

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 2006 (Proposition 84)**

Grantee Name: Pit Resource Conservation District

Project title: Mason/Monchamp/Balcom Streambank Stabilization
and Floodplain Enhancement Project

SNC Reference Number: G0812002 **Submittal Date:** 5/31/2011

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Check one:

6-Month Progress Report
 Final Report

<p>6-Month Progress Reports should reflect the previous six months. Final Reports should reflect the entire grant period.</p>

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

During this reporting period, the Coordinator met with the landowners, conducted monitoring, and prepared reports. The landowner meetings discussed future monitoring needs and public outreach opportunities. The Coordinator also conducted photo-monitoring and assessed project effectiveness by inspecting channel stability during high flow events.

During previous reporting periods, the Coordinator met with landowners, conducted pre-construction monitoring, met with contactors, and constructed the project according to the design plan. Pre-construction monitoring included using a global positioning system (GPS) to record polygons of riparian deciduous shrub vegetation. Monitoring also included establishing pre-project photograph locations, and taking photos from these locations prior to and during construction. Finally, cross-section surveys were recorded of the stream channel prior to construction, and field inspections were used to document the aquatic conditions (i.e. bank stability) at the site.

Monitoring pictures and riparian habitat polygons are provided in Appendix A.

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.)

Tasks Completed:

- Executed landowner and contractor agreements
- Pre-construction monitoring (photo points, cross-sections, GPS riparian areas)
- Constructing nineteen j-hook vanes, resloping streambanks, and planting willow cuttings
- Constructed approximately 4,000 linear feet of fence and two water gaps for livestock management
- Developed and produced a newsletter highlighting the project
- Organized and held a public site visit

C. Challenges or Opportunities Encountered:

No major challenges or opportunities were encountered during the project.

D. Unanticipated Successes Achieved: N/A.

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
Administrative Costs	3,600.00	1,932.88
Office Expense	600.00	648.70
Publications and Advertising	700.00	281.35
Materials (rock for vanes)	50,000.00	50,000.00
Materials (fencing)	3,000.00	6,000.00
GIS Service	269.00	0
Pit RCD Watershed Coordinator	6,373.93	5,680.00
Construction Contracts	123,847.07	123,847.07
GRAND TOTAL	188,390.00	188,390.00

Explanation: (if needed)

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.) Several photographs have been taken as part of the monitoring for this project.

No other relevant materials were produced that were not part of the budgeted deliverables.

G. Next Steps: (Work anticipated in the next 6 months, including location and timing of any scheduled events related to the project.) The final task that was to be completed in the last six months was to hold a tour of the site during the spring which was held on 5/18/2011.

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?)

The RCD strengthened partnerships with contractors and private landowners in order to complete the project. Numerous meetings were held with landowners and the contractors to discuss project details and timing of construction. Through these meetings, trust was built among the partners. Construction and completion of the project also resulted in more landowner's having an interest in protecting the banks of the Pit River and improving water quality conditions. The Pit RCD gained more experience to complete this type of project, which results toward increased organizational capacity and ability to sustain future activity.

Description of Project Accomplishments:

1. Most Significant Accomplishment

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

The project protected approximately 7,500 linear feet of streambank from erosion which has resulted in better water quality. Restoration and enhancement projects such as this demonstrate that landowners can and will volunteer to engage with agencies and other stakeholders to improve watershed conditions on their property, even when there is little to no financial gain for them in such activities. If RCDs keep implementing small projects, through the course of time, resource conditions will be greatly improved throughout the watershed.

2. WOW Factor

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

The vanes withstood extremely high flows the first winter after construction, and exceeded their effectiveness beyond expectation in these severe flooding conditions.

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?

See response to item number one. Several other areas of the Pit River in the region have similar bank erosion issues (e.g. Warm Springs Valley). The design plan and construction techniques associated with bank stabilization can be applied to these areas as well.

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.

See response above.

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.

