

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: Lassen Land & Trails Trust

Project title: Barry Property Pre-Planning

SNC Reference Number: SNC 362 **Submittal Date:** _____

Report Preparer: Amy Holmen **Phone #:** (530) 257-3252

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.)
The purpose of this project was to gather and develop all necessary documents, permits and plans to pursue the fee title acquisition of the Barry Pond property and to implement management and wetland restoration plans. To do this, Lassen Land & Trails Trust (Trust) worked with Ducks Unlimited to create a wetland design for the property and to complete necessary permitting for those designs. Additionally, the Trust acquired a title report and appraisal for the property, and worked with community stakeholders to create a conceptual management plan for the property. Throughout the project, the Trust has engaged many potential funding sources as part of this process, although funding for the fee title acquisition has not been secured at this time, conversations with potential funders continues.

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.)
Throughout the execution of this project, the following deliverables were completed: preliminary title report and appraisal, engaged multiple private and public stakeholders, completed Conceptual Management Plan for property, engineered wetland design, and completed documentation for necessary permits for wetland construction work.

- Stakeholder Meetings: June 8, 2012 & August 1, 2012
- Stakeholders Invited to meetings and to comment on Conceptual Plan: City of Susanville, Susanville Indian Rancheria, Lassen County Dept of

Planning and Building, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, California Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, Ducks Unlimited, Lassen Community College, Lassen County Fairgrounds, US Fish & Wildlife Service-Partners Program

- Presentation to Lassen Community College Board of Directors: April 9, 2013
- Potential Funders Engaged: Wildlife Conservation Board (1 site visit, informational packet, multiple phone calls and emails), California Department of Fish & Wildlife (multiple site visits, phone calls, and emails), National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Western Partnership Office (informational packet, multiple phone calls and emails), CalTrans Mitigation Division (1 site visit, informational packet, multiple phone calls and emails).
- Partnerships Secured: USFWS and Ducks Unlimited have committed to involvement in restoration work once property is acquired. USFWS has committed \$25,000.
- Letter of Support received: City of Susanville, Susanville Indian Rancheria, Ducks Unlimited, USFWS

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.)

The biggest challenge has been identifying and securing funding for the acquisition of the property, which has not yet been completed. Although the Trust not receive input from all invited stakeholders during the drafting of the Conceptual Management Plan, a broad diversity of public and private partners did participate, which we believe resulted in a stronger planning document and also brought new partners for the restoration to the table. Due to staff constraints with our contractor (Ducks Unlimited), the Trust was unable to complete all of the final permitting documentation before the final grant deadline. However, the vast majority of the permitting documents have been completed and are ready for submission when an acquisition funding source is secured.

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

As mentioned above, the development of partners for the restoration has been an unanticipated success.

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 |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| PTR and Appraisal | 8,000 | 6,640 |
| Contract for Consultant for Wetland | 35,724 | 30,542.95 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Restoration | | |
| Project Coordination-Management Plan | 13,600 | 14,189.98 |
| Conceptual Management Plan | 3,400 | 3,264.54 |
| Performance Measures, Reports | 2,550 | 1,819.50 |
| Administrative | 3,164 | 2,712.24 |
| GRAND TOTAL | \$66,438 | \$59,169.21 |

Explanation: (if needed)

We were unable to expend all funds before the end date of the grant due to staff time constraints with our contractor, Ducks Unlimited, which also impacted the ability of the Trust's staff to complete all of the grant administration within the grant period.

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.)

a. Resources Leveraged in Sierra Nevada

The resources leveraged, to date, include Ducks Unlimited team in California; the regional office of the state's Department of Fish & Wildlife; Lassen College, City of Susanville, Lassen County Planning Department and the USFWS Partners program out of Modoc Wildlife Refuge (Modoc Plateau, however services the northeastern Sierra region)

b. Number and Diversity of People Reached

At this initial stage, over two-dozen individuals in a broad capacity have been reached directly with regard to the project planning. This has included public boards, public agency staff and educators, as well as members of the Susanville Indian Rancheria.

c. Number and Type of Jobs Created

At present, job creation support is in terms of sustaining those directly related to the project planning such as DU's staff and consultants, the Trust's staff as project leaders.

d. Number and Value of New or Improved Economic Activities

At present, the project in its planning phase has not provided new or improved economic activities. Once the project site is acquired and restoration and creation activities begin, there will be a greater impact on local opportunities related to project development, education and tourism.

e. Project Specific

i. Number of Cooperatively Developed Plans & Assessments

One plan and multiple permit assessments were developed cooperatively with the stakeholders and the Trust's consultant, Ducks Unlimited.

ii. Percent of Pre-Project and Planning Efforts Resulting in Project Implementation

If we define the project as pre-project planning and the conceptual plan and wetland restoration plan, then there has been 100% implementation. If completion of acquisition is included then we are short of 100% and look forward to securing the funds and moving on to work with our partners to complete the implementation of the wetland restoration plan.

iii. **Measureable Changes in Knowledge and/or Behavior**

The Trust's staff, Conservation Committee and Board have learned a great deal more about working with the local tribal agency, as well as with the Wildlife Conservation Board and Department of Fish & Wildlife when confronted with a challenging acquisition project. In addition, much more was learned about mitigation and enhancement as it pertains to working with CalTrans and the Army Corps of Engineers.

