

Sierra Nevada Conservancy WIP Capacity Program Subgrant Three-Month Progress Report

Grantee Name: Eastern California Water Association

Project title: WIP Capacity Program Subgrant – East Geography

SNC Grant Agreement Number: 940-RFFCP

Submittal Date: October 31, 2021 **Reporting Period:** August 1 - October 31, 2021

Report Preparer: Holly Alpert **Phone #:** 760-709-2212

Progress Reports are a required deliverable of your grant and must be completed whether or not work has occurred on your project in the last three months. Not submitting a complete progress report by the deadline defined in your grant agreement will result in any subsequent requests for payment being delayed or denied. Progress Reports should reflect implementation activities for the project over the last three months. Upon completion of the project, a Progress Report that covers the last three months of the project must accompany the Final Report.

Progress Report Summary

Please provide a summary narrative of work completed during this reporting period in the following categories. This report should include work completed by any organization for which you are a fiscal agent or subgrantor under your SNC Subgrant.

1. Capacity Building
 - a. Capacity building need assessment

We submitted our capacity assessment on April 30, 2020.

- b. Capacity building program design

The capacity building program design will be updated and refreshed as needed.

- c. Capacity building program delivery

We continue to serve in a coordinating role with the three counties' fire safe councils. Several drafts of a letter to the counties' boards of supervisors were produced and vetted through the group of fire safe councils. In the midst of this process, we attended a meeting of all interested fire safe councils convened by California Fire Safe Council. The letter was eventually finalized and brought before the Mono Board of Supervisors in October, where it was very well received and spurred some excellent discussion. We are still working on getting the letter agendaized in Inyo County, and it is unlikely to go before the Alpine Board of Supervisors.

Rick and Holly served in a central role in the development of Mono County's county fire

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coordinator grant application through CFSC. We produced drafts of all the portions of the application that did not require county-specific knowledge. We also consulted in an informal way on the Inyo County application but did not assist with the actual writing of the proposal.

2. Collaboration and Partnership Development

a. Stakeholder and partner outreach

We have recognized that Alpine County issues tend to be left out of discussions of projects, project prioritization, and other efforts. Alpine Watershed Group reached out to SNC, and we then reached out to AWG to discuss how to bring more resources to the county, possibly through early action funding but also using current resources. We are also in regular contact with Alpine Fire Safe Council and Alpine Biomass Collaborative but have not yet found a way to formally partner on any activities.

We have been reaching out to local jurisdictions (including Alpine County) about the possibility of a structure hardening demonstration project in the region. The outreach has been met with some interest and some non-responsiveness. We are investigating the possibility of FEMA/CalOES funding.

b. Development of agreements (MOUs, MSA, GNAs, other agreements or foundational documents.)

No new agreements

c. Meetings with partners/collaborative members

The following meetings occurred during the reporting period:

- A meeting of the full RFFCP stakeholder group focused on project prioritization criteria and process
- Meetings with Mono County staff on county fire coordinator grant application
- Meeting among all fire safe councils, CFSC, and RFFCP team
- Discussion of fire safe council letter with Inyo County Office of Emergency Services and Independence FSC
- Traditional ecological knowledge summit organized by the Bi-State Tribal Natural Resources Committee (with support from BLM, Inyo National Forest, USGS, and LADWP)
- ESCCRP needs assessment focal team meetings
- 2 Mono County Board of Supervisors meetings
- Call with Bishop BLM and 40 Acres FSC
- ESCCRP stakeholder meeting
- ESCCRP CAL FIRE Forest Health grant kickoff meeting
- Update call with Great Basin Institute
- Workforce development meeting with Plumas Corp. and East Side Iron

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- One-on-one meetings:
 - Independence FSC
 - Bishop BLM
 - Inyo County OES
 - Alpine Watershed Group
 - Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe
 - High Sierra Energy Foundation
 - Janet Hatfield/ESCCRP

d. Collaborative activities

Collaboration took place with the ESCCRP effort, both directly with Janet Hatfield and through the outreach & education and monitoring & research needs assessment focal teams. This work includes frequent communication with Janet and her team, participation in various meetings, and contributing in a substantive way to the project's needs assessment.

