

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: Nevada County Resource Conservation District

Project title: Environmental Benefits of Grazing Video and Educational Tour

SNC Reference Number: SNC#070148 **Submittal Date:** 7-7-09

Report Preparer: Lesa Osterholm **Phone #:** 530-272-3417 ext 107

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: (For entire grant period)

A ten minute educational DVD was developed, completed and presented at each of the ten workshops throughout the Sierra Nevada Conservancy region. Several partners from diverse backgrounds, interests and organizations came together to create a unified message in the DVD regarding the environmental benefits of grazing and the importance of supporting working landscapes. Six hundred seventy-five copies of the DVD were distributed to attendees of the workshops, agency departments and personnel as well as anyone requesting a copy. The DVD aired on several local television stations and on county web pages. Five hundred educational binders were developed with information from scientific studies emphasizing the environmental benefits of grazing to water quality, wildlife, plants, reducing the fire danger and invasive weeds to name a few. Five workshops were held in the fall of 2008. An additional five of the total ten educational workshops were planned, coordinated and presented spring 2009 to complete the workshop project. These workshops were strategically selected to be held throughout the Sierra Nevada Conservancy region. (See attached map)

Two professional speakers were hired to present at the seminars; Dan Dagget, environmentalist and author of two books and Michel Meuret, Director of Agriculture Research at the National Institute of Agricultural Research in France. UC Cooperative Extension Farm Advisors also provided support and participated

in most of the seminars. Nevada County RCD coordinated speaker's travel, scheduling and presented at the workshops.

A total of 655 people attended the ten workshops at the following locations:

Pilot Hill (El Dorado County)	30
Red Bluff (Tehama County)	40
Nevada City (Nevada County)	70
Sutter Creek (Amador County)	80
Riverside (CARCD Annual Conference)	240
Anderson (Shasta County)	51
Cathay's Valley (Mariposa County)	32
Jamestown (Tuolumne County)	56
McArthur (Lassen County)	23
<u>Chico (Butte County)</u>	<u>33</u>
Total attendance	655

The educational DVDs and binders were distributed to each workshop attendee, individuals upon request and were made available outside of the SNC region.

The Nevada County RCD assisted the City of Rocklin in coordinating an additional educational workshop on the "Environmental Benefits of Grazing" targeting public landowners, land trusts, parks, homeowners associations, fire departments, land planners in Placer County and 33 individuals attended.

The educational DVD was also presented at the following meetings and conferences by the Nevada County RCD:

- California Farm Bureau Federation Public Lands annual meeting
- California Association Resource Conservation Districts Annual Conference
- California Rangeland Conservation Coalition Annual Summit
- Yuba-Bear Watershed stakeholder meeting
- Bear River Watershed Group stakeholder meeting
- Cosumnes/American/Yuba/Bear (CABY) Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Group meeting
- Nevada County Resource Conservation District Board meeting
- Central Sierra Region of Resource Conservation Districts fall meeting
- Nevada County Conservationist of the Year event
- City of Rocklin grazing workshop
- Nevada County Agricultural Advisory Commission

Most notable attendees from the workshops were California's Secretary of Agriculture A.G. Kawamura and staff members, Senator Feinstein's legislative aid and members from various county Board of Supervisors. Attendees represented private landowners, ranchers and livestock producers, local farmers, many city and county planning staff members, several watershed groups, CRMPs and stakeholders, RCD staff and directors, chamber of commerce members, biologists, Master Gardeners, Farm Bureau members, Sierra Pacific Industries foresters, WM Beatty & Associates foresters and land managers, university and community college students, fire department personnel, tribal members, environmental groups, CA Rangeland Coalition staff and members, CABY members, CA Native Plant Society members, several irrigation district personnel, private engineering and environmental firms, Defenders of Wildlife members, Audubon Society members and several members from the media. The following agencies sent personnel to several of the workshops: USDA NRCS, CA Dept Fish & Game, BLM, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Reclamation, CA Parks & Recreation, National Park Service and UC Cooperative Extension.

