demonstrates the core values of the triple bottom line, that resilient communities, an inspiring environment, and a healthy, inclusive economy prosper most when prospering together. Through innovation, integrity, and respect, Sierra Business Council harnesses this proactive model to develop and implement local projects and collaborative efforts that tackle our region’s greatest challenges.

Our goal is a diverse, inventive, and sustainable region that harnesses the triple bottom line to catalyze environmental, social, and economic solutions for this and future generations.
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.

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.

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.
OUR FINANCES

2018 Expenses

$2,185,979.45

- Energy: 16.9%
- Climate: 19.0%
- Fundraising: 6.0%
- General Administrative: 19.0%
- Other Programs: 1.4%
- Business Innovation: 33.7%
- Advocacy: 4.0%
OUR FINANCES

2018 Revenue

$2,192,680.00

Major Donors
2.2%

Individual Donors
0.9%

Other Revenue
12.8%

Grants
16.9%

Fee for Service
67.2%
CLIMATE ACTION

Sierra CAMP

Sierra Climate Adaptation & Mitigation Partnership

**Budget:** $158,944

Sierra CAMP is a cross-sector partnership that promotes and facilitates regional climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, serves as a climate action capacity-building hub for Sierra communities, and fosters urban-rural connections to build state-wide investment in our region’s communities and natural resources.

**Major Impact:**

In 2018, Sierra CAMP hosted two wildfire disaster preparedness workshops for high risk communities and provided educational workshops and webinars on forest restoration, biomass case studies, and climate change policies.

**Partner Testimonial:**

Devin Middlebrook  
Sustainability Program Coordinator  
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

“Sierra CAMP is an invaluable resource for climate action in the Sierra. The regular updates, legislation watch, funding opportunities, and webinars are always relevant and informative. The greatest benefit of Sierra CAMP is staying connected with other communities across the region all working to address climate change. We are stronger together.”

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

**Budget**: $530,143

SBC promotes and implements energy efficiency, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and renewable energy use through Sierra Nevada Energy Watch (SNEW), a partnership with Pacific Gas and Electric Company that serves 11 counties of the Sierra.

SNEW delivers no-cost energy assessments, project management assistance for energy efficiency projects, financing expertise, and relationships with the region’s top contractors.

**Major Impact:**
In 2018, SNEW worked with 11 public agencies and 97 businesses to save over 1.5 million kWh, the equivalent of approximately 40,984 gallons of gasoline.

Climate Planning

**Budget**: $353,366

Our Climate Planning team assists local jurisdictions throughout the Sierra to proactively plan for climate change by reducing emissions now and adapting to the changes we are experiencing today.

The team works closely with local governments and community members to conduct greenhouse gas inventories and develop emissions reduction plans that will make their communities more resilient, efficient, and vibrant.

**Major Impact:**
The team recently completed Energy Action Plans for the City of Sonora, Grass Valley, and Nevada County, assisted in the development of Placer County’s Sustainability Plan, and is currently working with Mammoth Lakes on the Town’s Climate Action Plan.

Learn More: www.sierrabusiness.org
Client Testimonial:

Jenna Baker
Co-Owner, J&J Gemstones

“We are so grateful for the SBDC! With their free and unlimited support, I have learned the practical steps needed to turn our dream of running our own crystal business into a reality! In less than one year, we were able to take the leap and work for ourselves 100%. The SBDC is such an incredible resource in our community that I hope all new businesses take advantage of!”

Sierra Small Business Development Center

Budget: $412,028

The Sierra Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides free one-on-one consulting and workshops to local entrepreneurs to help their businesses start, grow, and thrive. The Sierra SBDC currently serves El Dorado, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, and Sierra Counties.

Major Impact:

In 2018, the Sierra SBDC served 400 clients with 1,692 hours of business counseling, helped create or retain 171 jobs in the region and infused $12.3 million in capital into the Sierra Nevada.

Our Sierra SBDC team also teamed up with the Martis Fund to relaunch the Martis Fund Homebuyer Assistance Program, offering $500,000 in loans for local working families looking to purchase a home.

Learn More:
www.sierrasbdc.com
Gold Country Broadband Consortium

**Budget:** $144,858

In 2017, SBC took over a grant to help increase internet access and speed 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 in rural areas.

The Consortium drew the attention of local internet service providers (ISPs) who have supported additional data collection to better understand local broadband needs.

**Major Impact:**

In 2018, the Consortium conducted a resident survey to help ISPs identify areas of need and determine the feasibility of infrastructure projects in Sierra City and on Donner Summit. 718 surveys were mailed to residents and the collected responses have been shared with local ISPs who plan to use the data to increase broadband availability and speed in particularly unserved and underserved areas.

Sierra Nevada Geotourism

In partnership with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and the National Geographic Society, the Sierra Nevada Geotourism MapGuide helps travelers get off the beaten path and experience the Sierra through the eyes of a local through an interactive website and print map showcasing with destinations nominated by those who know the region best. The project was without funding in 2018, but remains at the heart of SBC’s sustainable tourism and recreation efforts.

Learn more: www.sierranevadageotourism.org
Lake Tahoe Water Trail

**Budget:** $138,013

The Lake Tahoe Water Trail (LTWT) is a designated water route along the 72-mile shoreline that links public beaches with launch and landing sites to help paddlers have a safe recreation experience while practicing good stewardship that protects the watershed.

**Major Impact:**

Educational wayfinding signage was designed and placed at 20 public access sites along the trail, offering water safety and weather information, mapped paddle routes, public launch/landing, aquatic invasive species prevention, and natural resource protection tips.

LTWT staff also accomplished a major website upgrade that includes interactive mobile maps and real-time wind and weather conditions to help paddlers with lake access, wayfinding, and stewardship.

Learn More:
www.LakeTahoeWatertrail.org

**Bonus Project**

**Donner Summit Visitors Center Feasibility Study:**

Pat Lalberg
President, Donner Summit Association

“Donner Summit has been looking to revitalize its economy for some years and we’re finally making progress.

Sierra Business Council has been an invaluable partner in our efforts, providing guidance, information and strategy. SBC has acted as the “sounding board” and provided connections to sources of help. SBC conducted the feasibility study this past year for a visitor center on Donner Summit, producing an analytical and aspirational document that will serve as the basis for continued progress.”
Sierra Business Council has demonstrated a true commitment to the advancement of Sierra interests through their leadership of the Sierra Consortium. When the land trusts of Sierra Cascade Land Trust Council identified the need to unite our voices in a collective effort for the Sierra, SBC responded to the call to action taking on coordination of this important effort. The extended land trust community took note of this leadership and honored SBC with an award at this year's California Council of Land Trusts' conference. On behalf of the land trust community we extend our gratitude for SBC's leadership, vision and innovative spirit.

Partner Testimonial:
Bridget Fithian
Executive Director, Sierra Foothill Conservancy

“Sierra Business Council has demonstrated a true commitment to the advancement of Sierra interests through their leadership of the Sierra Consortium. When the land trusts of Sierra Cascade Land Trust Council identified the need to unite our voices in a collective effort for the Sierra, SBC responded to the call to action taking on coordination of this important effort.

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Regional Advocacy

Government Affairs

Budget: $114,858

SBC’s Government Affairs team is an established 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 Impact:
2018 was a landmark year for SBC’s Government Affairs Department and the Sierra overall. The Sierra Nevada will be safer from wildfire, more prepared for climate change, and economically secure due to the passage of Proposition 68 which directs $142 million directly to the Sierra and by recognizing the Sierra Nevada Conservancy’s Watershed Improvement Program in state law (through AB 2849).

SBC sponsored AB 2849, sat on a steering committee and led regional efforts for the Proposition 68 campaign.

In partnership with the Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation, SBC also began advocating for solutions to the region’s affordable housing crisis by leading the advocacy work of the Tahoe Truckee Mountain Housing Council.

Learn More: www.sierrabusiness.org
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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.

Together we are making the region an even better place to live, work and recreate in.
Word Cloud generated from 2018 SBC Network Survey:
“What word comes to mind when you think of SBC?”