

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: Sierra County Land Trust
Project title: Sierra Buttes/ Lakes Basin Acquisition Program-
Packer Saddle Property
SNC Reference Number: SNC 080231 **Submittal Date:** 11/1/2011
Report Preparer: __Laurie Oberholtzer_ **Phone#:** (530)265-5433

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.)

We finalized the acquisition of the 204 acre Packer Saddle property.

- 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.)

Property acquisition. We also held a dedication event on August, 2011 and received area wide press attention for the acquisition.

- 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.)

No special difficulties arose, a very straight forward acquisition.

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

None.

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
Property acquisition	\$403,200	\$403,200.00
Title report/ ins., escrow fees, transfer fees	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,430.85
Admin and consultants	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000.00
Project performance measures	\$ 3,200	\$ 3,200.00
Signs	\$ 1,800	\$ 0
GRAND TOTAL	\$423,200	\$420,823.85

Explanation: (if needed)

F. Do you have information to report on the project-specific Performance Measures for your project? (If so, please list the Performance Measures below and describe your progress.)

1. **Number of people reached.**

Hikers access the extremely popular Sierra Buttes Lookout Tower trail across this property. Visitors also park here and use the cleared area on Packer Saddle as a staging ground to hike, bike, and OHV to other locations in the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin. The site is used as a class meeting site for a number of San Francisco State Field campus classes. It is a sight seeing destination in itself. Our caretaker kept an averaged weekly count of visitors encountered. We estimate that during the usual April 15 to October 30 season, the site sees approximately 43,000 visitor days including 20,000 mountain bikers. In the winter, snowmobilers, and cross country skiers access the site frequently. We estimate that during the winters approximately 2500 visitor days are added.

2. **Dollar value of resources leveraged.** Over 150 hours of volunteer time were donated to the project for in-kind administrative support and visitor counts. Total value: \$6000.

3. **Number and types of jobs created.** We have continued to allow Christmas tree harvesting on the property which creates and conserves these jobs. Approximately 5 full time jobs over a period of 90 days resulted and will continue annually. This has been accomplished via the acquisition. Administration of the grant has provided approximately ¼ of a staff position for the grant period. Future management of the property will continue to support a ¼ staff position, largely caretaking responsibilities.

4. **Number of new, improved, or preserved economic activities.**

The USFS has estimated that 133,000 people per year visit the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin. Based on our counts, we estimate that approximately 35% of these visitors use the Packer Saddle site (45,500 visitors). Approximately 1 million visitor days are seen in Sierra County annually according to local estimates. Using these figures, the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin visitation makes up about 13.3% of this total county visitation, the site sees about 4.5% of the countywide visitation.

Since visitors travel to many sites during their stay in Sierra County, the dollar amount of a visit to Packer Saddle alone cannot be accurately determined. However, the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin which includes Packer Saddle is the main destination for the 13.3% of county visitors attributed to Basin trips, as noted above. As a result, it is clear that Packer Saddle, included in 1/3 of the Lakes Basin visits, contributes greatly to the overall attraction of the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin. Preserving the public accessibility of Packer Saddle will continue to have a significant positive economic impact.

**Visitor Economic Impacts to Sierra County and
Attributed to Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin, 2009**

	<u>County (1)</u>	<u>Sierra Buttes /Lakes Basin(2)</u>
Travel spending	\$17.3 million	\$2,300,900
Earnings (personal income)	\$4.7 million (13.1%)	\$625,100
Employment (jobs)	270 jobs (23.7%)	36 jobs
Local tax receipts	\$0.3 million (77.2%)	\$39,900

(1) California Travel and Tourism Commission, Runyon Report, 2010

(2) Sierra County Land Trust

5. **200 feet of stream bank has been protected through the acquisition.**
6. **204 acres of land have been protected through the acquisition.**
7. **New public access points that have resulted number six total.**

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

This report marks the project completion.

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?)

We have always had an excellent working relationship with the Sierra County Board of Supervisors and County staff. This was strengthened as we worked on the acquisitions and certainly the success of the project buoyed all of us to continue this relationship.

We began working with the US Forest Service during the acquisition process and after close of escrow. We are now coordinating on management issues since this property and others we acquired concurrently are surrounded by Forest Service lands and trails and roads travel jointly through each of our properties.

We have forged an even closer relationship with the Sierra Buttes/ Lakes Basin Trails Stewardship Council; the start of their Downieville Downhill is on this property.

We have begun working on future potential projects with the local Fire Safe Council and CABY as a result of the acquisition(s).

This grant enabled us to increase our organizational capacity. The acquisition success as part of a large package of acquisitions has increased our support and donation base already, which we expect to continue via outreach to the community, our existing members, public relations work, events on the properties, and contact with visitors through our back country ranger program.

