

Sierra Nevada Conservancy-Progres Report

**Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program
Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control
River and Coastal Protection Act of 2008 (Proposition 84)**

Grantee Name: Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District

Project title: Sierra Valley RCD Watershed Outreach Event Proposal

SNC Reference Number: ^{SNC 070311} ~~G0722005~~ **Submittal Date:** 10-31-08

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Check one:

6-Month Progress Report
 Final Report

6-Month Progress Reports should reflect the previous six months. **Final Reports** should reflect the entire grant period.

A. Progress Report Summary: (Please provide a general description of work completed during this reporting period.)

This work involved the hiring of a Coordinator to work with local partners (ranchers, farmers, landowners and the public) in Sierra Valley to provide a Sustainable Agriculture Workshop. This Workshop involved: Coordinating with a local committee for initial project scoping of the main themes of the workshop. Once this was accomplished the Coordinator began fundraising, advertising, purchasing needed materials & supplies, securing facility and coordinating with a dozen presenters. The theme for this year's Sustainable Agriculture Workshop focused on "Stewarding Our Watershed" that combined local producers and resource managers into workshop that addressed issues like noxious weeds, restoration projects and land improvements that benefited the watershed to name a few.

B. Deliverables or Outcomes completed during this Reporting Period or Milestones Achieved: (Include specific information, such as public meetings held, agency participation, partnerships developed, or acres mapped, treated or restored.)

1. Formed event steering committee that met twice in June 2008 – outlined major themes of the event (see attached)
2. Worked with the community to recruit speakers, specialists and volunteers
3. Identified key experts and local farmers and ranchers in the Sierra Valley Watershed

4. Outlined and developed a working program and agenda that compiled input from partners and local community members
5. Secured Facility and places to stay for speakers
6. Advertised in seven papers in the area, sent 150 mailings out, and over a variety of websites
7. Developed packets , displays, signage and other materials that were an integral part of the workshop- an example of the materials are enclosed with this report
8. Fund raised to offset the cost of food and other items not covered by the grant- a total of \$2,315 raised
9. Hosted the Sustainable Agriculture event Sept. 26th 2008

C. Challenges or Opportunities Encountered: (Please describe what has worked and what hasn't; include any solutions you initiated to resolve problems. If your project is not on schedule, please explain why here.)

With this type of event the greatest challenge is getting the speakers and those attending to a rural place like Sierra Valley. Other challenges involved creating an event that has significant meaning to the family farms and landowners in the valley. This event has become a successful link in meeting these challenges and continues to provide an integral connection with the Ag community and that of the public to discuss watershed based issues.

The ultimate goal for an event like this is to make it a two day event so the workshop can have time to explore projects in the field that help demonstration what is being discussed in-doors.

D. Unanticipated Successes Achieved: (Please describe any additional successes beyond completing scheduled tasks or meeting scheduled milestones.)

The greatest successes were as follows:

- Larger than anticipated sponsor ship funds of \$2315 from local ranches and agencies like: Sierra Business Council, Cattlemen's' Association and the Upper Feather River Watershed Group (see attached packet for all sponsors)
- Total attendance reached 67 participants and speakers
- Great participation from local ranchers- majority of presenters were from the local area. (see Ag agenda for further details)
- Better understanding of watersheds function and that of working landscapes
- Discussion of the struggles of farming in the watershed and how to become better stewards

E. Compare Actual Costs to Budgeted Costs: (Please refer to your grant agreement to list your deliverables/budget categories and budgeted costs compared to actual costs incurred during this reporting period in the table below.)

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	Budgeted SNC Dollars	Actual Dollars
Operations	3490	2260.60
Material & Supplies	1255	874.83
Contracts	3700	5305.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$8,445.00	\$8,440.43

Explanation: (if needed)

Due to the nature of the project funds were needed to be shifted to the appropriate categories. Approval was given from grant manager to shift the funds accordingly to meet the project actual costs.

F. Were there any other relevant materials produced under the terms of this Agreement that are not a part of the budgeted deliverables? If so, please attach copies. (Include digital photos, maps, media coverage of project, or other work products.)

There are several items that were produced from this event a packet of information, CD/DVDs of watershed and Ag based information, and signage. A packet of the materials produced are included in this report.

G. Next Steps: (Work anticipated in the next 6 months, including location and timing of any scheduled events related to the project.)

NA

Please Complete this Section for FINAL Report ONLY

Resources Leveraged: (What kind and amount of resources – funding or in-kind – outside of the SNC were you able to leverage, and how?)

Sponsorship funds raised: \$2,315 from – Sierra Business Council, Payen Ranch, Cattlemen's, and the Upper Feather River Watershed Group

Additional support came from..

- The UCCE with demonstration booths and presentation of irrigated lands work in the Sierra Valley Watershed.
- The NRCS provided an information table on completing ranch plans
- participation from the Weeds specialist in Lassen county- Rob Wilson
- The USDA biological specialist Livy Williams presented recent info on the control efforts with noxious weeds using biological control methods
- A dedicated volunteer that assisted with 80 hours of in-kind time - \$1,600
- The additional in-kind of the SVRCD and the Coordinator - \$3,160
- Ticket Sales \$615

Capacity-Building Results and Collaboration and Cooperation with Stakeholders:
(What partnerships did you initiate or strengthen as a result of this project? How did they affect the project outcome? If applicable, how did this grant increase your organization's capacity? What is your plan to sustain this increase?)

