

## 2023 Annual Report

### The McConnell Foundation

In 2023, the Foundation funded grants in the priority areas of interest to its Board of Directors, which include Children, Youth & Education; Community Vitality; Ecosystem Resilience; International giving in the countries of Nepal and Laos; Major Projects; NatureBridge in Yosemite; Scholarships; and The McConnell Fund at The Community Foundation of the North State.

The Ecosystem Resilience Program focuses on wildfire mitigation, land conservation, regenerative agriculture, and post-wildfire restoration. In recent years, catastrophic wildfire events have become Northern California's leading cause of structure loss and the greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions. Ecosystem resilience objectives include ensuring community safety, providing forest and ecosystem productivity, enabling beneficial fire, protecting watersheds, supporting rural economies, restoring degraded or damaged ecosystems, and maintaining habitat for threatened, endangered, and other species of conservation concern.

- **Enabling Beneficial Fire:** The McConnell Foundation partnered with CAL FIRE to implement prescribed fire on approximately 190 acres on Ross Ranch. Returning beneficial fire to a landscape in a region with a very active historical fire regime will reduce the potential for catastrophic wildfire to impact the property and neighboring communities. Beneficial fire will return native grasses, improve grazing for stock and wildlife, and increase water yield. The project was implemented with a variety of partners, including Shasta-Trinity CAL FIRE, Redding Fire Department, Shasta College, Shasta County Fire Department, and Shasta Land Trust.
- **Building Funding Capacity:** The Foundation provided staff and grant writing support to help the Fire Safe Council of Siskiyou County (FSC) and the City of Mt. Shasta secure funding from the United States Forest Service and CAL FIRE. The FSC secured approximately \$10,000,000 from the Community Wildfire Defense Grant, and Mt. Shasta secured \$681,000 from the Wildfire Prevention Grant.
- **Wildfire Mitigation:** The Foundation collaborated with community partners to bring funding to at-risk communities, protecting habitable structures and forest ecosystems from catastrophic wildfires. These efforts seek to perform strategically located treatments on approximately 18,000 acres (2,500 parcels) in 17 communities in Shasta, Trinity, and Siskiyou counties. Work started at the end of 2023 on wildfire mitigation in the communities of French Gulch, Keswick, and Old Shasta.
- **Land Conservation and Regenerative Agriculture:** The Foundation established conservation easements on the Foundation's Gore Ranch and developed regenerative/climate-smart management practices for implementation on Gore Ranch and Ross Ranch (upon which a conservation easement was placed in 2021).
- **Post-Wildfire Restoration:** The Foundation developed processes and partnerships to help restore landscapes on the millions of acres of land damaged through high to

moderate burn severity. Large contiguous burned areas are at risk of permanent conversion to a fire and erosion-prone landscape, with a negative effect on a number of ecosystem services, including hydrological function, carbon sequestration, and habitat.

In addition to new grants approved in 2023, the Foundation paid out funds committed to ongoing, long-term programs such as the McConnell Scholars and Yosemite Programs, and projects such as College and Career OPTIONS and North State Together under the Children, Youth & Education program area, and International programs such as community conflict transformation in Nepal, improving access to justice for citizens of Laos, women's leadership development in Nepal, and improving the water quality of Laos' rivers.

The Foundation continued its Community Vitality grantmaking and investment, catalyzing the revitalization of downtown Redding - specifically in design, infrastructure, and construction, focusing on affordable housing, active lifestyles, and fostering local, creative placemaking. Synergies between Community Vitality programming and the Foundation's efforts regarding environmental sustainability included: reducing greenhouse gas emissions by offering e-bike share to residents and tourists; and planting street trees to increase shade and reduce energy demand in downtown Redding.

Sustainability remained a high priority, with the Foundation integrating Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) into its work. SDGs are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. The SDGs were established in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and are intended to be achieved by 2030. To learn more, visit <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>. The Sustainability Committee also published a Sustainability page on the Foundation's external website: Land Stewardship, Sustainable Development, and Foundation Operations are the three main nodes.

Public use of the Foundation's trails and open space provided uninterrupted recreational walking, hiking, and biking opportunities.

