SNC’s programmatic mission is to initiate, encourage, and support efforts that improve the environmental, economic, and social well-being of the Sierra Nevada Region, its communities, and the citizens of California. Its keystone initiative, the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP), is a large-scale, holistic effort to restore resilience to the forested landscapes and communities of the Sierra Nevada, primarily through collaboration, grant funding, and project development and community support. All administrative functions overseen by the DEOA ensure the work of the SNC’s program functions are able to achieve SNC’s primary mission and implement its critical WIP operations. SNC’s board operations, budget development and oversight, accounting, and contracting functions, procurement, human resources, information technology, and business services are essential to successful implementation of SNC’s programmatic mission and operational accountability. Without successful and independent management and functioning of the administrative operations, SNC would be unable to undertake projects and funding programs that support the agency’s mission and address the opportunities and complex challenges of today, particularly the unprecedented receipt of funding and urgency of actions as we fight climate change, drought, and wildfire.
9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

Working at the second organizational level reporting to the Executive Officer, the DEOA is a part of the Executive Management team and assures the authority for implementing and managing SNC's overall administrative operations. The DEOA exercises independent decision-making in developing, managing, and providing direction and oversight for key department-wide services including Budgets, Accounting, Contracts, Procurement, Information Technology, Business Services, Human Resources, and Legal Compliance. The DEOA has broad responsibility for policy planning, development, implementation and enforcement, and extensive participation and a decisive role in department-wide policy evolution. The DEOA implements and enforces statewide administrative laws, executive orders, rules, and policies in these areas. As a key member of the Executive Team, the DEOA advises the Governing Board, Executive Officer, Chief Deputy Executive Officer, and other staff on administrative matters and exercises substantial participation in the formulation, operation, and evaluation of broad program policy. The DEOAs called upon to serve as acting Executive Officer in their absence. Examples of key duties include:

- Budgets and Accounting: The DEOA plans and directs the SNC's budgeting and accounting activities, including Fi$Cal implementation, managing cash flow, establishing, and auditing fiscal controls, and monitoring, analyzing, and projecting expenditures and reimbursements. The DEOA presents expenditure projections and recommendations to the executive team and is a key executive in budget reconciliation and decision-making activities. The DEOA acts as primary SNC negotiator for budget changes with the Resources Agency, the Department of Finance, and the Governor's Office and prepares and presents testimony during budget hearings. The DEOA negotiates with the Department of Finance to provide necessary funds and/or flexibility to avoid negative cash flow due to reimbursable accounts.

- Human Resources: The DEOA provides oversight and leadership to the SNC's human resource operations, including personnel transactions, training, telework, health and safety, classification and pay, labor relations and negotiations, grievances, disciplinary actions, selection and examinations, payroll and benefits, workers' compensation, employee assistance program, equal employment opportunity, and workplace violence. The DEOA serves as the SNC's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer, addressing incoming complaints of discrimination or harassment, ensuring appropriate investigations are conducted, and approving final action on recommendations resulting from any investigations. The DEOA is responsible for developing and implementing the State Personnel Board, the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), employee organizations, among others, presenting recommendations, identifying needs, responding to requests, reporting actions, and acting as a decision-maker for the department.

- Information Technology: The DEOA plans and directs the SNC's IT functions, participating in the formulation, development, promulgation and implementation of IT policy and procedures, and overseeing staff who design, deploy, and provide support services for the SNC's information processing systems, computer equipment, and mobile devices. The DEOA ensures information assets and associated technology, applications, systems, infrastructure, and processes are adequately protected, providing extensive risk and information security oversight, reporting, governance, communications, education, and consulting.

- Contracting, Procurement, and Business Services: The DEOA provides leadership and oversight to the SNC's contracting, procurement, and business services activities, ensuring compliance with all applicable laws, rules, practices, and procedures; represents the department before various control agencies in resolving the most complex or sensitive problems; and provides accountability and transparency in all contracting and procurement activities.

- Consultation and Accountability: The DEOA functions as an executive level liaison to Department of Finance, Cal/HR, Department of Technology and various control agencies, all levels of government, the private sector and SNC's management and executive team on administrative and related compliance matters associated with the SNC. The DEOA is responsible for department wide compliance with the State Leadership Accountability Act (SLAA) to maintain effective systems of internal control, to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of these controls on an ongoing basis, and to biennially report on the adequacy.

