

## 2024 Annual Report

### The McConnell Foundation

In 2024, 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 continued to focus on wildfire resilience in Northern California. Reoccurring and destructive wildfires continued to impact the North State, including the 2024 Park Fire in Butte and Tehama counties, burning 429,603 acres and destroying 709 structures. The reoccurring impacts highlight the likelihood of future fires and the need to be proactive.

- **Enabling Beneficial Fire:** The McConnell Foundation partnered with CAL FIRE to implement prescribed fire on approximately 570 acres on Gore Ranch and 190 acres at 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 projects were implemented with various partners, including Shasta-Trinity CAL FIRE, Redding Fire Department, Shasta County Fire Department, and Shasta Land Trust.
- **Wildfire Mitigation:** The Foundation collaborated with community partners to bring funding to at-risk communities, protecting habitable structures and forest ecosystems from catastrophic wildfires. A new grant in Siskiyou County expands on three existing grants for Shasta and Trinity counties, bringing the total expected wildfire mitigation projects to approximately 22,000 acres and providing protection to 24 vulnerable communities in three counties.

In addition to new grants approved in 2024, 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. This year witnessed the fruition of the Bell Plaza Project, a vibrant hub now graced by the Shasta Bike Depot and the culinary delights of Pipeline Craft Taps & Kitchen. The Community Vitality

initiative underscores the importance of dynamic programming and consistent activation to ensure the vitality of these newly established spaces and those yet to come. 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. Ninety-seven meetings were held at the Foundation's headquarters and guest house, hosting 3,135 people. A sample of the groups that met at the Foundation include Girl Scouts of Northern California, Health Alliance of Northern California, League of Women Voters of the Redding Area, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Soroptimist International of Downtown Redding, University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources, Northern California Educational Leadership Consortium, CalTrans, Delta Kappa Gamma International Society For Key Women Educators, Partnership HealthPlan of California, Sacred Land Film Project of Earth Island Institute, California Native Plant Society, United Way of Northern California, Junction School, Northern Valley Catholic Social Services Shasta County Office of Education, California Association for Microenterprise Opportunity, Shasta Community Health Center, Shasta College Step-Up, Shasta Union High School District, Shasta Resilience Project, Northern California Educational Leadership Consortium (NorCal ELC), League of Women Voters of the Redding Area, Mercy Redding Family Practice Residency Program, Siskiyou Economic Development Council, Shasta County Office of Education, Shasta County Head Start Child Development, Inc., Anderson Union High School, Jefferson Economic Development Institute, Northern California Grantmakers/Philanthropy California, Butte County Office of Education, Lassen Park Foundation, American Association of University Women, California Association Marriage and Family Therapist, Shasta Trinity County Bar Association, California Department of Public Health, Northern ACEs Collaborative, Shasta County Probation Department, The Women's Fund of the Community Foundation of the North State, and US Small Business Administration.

### **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 with supportive services for people who are vulnerable or homeless, 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, Center of Hope mixed-use development, Paseo California predevelopment, wildfire recovery, mitigation and prevention, land conservation and regenerative agriculture at Ross and Gore Ranches. In 2024, the Foundation funded the following PRIs:

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

\$4,109,144 construction costs

\$28,049 programmatic costs

**Net Zero Mixed-Use Affordable Housing and Community Vitality Development**

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

\$411,384

**Downtown Paseo site design**

\$65,000

**Wildfire Mitigation grants**

\$3,912,601

**GRANTMAKING**

The Foundation's Board of Directors approved new grants in 2024, some of which were also paid in 2024. In addition to approving and making payments on new grants, funds were distributed to partner organizations on previously approved grants.

**Grants approved in 2024 and funds distributed in 2024**

**Advance Redding**

Civic Auditorium Lighting

\$150,000

**California State Grange Foundation**

Ono Grange Rebuild Project

\$250,000

**City of Mount Shasta**

In-kind donation of 1998 Jacobsen Gooseneck Trailer to Mt. Shasta Fire Department

\$10,500

**Community Foundation of the North State**

In Honor of Bill Cox's retirement from The McConnell Foundation Board of Directors  
\$12,000

**Henry L. Stimson Center**

Early Warning System for Debris Floods in Nepal-Phase II  
\$90,000

**IUCN, International Union for Conservation Of Nature & Natural Resources**

Lao Ecology Small Grant Program - Phase II  
\$238,500

**JPR Foundation**

Cascade Theatre Grand Drape and Handrails  
\$24,223

**Kent State University**

Support for Open Access to Book  
"Functional Coexistence is Socio-Political Conflict: Enabling Social Change Across Decades"  
\$8,000

