

**Final Reporting Performance Measures Supplement – Agreement No. SNC 070269
Sequoia Riverlands Trust’s Blue Oak Ranch Visitor Use & Education Plan**

1. Resources Leveraged

a. Resources leveraged to complete this Project –

Matching funds –

Alcoa Foundation and Sempra Energy Foundation support to SRT’s education program, including service learning, education collaborations, school field trips, after school programs and teacher trainings - \$57,500

NRCS Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program cost share agreement for riparian restoration along Dennison Creek. - \$24,491

Resources Legacy Fund Foundation grant for continued implementation of the Southern Sierra Partnership’s “Framework for Cooperative Conservation and Climate Adaptation in the Southern Sierra Nevada and Tehachapi Mountains.” - \$30,000

In-kind contributions and volunteers –

Former Board member Terry Manning, former staff person Ian Herdell – outreach to community groups concerning the planning effort - \$500

Youth and Wild Places leaders who participated in the Dennison Creek riparian restoration service learning projects - \$3,000

John Greening, photographer – for a number of plan photos - \$1,000

b. Resources leveraged as a result of this Project

Existing and future education partnerships –

Partnership with Pro Youth HEART, a non-profit serving at risk children – for after school programs and teacher trainings

MyForest Summit – collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service and Tulare County Office of Education (SCICON) to provide Tulare County youth with a multi-day environmental education / service learning experience. SRT able to step into lead more when USFS funding waned.

Peaks & Valleys Institute – a collaboration with the federal land management agencies and Tulare County Office of Education to develop a year-round service learning program that provides Tulare County youth with multiple outdoor experiences at various elevations and in various environments within the County

Future grant funding – the Plan can serve as the basis for future grant proposals for restoration, visitor amenities and educational projects.

Future in-kind and volunteer contributions – the grant enabled SRT to build a prioritized list of projects, and develop relationships with potential contributors (e.g. local Scout troop, archaeologist, teachers, people who might want to be preserve rangers or ambassadors)

No value has been assigned to the items listed above, as they are all future items.

2. Impact on collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders

a. Number of people/entities involved in Project

Approx. 35 people who attended the community open house

Presentations to:

Springville Lions Club
Springville Chamber of Commerce

Outreach to:

Tulare County Office of Education (SCICON, Circle J Ranch)
U.S. Forest Service – Sequoia National Forest / Giant Sequoia National Monument
National Park Service – Sequoia National Park

Wild Places and roughly 30 students involved in Dennison Creek restoration project

3 SRT staff and 2 volunteers on planning team – brought together around SRT’s visitor access goals

2 resource inventory consultants

b. Increased cooperation/decreased conflict among stakeholders.

Stronger ties especially with SCICON, Circle J, Wild Places
Residents of Springville area now much more aware of Blue Oak Ranch resource
Neighbors now much more familiar with SRT

3. Capacity building within region:

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

The SNC grant for visitor use and education planning boosted SRT and community capacity by:

- Underwriting education outreach and partnership development by SRT's Education & Volunteer Director – not only for Blue Oak Ranch, but for broader outdoor education efforts (e.g. MyForest Summit and the Peaks & Valleys Institute) that affect youth throughout Tulare County. The SNC grant enabled SRT to step in and take a stronger role when the capacity of some other organizations declined.
- Enabling SRT to develop Blue Oak Ranch outdoor education programs that complement and reinforce the science curriculum offered by the Tulare County Office of Education (SCICON and Circle J Ranch) and by nearby schools
- Enabling SRT to open a south Sierra foothill property to conservation-compatible recreation use – a direct community benefit in an area where most lands are privately owned and posted “no trespassing.”

4. One-page description of Project accomplishments:

- a. Description of how the project succeeded in accomplishing its intent and the direct benefits that resulted from the Project.

- *Completed a resource inventory* to determine existing conditions, map existing improvements, identify points of interest, and scope out potential locations for future activities and improvements.
- *Developed a plan and partnerships for outdoor education programs, with highlights including –*
 - Identifying educational themes and focal points at Blue Oak Ranch

