

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY**

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program Safe Drinking Water,
Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Act of
2006 (Proposition 84)**

Applicant: PIT RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Project Title: LOWER ASH CREEK WILDLIFE AREA RESTORATION PROJECT

Subregion: NORTH

County: LASSEN AND MODOC

SNC Funding: \$1,000,000.00

Total Project Cost: \$4,020,195.00

Application Number: 419

Final Score: 91.2

PROJECT SCOPE

This project will restore degraded meadow, riparian and aquatic conditions along the lower portion of Ash Creek within Lassen and Modoc counties. The project area covers approximately 2400 acres along almost 140,000 linear feet of stream channels within the larger Pit River watershed. The restoration of meadow and stream riparian habitat will meet Proposition 84 goals in watershed and wetlands conservation, habitat rehabilitation and water quality. SNC will fund a portion of the total project costs.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Coordinator Administration of Construction Activity	March 2011- December 2012
Post Design, Pre-Construction	March 2011-August 2011
Progress Report – 6 month intervals	September 2011- December 2012
Construction	August 2011-October 2011
Reports, Monitoring and Outreach	March 2011-December 2012
FINAL PAYMENT/FINAL PAYMENT REQUEST	March 31, 2013

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Direct Costs – Contracts, Consultants, Coordinator, Material and Supplies, Equipment Use, fees	\$1,000,000.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$1,000,000.00

PROJECT SUPPORT LETTERS

- Modoc County Board of Supervisors
- Lassen County Board of Supervisors
- Ducks Unlimited
- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Waterfowl
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

PROJECT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

There are four Performance Measures common to all grants. In addition, grantees are required to include between one and three project-specific measures. Performance Measures listed here represent those proposed by applicants and may be modified through further discussion with SNC staff.

- Linear Feet of Stream Bank Protected or Restored
- Acres of Land Improved or Restored
- Acre Feet per Annum of Water Supply Conserved or Enhanced

PROJECT SUMMARY

County: Lassen and Modoc

Applicant: Pit Resource Conservation District

Project Title: Lower Ash Creek Wildlife Area Restoration Project

PROJECT GOAL

The goal is to implement a stream and meadow restoration project near Lookout, Modoc County. As part of project implementation, the project will be featured in public outreach and education efforts of the Pit RCD, thus helping raise awareness relating to local resource management problems and solutions. The project will improve water quality in approximately 137,000 linear feet of stream channels, addressing one of the SNC's key programmatic goals. In addition, the project will directly contribute to meeting the Proposition 84 goals of restoring rivers, streams, and their watersheds by improving approximately 3,500 acres of surrounding meadow habitat.

PROJECT SCOPE

The Pit Resource Conservation District (RCD) proposes an implementation project to address degraded meadow, riparian, and aquatic conditions along the lower portion of Ash Creek. The total project restoration area is approximately 2,415 acres and consists of roughly 137,000 linear feet of stream channels. The project will also protect an additional 1,085 acres of meadow that is at risk from the degraded 2,415 acre area. This restoration project is consistent with a recently completed, large-scale collaborative planning effort (i.e. Upper Pit River Watershed Management Strategy) and addresses seven of the nine goals identified in said document. Once concluded, the Lower Ash Creek Wildlife Area Restoration Project will be the largest meadow restoration project effective in the Sierra Region.

The dominant feature of the project site is a degraded stream and meadow along Ash Creek. Although the landform evolved for thousands of years without significant degradation, non-sustainable management practices including channelization, improper bridge and culvert placement and design, and historic over-grazing have caused severe degradation in the past century. The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) purchased the area in 1988, but despite efforts to improve habitat conditions for wildlife, the historic disconnect between the stream channels and their floodplain has allowed meadow degradation to continue. This project proposes to restore the physical connection of Ash Creek's many stream channels to their floodplain by implementing the "pond and plug" restoration technique. The technique is also consistent with the Department's goal to improve waterfowl conditions, as ponds would be used by thousands of migratory and resident waterfowl that concentrate in the Wildlife Area.

Overall, the project will attenuate flood flows, increase shallow ground water storage, improve water quality conditions, improve aquatic resources, improve water management infrastructure, and improve meadow and riparian productivity and health. Threatened species that thrive in broad meadow systems, including the greater sandhill crane, will also benefit from the restoration. Nesting success of this species in particular has declined in degraded meadow systems due to the meadows' dry nature and resulting lack of predatory protection. In addition to improved aquatic and riparian habitat for fish and terrestrial species, the meadow productivity will also benefit livestock. The State currently leases portions of the Wildlife Area for haying livestock grazing during the summer, and revenue from these leases is used by the State and Pit

Resource Conservation District to fund other projects. The final component of the restoration project is the re-design of an existing water delivery system maintained and operated by the Wildlife Area. The current system delivers water downstream for seasonal wetland management, but does so inefficiently. The re-design of this system has been integrated into the restoration design, which not only sustains the stream and meadow, but also increases efficiency of water management and use. The overall result is a project that stimulates the economy while restoring, protecting, and sustaining a working landscape.

The proposed project will directly address the following six SNC program goals: increased opportunities for tourism and recreation, protection of living resources, preserving working landscapes, reducing the risks of natural disasters, improving water quality, and assisting the regional economy.

Funds requested within this application will be used specifically for the pond and plug component of the restoration. More funds are needed to this component and others in order to implement the project. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has contributed \$100,000.00, and the CDFG will contribute significant staff time for a variety of monitoring and management services. Finally, Ducks Unlimited and California Waterfowl Association will be partnering and providing technical expertise with project components such as construction supervision.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Insert list of letters of support included with application.

SNC PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Administration	March 2011 – December 2012
Post Design, Pre-Construction	March 2011 – August 2011
Construction	August 2011 – October 2011
Reports, Monitoring, and Outreach	March 2011 – December 2012

SNC PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Direct Costs (staff time, travel, contracts/consultants, materials and supplies, equipment use/lease, other fees)	\$ 1,000,000.00
Indirect Costs (staff time, printed materials, outreach/education, equipment use, performance measure/reporting)	\$ 0
Administrative Costs	\$ 0
Total Grant Request	\$ 1,000,000.00
Other Contributions	\$ 230,315.00