

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: Amador Community Foundation
Project title: Amador County Watershed Stewardship Project

SNC Reference Number: SNC 070176 **Submittal Date:** 4/15/11

Report Preparer: Tina Hurley **Phone#:** 209-223-2148

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.

- **Progress Report Summary:** (Please provide a general description of work completed during this reporting period.)

This final report reflects all work completed on the Amador County Watershed Stewardship Project. Since the projects initiation in 2008, the Amador Community Foundation in partnership with several project consultants have completed all requirements for the Project and have gone above and beyond with the development of additional supporting materials for stakeholders and the creation of a list of community members who have committed to carrying this project into the future.

Over the past several years we have developed relationships with many stakeholders, ranging from Water Agency personnel and County Board of Supervisors, all the way down to private landowners within the watershed. Through these relationships we were able to develop the Jackson Creek Watershed Assessment, New York Ranch Management Plan, and the Jackson Creek Management and Implementation Plan. These plans will be on file in several locations throughout the County and will be available electronically to stakeholders for years to come. The Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council has agreed to hold the documents for public use and other copies will be held at the County Library, Amador Community Foundation offices, Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Council offices, and at the office of the Project Coordinator, Ellie Routt.

The following is a list of additional tasks completed since the last reporting period:

- Work completed on the Jackson Creek Management and Implementation Plan (See attached);
- Outreach and stakeholder input completed;
- Final report completed;

- Peer review and review and acceptance of final report by the Amador Community Foundation's Board of Directors
- **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.)

In the beginning of our project, Public and Stakeholder outreach was our main goal. We needed to create a baseline (Watershed Assessment) of current conditions and uses throughout the watershed, and the more community involvement we had from the beginning, the better our project would reflect the real situations within the watershed. We held several large community meetings through which we developed partnerships with different interest groups and neighborhoods within the watershed. These smaller groups led to more contacts and soon we were collaborating with many stakeholders. This created a modest sized volunteer pool from which we derived historians, water quality technicians, biologists and more volunteers. We were also able to reach out to pertinent Agency personnel from departments such as the California Department of Fish and Game, Army Corps of Engineers, Amador Water Agency, and the Jackson Valley Irrigation District. All of these agencies have a vested interest in what goes on in the watershed, either for the purposes of water supply and delivery, or for wildlife habitat.

Using the volunteers and agency representatives, we were able to create an extremely in depth Watershed Assessment and Management and Implementation Plan for the Jackson Creek Watershed. The same technique was also used in the development of the New York Ranch Reservoir Management and Implementation Plan.

- **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.)

Initially there was hesitation on the part of a lot of the landowner stakeholders in that they were concerned about having people on their property to analyze the condition of the watershed. Many people felt that we were going to come out and tell them that they were doing something wrong and/or report them to agencies and force them to change their land management practices. We were able to reassure them that we were not looking at specific issues on an individual basis, but rather that we were looking to assess the watershed as a whole and describe conditions in general. In the end most stakeholders got involved and we gained access to many reaches of Jackson Creek.

Fortunately the above mentioned challenge, gave us the opportunity to reach out to more people. When we realized the landowners were hesitant to work with us, we really pushed the educational component of our project to stress the need for an accurate and

comprehensive watershed assessment. Once we reached more people we discovered good resources through their historical and professional experiences. These relationships greatly enhanced all aspects of this project.

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

Working with local residents provided an opportunity to share information and provide assistance. This helped us as well as the stakeholders, gain a better understanding of watershed health and what is needed in our watershed.

Please see the above “Challenges and Opportunities” for additional successes.

- **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
1. Watershed Assessment	\$85,810	\$85,800.10
2. Stakeholder Outreach	\$13,000	\$12,715.00
3. Jackson Creek Implementation Plan	\$24,020	\$26,556.89
4. NY Ranch Reservoir Implementation Plan	\$50,950	\$46,505.81
GRAND TOTAL	\$173,780	\$171,577.80

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. Initiate a watershed assessment for the upper Jackson Creek watershed and provide opportunities for public comment.

The Upper Jackson Creek Watershed Assessment is complete and attached to this final report on a CD.

2. Conduct Stakeholder outreach efforts to determine key conservation goals and objectives for the watershed management and implementation plan.

Stakeholder outreach continued throughout the duration of the project. As stated above, we were able to draw from a broad range of expertise through our stakeholder involvement. Many of these stakeholders remain engaged in the project and will be around to help us through the next phase of the project, implementation.

3. Finalize a Watershed Management and Implementation Plan to identify funding and all steps necessary for undertaking specific stewardship projects.

The Jackson Creek Management and Implementation Plan is complete and attached to this final report on a CD.

4. Initiate development of specific implementation and management plan to protect the New York Ranch Reservoir.

The New York Ranch Reservoir Management and Implementation Plan is complete and attached to this final report on a CD.