Description of Project Accomplishments:

1. Most Significant Accomplishment

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

We purchased Packer Saddle! The Packer Saddle property is **the** hub of the hiking, mountain biking, sight seeing, and snow mobiling activities of the Sierra Buttes area. Because of its ridge top location, visitors on one of the most scenic drives in the Sierra stop here to view into the Lakes Basin. They access the Sierra Buttes Lookout Tower and its spectacular view of 4 lakes from the trail that starts here. The internationally renowned Downieville Downhill mountain bike course is on the property, an important tourist draw and a major economic asset to Sierra County. The entire length of the Sunrise Mountain Bike Trail, built by volunteer effort, is located on the property. The Pacific Crest Trail passes through the site. The Packer Saddle parcel is a critical piece in

the 1525 acres that we have been able to preserve for public use and resource preservation in the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin.

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 dedication event was a big success and enabled many people who had participated in the effort to preserve the Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin to come together and congratulate each other as well as to reflect on the enormity of the outcome.

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?

This was a fairly straight forward acquisition. It was useful to be able to access DTSC funds for a Phase I Environmental Assessment. And, it was useful to have prepared a timber valuation on top of the land appraisal.

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.

The successful acquisition(s) has sparked a number of other landowners to approach us on potential acquisitions and conservation easements.

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.

We worked closely with The Trust for Public Land on all of our acquisitions. In this case, they provided advice as needed during the finalization of the sale.

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.

The Sierra County Land Trust is healthy. Our Board has not changed membership in 5 years. Staff time for our executive director has increased each year, now it is full time. Our membership has grown each year, as well as small and major donors. We have added a part time caretaker/ back country ranger during the Spring, Summer, and early Fall. We have a core of about 20 active volunteers and approximately 200 members. (Our county has a population of only 3000.)

Our acquisitions will incrementally increase the potential for success of the local eco tourism industry. The Sierra Buttes area including this property are a popular destination for the visitors they serve including skiers, snow mobilers, mountain bikers, fishermen/women, and hikers. It needs to remain open to the public for this industry to succeed. We expect that the activities of some of these businesses will take place in part on this property in the future.

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”?

This was a fairly straight forward acquisition.

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.

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?

Though the acquisition is complete, we will continue to host the Downieville Downhill on this property. We will host other activities including nature classes. Our back country ranger will interact with visitors on this highly used site. We will support the management of the property largely with our annual private fund raising.

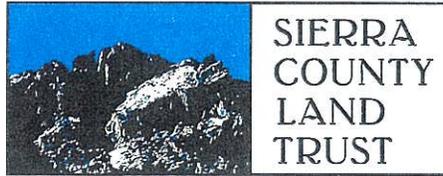
10. Post Grant Contact

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

Laurie Oberholtzer, Executive Director, Sierra County Land Trust
(530) 265-5433
PO Box 4040 Sierra City, CA 96125
laurie@sierracountylandtrust.org

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

Please See Item F under Progress Report at the beginning of this submittal (page 2). It includes each of the 7 Performance Measures we identified in our Grant Agreement.



PO Box 404, Sierra City, CA 96125 (530)265-5433 www.sierracountylandtrust.org

We Did It!

1525 Acres of Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Preserved

With your help, five years of grant writing, fund raising, and negotiations have culminated in the purchase of 1525 acres of land to be preserved for public open space in our cherished Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin.

In May, 2011 the Sierra County Land Trust announced finalization of the purchases which include the last portion of the face of the Buttes still in private ownership. The parcels include Packer Saddle where the trail to the popular Sierra Buttes Lookout Tower begins as well as the start of the internationally renowned Downieville Downhill mountain bike trail. Also within the acreage are Young America Lake and Volcano Lake, as well as a segment of the Pacific Crest Trail, and lakeside frontage on Upper Sardine and Lower Sardine Lakes.

Funding for the acquisitions was from the State of California Sierra Nevada Conservancy (Proposition 84 funds), the California Resources Agency (Proposition 50 funds) and The Trust for Public Land.

Here is our full acquisition list:

- ◆ 835 acre Harris parcels – Volcano Lake, Young America Lake, Buttes face.
- ◆ 200 acres of Packer Saddle.
- ◆ 300 acres adjacent to Volcano Lake and Salmon Creek.
- ◆ Volcano Lake Beach and Access. 160 acres.
- ◆ Lower Sardine Lake frontage. 15 acres including a 5 acre conservation easement.
- ◆ Upper Sardine Lake frontage. 17 acres.

Your Sierra County Land Trust will own all 1525 acres of land and we will manage them for public use, beginning immediately.