- Legal Compliance: The DEOA ensures all administrative programs are fully compliant with the law and various procedural documents, including guiding the SNC's Conflict of Interest and Public Records Act programs. The DEOA makes recommendations on proposed laws and changes to existing laws.
B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- [ ] Program is directly related to department’s primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- [ ] Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- [ ] Program plays a supporting role in achieving department’s mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

Description: The administrative services provided under the CEA are critical to all staffing, contracting, funding, budgeting, accounting, health and safety, and information technology and security operations conducted throughout the SNC, statewide. Without competent, efficient, and reputable administrative functions not only would the department not be able to meet all legal, bond, regulatory, and environmental requirements inherent in implementing its mission, the SNC's reputation could be harmed, delegations withdrawn, and funding sources impacted, making it impossible to quickly and effectively address the critical issues across the 27 million acre Sierra Nevada Regions. Furthermore, the CEA is responsible for workforce and succession planning and for completing and implementing the State Leadership Accountability Act, also known as SLAA, which was enacted in Gov. Code sections 13400-13407. And finally, the CEA is responsible for the development and implementation of all health and safety operations including development and implementation of the Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP), the COVID-19 Prevention Plan (CPP), and the Continuity of Operations/Government Plan (COOP/COG). All of these plans and efforts are critical to ensure the health and safety of SNC employees, continuity of government operations, and to reduce the waste of resources and strengthen internal controls, necessary to carry out the SNC's primary mission.
11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

This CEA is being established at a critical time. With the unprecedented increase in large, high-severity wildfire activity, and in a changing climate facing severe to extreme to exceptional drought conditions affecting all of the SNC Region, the work of the SNC to address regional needs that advance state and federal policy goals is especially important. Working with key partners and policymakers, the SNC is being called upon to successfully deliver programs that are helping to build the capacity of regional organizations to deliver a pipeline of projects that will build resilience in Sierra forests and communities. Key considerations:

**SNC Expansion:**
Since 2019 and during the COVID-19 pandemic, the SNC has increased staffing by 25 percent, its local assistance budget by 53 percent, and is overseeing a significant boundary expansion to its service area, at a time with significant challenges. In January 2022 the SNC’s regional boundary expansion (Chapter 182, Statutes of 2021, Senate Bill 208) added just over 1.3 million acres to its service area. This action increased the reach and responsibility of the SNC from all or part of twenty-two counties, to all or part of twenty-four counties.

**Efficient Delivery of Critical Programmatic Work:**
In the last two years, over 2 million acres in the Sierra Nevada Region have burned in wildfires of unprecedented size and severity. These fires have threatened the water supply, wildlife habitat, carbon stores, Native American sacred sites and biocultural values, and recreation opportunities. Many elected officials, stakeholders, and state and federal agencies recognize the key role the SNC plays to inform about the science and issues, to support regional partners with funding and technical assistance, and to convene collaborative groups that are assessing, prioritizing projects, and taking actions during these unprecedented times.

**Increased Funding and Administrative Priorities:**
In 2021 Governor Newsom signed the $2 billion wildfire package enabling the state to take urgent action on projects that support wildfire suppression, improve forest health, and build resilience in communities. In light of SNC’s on-the-ground actions and ability to get funding to organizations in a timely and efficient way, the Governor has provided SNC with $107 million in direct General Fund monies, with an additional $25.8 million proposed in future years. The SNC also received three positions to support this critical time sensitive work.

The SNC is also recognized as a valuable, reliable, efficient, and effective administrator by other state and federal government agencies. Since 2019 SNC has taken on 28.25 cumulative years of agreements totaling over $17.5 million, of which over $14.5 million will be granted throughout the Region. For example, the US Forest Service signed an agreement with SNC to give $500,000 to fund a position at SNC to work on federal forest issues. The SNC also has a $7.2 million agreement with the Plumas National Forest to provide restoration services on National Forest land. The SNC also serves as a regional block grant implementor for the Department of Conservation’s Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program, currently managing over $9.67 million in subgrants to support regional capacity-building, planning, and project development. These are highly technical and complicated agreements with budget implications that need proactive management and oversight.

This CEA is needed at this time because the complexity of managing the administration functions for these growing and crucial programs, and the criticality of ensuring compliance with all state and federal rules and laws, especially in establishing fiscal policy and controls, is essential to protect the public interest, effectively manage delegations to get funding and projects on the ground as quickly as possible, and to support and enhance the reputation of the SNC to ensure future funding and growth options. Delegation of additional authorities and autonomy to the CEA, and having an additional member of the Executive Team who can represent the Executive Officer at high level meetings, will allow the Executive Officer and Chief Deputy Executive Officer to focus primarily on programmatic priorities and future funding sources.
12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