This multi-regional educational project brought diverse interest groups together for meaningful discussion and capacity building throughout the SNC region and beyond. Together the groups learned about the importance of working landscapes and the ranching culture. Attendees learned the value of cost effective, long term sustainable means of land management strategies and how important this approach is to sustaining wildlife and habitat and protecting water quality.

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.)

Deliverables:

1. A ten minute educational DVD was produced and 675 copies made and distributed throughout the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) region and local, regional, state and federal agencies and organizations. Copies submitted to SNC.
2. Ten workshops planned, coordinated and hosted throughout the SNC region.

3. Sample flyers, posters, agendas, press releases and seminar reporting forms were developed and utilized by each workshop host.
4. Map produced representing the distribution of educational workshops throughout the SNC region.
5. Five hundred educational binders developed, collated and distributed to workshop attendees. Copies submitted to SNC.
6. The grazing educational tour also presented the DVD and information at an additional eleven plus state and regional meetings.
7. Numerous partnerships developed between collaborators and attendees and among agency personnel. Several projects are being developed as a result to increase watershed health and protect water quality by implementing best management practices and developing new strategies by public agencies for a more sustainable and low to no cost land management plan.

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 main challenge was to have the project suspended then allowed to restart and we had to find temporary funding in order to keep the momentum going for the workshops and educational tour. In saying that, we understand the seriousness of the state's financial situation.

At the McArthur workshop, we encountered an electrical outage in the region which was a challenge initially but the majority of the people stayed and the creative attendees found a generator and we were back up before too long. The workshop was delayed for one hour.

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

At one of the workshops, a federal agency employee remarked that they have land but the personnel who knew about grazing management retired and none of the current staff were familiar with the process, therefore their local public lands were not currently grazed. He explained the lands as overgrown, fire hazard and taken over by invasive weeds. At the seminar, the federal agency staff spoke to a local rancher and they met the following day. As a result, the rancher entered into an agreement and was

allowed to utilize the land for grazing and the federal agency was able to get their land management needs met. New partners and a low to no cost sustainable practice was implemented!

We did not anticipate the interest and attendance for the educational tour would be so great. We expected about 200 attendees and we achieved 655!

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
Planning ten workshops, speakers	50,700	50,700
Video	10,000	10,000
Admin fee	7,300	7,284
GRAND TOTAL	68,000	67,984

Explanation: (if needed)

Project completed within budget.

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. A ten minute educational DVD was developed, produced, presented and 675 DVDs were distributed. (225 copies proposed)
2. Ten workshops were developed, coordinated and conducted throughout the SNC region. Six hundred fifty-five workshop attendees.
3. Speakers were contracted, scheduled and travel coordinated for the workshops.
4. Five hundred educational binders were developed. (Performance measure was for two hundred binders)
5. Internet information and website links were established.
6. A map was developed showing the distribution of workshops throughout the SNC region.

Project completed in full.

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.)

Yes, we have attached several photographs from each of the ten workshops. Copies of the DVD and educational binder have already been submitted to SNC. Additional copies available upon request from the Nevada County RCD.

A map of the workshop locations is attached.
Copies of some of the media coverage are attached.

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

We anticipate several more educational workshops being hosted by RCDs, Native Plant Society and others in California using the templates developed from this grant.

The California Rangeland Conservation Coalition planning members are meeting in July 2009 to discuss next steps and further the progress made from this grant.

The Cosumnes/American/Bear/ Yuba (CABY) Working Landscapes committee continues to meet to develop a research and implementation project using grazing as a sustainable management tool on mountain meadows in the Sierra Nevada's. Lead partners on this grant proposal will be American Rivers and the Nevada County RCD.

The Nevada County RCD and other RCDs in California will provide an educational booth at the National Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) conference in Reno, Nevada the week of December 13-16th, 2009. The educational binder will be on display and the DVD will be played on a "continuous loop" for the attendees to view. Established in 1991, GLCI is carried out through coalitions of individuals and organizations functioning at the local, state, regional and national levels.