Sierra Buttes/Lakes Basin Lands of the Sierra County Land Trust

Funding for these purchases was made possible with major assistance from the State of California Natural Resources Agency and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, agencies of the State of California, as authorized by the voters of the State of California with passage of Proposition 50 (2002) and Proposition 84 (2006) as well as:

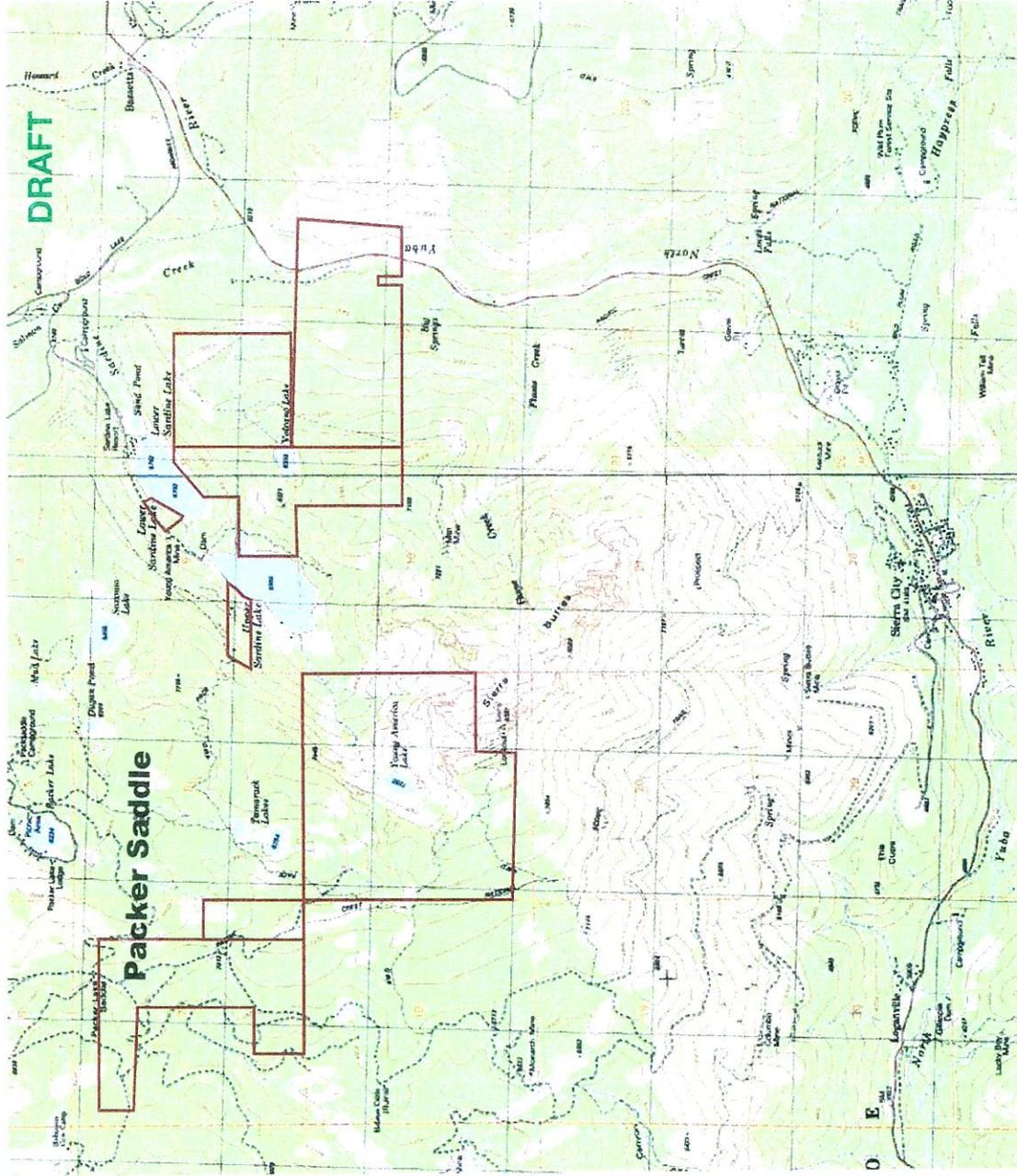
The Nancy Eccles and Homer M. Hayward Foundation in memory of Marguerite H. Lemmon
 Peter Davis
 The Morgan Family Foundation
 Dan Martin
 Megan Christian and Kenneth Wright
 The family of Phyllis O'Gara Currans
 The Trust for Public Land

Sierra County Land Trust Board of Directors

Laurie Oberholtzer, Executive Director
 Steve Carlton
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Patrons of the Sierra County Land Trust

Megan Christian and Kenneth Wright
 Nancy and John Wegner
 Maureen Meikle
 The Parsons family
 The Hunt family
 The family of Phyllis O'Gara Currans







PO Box 404, Sierra City, CA 96125 (530)265-5433 www.sierracountylandtrust.org

November 1, 2011

Lynn Campbell
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Dr. #205
Auburn, CA 95603

Re: SNC Grant # 080231, Packer Saddle acquisition

Dear Lynn,

Attached please find our final Payment Request Form for closeout of the Packer Saddle grant. We closed escrow on February 4, 2011 and you have received all of the related documents.

We have attached:
Payment Request Form
Performance Measures Report
Itemized List of Expenditures
Supporting documentation (time sheets)

Please give me a call if you have any questions or need further documentation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie Oberholtzer".

Laurie Oberholtzer
Executive Director