

Sierra Nevada Conservancy-Progress 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: Amador Water Agency

Project title: Regional Approach for Water Reuse

SNC Reference Number: SNC 080207 **Submittal Date:** 5/10/2013

Report Preparer: Erik M. Christeson **Phone #:** (209) 257-5242

Check one:

6-Month Progress Report

Final Report

A. Progress Report Summary:

This period, the consultant finalized the Recycled Water Strategic Facility Model and Master Plan ('Master Plan'), solicited input from the stakeholders and held a public outreach meeting on the findings of the Regional Approach for Water Reuse Project.

**B. Deliverables or Outcomes completed during this Reporting Period or
Milestones Achieved:**

The project team completed work on all tasks. Task 1 (Strategic Outreach Plan) was complete by distributing the draft Master Plan to all stakeholders as well as posting it on the website. On-going active solicitation of input and incorporation of said comments/questions/concerns were on-going through the draft stage of the Master Plan. Task 2 (Recycled Water Market Assessment) was completed, incorporating new data and progress by two of the other regional entities which included significant revisions and research. This data and associated analysis were incorporated into the Master Plan. Task 3 (Alternatives Analysis) was likewise adjusted based on new data by the Cities of Jackson and Sutter Creek in resolving their respective, independent wastewater issues. The recommended alternative considers the most up-to-date scenarios relative to the region. Task 4 (Construction Financing Plan) was finalized, breaking the three alternatives into a phased approach (where possible) and identified initial capital costs, life-cycle costs and operations & maintenance costs to facilitate future water reuse planning. Task 5 (Facilities Planning Report) was completed this period and incorporated into the Master Plan. Task 6 (Public Outreach) was completed by Amador Water Agency Board of Directors who held a public meeting where the findings of the Master Plan were presented by the project team and

questions were fielded from the Board and public. Task 7 (Project Management and Progress Reporting) were on-going throughout the Project and completed with this Final Report.

C. Challenges or Opportunities Encountered:

Despite the misunderstanding of the completion date as March 31, 2013, the project team was able to complete the Master Plan and submit the deliverables by March 1, 2013. Although the project was behind schedule for most of the duration due to the Amador Water Agency Engineering Department being reduced from 13 to 2 full time employees, including the layoff of the former Project Manager, the team was able to make up time and complete the project on-time

The cities of Jackson and Sutter Creek continue to operate under very different timeframes from that of this study which has led them to take individual approaches to the respective solutions to their problems rather than participate in a regional solution. These approaches both took late turns that were successfully incorporated into the Master Plan. Finally, the City of Ione declined to participate in any aspect of this Study.

D. Unanticipated Successes Achieved:

Completion of the Project on-time and under budget.

E. Compare Actual Costs to Budgeted Costs:

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	Budgeted SNC Dollars	Actual Dollars
Strategic Outreach Plan	\$90,000	\$86,007.60
Recycled Water Market Assessment	\$30,000	\$29,277.65
Alternatives Analysis	\$50,000	\$48,395.38
Construction Financing Plan	\$15,000	\$15,110.00
Facilities Planning Report	\$40,000	\$39,646.00
Public Outreach – Master Plan	\$15,000	\$14,898.10
Project Management & Reporting	\$30,000	\$29,277.21
GRAND TOTAL	\$270,000	\$262,611.90

Explanation:

Progress on the overall project is 100% complete with the overall budget expended at 97.3%. The project was completed under budget.

F. Do you have information to report on the project-specific Performance Measures for your project?

Performance Measure 1 – Resources Leveraged in the Sierra Nevada
Not applicable

Performance Measure 2 – Number and Diversity of People Reached:

During project, the Agency and its consultant facilitated communications, meetings, site visits and a public presentation with the Stakeholders, Board members and the general public.

Performance Measure 3 – Number and Type of Jobs Created:

The equivalent of approximately 4 FTEs were employed during the life of the project.

Performance Measure 4 – Number and Value of New, Improved or Preserved Economic Activities

This project developed a plan for regional water reuse which will help preserve and augment the water used and available to Amador County. All progress on this project works towards achieving this Performance Measure.

Performance Measure 5 – Number of Collaboratively Developed Plans and Assessments

This project included solicitation of input and establishment of future regional goals and plans relative to water reuse within Amador County. The entirety of this project collaboratively developed the Master Plan which works towards accomplishing this Performance Measure.

Performance Measure 6 – Percent of Pre-project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation

The full measure of success of this project will not be known until after the development of the Regional Water Reuse Study. Future success in moving this project from the planning stage to implementation will be based primarily upon future participation by the Stakeholders.

G. 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.) No.

H. Next Steps:

None, the Project is complete.

Please Complete this Section for FINAL Report ONLY

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?)