We collaborated with the region's fire safe councils in developing and submitting a letter to the boards of supervisors.

Through the awarding of two CAL FIRE fire prevention grants, we have started working more closely with 40 Acres FSC, though the bulk of that work will not begin until January 2022 (and will also include Independence FSC).

3. Forest Health and Fire Protection Project Planning

a. Collecting existing plans and project information

No progress was made here during the reporting period.

b. Designing the planning process

We had a call with Great Basin Institute during the quarter. They have been backed up with other work, so all they could share with us was a map of the study area. They said they are working on the content of the analysis now and will have something for us to review towards December. We discussed then having a workshop with the full stakeholder group to present the document and describe how it can be used.

c. Outreach and involvement of stakeholders and the public

We worked with various stakeholders through the ESCCRP in planning its initial forest health project. In a related vein, the Whitebark Institute was awarded a small grant through Southern California Edison to perform defensible space and home hardening education in Mammoth Lakes over the next year.

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We received word during the reporting period that the Whitebark Institute was awarded two CAL FIRE fire prevention grants, which will allow us to work with the communities of 40 Acres and Independence. We communicated all three awards to the full RFFCP stakeholder group. Once grant agreements are signed, we will also be preparing press releases for the affected communities and for media outlets.

- d. Application of scientific methodologies or best practices

N/A at this point.

- e. Project prioritization

American Forests is continuing to facilitate our project prioritization process. The project prioritization subcommittee developed indicators that could then be narrowed into criteria. The subcommittee did the narrowing through a survey, and then we met with the full RFFCP stakeholder group to go through an indicator prioritization exercise. Because only a handful of stakeholders was able to stay on the call long enough to complete the exercise, we made the exercise available to additional stakeholders in electronic form. In all, 14 people went through the prioritization exercise. We have reviewed the results and are working with American Forests on next steps, which will likely include first vetting the results (and the process) through the subcommittee before taking them to the full stakeholder group.

- f. Other planning activities

N/A at this point.

4. Forest Health and Fire Protection Project Development

- a. Completing design of projects

No work in this task during the reporting period.

- b. Obtaining funding for projects

As mentioned above, we have obtained three grants for fire prevention work in the eastern Sierra. The work of these grants will start in late 2021 and early 2022.

We communicated an early action RFFCP funding concept proposal to SNC, which includes project development needs.

We are looking into CalOES/FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding for a possible structure hardening demonstration project in all three counties.

- c. Completing environmental or other permitting for projects

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N/A at this time.

- d. Other project development activities

Great Basin Institute's work is the primary project planning/development activity currently underway.

5. Demonstration Project Implementation

- a. Project implementation activities

N/A

- b. Project evaluation activities

As discussed above, we are evaluating the possibility of a structure hardening demonstration project in the three counties. We have reached out to local officials in each jurisdiction to gauge interest, and those that have responded were enthusiastic about the possibility, dependent upon funding availability and match requirements.

6. Subgrant Administration

- a. Project Reporting

The sixth quarterly report was submitted on August 6, 2021.

Invoice #7, covering the period July 1 - September 30, 2021, has been submitted.

- b. Administration and/or oversight of subgrants or fiscal agency recipients

ECWA is administering and overseeing this subgrant. ECWA does not oversee any other entities as related to this subgrant.

- c. Other

N/A

7. Regional Communication and Collaboration

- a. Communication or collaboration with other Geographies

Other than participating in the SNC-hosted subgrantee workshops, we did not have any communications with other geographies during the reporting period. American Forests does act as a kind of liaison among subregions in which they work.

- b. Participation in any multi-regional conferences, workshops, and webinars

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The RFFCP east team participated in the SNC-hosted subgrantee workshops during the reporting period. We did not attend any other meetings with other geographies.

Status of Specific Deliverables to Date

In addition to the above, please report on any specific deliverables included in Exhibit A of your grant agreement.

Deliverable 1: Capacity assessment/capacity building work plan

This deliverable was completed and submitted on April 30, 2020.