This event was able to bring together a variety of stakeholders these included:

Natural Resource Conservation District
UC-Cooperative Extension – Plumas & Lassen county Farm Advisors
Upper Feather River Watershed Group
Cattlemen & Cattlewoman groups
Sierra Business Council
USDA- Biological Control expert from Nevada
Feather River Resource Conservation District
Plumas Sierra Rural Electric Cooperative
Sacramento Coalition- Tina Lunt
Livestock & Riparian Electric Fencing
Feather River Land trust

Feather River Coordinated Resource Management Group
Modoc Resource Conservation District
Powershacks- Alternative Energy
Sierra Valley Farms
Goicoechea Ranch
Payen Ranch
Fillippini Ranch
Goodwin Ranch
SVRCD

A total of 20 stakeholders were represented in the Upper Feather River Watershed

The workshop allowed the SVRCD to work more closely with local ranchers in the Sierra Valley which make up a large number of landowners. They're participation and support allowed the RCD to gain better trust from ranches that previously were not interested in the RCD's watershed efforts. Many of the ranchers that participated requested that they be a part of next year's event. This workshop allowed ranches to connect with local participants and build a better understanding between farming practices that benefit the watershed. This stewardship ethic was emphasized throughout and was key component in promoting the on-going efforts of watershed awareness in the Sierra Valley.

The RCD has began receiving more and more interest in our conservation efforts as a result of this workshop. We have been featured in numerous local papers and have received a more calls from landowners about programs that benefit their far as well as the watershed.

The RCD plans on partnering the Feather River Land Trust and Feather River RCD to host another workshop such as this next year.

Description of Project Accomplishments:

1. How did the Project succeed in accomplishing its intent?

- Reached 67 participants
- Focused on relevant issues that the ranchers and landowner cared about
- Key topics Discussed- Noxious Weed Control, Land Use Planning, Upstream Restoration Projects, Land improvement techniques and Demonstration of equipment that can benefit Farms and Ranchers in a sustainable manner
- Over ten ranches were present at the event
- Survey Results – showed that ranchers were going to make improvements as a result of the workshop (see surveys- attached)
- The landowners who attended represented over 40,000 acres – several of these participants stated they would change or adopt new practices as a result of the workshop.
- Some of the anticipated changes/new practices that landowners said they would most likely implement included- Solar pumps installation, Utilizing ponds to filter run-off & raise water table, increase the number of willows on the property and general stream improvements.

2. Describe any follow-on or indirect benefits resulting from the Project.

As stated above several landowners stated from their survey responses that they would be making improvements on their lands:

Solar pump installation

Planting of willows & trees

General stream restoration improvements

Weed control

Plug and pond- filter off-site water

Increase in building more ponds to improve water quality and wildlife habitat

Several ranchers were willing to update or create a ranch plan with the NRCS who was attending the workshop and had a display on conservation plans

3. Describe any significant experiences, unanticipated results or noteworthy events that create a “wow” factor.

The greatest impact was the amount of excited hand-shakes on the success and appreciation for the workshop. Many individuals rated the overall experience as excellent and would be willing to attend another event such as this.

4. Describe any Lessons Learned.

The need to create a two day event or a weeklong event focused on watershed issues that tie in the other groups that are doing similar work.

5. How do you intend to share the results of your work on this project?

Much of this work is currently being shared with many of the stakeholder meetings throughout Plumas, Sierra and Lassen County. The Coordinator is attending a number of board meetings and has incorporated this event into the Watershed Action Plan that has been made available through CD and website (this CD is included).

SNC-approved Performance Measures: (Please list each Performance Measure for your Project, as identified in your Grant Agreement, and the results/outcomes.)

As indicated above:

1. Formed event steering committee that met twice in June 2008 – outlined major themes of the event (see attached)
2. Worked with the community to recruit speakers, specialists and volunteers
3. Identified key experts and local farmers and ranchers in the Sierra Valley Watershed
4. Outlined and developed a working program and agenda that compiled input from partners and local community members

5. Secured Facility and places to stay for speakers
6. Advertised in seven papers in the area, sent 150 mailings out, and over a variety of websites
7. Developed packets , displays, signage and other materials that were an integral part of the workshop- an example of the materials are enclosed with this report
8. Fund raised to offset the cost of food and other items not covered by the grant- a total of \$2,315 raised
9. Hosted the Sustainable Agriculture event Sept. 26th 2008 and 67 participants attended

Additional Key accomplishments:

Over 20 stakeholders participated in the event

67 attended the workshop

Total in-kind for the event was \$4600

Total of \$2315 raised in sponsorships and ticket sales

Over 40,000 acres were represented at the workshop

Landowner Participants would likely make management changes that would improve the watershed

Strengthened the ties with landowners and agencies on stewardship efforts in the watershed

Several stakeholders will likely co-host the event next year

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS : 67

5 RANCHES REPRESENTED ~ 40,000

20 STAKEHOLDERS