

Sierra Nevada Conservancy-Final 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 County Fire Safe Council, Inc. (LCFSC)

Project title: Day Lassen Bench Fuel Reduction & Watershed Restoration Project

SNC Reference Number: SNC 070147 **Submittal Date:** 2/9/2012

Report Preparer: Thomas W. Esgate **Phone #:** 530-310-0146

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:

Project work was the last phase of 8 years of fuel treatments conducted jointly by the Lassen County and Day Lassen Bench Fire Safe Councils. \$60,000 of a \$200,000 CFSC/BLM grant was also used/leveraged during the SNC phase of the project. An additional \$108 in LCFSC funds and \$9.66 in interest earned on SNC funds was used for treatments.

Primary project work focused on 226.78 acres of forest thinning of suppressed, over stocked and dead and dying trees and the removal of invasive western juniper. The goal of the thinning was to reduce overstocking, and thereby restore the health of the forest and watershed, and also to reduce hazardous fuel loads, which helped reduce fire risk within the community. The removed material was chipped and hauled to a biomass electrical generating facility where it was used in the production of renewable energy. In addition to the forest thinning, 69.75 of brush were masticated, which also helped reduce fuel loads.

A total of 296.53 acres of private land were treated by mechanical methods within the project area that is identified in the attached project completion maps and the corresponding photo monitoring. 191.03 acres of work on 19 parcels were completed in 2008 and 105.5 acres on two parcels occurred in 2011. All of these acres are within the project area map submitted with the SNC grant application. All SNC funded project work was conducted between May 1, 2008 and August 10, 2011 by two contractors.

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

We completed 298.53 acres of treatments that consisted of forest thinning of suppressed, over stocked and dead and dying trees and the removal of invasive western juniper, and/or mastication of brush. The \$99,999 SNC investment leveraged an additional \$61,217.50 in funds for treatments from our CFSC/BLM Day Lassen Bench III project, LCFSC funds and interest earned. The project Completion Maps attached to our invoices document where the treatments were conducted.

C. Challenges or Opportunities Encountered:

The major challenge of our project was the California fiscal crisis that required us to shut down half way through the project. Once we were cleared to start-up again we still didn't feel comfortable proceeding. We were still uncertain about the state's ability to pay its bills in a timely manner so we waited. It turned out to be a good thing because some of the property owners who owned the lands that were our highest priority only finally agreed to sign-up in 2011. We had tried to get one of them to sign-up for almost 7 years!

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

One of our highest priorities mentioned above was an 80 acre parcel that spans 1/2 mile along Day Road, the community's only ingress and egress. It was an overstocked stand of dead and dying pine, juniper and brush in need of thinning and mastication. It was the biggest fire threat to the Day Lassen Bench community in that it was positioned along the evacuation corridor. If it hadn't been for the state fiscal crisis we would have most likely ended up treating lower priority parcels. It just took a little time for the 96 year old property owner to make up his mind. We never took no for an answer and it finally paid off.

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
SNC Treatments	\$95,999	\$95,999
Administrative Costs	\$4,000	\$4,000
GRAND TOTAL	\$99,999	\$99,999

Explanation:

Total treatment costs were \$157,216.50, which are documented in Exhibit A and attached hereto. SNC funds paid for \$95,999.00 and the balance was paid for with our CFSC/BLM grant, LCFSC funds and \$9.66 in interest earned.

In addition, LCFSC allocated \$4,000 in SNC funds toward administrative expense, 4% of the SNC grant funds, per our Grant Agreement. This was used to pay for our indirect expenses associated with the Day Lassen Bench project.

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

1. Resources leveraged:

a. Resources leveraged to complete this Project (matching funds, in kind contributions, etc.):

CFSC/BLM Grant	\$60,000
LCFSC Funds	\$1,207.84
Interest funds earned and user	\$9.66

b. Resources leveraged as a result of this Project:

2,281 Bone Dry Tons of Biomass Fuel, used in the production of renewable energy

2. Impact on collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders:

a. Number of people/entities involved in Project:

21 property owners participated in our project.

b. Increased cooperation/decreased conflict among stakeholders:

The treatment of our 80 acre priority parcel decreased conflict in the community by helping ensure a safer evacuation route and all the treated properties contributed to a reduced fire risk throughout the community.

3. Capacity building within region:

a. Description of how completion of this Project improved capabilities of grant recipients, partners, or larger community.

SNC participation helped LCFSC complete the last phase of an 8 year effort within the Day Lassen Bench community. This culminated in over 1,500 acres of private land treatments and over 1,000 acres of BLM and USFS treatments.