5. Complete the Watershed Assessment for the Upper Jackson Creek Watershed and provide opportunities for public comment.

The Upper Jackson Creek Watershed Assessment is complete and attached to this final report on a CD.

6. Complete the development of Specific implementation and management plan to protect the New York Ranch Reservoir.

The New York Ranch Reservoir Management and Implementation Plan is complete and attached to this final report on a CD.

- 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.)

In addition to the four budgeted deliverables; Stakeholder Outreach, Jackson Creek Watershed Assessment, Jackson Creek Management and Implementation Plan, and New York Ranch Management and implementation Plan, we were able to develop a landowners technical manual that highlights management practices for the watershed. It is our hope that this manual will help guide future management practices in the watershed.

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

N/A

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 was the first time that the Community Foundation had played the role of grant administrator for this type of grant.
- It strengthened our connections to the research and conservancy groups within our community. Since we are a neutral, nonpolitical entity, we were able to provide a key role as convener of issues regarding this topic.
- This grant opportunity also gave the Amador Community Foundation more standing in the community and made more people aware of the foundation and what we do.

Description of Project Accomplishments:

1. Most Significant Accomplishment

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

- A fact-based assessment of current water issues for the Jackson Creek Watershed.

2. WOW Factor

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

N/A

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?

The biggest stumbling block for us was the initial outreach and stakeholder collaboration. We would recommend starting to work with stakeholders even before you write a grant. If the people feel that they helped to create a project, they will stand behind it, and help it happen.

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 Amador Water Agency has been and continues to use the information gathered to assess the watershed and make pertinent decisions on the management of their water system.
- The Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council continues to utilize the “Earth Team” volunteer base developed through this project in order to continue monitoring within the Jackson Creek Watershed. These volunteers are also able to use equipment and supplies to monitor other watersheds within the county.

- Stakeholders are committed to keeping things going within the watershed. Continued monitoring, restoration, collaboration with neighbors, etc. will all keep the project alive.
- There is a strong feeling that what was learned from this project will provide a basis for decisions that must be made to protect and enhance water resources in our area.

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.

Amador Water Agency – The water agency’s decommissioning of the old earthen canal was the basis for this project. The changing water regime within the watershed needed attention and thus we secured the funding to complete this project. The Amador Water Agency gave us a lot of data and access to studies from their Environmental Impact Assessment Report. This information saved us countless hours of research and allowed us to focus our time on other aspects of the plan.

Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Council – The CSRC&D was an integral part of this project. They trained and implemented the “Earth Team” volunteers, completed all of the mapping for the project, assisted in outreach, and helped finalize the Management and Implementation plans. The CSRC&D will continue to be a project partner long into the future.

Foothill Conservancy – The Foothill Conservancy played a part in the decision making portion of the management and implementation plans. They also helped with editing all drafts and provided input throughout the project.

Protect Historic Amador’s Waterways – PHAW was integral in securing this grant and getting the project moving in the early stages. PHAW recognized the need for an assessment of the watershed and lent their expertise through their contract professionals, in order to secure a quality final product.

Conflict Resolution – Potential conflict was avoided just by the community foundation taking over this grant. There was contention between the Water Agency and certain interest groups over the quality of the watershed. The Water Agency said that there would be no change to the condition of the watershed and other groups felt there would be significant changes. By the non-biased community foundation controlling the grant, we were able to produce a final product that all parties could accept.

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.

N/A – The Amador Community Foundation sponsored this grant because we were the best, neutral organization that could effectively facilitate this potentially controversial project. Increasing capacity was not a goal of the community foundation, although as mentioned above, community relationship building did occur as a result of this project.

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”?

Because this was a first –time administrative role by ACF, we had to move up the learning curve on how to administer according to SNC’s procedures. Through the hiring of project consultants who were familiar with the process, we were able to better understand the grant and create a better final product.

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.

Many photos, charts and graphs are contained within the Jackson Creek Watershed Assessment and the New York Ranch Management and Implementation Plan. Please refer to these documents when needing photos for this project.

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?

The development of the Management and Implementation plans created plans for the Amador Community Foundation to determine future uses of funding of projects within the watershed. The Amador Water Agency gave \$100,000 to the Community Foundation to fund beneficial projects within the Jackson Creek Watershed. It will be the job of the Board of Directors of the Community Foundation to use the Jackson Creek Management and Implementation Plan to choose and fund appropriate projects within the watershed.

The New Your Ranch Management and Implementation Plan also requires ongoing work. One of the goals of the NY Ranch Plan is to facilitate the decision making process for a future landowner of the reservoir. The Stakeholder group defined within the plan will be responsible for choosing this future owner, and setting them on the right track for long term management and restoration of the reservoir.

Ongoing monitoring within the Jackson Creek Watershed will continue to occur using the existing “Earth Team” volunteers and the very involved stakeholder group.

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.

Ellie Routt ellieroutt@sbcglobal.net 1-209-419-2861

Susan Snoke bigmt@volcano.net 257-1851 x107

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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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.