

# Conservation nonprofits squeezed as economy shrinks budgets

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

Nonprofit conservation groups have preserved tens of thousands of acres of land in California – wild places where both hikers and animals roam. Now, some of them say the economic slump could force them to scale back.

Others say lean budgets make it harder for them to scrutinize land use proposals for environmental effects – a key role such groups play in the state’s push-pull development process.

Most groups don’t like to talk about their financial difficulties, but one, the American River Conservancy, recently took the unusual step of going public. In an email to members and supporters, the group confessed that “times are hard” and it needs to raise \$250,000 by year-end or it will be forced to cut programs in 2012.

“What is happening to our organization is happening to a lot of organizations. We’re just being honest about it,” said Alan Ehrgott, the conservancy’s executive director.

**Read the whole story**