- Gathering information at the annual CCLT conference on visitor use management and land trust roles in environmental education
 - Assessing how SRT education programs at Blue Oak Ranch could complement programs offered by the Tulare County Office of Education at the nearby SCICON Camp and Circle J Ranch facilities, and by Tulare County schools
 - Partnering with the U.S. Forest Service and Tulare County Office of Education on an annual outdoor learning event called “MyForest Summit” that used environments at SCICON, Blue Oak Ranch and Sequoia National Forest
 - Spearheading a collaborative, year-round service learning program called the “Peaks and Valleys Institute.”
 - Partnering with a local conservation organization, WildPlaces, to develop an education plan for the next year that includes visits to all of SRT’s nature preserves, and to complete service learning projects that accomplished restoration objectives at Blue Oak Ranch
- *Developed and produced a visitor access and education plan for the preserve, including –*
 - Reaching out to the community to gauge interest and engage area residents in the visitor use planning effort
 - Establishing major goals and strategies
 - Identifying opportunities, challenges and possible management responses related to each goal and strategy
 - Laying out recommended policies, management actions and physical improvements for enhancing visitor and educational uses at Blue Oak Ranch

b. Description of the follow-on or indirect benefits of the Project

- Strengthening of partnerships between Sequoia Riverlands Trust, the Tulare County Office of Education (including SCICON), the Sequoia National Forest/Giant Sequoia National Monument, Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks, WildPlaces and Springville-area service organizations
- Increased community awareness of Blue Oak Ranch and Sequoia Riverlands Trust
- Demystification of SRT with neighbors of the preserve
- A prioritized inventory of restoration and resource enhancement opportunities that provides the basis for future grant proposals and service learning/ volunteer projects

- Improved ability to sustain a variety of compatible uses at Blue Oak Ranch, including protection and enhancement of habitat, cultural and watershed resource protection; outdoor recreation, environmental education, and livestock production.
 - Improved understanding how Blue Oak Ranch can contribute to landscape-level conservation, and how visitor and educational uses of the preserve can contribute to conservation awareness in the area
 - SRT was able to produce an updated map of SRT-conserved lands in the North Fork Tule River drainage, as noted above.
 - The SNC grant support, along with funding from the Alcoa Foundation and Sempra Energy Foundation, enabled SRT to play a strong role in educational partnerships that involve, but also extend beyond, Blue Oak Ranch.
- c. Description of any significant positive experiences and unanticipated occurrences, or other noteworthy events that happened during the Project and anything about the project that gives you “goose bumps.”

The grant enabled these unanticipated successes –

- In preparing the Local Context map for the visitor use plan SRT also reviewed and mapped its land conservation progress in the North Fork Tule River drainage. This map will be a valuable resource for future conservation outreach, funding proposals and planning.
 - In order to plan for visitor and educational uses of Blue Oak Ranch we needed to understand how they would fit with other land uses and conservation values. As a result, the Blue Oak Ranch Visitor Use & Education Plan will serve SRT well as an overall management plan for the preserve.
 - Although the deliverable for this grant was a visitor use and education plan, we also ended up developing a “volunteer involvement plan”, including a comprehensive list of projects that can readily be matched to specific partners (e.g. a high school ecology club, Eagle Scout, service organization or a group with a specific recreation focus). Half the challenge with volunteers is having a clear idea of what you want them to do!
- d. Description of lessons learned during the course of completing the Project.

SRT had not previously done a visitor use and education plan, so we spent considerable effort devising goals, strategies and recommendations that would best take advantage of opportunities within the constraints of funding, staff capacity and risk management. In

the process we learned a lot about the issues that go with inviting visitors to SRT preserves, as well as ways to deal with those issues.

We also developed a plan structure that should serve SRT well for future visitor use and education plans (e.g. for Dry Creek and Homer Ranch), or even future preserve management plans.

Hopefully the Blue Oak Visitor Use & Education Plan will be a useful example for other land trusts who seek to enhance visitor and educational uses of their fee title lands.

5. Number of visitors for educational, recreational, or tourism purposes to the Blue Oak Ranch Preserve

During grant period:

Community open house hike – 20 people
Photography event(s) – 15 people?
Wildflower walk – 15 people
Service learning days – 2 days with 15 kids each for 30 total
Other?

6. Define the number and type of sensitive species identified in the resource inventory and the number of acres of sensitive habitat preserved.

- a. Sensitive species identified in the resource inventory

114 total plant species

Sensitive plant species –

Springville clarkia – confirmed
Kaweah brodiaea – probable (confirmed on nearby site)

69 total animal species

Sensitive animal species –

Vernal pool fairy shrimp – suitable habitat
Valley elderberry longhorn beetle – suitable habitat

Foothill yellow-legged frog – suitable habitat
Western pond turtle – confirmed in West Pond
Sequoia slender salamander – confirmed
Yellow-breasted chat – confirmed
Golden eagle – confirmed
Tricolored blackbird – suitable habitat
California condor – suitable habitat; were in area historically
Sierra Nevada red fox – suitable habitat

b. Acres of sensitive habitat preserved

This grant did not involve direct land protection or restoration. However, the following sensitive habitats occur at the Blue Oak Ranch Preserve:

Blue oak woodland habitat
Riparian woodland habitat
Vernal pools