



## **Technical Advisory Council**

### **Item 11: The Nature Conservancy and Funding Governance**

August 22, 2025

#### **Introduction**

In 2023, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), California coordinated with the Sierra Foothill Conservancy and the Eastern Research Group (ERG) Blue Earth Team and consulted state agencies to analyze existing governance and funding models for Nature-based Climate Solutions (NBCS) and propose recommendations in a discussion draft to meet the State's mitigation, adaptation, and resilience goals. The goals of the discussion draft were to inform funding governance approaches that could help:

- 1) Lesson the administrative burden on implementers;
- 2) Leverage private and public dollars; and
- 3) Increase coordination of conservation, restoration, and environmental management efforts.

The discussion draft analysis was based on a literature review, interviews with public and private representatives, and coordination with an Advisory Committee made up of NBS experts. Key observations and recommendations from the discussion draft included the following:

- Funding sources for nature-based climate solutions (i.e., restoration, conservation & changes in land management to address climate change) are highly fragmented
- Fragmentation of funding for NBS fosters competition among organizations/implementers instead of coordination and collaboration
- Different grant timeframes and criteria create capacity challenges for implementers
- Public funding often covers project implementation but not planning or long-term maintenance/stewardship
- Funding availability is intermittent, making long-term planning and investment in NBS activities a challenge

One concept highlighted in the discussion draft to address funding challenges is the idea of a natural climate infrastructure funding body, or facilitator, that could support counties (or groups of counties) to aggregate and distribute funding for nature-based climate solutions at a regional scale and align with existing state and landscape scale efforts and priorities. Since the development of this discussion draft, TNC and partners have been workshopping

the concepts and recommendations in the draft in several counties for additional feedback and ideas.

This discussion will highlight the findings and concepts in the discussion draft and initial feedback and invite further discussion.

### **Discussion Questions**

- What are some of the key funding obstacles for nature-based solutions in your region?
- If a natural climate infrastructure funding facilitator were piloted for your region, what should it focus on to help deliver public and/or private funds to your region and projects?
- What other efforts could be leveraged alongside this “funding facilitator” idea to accelerate the implementation of NBS?