

TOWN COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Title: Final Report on Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Grant 1148-RT Sustainable Recreation and Tourism Initiative.

Meeting Date: March 2, 2022

Prepared by: Daniel C. Holler, Town Manager

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive final report on SNC Grant 1148-RT and provide comments.

BACKGROUND:

The Town was the lead agency for a \$618,750 Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant under the category of Sustainable Recreation and Tourism awarded in June 2019. The work under the grant represented a regional approach to defining priorities and means of enhancing sustainable recreation and recognizing the linkage to the region's tourism-based economy. The grant was developed around four work categories plus general project management and grant administration. The work categories included:

1. Regional Recreation Stakeholder Engagement,
2. Climate Adaptation and Resilience Assessment,
3. Connection to the Eastern Sierra Visitor Audience; and
4. Project Development and Prioritization.

The first three categories built upon each other to lay a foundation to work through a community generate list of potential projects. The final step was to identify a final eight projects to pursue funding for implementation. The larger project list was refined into a portfolio of projects which may be accessed in the future as a potential guide for pursuing additional projects by the stakeholders, out of the 220+/- ideas generated. The grant work is nearing completion with only final reporting and billing remaining.

Numerous meetings and presentations were made throughout the grant funded project to stakeholders, local agencies and to the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership meetings. A high level of public outreach was an important part of the grant process. A brief overview of grant process and key work areas follows. A more detailed presentation will be presented to Council as part of the final report.

DELIVERABLE: Facilitated 8 Meetings of Regional Recreation Stakeholders

- In Person Meetings 1 - 3: Completed
- Virtual Meetings 1 - 3: Completed

- Final “Virtual Wrap Up” Meeting: Completed
- Final Deliverables – Completed/Delivered 12/10/21

DELIVERABLE: Climate Adaptation and Resilience Assessment

- Final Assessment Report – Completed/Delivered 6/7/21
 - The final report was previously presented to stakeholders including a presentation to Town Council.

DELIVERABLE: Program Recommendations/Framework for Sustainable Recreation Messaging

- Final Document – Completed/Delivered 12/13/21

DELIVERABLE: 8 Regional Marketing Partner Meetings

- Meetings 1 - 8: Completed
- Final Deliverables – Completed/Delivered 12/13/21

DELIVERABLE: 8 Planned projects, fully developed and ready to seek identified funding opportunities

Project Development: Completed

- Buttermilk Infrastructure & Recreation Planning Initiative
 - Recommended for National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Grant through ESCOG \$247,300
- Eastern Sierra Visitor Connection Program
 - Currently unfunded (No grant sources found – options to be pursued by ESCOG)
- Regional Recreation Capacity
 - Currently unfunded (No grant sources found - options to be pursued by ESCOG)
- Eastern Sierra Campground Improvements
 - Currently unfunded – options through Inyo National Forest and Quantified Ventures are pursuing funding options
- Eastern Sierra Towns to Trails Plan
 - ESCOG notified of being recommended for funding by SNC of \$370,443
- Vulnerability in California’s Eastern Sierra: Asset Inventory & Gap Analysis
 - Currently unfunded – options will be reviewed under the State’s climate solutions allocations

- Dispersed Camping Mitigation – Camp Like A Pro
 - Concept program a success and Mono County invited to submit for a full grant proposal by SNC and with potential for Caltrans Distract Maintenance Agreement.
- Eastern Sierra Scenic Byway Analysis
 - Currently unfunded and no lead agency defined. ESCOG may be consider refurbishing elements of the Byway program as part of the Visitor Connection Program pending funding.

The total project is expected to come in slightly under budget. The timeline to finalize the grant is as follows:

- • March 2: TOML Town Council Presentation
- • March 15: Final Report Due
- • March 16: Last day to bill any reimbursable costs
- • March 25: Last day for Town to pay any reimbursable costs
- • April 1: Final Request for Payment Due