Partnerships with the Cities of Jackson and Sutter Creek were strengthened as a result of this project. Early inclusion and their participation in multiple meetings, site visits and review of documents ensured a true "regional" approach. We were able to keep apprised of the latest events relative to the cities' respective wastewater issues and incorporate them into the final report.

Description of Project Accomplishments:

1. Most Significant Accomplishment

Describe in one concise, well-written paragraph, the most significant accomplishment that resulted from this grant.

This Project took an updated, inclusive approach to the issue of regional water reuse in Amador County. Prior studies were perceived by other governmental entities as an intrusion on their independent activities and were dismissed. Through early, often and open communication with the cities, a good proactive stance was taken that facilitated significant progress on the issue of water reuse. Since the preferred alternative preserves the autonomy of the cities, it has a greater likelihood of acceptance and future implementation.

2. WOW Factor

If applicable, please describe anything that happened as a result of the project or during the project that is particularly impressive.

N/A

3. Design and Implementation

When considering the design and implementation of this project, what lessons did you learn that might help other grantees implement similar work?

It is important to solicit input and get “buy-in” from all potential partners very early in the process. Unfortunately in our case, one of the cities refused to participate and the other two were too far gone in their own solutions. This necessitated our inclusion of each independent agencies reality, and while not necessarily the best ultimate solution, the result was the most workable and palatable solution to all parties involved.

4. Indirect Impact

Please describe any indirect benefits of the project such as information that has been developed as a result of the project is being used by several other organizations to improve decision-making, or a conservation easement funded by this grant that encouraged other landowners in the area to have conservation easements on their property.

N/A

5. Collaboration and Conflict Resolution

If you worked in collaboration or cooperation with other organizations or institutions, describe those arrangements and their importance to the project. Also, describe if you encountered conflict in the project and how you dealt with it, or if there was conflict avoided as a result of the project.

No conflict was encountered during the project. Collaboration with the Cities of Jackson and Sutter Creek were instrumental in the success of the project. Their early inclusion and their participation in multiple meetings, site visits and review of documents contributed to a regional approach. These relationships were important in keeping apprised of the latest events relative to the cities' respective wastewater issues and their incorporation into the final report.

6. Capacity-Building

SNC is interested in both the capacity of your organization, as well as local and regional capacity. Please describe the overall health of your organization including areas in need of assistance. SNC is interested in the strength and involvement of your board, significant changes to your staff, size and involvement of membership. In addition, describe how your project improved capabilities of partners, or the larger community.

This project began during a time of great flux at Amador Water Agency. The overall agency was reduced from over 60 employees to approximately 40, a reduction of 33%. The Engineering department, however was reduced from 13 employees to 3 (including the original Project Manager for this project) a reduction of 77%. The Agency Board and General Manager are involved in monitoring staff workloads, project priorities and future project planning. This project fell behind schedule due to these cuts and barely finished on schedule through herculean efforts of the two remaining AWA Engineers. The project did not improve the capabilities of the partners or larger community.

7. Challenges

Did the project face internal or external challenges? How were they addressed? Describe each challenge and any actions that you took to address it. Was there something that SNC did or could have done to assist you? Did you have to change any of your key objectives in response to conditions "on the ground"?

The project faced the internal challenge of staffing as described in the previous section. This issue was addressed through overtime by the two AWA engineers and shuffling of project priorities by management.

The City of Ione, integral to an overall regional solution, refused to participate in the Study. This was likely due to many factors, including a new City council and City Manager. AWA attempted to address this issue through numerous, repeated attempts at communication, but without success.

No, there was nothing SNC could have done to assist.

No, we did not change any of our key objectives.

8. Photographs

Grantees are strongly encouraged to submit photos, slides or digital images whenever possible. These images will be used for SNC publications such as annual reports or on the website. Please make sure you clearly identify location, activity, and your project with each submitted image. Images will be credited to the submitting organization, unless specified otherwise.

Images in a planning study are premature and not applicable. Therefore, there are no photographs to share.

9. Post Grant Plans

What are the post-grant plans for the project if it does not conclude with the grant? Include a description of the following (if applicable): (1) Changes in operations or scope; (2) Replication or use of findings; (3) Names of other organizations you expect to involve; (4) Plans to support the project financially, and; (5) Communication plans?

The post-grant plan for the project would be to use the study as a planning template for future water reuse efforts. The goal was to select reuse solutions that could be integrated into future land planning and infrastructure efforts. Additionally, this document will help focus AWA on applying for relevant and available grants that could facilitate implementation.

10. Post Grant Contact

Who can be contacted a few years from now to follow up on the project? Please provide name and contact information.

Gene Mancebo, General Manager
12800 Ridge Road
Sutter Creek, CA 95685
(209)257-5245

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

See Section F for a complete discussion.