Deliverable 2: Grant application for demonstration project

A structure hardening demonstration project has been conceived, and SNC suggested the CalOES/FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program as a possible funding source. We are investigating both the funding source and the local desire to implement such a project.

Deliverable 3: Outreach/educational materials

We are concentrating our efforts for this deliverable on the Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance website. Plumas Corporation's Sierra Corps Fellow is helping to build out the pages focused on education.

Deliverable 4: Develop sub-regional plan

We have begun to write the sub-regional plan, and with the recent progress on the project prioritization process, will soon have a list of prioritized projects to include in the plan.

Challenges Encountered

Have you completed the 'Next Steps' work as stated in your last Progress Report? If not, please describe any issues that have made or will make completing the project on time difficult; include solutions you initiated to resolve problems. If your project is not on schedule, please explain why here.

We have made progress on the next steps from our previous progress report:

- The draft project prioritization criteria were presented to the RFFCP stakeholder group in September, and group members went through an exercise to prioritize the criteria.
- We assisted with the Mono County fire coordinator grant application. We have not applied for any further funding opportunities but are considering the FEMA HMGP.
- The fire safe council letter was presented to the Mono County Board of Supervisors in October.
- Rick and Holly continued to participate in the ESCCRP effort, including leading the outreach & education and research & monitoring focal teams of the needs assessment.

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At this time, our project is on schedule.

Successes Achieved

Please describe any successes or opportunities that have emerged during this reporting period.

Successes

- Assisting with Mono County’s fire coordinator grant application
- Helping to facilitate the process of agendizing the fire safe council letter at the Mono County Board of Supervisors
- Achieving the next step in the development of project prioritization criteria
- Awarding of three fire prevention grants

Opportunities

- Offering more capacity building opportunities
- Keeping up on website maintenance and development
- Prioritizing project planning needs and developing plan for fulfilling them
- More outreach to tribes

Media

Please provide a description along with copies or links of any coverage including social media posts, print, video, press release, or webpages.

N/A at this time

Compare Actual Costs to Budgeted Costs

Please refer to your grant agreement for the budget categories and budgeted costs.

These numbers are current as of September 30, 2021. That date is the end date of our seventh invoicing period.

| Project Budget Categories | Budgeted Subgrant Dollars | Total Expenditures to date |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Staff | \$145,000 | \$121,881.36 |
| Materials/Supplies | \$10,000 | \$458.31 |
| Travel | \$8,000 | \$1,219.07 |
| Indirect Costs | \$16,300 | \$5,693.46 |
| | | |
| GRAND TOTAL | \$179,300 | \$129,252.20 |

Please provide additional budget details as needed

Provide an explanation for any categories that are over budget. If you are on an advance payment schedule, list interest earned on advanced funds.

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We have gone over our capacity budget just slightly (\$10). We will not charge any more expenses to this category.

Do you anticipate any challenges to completing the project within established budget category amounts?

If so, please list the budget categories in question and describe the potential issues.

It is very unlikely we will use the entire budgets in the Materials/Supplies and Travel categories. Instead, it would be helpful to have additional money from these categories available for the Staff category.

Next Steps

Work anticipated in the next three months, including location and timing of any scheduled events related to the project.

We expect the project prioritization criteria to be completed in the next quarter and applied to the project list as an initial exercise. The results will likely be brought to the stakeholder group in early 2022 to review, discuss, and modify if needed.

We have begun drafting the sub-regional plan and expect to make solid progress on it in the next quarter, perhaps having a working draft by the end of the quarter.

We will continue to assist in the ESCCRP, including the project's needs assessment effort.

We will reach out to the group fire safe councils again to determine if another meeting is desired.

We expect to receive and review a draft riparian environmental analysis from Great Basin Institute.

At this time, no other events are scheduled.

Comments

Please list any other important items/issues pertaining to the project which have not been addressed elsewhere.

N/A

Additional Requirements

If you have been requested to provide information on other issues (such as employment benefits, benefits to priority populations, greenhouse gas reductions, etc.), please provide the response below: