MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends,

The past year brought challenges as well as opportunities to the Sierra. The region juggled power shut-offs, increased wildfire risk, and affordable housing issues while elevating our voice in Sacramento. Throughout it all, Sierra Business Council harnessed these new opportunities by implementing proactive and positive projects while adapting to a shifting environment and economy.

Sierra Business Council’s focus throughout this past year has been to empower the Sierra Nevada to prosper in the face of adversity. In 2019, SBC continued to make strides in establishing itself as a steward leader in the Sierra, elevating awareness of the triple bottom line in communities up and down the region.

In 2019, we merged two long standing SBC programs that together laid the foundation for our work in climate resilience. The Sierra Nevada Energy Watch (SNEW) and Climate Planning teams consolidated to form Climate Planning, a collaborative program that encompasses all of SBC’s established work in energy efficiency, renewable energy, climate adaptation and climate advocacy. Projects that fall under the Climate Planning Team’s scope include greenhouse gas reduction inventories, energy efficiency consulting, education and public outreach, maximizing consumer savings, and more emissions-reducing programs.

Our legislative focus over the last year prioritized tracking wildfire legislation and other statewide initiatives that elevated forest health and management as well as clean energy and climate resilience. We also continued working closely with the Mountain Housing Council and other regional partners in bringing more opportunities for affordable housing solutions to the Sierra.

Our business innovation team provided ongoing critical assistance to small businesses and communities, including those impacted by power outages that interrupted business as usual, proving once again that SBC as well as the Sierra is nimble and resilient. The Sierra SBDC also relaunched the Martis Fund Down Payment Assistance program, helping first time home buyers achieve their homeownership dreams in the Sierras.

In 2020, we will concentrate our efforts on securing funding for COVID-19 emergency response, business innovation, wildfire prevention and climate resilience in the Sierra as well as prioritize innovative solutions to affordable housing challenges, energy self-reliance, and other issues impacting the region.

In the Sierra Nevada, opportunities abound and through innovation, integrity, and respect, Sierra Business Council continues to prove itself adept at adapting to a shifting environment, economy, and population. Our approach is proactive and positive, and our 2019 projects empower Sierra Nevada to become the best place to raise a family, seek adventure, learn, engage in community, grow a business, and find meaningful work.

Without you, our growing network of supporters and friends, we wouldn’t be where we are today - driving positive change to create a more resilient and prosperous Sierra. For that, you have our deepest gratitude and we hope you will continue to support our triple bottom line mission in 2020.

Steve Frisch
President and CEO

Allan Pietrasanta
Chair, Sierra Business Council Board of Directors
OUR MISSION

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 act as steward leaders of the region, taking responsibility for the care and responsible management of our place, guided by the triple bottom line that considers the economy, environment, and community simultaneously.

OUR VISION

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 Focus Areas

## Climate Action

*Establishing climate resiliency and saving communities money*

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 decreased tourism revenue are anticipated results. We can minimize risk and create opportunity by planning in advance and acting now.

## Regional Advocacy

*Ensuring the Sierra’s value is recognized in legislative funding and priorities*

We focus on legislation that impacts the Sierra and our downstream users, working closely with local, regional, and statewide partners to speak up on issues that matter to our communities. We monitor and weigh in on state and occasionally federal policy to ensure the rural needs of the Sierra are heard. Issues we advocate on include wildfire protection, watershed restoration, climate change, internet access, affordable housing, job creation and retention, and sustainable outdoor recreation.

## Business Innovation

*Empowering entrepreneurs and a sustainable local economy*

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 FINANCES

2019 Expenses
$1,924,783

- 37% Business Innovation
- 22% Climate and Energy
- 19% Advocacy
- 17% General Administrative
- 4% Fundraising
- 1% Other Programs
2019 Revenue
$1,997,872

- 7% Other Revenue
- 3% Contributions
- 56% Fee for Service
- 34% Grants
CLIMATE ACTION

Sierra CAMP
(Climate Adaptation & Mitigation Partnership)

Budget: $47,160

Program Description:
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. Sierra CAMP activates the Sierra Nevada on climate action.

Major Impacts:
• Led the research, writing, and design of the publication, *Biomass in the Sierra Nevada: A Case for Healthy Forests and Rural Economies*
• Facilitated 3 Peer Adaptation Learning Groups with regional and local governments around local climate adaptation plans
• Provided technical assistance to 5 local and regional governments
• Expanded Sierra CAMP’s leadership committee to 5 members
• Hosted quarterly state-wide ARCCA meeting
• Held a Sierra-wide Business Resiliency Initiative webinar for businesses affected by wildfire
• Hosted a state-wide webinar on Climate Adaptation Case Studies in the Sierra

Partner Testimonial:
Angel Green, Placer County

“Sierra CAMP has created a platform for Placer County to discuss and problem solve climate issues that are important to our residents, business owners, and County officials. Through this collaborative, Sierra CAMP has brought together a working group with a mix of skills and expertise necessary to assist the County of Placer in developing sound solutions. Their efforts are truly appreciated!”
CLIMATE ACTION
Climate & Energy

Budget: $427,152

Program Description:
The Climate & Energy Team assists communities throughout the Sierra to proactively plan for climate change by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapting to changes already impacting the Sierra. The team works closely with local governments, school districts, public agencies, and community members to conduct GHG inventories, develop emissions reduction plans, and to execute projects that make their communities more resilient, efficient and vibrant.