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

Global Platform III  
\$28,000

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

Phase VIII: Peace for Prosperity  
\$550,000

**Shasta County Office of Education**

Pathways to Success: Integrating Community Schools and Cradle-to-Career Initiatives in the  
North State  
\$1,414,000

**Shasta Living Streets**

Block 7 HCD/AHSC Funding  
\$225,959

**Shasta Living Streets**

Build Capacity and Scale Sustainable Programs for a Bikeable-Walkable Downtown  
\$724,700

**United Way of Northern California**

Building Bridges Initiative-Equity Fund  
\$25,000

**Viva Downtown Redding**

Viva Downtown Place-Making  
\$372,000

**Grants approved in 2024, funds not distributed in 2024**

**Community Foundation of the North State**

The McConnell Fund at the Community Foundation of the North State 2025  
\$742,500

**Fall River Resource Conservation District**

Upper Sacramento River Watershed Forest Resilience Assessment and Collaborative  
\$50,000

**McConnell Scholars Program**

2025 McConnell Scholars  
\$876,000

**NatureBridge**

2026 Yosemite Program  
\$140,000

**Shasta County Arts Council as Fiscal Sponsor for Redding Film Fund**

Sundial Film Festival  
\$75,000

**Shasta County Office of Education**

Homeless Families Short-Term Motel Program  
\$37,500

**Shasta Living Streets**

Clean Mobility Options Pass-Through Grant  
\$1,126,215

**The Ford Family Foundation**

Siskiyou County Alignment  
\$30,000

**Turtle Bay Exploration Park**

Operating Support for Calendar Year 2025  
\$1,500,000

**Turtle Bay Exploration Park**

Sustainability Gardens - Site Maintenance 2025  
\$70,000

**Whiskeytown Environmental School Community**

Rebuild Whiskeytown Environmental School  
\$1,000,000

**Funds distributed in 2024 on previously approved grants**

**Advance Redding**

Sundial Bridge Celebrate 20  
\$61,250

**Block 7 Retail Investors, LLC**

Parking Garage for Block 7 Net Zero Housing and Downtown Activation Project  
\$237,562

**City of Redding**

Block 7 HCD/AHSC Funding  
\$3,357,391

**City of Redding**

4th of July Fireworks  
\$105,000

**College OPTIONS, Inc.**

College and Career Options  
\$350,000

**Community Foundation of the North State**

Operating Support 2022-2026  
\$193,375

**Community Foundation of the North State**

The McConnell Fund 2024  
\$742,500

**Community Foundation of the North State**

Operating Support for Occupancy Expenses  
\$77,028

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

Rural Women's Leadership Development Project: Phase VII  
\$17,880

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

Rural Women's Leadership Development Project: Phase VIII

\$250,000

**McConnell Scholars Program**

2014-2024 McConnell Scholars

\$779,682

**NatureBridge**

2024 Yosemite Program

\$65,650

**NatureBridge**

2025 Yosemite Program

\$29,790

**Nepal Youth Foundation**

Educating Dalit Lawyers Project

\$20,000

**Redding Fashion Alliance Inc.**

Activation and Community Engagement

\$100,000

**Shasta College Foundation**

North State Together 2020-2027

\$617,000

**Shasta Family YMCA**

Healthy Shasta Partnership 2023-2025

\$36,000

**Shasta Land Trust**

Sustainable Agricultural Land Conservation Capacity and Project Development Grant Match

\$20,000

**Shasta Living Streets**

Occupancy-Rent and Utility Subsidy

\$55,743

**Siskiyou County Job Council**

Yreka Carnegie Library Rehabilitation Project

\$500,000

**The Asia Foundation**

Community-based River Basin Management-Phase II  
\$300,000

**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

**Viva Downtown Redding**

Viva Downtown Butte Street Revitalization-Operating Grant 2022-2025  
\$75,000

**Viva Downtown Redding**

Viva Downtown Butte Street Revitalization-Rent Subsidy 2023-2025  
\$172,779

**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 organizations of their choice. Individual donations are matched by the Foundation.

\$221,886

**Community Support**

As part of the Foundation's communications and community relations, it supports events and opportunities that connect 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.

\$76,126

**Qualifying Memberships**

\$20,000

**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.

\$57,137