

# Sierra Business Council Sierra Solutions Conference: Big Ideas for a Small Planet



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Press Release Summary: MAMMOTH LAKES, California—The Sierra Business Council and Sierra Nevada Conservancy hosted the Sierra Solutions Conference October 3-4. Over 200 members gathered from across California to share insights and learn from leaders in housing, sustainable development, carbon sequestration, and sound energy policies and practices.

The Sierra Business Council's (SBC) mission embraces community, environment and the economy, and this was reflected in the broad range of speakers and topics.

**About Sierra Business Council**  
The Sierra Business Council serves the entire Sierra Nevada region. As a nonprofit association of more than 750 businesses, agencies, and individual members, Sierra Business Council is committed to promoting a new perspective on regional wealth while emphasizing collaboration in planning and policy making.

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During the day Thursday, 20 high school students from urban and rural areas throughout California were out on the trail hiking, rock-climbing and exploring the Sierra through SBC's Sierra Nevada Youth Empowerment Program. Engendering the next generation of stewards is a priority with Sierra Business Council, and with the support of the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council, these students participated fully in the entire conference, adding their important voices throughout the conference and to the closing comments.

Thursday evening some 100+ guests shared their experiences at the Sierra Leadership Institute Alumni dinner, celebrating the success of **SBC's Sierra Leadership Institute (SLI)**. The SLI is an annual collaborative leadership training session founded in 1996 and is designed to improve individual professional skills while enhancing the civic infrastructure of our region, over 250 Sierra Leadership Institute alumni currently work throughout the Sierra, contributing to the quality of life and economic well being of the region.

**SBC Founder and Past President, Lucy Blake**, opened Sierra Solutions with a return to the values that began the Sierra Business Council, looking forward to a vision where business leads for integrated success in environment, economic and social solutions.

**Chief Executive Officer Mammoth Mountain Ski Resort, Rusty Gregory**, made sure everyone felt at home for the Sierra Solutions Conference. Mammoth Mountain is the first ski resort in California to put in place a measurement program with the California Alpine Resort Environmental Cooperative (CAREC). A tour of the erosion control test plots at Mammoth Mountain was held on Sunday, October 5. In the opening remarks, Gregory noted the need for balance in embracing unique opportunities as an organization. "Mammoth is long-term orientated, but also focused on surviving the short-term, so we get to

those long term goals." Mammoth Mountain Executive Chef Reed Hearon provided memorable meals using local foods, showcasing ranches and farms in the Eastern Sierra with extraordinarily delectable results.

**Sierra Business Council** honors outstanding community member efforts with the annual Vision 2020 Award. This award is designed to recognize those firms and individuals charting the course for a sustainable future by the year 2020. The conference dinner on Friday opened nominations for this prestigious award.

The SBC's Board of Directors will select the award winners from member nominations and present the 2009 awards on March 19 in Sacramento, California. Sierra Business Council's 2009 Vision 2020 Awards Celebration will feature presentations from Vision 2020 Award winners, comments from past winners, a Slow Food Dinner and of course, important news from the Sierra Nevada. SBC established the Awards in 1996 to recognize and reward innovation and leadership in the Sierra Nevada region.

"We are honored every year by the remarkable accomplishments of our friends and neighbors; they are the people in our communities who do the heavy lifting to make our futures bright. One of our greatest pleasures is being able to recognize them for their innovation and hard work," said Rich Morrison, Chairman of the Board, Sierra Business Council.

"**The Vision 2020 Awards** are being held in Sacramento as a way to bring the importance of the Sierra Nevada in California to the State Capitol. This change is both symbolic and practical in communicating our message to the population of the entire state," commented Steve Frisch, SBC president.

**Web Site:** <http://www.sbcouncil.org/>

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