

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: Pit Resource Conservation District

Project title: Pit River Planning & Development Project

SNC Reference Number: G0710003 **Submittal Date:** 1/31/2011

Report Preparer: Todd Sloat **Phone #:** (530) 336-5456

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 landowners, prepared landowner agreements, and conducted pre-construction monitoring. Each of the landowners signed the landowner agreements during the summer and the Coordinator met with each. During the meetings, the Coordinator talked about the construction plan, schedule, and other details regarding the project. Established photograph points were recorded again during the summer.

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 agreements
- Biological and archeological resource surveys conducted in 2008: reports prepared (archeology in August 2008, hydrology 2008, botanical in 2010). Information collected from biological resources was used to prepare permit applications.
- California Environmental Quality Act Compliance – Notice of Exemption adopted September 2008.

- Section 401 Water Quality Certification approved June 2009 from Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Dept. of Fish and Game Streambed Alteration Agreement prepared and submitted (completed March 2009)
- Section 404 Clean Water Act compliance under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdiction (completed July 2010)

C. Challenges or Opportunities Encountered: One of the landowners was very difficult to reach and did not return phone calls or emails for several months. Eventually, the Coordinator was able to reach them and execute a landowner agreement.

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
Personnel	9,600	4,107.50
Permit fees, CEQA publications, outreach, legal advertising	27,600	15,496.19
Contract services	100,100	53,248.40
GRAND TOTAL	137,300	72,0852.09

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. These photographs will be provided on a CD to the SNC at the completion of the project.

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 to complete in the next six months will be to hold a tour of the site during the spring/summer.

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 NRCS and landowners. Multiple landowner meetings were held during the design phase. This provided an opportunity for the Coordinator to meet new landowners and strengthen partnerships. Also, the NRCS partnered on one of the project sites as a result of this project, and the Coordinator was able to develop a partnership with a new area engineer because of this. The grant enabled the RCD to maintain capacity during a very difficult economic time.

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 design report provided direction for restoration and enhancement plans along the Pit River. As noted in the proposal, water within the river is managed during the growing season by multiple landowners who have rights to dam and release the water. During the design phase, the consultant determined that enhancement activities using bank stabilization techniques would present a greater amount of risk than previously thought. Therefore, the RCD was able to identify areas along the Pit River that were either appropriate for restoration or enhancement, and this information was not known prior to this project.

2. WOW Factor

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

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 are managed similarly (e.g. Warm Springs Valley) to the area studied within this project. The limitations and opportunities associated with bank stabilization can be applied to these regions.

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.

During the project, one landowner (Gould) decided not to participate anymore. They told the Coordinator that they felt the process (e.g. permitting, design) and amount of interaction required was too great for their comfort level. In addition, a second landowner (Bachigalupi) felt strongly about how to best implement the project. Their proposed method was not consistent with the design report, so the landowner was encouraged to work with NRCS. This landowner was unable to reach an agreement with NRCS. However, the location along the River for both of these landowners was determined to be within the area of high-risk for bank enhancement during the design phase, and the RCD would have ended up not recommended enhancement of the river banks for their land.

As provided in earlier reports, two new landowners along the Pit River expressed interest with the design, and these two landowners were directly across the River from the Mason site. Therefore, they were added to the design in this portion of the river and both banks are proposed for treatment. Overall, there was a no-net loss in the linear distance of the River proposed and permitted for future work.

Also, the Natural Resource Conservation Service worked with the Pit RCD and landowner of the Fultcher Dam project. NRCS provided design work and implementation money and this project was constructed in 2008.

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 largest challenge for this project rests in the details of the design report recommendations. In short, the design report for two of the projects identifies that the current management practices (i.e. operation of flashboard dam structures) places future enhancement and restoration practices along portions of the Pit River at-risk. The operation of these structures is a legal right for these landowners. However, knowing that the operation of them threatens potential future enhancement work, this places a potential risk to each landowner because they may now be considered as “part of the problem.” Relating this information to them was sensitive, and the RCD does not want to be viewed as a regulatory group that identifies problems that eventually results in landowners being regulated for their management actions. In this instance, the landowners cooperated and allowed access for these studies, and using this information as leverage to negatively affect them would be counterproductive and wrong. The RCD supports the voluntary effort of landowners to improve resource conditions along their land, and we hope the SNC also believes in this philosophy and approach.

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 200 photos documenting site conditions along the Pit River. These photos are intended to be used for pre-project monitoring and will be taken in the future once restoration has been completed in order to show changes in habitat conditions.

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?

Post grant plans include securing funds through SNC and other potential funding sources to implement projects. Because of this project, the RCD received several inquiries from landowners seeking help to improve bank erosion issues along the Pit River.

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:** Approximately \$3,500 was provided for assessment work as part of a grant agreement between the Dept. of Conservation (DOC) and the Pit RCD. After receiving SNC funds, the RCD submitted an implementation grant to SNC to fund the implementation of the Mason Project. As part of this project, the landowners are contributing time and materials for project construction that will be documented in that grant agreement reporting materials. Also, one of the projects (Fultcher Dam and Gate) was implemented by NRCS and the value of implementation was determined to be \$50,700.00
2. **Impact on collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders:** Refer to Item 5 above.
3. **Capacity building with region:** Refer to Item 6 above.
4. **Project Accomplishments:** Refer to A-E and 1-4 above.
5. **Number of site assessment/resource surveys conducted and design alternatives considered.** Seven design alternatives were considered for a total of five landowners. Five resource assessments were conducted (wildlife, botany, fish, archeology, and hydrology) for one project that involved three landowners.
6. **Number of necessary permits obtained for project implementation to move forward.** Refer to Item B above.