Complimentary use of the Foundation's meeting rooms was offered to nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and public schools, allowing groups to escape their daily work environment and enjoy the Foundation's tranquil setting. Eighty-eight meetings were held at the Foundation's headquarters and guest house, hosting 2,918 people. A sample of the groups that met at the Foundation include Anderson New Technology High School, Axiom Repertory Theater, Butte County Office of Education, CAL FIRE, California Highway Patrol Air Operations, Caltrans, Chrysalis Charter School, City of Redding, Community Foundation of the North State, Dignity Health Connected Living, Empire Recovery Center, Foundation for California Community Colleges, Girl Scouts of Northern California, Happy Valley Union Elementary School District, Health Alliance of Northern California, Hill Country Community Clinic, Junction School, Klamath River Renewal Corporation, Mercy Foundation North, Partnership Healthplan of California, Shasta Arts Council, Shasta College Foundation, Shasta Community Health Center, Shasta County Office of Education, Shasta County Public Health Department, Shasta Head Start, Shasta Living Streets, Shasta Union High School District, Shasta Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation,

SHIELD Regional Training Consortium, United Way of Northern California, Watershed Research and Training Center, and Youth Options Shasta.

**Program-Related Investments (PRIs) and Land Conservation**

Program-Related Investments (PRIs) allow foundations to leverage their philanthropic dollars. Unlike grants, however, foundations may receive a return on their investment through either repayment of funds expended or return on equity. Investment assets are used for charitable purposes, such as affordable housing, community development, property conversions, and protecting open space. The Foundation is doing work in each of these areas through its Bell Plaza Bike Depot, Block 7 mixed-use development, wildfire recovery, mitigation and prevention, land conservation and regenerative agriculture at Ross and Gore Ranches, and housing and supportive services for people who are vulnerable or homeless. In 2023, the Foundation funded the following PRIs:

**Bell Plaza Bike Depot & Café – Adaptive Reuse Development**

\$1,763,445 construction costs  
\$166,211 programmatic costs

**Block 7 - Net Zero Mixed-Use Affordable Housing Development**

\$2,974,165 construction

**Wildfire Mitigation grants**

\$2,826,500

**Center of Hope Apartments – Permanent Supportive Housing Development**

\$85,000

**Downtown Paseo site design**

\$123,490

**Gore Ranch SALC Conservation Easement**

\$251,250 programmatic costs

**GRANTMAKING**

The Foundation's Board of Directors approved new grants in 2023, some of which were also paid in 2023. In addition to approving and making payments on new grants, funds were distributed to partner organizations on previously approved grants.

**Grants approved in 2023 and funds distributed in 2023**

**Advance Redding**

Sundial Bridge Celebrate 20  
\$85,000

**Anderson Historical Society and Museum**

In-kind donation of Parade Wagon and Russell Grader  
\$2,500

**Bella Vista Elementary School**

In-kind donation of irrigation and soil the Bella Vista Elementary Garden Club  
\$768

**Henry L. Stimson Center**

Early Warning System for Debris Floods in Nepal-Phase I  
\$85,000

**Indian Cultural Organization**

Support of Organizational Efforts to Restore Chinook Salmon  
\$250,000

**Manton Parks**

Manton School Community Center  
\$75,000

**Redding Fashion Alliance Incorporated**

Activation and Community Engagement  
\$325,000

**Redding Parks Foundation**

Future of Redding Trails Master Plan  
\$15,000

**Saola Foundation**

Laboratory Testing of Saola Dung Samples  
\$9,800

**Shasta County Young Men's Christian Association**

Healthy Shasta Partnership 2023-2025  
\$108,000

**Shasta Land Trust**

Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation Capacity and Project Development Grant Match  
\$60,000

