



SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY

July 11, 2012

Ms. Liane Randolph, General Counsel and Deputy Secretary
Natural Resources Agency
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Sacramento, CA 95814

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Dear Ms. Randolph:

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) has reviewed the Draft Natural Resources Agency Tribal Consultation Policy (policy) and provides the following comments regarding the content of the policy itself and the impact on the SNC as a participating department:

- The purpose of the policy, as stated, is to ensure effective government-to-government consultationto provide meaningful input into the development of regulations, rules and policies. We believe the policy does not provide enough direction to determine what constitutes "meaningful consultation." Although it is understood that each department will have to build on this policy to describe specific methods of outreach and consultation, it would be helpful to incorporate examples derived from successful programs in place or input provided on the draft policy from the Tribes. The SNC, as a non-regulatory agency, would find further clarification useful in our Tribal Outreach program and for ongoing initiatives.
- We suggest that Item #4 - Access to Contact Information- be expanded to include guides to informational references and resources for the Natural Resources Agency departments about the California Tribes and methods of contact as well as guides to information for the Tribes about the Natural Resources Agency departments.
- We recommend that the policy include a feedback component on Tribal input received. Natural Resource Agency departments should relay to the Tribes how the information obtained from a consultation informed the decision, policy, rule or regulation.
- We strongly support enhancing the knowledge of tribal liaisons and information sharing between the departments through training and the formation of a committee. We recommend that the policy identify the number of committee meetings per year. It is unclear what "a regular basis" would mean for tribal liaisons and Tribes interested/impacted by potential outcomes.

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Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the draft policy. We look forward to working with the tribal liaisons and strengthening relationships with the Tribes within our Region.

Sincerely,



Jim Branham
Executive Officer



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