

Upper Pit Disadvantaged Communities' Human Right to Water and Drought Sustainability Projects

North Cal-Neva Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.

Attachment 1 – Eligibility: Project Consistency with an adopted IRWM Plan

Project 1: Grant Administration

This project is consistent with the Upper Pit Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP – available here: <http://upperpit.org/the-plan/the-plan>), and in particular the finance section (Chapter 12), Goal 6 (strengthen community watershed stewardship and encourage better coordination of data collection, sharing, and reporting), Goal 7 (support community sustainability by strengthening natural resource-based economies), and Goal 8 (improve agency programs and policies by increasing accuracy, accountability, and effectiveness).

The finance section discusses the importance of having ongoing administrative support for the IRWMP, incorporating as diverse an array of stakeholders as possible in the process. The North Cal-Neva Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. (RC&D) has acted in this capacity over the last 3-5 years, and this funding will allow them to shepherd these projects through the process, ensuring the ongoing effectiveness and continuity of regional resources in a planning area of great socio-economic stress.

- Goal 6 is met through the complex coordination and reporting completed as part of this administrative task, carried out successfully in two other IRWM grant awards by the RC&D.
- Goal 7 is met via the infusion of funding into the region for natural resources-based work (this grant).
- Goal 8 is met by the work the RC&D does to promote the IRWM program and to coordinate accurate, effective, and synergistic data collection and reporting.

Project 2: Pit River Bank Stabilization, Riparian Enhancement and improved Stream/Floodplain Connection Project

This project is consistent with the Upper Pit IRWMP and is listed in the Plan as a Tier 1A Project (ready to proceed). Upon commitment of project funding from DWR, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will commit to funding the match.

Tier 1A projects have been through the formal approval process of the Project Review Committee and are endorsed by both the Project Review Committee and the Regional Water Management Group. The Pit River Bank Stabilization, Riparian Enhancement and improved Stream/Floodplain Connection Project was reviewed at the June 9, 2015 RWMG meeting. At that meeting it was determined that the project met the qualifications for the DWR Round 3 Prop 84 Implementation Grant Program and was deemed a high priority project. The RWMG approved this project to be included in the application at the June meeting.

The landowners involved with this project agree that bank stabilization and floodplain-stream connectivity is a priority issue for this reach of the Pit River. The yearly loss of riverbank and the associated loss of meadow land is a serious threat to their agricultural operations.

The following list summarizes the project's contributions to the Upper Pit River Watershed IRWM Plan objectives:

Goal 1 - Maintain or Improve Water Quality

- Objective 1-B: Assist landowners in implementing five additional projects to improve livestock management in riparian areas (e.g., off-site watering facilities, relocation of feedlots and corrals, riparian and stream-zone fencing).
 - This project addresses the issue of improving livestock management in riparian areas by including riparian and stream zone fencing as a component.
 - This is the implementation of Resource Management Strategy 13 Pollution Prevention (A) through cattle exclusions.
- Objective 1-C: Implement five miles of bank stabilization projects to reduce erosion and siltation.
 - This project addresses this objective since bank stabilization is a major component of this project.
 - This is the implementation of Resource Management Strategy 24 Watershed Management (C) by reducing erosion and sedimentation by stabilizing banks and creating robust riparian corridors.

Goal 3 - Sustain/Improve Aquatic and Terrestrial Communities and Habitat and Ecological Function

- Objective 3-A: Conduct meadow, spring, fen, and vernal pool restoration projects affecting at least 1,000 acres. Stabilize and/or restore 25 miles of streams within the watershed to natural ecological function to increase shade canopy, improve summer base flows, decrease peak flows, improve bank and channel stability, and improve habitat conditions.
 - This project addresses the issue by including the planting of willows along with other shrubs and the seeding of grass and forb species to restore the natural habitat along the streambank and within select areas on the floodplain.
 - This is the implementation of Resource Management Strategy 24 Watershed Management (A) preserving “green” infrastructure (putting nature to work as water supply and delivery system) for good watershed function.
- Objective 3-B: Restore and reconnect streams with historic floodplains, affecting at least 1,000 acres of floodplain.
 - This project addresses this objective by reducing bank erosion from flood and irrigation waters flowing into the river. This will be accomplished with the use of rock rip-rap and making use of remnant river ox-bows.

Goal 4 - Control and prevent the spread of invasive species.

- This project is consistent with objective 4-A: Promote and expand collaborative strategic weed management plans and then implement treatments of at least 500 acres of noxious weeds annually. Include a noxious weed treatment element in all restoration projects implemented under this Plan.
 - This project addresses this objective by including a noxious weed treatment element for all treatment sites which result in soil disturbance.
 - This is the implementation of Resource Management Strategy 24 Watershed Management (D) by managing invasive species.

Goal 7 – Support community sustainability by strengthening natural resource-based economies.

- Objective 7-A: Support two restoration/enhancement projects that benefit the local economy.
 - This project was originally identified as three separate projects. This project addresses this objective by providing benefits to three independent family owned business engaged in cattle and hay production. The agricultural industry is a significant part of the local economy.
- Objective 7-C: Encourage projects conducted under this plan to hire a local workforce.
 - This project addresses this objective by hiring a local field crew to do the vegetative plantings. The purchase and placement of rock will generally go to a local equipment operator; this is based on past experience with this type of project.

Project 3: Fall River RCD / Pit RCD Open Ditch Conversion Water Conservation / Water Supply DAC Projects

The Fall River RCD Open Ditch Conversions Project is consistent with the Upper Pit IRWMP and is listed as a Tier 1 project. Tier 1 projects have been through the formal approval process of the Project Review Committee and are endorsed by the Project Review Committee and the Regional Water Management Group. Tier 1 projects have been reviewed with respect to 12 criteria defined by the RWMG, and are ready to proceed.

The project was identified as important to the region due to the amount of water running through the open ditch systems and the significant water loss through leakage and evaporation. The stakeholders agree that this project would represent significant groundwater savings after implementation.

The following list summarized the project’s contributions to the Upper Pit River Watershed IRWM Plan objectives

- Objective 1-D: Conduct a feasibility of analysis of alternative methods of irrigation water delivery (e.g., piping or canals) that benefits both agricultural users and riparian/aquatic health.
 - Project implements an alternative method of water delivery to open ditches by piping the ditches, minimizing animal intrusion, eutrophication, and unnecessary pumping.
- Objective 2-F: Implement piping and/or lining to replace at least five miles of open ditch systems to reduce water losses by at least 26% percent.
 - This is a ditch piping project
- Objective 5-A: Conduct at least two water supply infrastructure projects that could include leak detection and repair; distributions system pipeline replacement; water tank storage repair, replacement, and meter calibration, repair, and replacement that help improve the integrity of local water supply.

- This project addresses water supply infrastructure and will minimize leaks and evaporation by piping a currently open, unlined ditch

The project is related to the plan's Resource Management Strategies (RMS) as follows:

- Consistent with RMS Agricultural Water Use Efficiency
 - Strategy B: Re-work irrigation systems via ditch lining and piping, diversion repair, field leveling, and water monitoring
 - Strategy D: Facilitate the financing of capital improvements for on-farm irrigation systems
 - Strategy J: Provide assistance for best management practices (BMPs) for agricultural water efficiency
- Consistent with RMS Conveyance – Regional/Local
 - Strategy A: Improve ditch efficiency by lining and converting to piping