

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: February 1, 2021 **Reporting Period:** November 1, 2020 – January 31, 2021

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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

We continue to hone the planning and design of the individual capacity building program elements as the program evolves and we learn new information.

- c. Capacity building program delivery

We made significant strides in several elements of our capacity building program during the reporting period:

Website: The Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance website went online this quarter! It can be accessed at <https://www.eswildfirealliance.org/>. Although the entirety of the website is a capacity building tool, two specific aspects are being built out as capacity building elements. The first is information related to the Mountain View Fire, which decimated the town of Walker in mid-November. Immediately, we began talking with community

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leaders and gathering information to understand needs. We transformed the homepage of the website into an information page for Mountain View Fire victims and other community members. We also included some of the information in Spanish. Marlon has continued to update the information on this page into January. The second capacity building step consists of webpages built by Marlon for individual stakeholder efforts in the region: Wheeler Crest (Swall Meadows) Fire Safe Council, Mono Basin Fire Safe Council, and the Eastern Sierra Climate and Communities Resilience Project (ESCCRP). Marlon worked with stakeholder representatives to determine what information to include on each of these pages.

Grant writing Workshop: We are planning an east side-focused grant writing workshop to be taught by SNC's Elissa Brown in February 2021. During the reporting period, we advertised the workshop and started gathering RSVPs. The workshop is full at 15 registrants, and there is also a fairly long waiting list.

2. Collaboration and Partnership Development

a. Stakeholder and partner outreach

- Much of our partnership development during the quarter centered on working within the ESCCRP. We continue to provide support for Plumas Corporation as it develops the project, including hosting and providing technical support for the stakeholder meetings (there have been two). Within this realm, we are also working with several partner entities such as the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Inyo National Forest, and the Eastern Sierra Council of Governments (ESCOG).
- We attended ESCOG-member-agency meetings at which they discussed and ultimately adopted the sustainable recreation and ecosystem management resolution adopted by ESCOG in the last reporting period. These meetings were excellent outreach opportunities and brought a significant amount of attention to the RFFCP effort.
- We presented the RFFCP concept and our work to the Mono County Collaborative Planning Team in late January. This group is comprised of local, state, and federal agencies, including the military, and meets periodically to share updates and collaborate on matters of mutual interest.
- We worked with individual stakeholders on specific efforts, such as creating individual webpages within our new website and discussing and assisting with specific funding opportunities.
- Following the Mountain View Fire in mid-November 2020, we worked with several partners in Mono County to determine how to make post-fire recovery information available and accessible to the community. We decided the best way for the RFFCP effort was to house information on our website, which we have done and continue to update.

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

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No new agreements

- c. Meetings with partners/collaborative members

The following meetings occurred during the reporting period:

- One projects subcommittee meeting to discuss a possible project concept for GBI's work
- One RFFCP Stakeholder meeting dedicated to approving the project concept for GBI's work
- Two ESCCRP meetings, which we helped to host and facilitate
- Several meetings with GBI, including a project kick-off meeting in early January
- Marlon attended a meeting of the Mono Basin Fire Safe Council to discuss the option of creating a webpage on our website.
- Holly met with American Forests and Yosemite-Sequoia Resource Conservation District to discuss AF's role and services.
- Marlon met and worked with Plumas Corporation to develop an ESCCRP webpage on our website.
- Marlon met with Wheeler Crest FSC representatives twice to discuss webpage development.

- d. Collaborative activities

Our collaboration with Plumas Corp. on the ESCCRP is in full swing. This is the most formal and active collaboration happening.

3. Forest Health and Fire Protection Project Planning

- a. Collecting existing plans and project information

We continue to solicit and add projects to the database. Adding projects will be an ongoing process.

- b. Designing the planning process

Getting GBI on board with a planning project was a major accomplishment achieved during the reporting period. Furthermore, we now have a projects subcommittee in place that provided input towards the GBI effort and will be the designers of the project evaluation and ranking process.

- c. Outreach and involvement of stakeholders and the public

- Stakeholders were engaged in providing input into the GBI project both via email and within the stakeholder meeting we held in December.
- Stakeholders were also involved in various other efforts such as the website.

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- We provided a written update/outreach piece to stakeholders in January.
- d. Application of scientific methodologies or best practices

N/A at this point.

- e. Project prioritization

This process is now well underway. The first task to check off the list was getting a planning project in place for Great Basin Institute. After the October stakeholder meeting, the projects subcommittee met to discuss possible project concepts for GBI. Ahead of that meeting, we had received an idea for a project that centered on developing generalized environmental information for riparian areas in the Eastern Sierra that could be used in CEQA analysis and that could help move projects forward. After refining the concept a bit with the input of the subcommittee, we submitted it to GBI for consideration. We met with them a few more times to refine the concept, and then we brought the proposal to the full stakeholder group for approval. We received some good input from that group, and the project is now in GBI's hands.