N/A

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 SNC grant, and other SNC grants for similar RCD projects, has been instrumental for providing viability for the RCD, their partners, and contractors in the area. Most all communities in the Pit RCD area are considered severely disadvantaged, and there is little opportunity for work in the area. The RCD's Business Manager, and their watershed coordinator, both live locally and work on several other projects, many of which are volunteer in nature. The Pit RCD is a small RCD, but has been able to assist landowners and stakeholders with important resource projects. There has not been enough workload or opportunities for other funding sources to expand the capacity of the RCD, but the continued effort by the RCD stimulates project development with other partners and stimulates the community through economic activity.

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 did not face any internal or external challenges.

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.

The RCD has approximately 100 photos documenting pre and post project implementation along the Pit River. These photos are intended to be used for project monitoring and additional photos will be taken in the future to show continued improvement in habitat condition.

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?

This grant has concluded this project, however, post grant plans include securing funds through SNC and other potential funding sources to implement similar projects on other damaged areas along the Pit River. Because of this project, the RCD received several inquiries from landowners seeking help to improve bank erosion issues along the Pit River at its tributaries.

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.

Todd Sloat (530-336-5456) and Sharmie Stevenson (530-299-3405).
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SNC-approved Performance Measures: (Please list each Performance Measure for your Project, as identified in your Grant Agreement, and the results/outcomes.)

- 1. Resources Leveraged/Number of People reached:** The RCD used approximately \$2,500 of funds within their Dept. of Conservation (DOC) grant agreement to finalize coordination, monitoring, and reporting activities associated with this project. The landowners contributed approximately \$2,000 of in-kind services and materials associated with armoring the banks of the river.

Articles published in the newspaper were estimated to reach 1,000 people (general public), and newsletter articles describing the project were sent to over 100 people (general public). Finally, the project was presented/discussed at stakeholder meetings (e.g. Pit River Watershed Alliance, Northeastern California Water Association) that reached another 40 people (i.e. resource professionals, government employees, conservation groups).

- 2. Number and types of jobs created:** Types of jobs directly created included project administration, project coordination and construction. In addition, labor for fence construction was also created by this project. Overall, these jobs when combined were determined to equal .70 FTE (see below table). No attempt was made to estimate the number of indirect jobs creating from the project (e.g. service industry that provides equipment rental, fuel, supplies, etc.)

Job Type	Number	Employment Length	Avg. Hrs. worked per week	FTE	Season
Hydrologist/Equip. Operator	1	1.5 month	50	.15	fall
Coordinator	1	3 months	20	.11	fall
Administration	1	1 year	3	.15	fall
Fence contractor	2	One weeks	40	.04	fall
Equipment Operators	3	1 month	40	.25	fall

- 3. Number and value of new, improved, or preserved economic activities.** The primary economic activities associated with this project include the improvement of a working landscape and agricultural products for the private landowner, and jobs for project activities (see item two above). The project will greatly improve the landowner’s ability to manage livestock along the riparian area in a more sustainable manner and will also protect valuable crops from erosion. First, the banks of the Pit River have been stabilized and are not expected to erode. If the project was not constructed, and estimated 3 acres of land could be lost from future erosion. The average value of an acre of land along the Pit River is

\$2,000/acre. This value does not include annual loss of crops that would be lost. For example, if Monchamp family were to have one acre of their alfalfa field eroded, this would result in a loss of approximately \$1,800/year of hay that would otherwise be produced and sold. The loss would occur annually and last in perpetuity. If an arbitrary time frame of 100 years is used, the total savings of the project (i.e. price of land, and value of crops saved) would be \$180,000 plus \$2,000. This value is an underestimate because it only accounts for 1 acre of crop loss, rather than three acres.

- 4. Linear feet of streambank protected/restored.** The project restored approximately 8,000 linear feet of streambank, and enhanced another 2,000 feet of a distributary channel. This same area is also protected as a riparian fence was installed to allow for better livestock management of the stream and floodplain.
- 5. Acres of land improved/restored.** A total of four acres of streambank habitat was enhanced and protected. This includes about two acres of riparian deciduous shrub restoration.