4. One-page description of Project accomplishments:

LCFSC had assembled a data base during the previous phases of the project and it was updated during this phase. We had completed the easiest phases of the project and this final phase was more challenging. All the landowners were signed up through direct contact and in some cases it took a lot of persuasion. Many of the treatments during this phase filled "holes" from the previous phases and completing these treatments gave contiguity to the previous work and thus made all the treatments more effective.

Indirect benefits of the project include the information delivered to participants during the *Risk in the Home Ignition Zone* assessments conducted during the sign-up process. These assessments helped point out the things that residents could do to reduce structural ignitability during wildfire events.

Our most significant unanticipated and positive experience was the sign-up of a 96 year old property owner (described above) who we had worked on for the previous 7 years. Over the years we had made numerous contacts with he and his son and they were always very hesitant. In a *Hail Mary* effort to round up the final participants our project manager and the contractor met with LCFSC Director and Day Lassen Bench Fire Safe Council Principal Point of Contact Ray Nielsen in June of 2011. In a cold call from his kitchen we got the answer we had been waiting for, he would sign-up and we could proceed.

Now we still had enough funds to treat about 20 more acres and they all headed down the road together to see if they could find a few more acres to treat. There was one property that we had signed up years earlier and just before we were about to start treatments the house was sold and the new owner wanted nothing to do with fuel treatments. The property was filled with "dog hair" pine and in desperate need of treatment. They thought they would give it one more try and knock on the door. Apparently the new owner bailed a couple of years later and the current resident had just bought the home out of foreclosure, and they wanted the treatments! The project was completed two months later.

Sadly Ray Nielsen, who was one of the founders of the Day Lassen Bench Fire Safe Council, would not see these key treatments completed. Two weeks after we met in his kitchen he found out that he had terminal cancer, resigned from the LCFSC board and three weeks later he passed away.

The best lesson learned from the project is never give up; the landowner just might sign up after all.

5. Number of acres treated, including number of miles in length and width of interface protected, and amount of tonnage of fuels material removed.

298.53 acres treated
2,281 Bone Dry Tons of fuel material removed

6. Number of properties, including structures and types, now protected by the fuel reduction work in the project area.

21 properties received treatments during this final phase of our project. Combined with all our treatments 200 homes are now at reduced risk in the Day Lassen Bench community and evacuation routes are safer.

- 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.)

Project treatment area maps have been attached to our contractor invoices and photos have been provided.

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 was the final phase of an eight year project. The community has achieved Firewise Community USA recognition. The program instills community involvement and support for continued maintenance of treatments and continued Firewise/Fire Safe education efforts.

Post Grant Contact

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

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530-310-0146

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

Listed in Section F. above

Exhibit A

Parcel #	County	Owner	Total Acres	Cost
016-610-012	Shasta	Chalmers	2.00	\$1,100.00
016-610-013	Shasta	Mortenson	2.14	\$1,177.00
016-610-010	Shasta	Howell	2.00	\$1,100.00
016-610-011	Shasta	Jennings	2.00	\$1,100.00
001-090-043	Lassen	Dicus	40.00	\$22,000.00
016-530-001	Shasta	Umscheid	14.00	\$7,700.00
016-530-002	Shasta	Baker	5.24	\$2,882.00
016-480-013	Shasta	Criss	2.50	\$1,375.00
011-420-04	Modoc	Keelin	5.00	\$2,750.00
011-420-06	Modoc	Gallosis	10.00	\$5,500.00
001-540-08	Lassen	White	5.00	\$2,750.00
016-600-001	Shasta	Scott	13.40	\$7,370.00
011-420-05	Modoc	Kraft	5.00	\$2,750.00
001-090-36	Lassen	Valentine	20.00	\$11,000.00
016-520-057	Shasta	Walker Shearing & Chipping	80.00	\$44,000.00
016-520-057	Shasta	Walker Mastication	5.00	\$2,750.00
016-550-032	Shasta	Hammon	20.50	\$11,275.00
016-480-025	Shasta	Martin	5.00	\$2,500.00
016-360-024	Shasta	Martin	8.00	\$2,800.00
016-360-023	Shasta	Martin	6.00	\$2,100.00
016-360-023	Shasta	Martin	2.75	\$1,237.50
016-360-026	Shasta	Digardi	2.50	\$1,250.00
016-360-041	Shasta	Bernardini	2.50	\$1,250.00
001-090-34	Lassen	Tonelli	20.00	\$8,500.00
016-550-04	Shasta	Williams	18.00	\$9,000.00
			298.53	\$157,216.50