In addition to GBI's work, we started down the road of the general project prioritization process. One of the suggestions at the October stakeholder meeting was to map all of the projects on our project list as a start to the project prioritization process. American Forests is working with us to develop a simple mapping tool to help the project subcommittee, and eventually the full stakeholder group, explore and analyze projects in support of developing evaluation criteria and a ranking process. Furthermore, we agreed that American Forests will take over the facilitation of the project prioritization process (primarily starting with the subcommittee), while the RFFCP East team will maintain leadership of 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

N/A at this point.

- b. Obtaining funding for projects

We are assisting Plumas Corporation in its pursuit of a CDFW Prop. 1 grant to fund the environmental surveys needed for the environmental documentation of the ESSCRP. We continue to search for other funding sources to match with the known project needs on our list.

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- c. Completing environmental or other permitting for projects

N/A at this time.

- d. Other project development activities

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

5. Demonstration Project Implementation

- a. Project implementation activities

N/A

- b. Project evaluation activities

N/A

6. Subgrant Administration

- a. Project Reporting

The third quarterly report was submitted on October 31, 2020.

Invoice #4, covering the period October 1 – December 31, 2020, is in preparation.

- 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

Holly has been in communication with the South subgeography and American Forests to discuss American Forests' role and how we may be able to collaborate across geographies and realize efficiencies.

Through American Forests, Marlon has been in contact with the South and El Dorado South subregions on monthly and ad hoc bases to check in and coordinate efforts.

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

The full RFFCP east team participated in the SNC-hosted subgrantee workshops during the reporting period, including the webinar on drone technology.

Marlon had an opportunity to present his work to Department of Conservation staff in December.

Holly was invited to the January “coffee chat” with Department of Conservation and the block grantees. She found this session to be very informative, and she enjoyed getting to talk one-on-one with people from different parts of the state, including DoC staff members.

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.

As requested by SNC for this progress report, we are providing an update on each of our grant deliverables, along with a plan and timeline for achieving each of the deliverables not already completed. To begin, we are planning to request a six-month extension of the Project Completion date of the grant, out to July 31, 2022.

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 specific demonstration project has not yet been identified, but with the momentum being gained in the project prioritization process, along with the project development work being done by GBI, we expect a project opportunity to become apparent. Extending our grant end date will give us some more flexibility in identifying a funding opportunity and completing a grant application.

Deliverable 3: Outreach/educational materials

This deliverable is being fulfilled in a piecemeal fashion. We have already provided many educational materials about personal safety and evacuation, defensible space, and home hardening on our website. The website, in general, also provides outreach about the RFFCP. We have plans to apply for the California Fire Safe Council Clearinghouse Grant for a region-wide fire safety educational campaign focused on visitors. That grant opportunity should be available this spring.

Deliverable 4: Develop sub-regional plan

We are starting to put the parts of the plan together. We have created some writing assignments among the RFFCP East team for the background material. American

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Forests is helping with GIS and mapping, and the new Sierra Corps Fellow comes with a wealth of GIS experience and will also take on some of the mapping. The bulk of the work, however, will come with the project identification and prioritization process, which, as reported, is underway. While we are confident we could complete the subregional plan in the original grant timeframe (by January 2022), we hope that a few extra months will give us more time to work with the projects and get some closer to shovel-ready status. If funding and time allow, we may be able to complete more funding applications.

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.

Yes. We completed both of the next steps from our previous progress report:

- We settled on a project for GBI's work
- We assisted with the first ESCCRP convening

At this time, our project is on schedule, though we are planning to request a grant extension as described above.

Successes Achieved

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

Successes

- Finalizing and approving the project concept for GBI's work
- Implementation and convening of the projects subcommittee
- Gaining momentum on project prioritization process
- Completion of Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance website
- Continuing to implement our Capacity Building Program

Opportunities

- Offering more capacity building opportunities
- Obtaining grant funding
- Begin drafting subregional plan
- More outreach

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

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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 December 31, 2020. That date is the end date of our fourth invoicing period.

| Project Budget Categories | Budgeted Subgrant Dollars | Total Expenditures to date |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Staff | \$145,000 | \$65,520.50 |
| Materials/Supplies | \$10,000 | \$379.85 |
| Travel | \$8,000 | \$867.39 |
| Indirect Costs | \$16,300 | \$5,227.15 |
| | | |
| GRAND TOTAL | \$179,300 | \$71,994.89 |

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.

N/A

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.

Not at this time.

Next Steps

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

We anticipate that our work will largely be focused on project prioritization and capacity building over the next three months. We will also begin putting pen to paper on some of the background information for our subregional plan.

We will continue to provide support for the ESCCRP as needed/requested. 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.

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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:

N/A