**Shasta Land Trust**

Stewardship Grant  
\$60,509

**Shasta Land Trust**

Gore Ranch Conservation Easement  
\$775,000

**Shasta Land Trust**

Gore Ranch Conservation Easement Associated Costs  
\$22,782

**Shasta Living Streets**

BCycle Bikeshare Equipment  
\$430,294

**Shasta Living Streets**

Bike Depot Insurance  
\$62,585

**Shasta Living Streets**

Occupancy-Rent and Utility Subsidy  
\$18,581

**Shasta Living Streets**

Operating Support  
\$75,000

**Shasta Valley Cemetery District**

General support of Evergreen Cemetery  
\$5,000

**The Unyoke Foundation**

Peacebuilders' Unyoke Retreat: II  
\$10,000

**Tri County Community Network**

General Support  
\$5,000

**Turtle Bay Exploration Park**

Donation in memory of Sherrill Bambauer  
\$1,000

**University of California, Davis**

Winnemem Wintu Collaboration Research Project  
\$9,100

**Grants approved in 2023, funds not distributed in 2023**

**Community Foundation of the North State**

The McConnell Fund 2024

\$742,500

**Mahila Shakti Bikash Kendra Nepal (MSBKN)**

Rural Women's Leadership Development Project: Phase VIII

\$501,000

**McConnell Scholars Program**

2024 McConnell Scholars

\$876,000

**NatureBridge**

2025 Yosemite Program

\$140,000

**Siskiyou County Job Council**

Yreka Carnegie Library Rehabilitation Project

\$500,000

**The Asia Foundation**

Community-based River Basin Management – Phase II

\$700,000

**Turtle Bay Exploration Park**

Operating Support for Calendar Year 2024

\$1,500,000

**Turtle Bay Exploration Park**

Sustainability Gardens - Site Maintenance 2024

\$70,000

**United Way of Northern California**

Micro Shelter Community Hygiene Facilities

\$78,140

**Funds distributed in 2023 on previously approved grants**

**City of Redding**

Block 7 HCD/AHSC Funding

\$1,072,273

**City of Redding**

4th of July Fireworks  
\$105,000

**City of Shasta Lake**

Bizz Johnson Ballpark Concession and Bathroom Replacement Project  
\$165,000

**College OPTIONS, Inc.**

College and Career Options  
\$525,000

**Community Foundation of the North State**

Operating Support 2022-2026  
\$215,172

**Community Foundation of the North State**

The McConnell Fund 2023  
\$742,500

**Community Foundation of the North State**

Operating Support for Occupancy Expenses  
\$73,920

**Mahila Shakti Bikash Kendra Nepal (MSBKN)**

Rural Women's Leadership Development Project: Phase VII  
\$208,000

**McConnell Scholars Program**

2014-2023 McConnell Scholars  
\$805,028

**Natural Resource Conflict Transformation Center - Nepal (NRCTC)**

Phase VII: Together for Peace  
\$516,500

**NatureBridge**

2023 Yosemite Program  
\$42,155

**Nepal Youth Foundation**

Educating Dalit Lawyers Project  
\$20,000

**Shasta College Foundation**

North State Together 2020-2027  
\$725,000

**Shasta College Foundation**

Shasta College Global Expeditions Program  
\$11,000

**Shasta County Arts Council**

Accelerating the Redding Cultural District  
\$25,000

**The Asia Foundation**

Improving Access to Justice for All Lao Citizens: Phase IV  
\$50,000

**The Asia Foundation**

River Basin Management Project  
\$180,000

**Turtle Bay Exploration Park**

Operating Support for Calendar Year 2023  
\$1,500,000

**Turtle Bay Exploration Park**

Sustainability Gardens - Site Maintenance 2023  
\$70,000

**United Way of Northern California**

North State Equity Fund  
\$50,000

**Viva Downtown Redding**

Viva Downtown Butte Street Revitalization-Operating Grant 2022-2025  
\$100,000

**Viva Downtown Redding**

Viva Downtown Butte Street Revitalization-Rent Subsidy 2023-2025  
\$164,195

**Watershed Research And Training Center**

Weaver Basin Trails - Expansion & Improvement  
\$112,500



## **OTHER GIVING**

### **Board and Staff Matching Gift Donations**

Annually, the Foundation's Board of Directors and staff members voluntarily embrace opportunities to share their time and resources on projects and events that contribute to the quality of life in Redding and beyond.

In addition, through the Foundation's generous Matching Gifts Program, board members and staff make donations to eligible nonprofit organizations of their choice. Individual donations are matched by the Foundation.

\$194,668

### **Community Support**

As part of the Foundation's communications and community relations, it supports events and opportunities that tie nonprofit organizations to our mission and priority areas of giving annually. These are often one-time community opportunities or annual events that reach a broad audience.

\$70,489

### **Qualifying Memberships**

\$29,600

### **4-H/FFA Jr. Livestock Auctions**

The McConnell Foundation supports local 4-H and FFA clubs by purchasing animals at livestock auctions and donating the meat to One SAFE Place, Anderson-Cottonwood Christian Assistance, Empire Recovery, Great Northern Corporation, Shasta Senior Nutrition Center, Shasta-Trinity-Tehama HIV Food Bank, and Trinity County Food Bank.

\$53,793