RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION:
Authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign a letter to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy supporting the Yosemite Association. The Yosemite Association is in the process of submitting a grant request to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. The grant funding will allow Yosemite Association to continue and expand their current educational opportunities as well as initiate new innovative programs to the public.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:
The Board has authorized the Chairman to sign letters supporting certain matters that they believe will benefit Mariposa County.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:
Do not authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign the letter. The Yosemite Association will not have a letter of support from the Board of Supervisors which may negatively impact their grant request. Individual Board members may write their own letters of support.

Financial Impact? ( ) Yes (X) No
Current FY Cost: $
Annual Recurring Cost: $

Budgeted In Current FY? ( ) Yes ( ) No ( ) Partially Funded
Amount in Budget: $
Additional Funding Needed: $

Source:
Internal Transfer
Unanticipated Revenue
Transfer Between Funds
Contingency
( ) General ( ) Other

4/5's vote
4/5's vote
4/5's vote

List Attachments, number pages consecutively
Letter of Support

CLERK'S USE ONLY:
Res. No.: 88-1555 Ord. No. ______
Vote – Ayes: ___ Noes: ___
Absent: ___
Passed
Approved
Minute Order Attached ( ) No Action Necessary

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.

Date: _______
Attest: MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board
County of Mariposa, State of California
By: ________________
Deputy

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER:
☑ Requested Action Recommended
☐ No Opinion
Comments:

CAO:  ___________

Revised Dec. 2002
March 18, 2008

Jim Branham  
Executive Officer  
Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
11521 Blocker Drive, Suite 205  
Auburn, California 95603

Dear Jim:

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors supports the efforts of the non-profit Yosemite Association (Association) to connect people to Yosemite National Park, and promoting in-depth education and park stewardship. The Board is particularly supportive of the Association’s “Outdoor Classroom” that showcases Yosemite National Park, Mariposa County, and the larger Sierra Nevada. The Association’s education programs protect the region’s resources, provide opportunities for tourism, enhance the public use of our public land, and heighten the regional economy.

We support and urge the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to partner with the Yosemite Association in advancing its educational programs for Yosemite National Park, Mariposa County, and the broader Sierra Nevada. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

LYLE TURPIN  
Chairman

LT/mj  
Enclosure  

cc:   David Guy, Yosemite Association
An Outdoor Classroom For Yosemite National Park

The Yosemite Association (Association) is seeking a $45,000 Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Strategic Opportunity Grant (SOG 2) to support and enhance its Yosemite Outdoor Classroom - an education program to showcase Yosemite and the larger Sierra Nevada through place-based learning. An SNC grant will help us provide new and more diverse educational programs to promote watershed health and inform and inspire a cadre of citizens to protect and sustain the world-class Merced and Tuolumne Rivers watersheds and other public lands in the Sierra Nevada.

The Association’s Outdoor Classroom includes sixty-five seminars that will engage more than 1000 people who are keenly interested in Yosemite, the larger Sierra Nevada and its natural and cultural resources. The Outdoor Classroom also includes walk-in interpretive programs for spontaneous individuals and custom trips tailored to specific interests in the Sierra Nevada. These seminars are designed to provide a broad array of invigorating educational experiences that address the National Park Service (NPS) interpretive themes for Yosemite. Significantly, these seminars advance the SNC program goals to:

- provide increased opportunities for tourism and recreation
- protect the region’s resources
- enhance the public use and enjoyment of lands owned by the public
- assist the regional economy

The Outdoor Classroom takes public tourism and recreation to a deeper and richer level and builds an informed constituency for the stewardship of the incomparable resources of the Sierra Nevada. Building upon the NPS’s short ranger walks, bus tours and films, our environmental education programs provide more extensive interpretive experiences and allow for a more in-depth (hands on) educational experience. The excitement and expertise of instructors, both in subject matter and as communicators, help forge an ethic of resource protection for the Sierra Nevada.

We are excited by opportunities to reach more visitors and interested parties with our Outdoor Classroom and would welcome the opportunity to partner with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Like similar programs in other national parks, the Association’s education program (which is budgeted at $130,000) does not provide net revenues for the Association. Instead, we offer our diverse programs as a service to reach people interested in Yosemite and the Sierra Nevada and to provide a meaningful, high-quality experience. Importantly, an SNC grant would help us reach more interested citizens, to keep our modest tuitions affordable for a majority of Californians and other visitors, and to offer scholarships for programs.

The non-profit Yosemite Association was formed in 1923 to help the National Park Service educate visitors about Yosemite National Park and its natural and cultural resources. The Association began its award-winning field seminar program in 1971 as part of our mission to “initiate and support interpretive, educational, research, scientific and environmental programs in Yosemite National Park, in cooperation with the National Park Service. The Association provides services and direct financial support to promote park stewardship, and enrich the visitor experience.”