Our programs increase the capacity of the public sector to identify projects, identify finance options, and get energy-saving projects off the ground. The team has also developed and supported the implementation of over a dozen Energy Action Plans (EAPs) and Climate Action Plans (CAPs) that serve as roadmaps for communities to follow while achieving their climate and energy goals.

Major Impacts:
- Completed and implemented the EAP for Nevada County
- Developed EAPs for Grizzly Flats Community Services District and Nevada Irrigation District
- Supported EAP implementation in Nevada City, Grass Valley, Sonora, Amador County, Sutter Creek, Plymouth, and Jackson
- Reached 52 local government agencies
- Coordinated energy efficiency projects at 31 sites

Partner Testimonial:
Brian Foss, Nevada County Planning Director

“Sierra Business Council has been an incredible partner and resource for Nevada County in our energy action planning. With their leadership and guidance Nevada County was able to develop a comprehensive Energy Action Plan that was tailored to the unique characteristics and needs of our rural county. SBC’s knowledgeable staff not only led the plan development but provided the coordination and facilitation of community engagement for implementing the County’s energy goals and strategies.”
Sierra Small Business Development Center

Budget: $445,776

Program Description:
The Sierra Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides 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 Impacts:
- Provided 2,390 hours of free counseling
- Served 515 unique clients
- Hosted 104 total workshops with 1,273 attendees
- Helped 34 new businesses launch
- Relaunched the Martis Fund Down Payment Assistance program with 20 new loans
- Supported 1,045 jobs
- Created 109 new jobs

www.sierrasbdc.com
Budget: $73,029

Program Description:
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, practice good stewardship, and protect the watershed. To meet the needs of paddlers and manage their impact, SBC is responsible for assisting paddle outfitters, public/private landowners, and conservation agencies with the development and implementation of the LTWT sustainable recreation education program. In addition to the LTWT website, SBC also manages the production of educational signage, stewardship safety brochures, and a waterproof Map & Access Guide.

Major Impacts:
• Redesigned the waterproof Map & Access Guide to clearly identify public launch/landing sites and legal campgrounds
• Helped paddlers safely navigate the water route
• Promoted Lake Tahoe recreation and stewardship to more than 6,000 monthly web users

Geotourism

Program Description:
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 those who know the destinations best are able to nominate and showcase the businesses, activities, and destinations they love in the Sierra. The project was without funding in 2019 but as a self-sustaining website, it remains at the heart of SBC’s sustainable tourism and recreation efforts.
Gold Country Broadband Consortium

Budget: $34,103

Program Description:
Gold Country Broadband Consortium was formed to leverage regional, state, and national resources as an investment in improving and expanding broadband access in rural areas. Its goal is to increase internet access and speed in Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Sierra, and eastern Alpine counties.

Major Impacts:
• Assisted internet service providers (ISPs) with development and funding applications
• Provided project management support for ongoing CPUC mapping updates
• Included Broadband in the Sierra Economic Development District’s comprehensive economic development strategy
• Aligned priorities with economically disadvantaged communities needing to promote business and job growth
• Completed the Nevada County Broadband Plan
• Managed implementation of Nevada County Broadband Grant
• Collaborated with regional transportation districts to explore leveraged funding
Budget: $198,236

Program Description:
SBC’s Government Affairs team is an established voice for the Sierra in Sacramento. SBC works with partners to drive funding to the region, bridge the urban-rural divide, and strengthen local communities by engaging on rural equity, natural resource protection, wildfire mitigation, access to broadband, climate resilience, and other issues that impact the Sierra. The government affairs team stands up for the region by testifying in hearings, commenting on legislation, tracking agency grant programs, developing partnerships, weighing in on draft regulations, and campaigning to pass ballot measures.

Major Impacts:
• Advocated in Sacramento for legislation addressing wildfire risk, forest health, biomass utilization, rural workforce development programs, affordable housing, and outdoor recreation
• Weighed in on Proposition 68 funding program guidelines to ensure that the Sierra gets an equitable share of support
• Helped develop a climate resilience bond intended for the November 2020 statewide ballot
• Co-hosted the Second Annual Land Conservation Summit with the California Tahoe Conservancy to develop and prioritize the future of conservation funding in California
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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 Network Survey, “What word comes to mind when you think of SBC?”