Growth can destabilize an organization. Planning for and managing growth via hiring, telework, and training/retention policies, and as part of Workforce Planning and Strategic Growth/Succession plan development. Rapid growth without measured administrative policies that are compliant with control agency guidelines while meeting the speed and timing needs of the department can destroy an organization. As a member of the SNC's Executive Team, the CEA has the principle role in the development, implementation, and evaluation of SNC's Administrative policies and procedures, including advising the Executive Officer, Chief Deputy Executive Officer, and Governing Board, on administrative policy issues and activities that provide a stable and consistent platform for the department. These issues may include sensitive and potentially costly matters such as progressive discipline, non-tenure appointments; grievances, complaints, involuntary termination, adverse actions, contract protests, invoice disputes, budget deficiencies, and sexual harassment to name a few. Specific areas include but are not limited to:

### Fiscal Services (Accounting, Budget, and Fi$Cal) Policies
Budget planning, state and federal financial reporting, expenditure tracking and projecting, expenditure reporting, management of funds, including reimbursable funding agreements, travel, general ledger and coordination with Department of Finance, Legislature, Administration, and DGS Contracted Fiscal Services (CFS). The lack of appropriate budget and fiscal policies can result in the inability to pay vendor invoices, issue payroll, and issue grant payments. Additional, in can result in the interruption of services to the department and to the communities and citizens throughout the Sierra Nevada Region. Ultimately, it can result in the loss of state and federal funding and failure to protect the natural and community resources in the 27 million acres served by the SNC.

### Business Services, Procurement, and Contracting Policies
Reimbursable funding contracts with state and federal partners, records management, requisition of goods and services, Small Business/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise participation, asset management, inventory control, mail and shipping and receiving services, facilities and related health and safety programs, etc. The lack of appropriate business services and contracts/procurement policies could result in illegal contracts with vendors which could open the state up to unnecessary litigation and legal action. Invalid purchases could result in the loss of delegated purchasing authority and the inability to obtain required resources and supplies to operation day-to-day business. Failure to provide right-sized, clean and safe facilities, compliant with ever changing local, state, and federal policies addressing contemporary health and safety issues like faced during the 2019 Coronavirus Pandemic can put employees and the general public at risk.

### Human Resources Policies
Labor agreements, hiring and performance management practices, Equal Employment Opportunity/Discrimination Complaints, benefits including the Family and Medical Leave Act/California Family Rights Act and the COVID-19 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave, Vaccine Verification and Testing, COVID-19 Prevention and Illness and Injury Prevention Plans, filing statements of economic interests/Form 700s, Incompatible Activities, Privacy, Telework, Reasonable Accommodation, Respectful Workplace (also known as Violence in the Workplace/Bully Prevention), Sexual Harassment Prevention, etc. Non-compliance with these policies could cause undue exposure to litigation and HR complaints from employees. Without appropriate HR policies in place the SNC, its employees, and the state is exposed to inconsistent, unfair, or illegal employment practices that could result in grievances and complaints, fair employment lawsuits, or the department's loss of delegated hiring authority.

### Information Technology Policies
Information security, database and SharePoint development and maintenance, website maintenance including ADA compliance, personal electronics, electronic file storage, and compliance with various IT policies developed by the Natural Resources Agency and the Department of Technology. Appropriate IT policies add efficiencies to the SNC and the state. In turn, the lack of these appropriate policies could result in IT security breaches, virus attacks, data corruption, data loss and theft which could all lead to additional resources needed to rectify them and protect the public from exposure to data breaches.
13. What is the CEA position’s scope and nature of decision-making authority?

The DEOA will have full and independent authority to make decisions and implement changes to all administrative programs of the SNC. The DEOA will consult with other members of the Executive and management teams for input on critical decisions that will impact program. The DEOA will develop new, unique, administrative policy and will interpret and apply external policies developed by control agencies, the legislature, and the courts. The DEOA will be responsible and accountable for full legal and administrative compliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations and procedures. The DEOA will develop procedures to operationalize internal decisions and guidance from the courts, the legislature, control agencies, the Natural Resources Agency, and the Administration.

14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?

The CEA will be developing and implementing new policy to guide operations, as well as interpreting and implementing existing policy. Examples of new policy include creating guidelines, financial tools, and policy on conditions for acceptance of new funds, like those received through reimbursable agreements with other state and federal entities. Another example of new policy development is in taking on new responsibilities, such as the unique MOU and associated financial structures worked out with the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council and the Department of Finance to accept funding and the responsibilities of becoming a conservation covenant holder, in perpetuity.

Working with its professional administrative staff, the CEA will review, assess, compare, and analyze new and existing state, federal, and court-ordered/statutory actions and policy for applicability to and impact on the SNC. The CEA will direct staff to gather input from the Executive and management teams, applicable staff, control agencies, sister agencies, stakeholders, partners, and other relevant organizations, in devising and recommending potential courses of action. The CEA will present sensitive new policy or policy changes to the Executive Team for final consideration and input. The CEA will have broad independent authority to develop and implement new administrative policy in all stated areas.