Please Complete this Section for FINAL Report ONLY

Resources Leveraged:

The Nevada County RCD provided a tremendous amount of support for this project. The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) provided additional support with copies of educational materials and financial support with the aid of nationally recognized Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) to help with the unanticipated large attendances. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the California Rangeland Conservation Coalition provided tremendous support to the project also. Supporting documents attached to explain cash and in-kind additional support. **Cash resources of \$12,508 were generated in addition to a minimum of \$19,469 in-kind support of the project. The SNC grant funded \$67,984 for the educational tour.**

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?)

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 SNC grant funded project achieved development and production of a ten minute educational DVD in addition to development, planning and coordination of ten workshops co-hosted by other Resource Conservation Districts throughout the Sierra Nevada Conservancy region. The project attracted 655 attendees from very diverse backgrounds and strengthened education and collaboration among the groups. This project was supported by hundreds of organizations and agencies locally, regionally, statewide and nationally. The educational opportunities brought about from this project can positively affect land management strategies to further protect water quality, support wildlife and habitat, support working landscapes and recognize livestock grazing as a long term, holistic land management tool. With the increased understanding, awareness and support of managed grazing, local communities will prosper with a sustainable local food supply and support of the local economy.

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 attendance of 655 people from diverse organizations and agencies and the interest from many other groups to get copies of the DVD.

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 educational project template worked very well. The project involved many partnerships and achieved great collaboration especially with diverse interest partners. Having the project supported by recent scientific findings added credibility to the project. The project template is ready and available to others.

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.

An indirect benefit would be the interest from other entities such as the City of Rocklin to host their own “Benefits of Grazing” workshop. As a result of this project, many fire personnel are also aiding landowners with information of how to better manage their vegetation and reduce the fire danger with goats, sheep or cattle grazing where appropriate. Local municipalities encouraged their planning staff to attend to be better informed about agriculture and low to no cost land management strategies. Several land trust organizations attended the workshops to improve their decision making ability with long term land management strategies on their 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.

The University of California Cooperative Extension provided excellent support of the project and provided results of current scientific studies that demonstrated the many benefits of grazing to the environment. CARCD and local Resource Conservation Districts brought tremendous local and regional support to the project through regional advertising and membership rosters of local watershed groups and organizations. Many other groups and organizations supported and participated in the project as stated previously.

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 Nevada County RCD (NCRCD) is traditionally a two person staff organization and has been in existence since 1943. This grant project did not increase the staff capacity as the District Manager became the project facilitator and director of the project and the RCD was very involved with the day to day work on this project. The NCRCD relies on grant funding to facilitate project implementation.

This educational project brought the local agriculture community closer with the environmental community especially the local food coalition. People are getting a better understanding of the importance of working landscapes and as a local, healthy food source.

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”?

There were some challenges attracting individuals from some of the environmental organizations that traditionally have been against the practice of grazing. As a result, we specifically invited some of these individuals and encouraged dialogue to increase the understanding of grazing management as a land management tool. We feel we were successful in bringing diverse interest groups together. We look forward to creating projects that broaden the understanding and assist groups in working together to further environmental goals as well as support the working landscape culture.

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.

Photographs submitted on printed copies as well as on a CD as part of this Final Report.

Map submitted with workshop locations throughout the SNC region.

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?

Please see G. above for next steps.

More educational workshops are anticipated throughout California. New partners are working together on a grant proposal to study and implement grazing on mountain meadows. The California Rangeland Conservation Coalition, CABY regional group, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts, national Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) and other groups will all be using the developed format from the workshop to provide additional educational opportunities. The California rangeland Conservation Coalition are working on new research opportunities to further the science on the environmental benefits of grazing.

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.

Lesla Osterholm, NCRCD District Manager 530-272-3417 ext 107
or lesa.osterholm@ca.nacdnet.net

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

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