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.)

Attached are copies of maps produced during the grant period, as well as the Conceptual Plan produced with input of private and public stakeholders.

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

Lassen Land & Trails Trust will continue looking for funding for the acquisition of the property, and will use project deliverables including the Conceptual Plan, Wetland Design, and maps to present this project to potential funders. The landowners have been very patient during this project, and have expressed a willingness to continue waiting for a funding source, as they would like to see the property conserved.

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?)

This project allowed the Trust to engage many stakeholders in order to create a conceptual plan for the management of the property which has broad community support. Representatives from nine public and private entities were invited to participate in the planning meetings for the creation of this plan, as was a private landowner and neighbor whose property is surrounded on three sides by the subject property. There were two stakeholder meetings, after which a draft conceptual plan was distributed for comments to the group. After the final draft plan was distributed, the Trust received four formal letters of support. These letters are from the City of Susanville, Ducks Unlimited, USFWS, and Susanville Indian Rancheria. Working with these partners on this project helped strengthen relationships between the Trust and these groups as we worked together to envision the project and its role in the community.

As a result of these meetings, some changes were made in the proposed future management of the property, including changes to the wetland design plan. The original plan was to convert the fields below the reservoir into a series of ponds and swales, while leaving the reservoir alone. After these meetings, however, it was decided to include dredging of the reservoir to increase its capacity for full-season water for wildlife and to create additional islands for nesting.

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 most significant accomplishment achieved through this grant from SNC was the creation of a Conceptual Management Plan, which includes a wetland enhancement design. This plan was written with significant input from a variety of community stakeholders, which allowed the Trust to create a plan that has the support of local public and private entities. This plan includes sections on how to provide public access, priorities for habitat enhancement, outlines the threats to the conservation values, management recommendations, passive recreation and public education, which will guide the writing of a management plan and development of the property when the property is acquired by Lassen Land & Trails Trust.

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 wetland design, completed by Ducks Unlimited as a contractor, incorporates input from stakeholder meetings and includes phases so that wetland enhancement may occur as funding becomes available.

Excitement of local chapters of wildlife groups has led to commitments of volunteer resources and assistance in the restoration and creation of wetlands.

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 was more difficult than anticipated to find funding sources for the acquisition of this property. Having a conceptual management plan and completed wetland design helped gather support, but we found more funders interested in the wetland enhancement implementation than the acquisition. We also did not anticipate how long it would take to complete permitting documentation, which led directly to the inability to expend all SNC grant funds.

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 project led to CalTrans looking at future projects in the area and the need for future mitigation banking, which the restoration and creation of wetlands would provide necessary credits for those projects.

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 very closely with Ducks Unlimited on this project. DU staff's input and technical expertise was critical to the success of the stakeholder meetings, and they also helped engage potential funders. DU completed surveying, wetland design plans, and permitting documentation, which was a major component of the project and is beyond the scope of the Trust's staff expertise. DU was very cooperative at all levels, from project management to administration, and was a pleasure to work with. This project strengthened the working relationship between the Trust and DU, and we hope to continue working with them on this and other projects in the future.

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.

As a small, member-supported non-profit dependent on grants and donations, Sierra Nevada Conservancy's support has been critical to our work in this northeastern Sierra region. Geographically, the northeastern Sierra is often outside of state-wide conservation priorities even though water, wildlife habitat and working lands have an impact on the citizens of the state and region, as well as on our neighbors in Nevada.

Working in a rural community, the Trust struggles with the generation of private support for our work. A solid foundation of just over 200 member donors consistently gives, however those gifts represent a small percent of the annual operating and project budget. With that said, the all-volunteer Board of Directors and committees work hard and wear many hats to support the work of the two professional staff members. In addition, a broad-based volunteer cadre of nearly 100 individuals works tirelessly to realize the Trust's goals and objectives.

The planning process for the Barry Reservoir project opened up possibilities for Lassen College, as well as the Susanville Indian Rancheria, regarding their education programs for youth as well as adults. Once acquisition is completed and the restoration and creation of the wetland plan is completed, the wildlife observation areas will become important parts of both organizations' programs.

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"?

It was clear from the beginning that what the Trust was developing with stakeholders was a 'conceptual' plan rather than a management plan. We were working to identify the role that the property and its resources were to play in the community with regard to wildlife, water and education and that, in turn, would drive the management plan. Once that was clear, the Trust was able to work with Ducks Unlimited to develop the plans for the wetland restoration and reservoir and complete the permit assessment.

The greatest challenge has been securing acquisition funds. Despite the clear definition of need in the community regarding this property, its location and zoning has meant a high purchase price given the acreage. It is clear that a partnership of funders will be required to complete the acquisition and the Trust continues to work toward that end. SNC staff has facilitated conversations with WCB on the project's behalf and that has been greatly appreciated.

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.

Photo guide: *See attached zip file.* All photos credit to Lassen Land & Trails Trust, and are taken at the project site, adjacent to the city of Susanville in Lassen County, CA.

Barry 1: View of Barry Reservoir and surrounding wetlands from Skyline Rd

Barry 2: View across Barry Reservoir looking at housing developments on South side of reservoir

Barry 3: Looking across reservoir to Lassen Community College, which borders northern property boundary

Barry 4: Site visit with California Dept of Fish & Wildlife staff and Lassen Land and Trails Trust Conservation Committee members

Barry 5: View of northwestern portion of reservoir, looking South toward Diamond Mountains

Barry 6: View of Barry Reservoir from Skyline bicycle trail, which bisects property

Barry 7: View of lower hay fields and site of proposed pond and swale wetland creation on Barry property

Barry 8: Pair of Sandhill Cranes in lower fields of Barry property

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?

- 1) There is no change in operations or scope. Lassen Land & Trails Trust will continue pursuing funding for the acquisition for this property. There has already been considerable interest from funders in the restoration of the wetlands, but the property must first be acquired by the Trust.
- 2) Deliverables from this project, including the Conceptual Plan and Wetland Design, will continue to be used in discussions with funders and potential partners.
- 3) Ducks Unlimited will continue to be involved as they are able, and would like to be involved in the implementation of wetland restoration as well. UFWS Partners Program has already committed resources and funding for the restoration effort.
- 4) The long-term financial support will depend to some extent on the funding of the acquisition and flexibility with regard to land use, as well as partnerships with our local education partners.
- 5) Communications, at present, are primarily one-on-one with potential funding partners. With acquisition funding, the communications to the community with our partners will begin in earnest and ultimately interpretation of the restoration, wetland creation and wildlife habitat will be a permanent communications tool for the project for visitors, Lassen College students, regional public and charter school students, residents and those particularly interested in the wildlife served by the improved habitat.

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.

Amy Holmen, Lands Manager for Lassen Land & Trails Trust, is project lead for this project, and may be contacted in the future.

Phone: (530) 257-3252

PO Box 1461, Susanville, CA 96130

Email: land@lassenlandandtrailstrust.org

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

a. **Resources Leveraged in Sierra Nevada**

The resources leveraged, to date, include Ducks Unlimited team in California; the regional office of the state's Department of Fish & Wildlife; Lassen College, City of Susanville, Lassen County Planning Department and the USFWS Partners program out of Modoc Wildlife Refuge (Modoc Plateau, however services the northeastern Sierra region)

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Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program Project Reporting Guidelines

Progress Reports are required periodically throughout the term of the Grant Agreement (Refer to Exhibit B of the Grant Agreement). These reports will allow you and the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) to see the degree to which the project is on track and achieving your projected outcomes. Your Progress Reports will further provide the SNC with information that will help us to explain your work to the Board Members and various other audiences. Timing of Progress Reports is specified in the Project Schedule included in Exhibit A of the Grant Agreement, but generally every 6 months until completion of the project.

A Progress Reporting Form is provided to Grantees on the SNC Website. **Six-month Progress Reports** should reflect the previous 6-month period; **Final Reports** should address each question for the entire grant period – looking at the project as a whole.

The form specifies the items you will need to report on. For the Six-Month Interim Report these include, but are not limited to: *A Progress Report Summary of work completed, Deliverables or Outcomes Completed, Challenges or Opportunities Encountered, Unanticipated Successes Achieved, Actual Costs compared to Budgeted Costs, Any Additional Relevant Materials Produced, and Next Steps.*

The Final Report will include additional information, such as: *Resources Leveraged, Capacity-Building Results and Collaboration and Cooperation with Stakeholders, a Description of Project Accomplishments, and SNC Approved Performance Measures.*

Please make sure that you submit complete reports by the dates requested in your Grant Agreement.