



Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District
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Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District

FY 2005/ 2006 Annual Plan

Mission Statement

“To promote the responsible stewardship of our natural resources through education, planning, and project assistance”

The Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District (RCD) has developed the following program of work for the 2005/2006 Fiscal Year (FY). This program is based on the goals and objectives of the RCD, as defined in the District’s Long Range (Strategic) Plan.

The availability of staff to work on various tasks within this Annual Plan is based on the District’s Time Budget, which has been allocated as follows: 25% to District organization, administration, and the development of grant funded projects; 25% to NRCS support; 35% to District funded projects, and; 15% towards work described under 2005-2006 County Agreement.

General Program Description

The Districts focus for the FY 2005/2006 program will continue to concentrate on RCD Organization, NRCS Cooperation and Private Landowner Technical Assistance, Catastrophic Wildfire, Watershed Management, and Education and Outreach. A description of each area of emphasis is provided below.

Goal 1. District organization, administration, and the development of grant funded projects

It is the intent of the Georgetown Divide RCD to continue developing the District’s capacity to plan and deliver conservation programs, through the following measures:

Task 1. Actively involve the Board of Directors in RCD business to improve the quality of grant applications, project administration and provide staff with necessary guidance.

Task 2. Develop and revise resolutions and policies for the RCD that will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its operation.

Task 3. Continue to develop the RCD’s relationship with agency personnel and conservation partners, including members of the community. This will be accomplished through increased participation in local working group meetings, South Fork American River watershed group meetings and County organized events.

Task 4. Continue to improve the RCD’s financial reporting system, necessary for providing the best information possible for financial management and Director oversight.

Task 5. Improve the RCD’s abilities to prepare and understand legal contracts and bidding procedures. This will be accomplished through building a strong relationship with Council of El Dorado County under the direction from the Board of Directors.

Task 6. Prepare annual work plans and other management tools to help guide the District and provide staff with needed direction. This will be accomplished through feedback from the Board of Directors and partnering agencies. In addition, sub-committee meetings will be scheduled to determine if the RCD is fulfilling its Annual and Long Range Plans.

Task 7. Research and secure continuous project funding sources for the RCD. This will be accomplished by staff and will include staying aware of current available funding sources and working with the community and partnering agencies on the development of project ideas.

Task 8. Continue to improve inter-office efficiency through weekly staff meetings to discuss district operations and measurements of adherence to annual and long-term strategic plans. In addition, these meetings will include NRCS staff where opportunities to outreach to landowners will be a focus.

Goal 2. NRCS Support

The Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District will assist the NRCS in providing technical assistance necessary to plan and implement conservation practices to assist land users with forestry and grazing land related resource problems/ concerns. NRCS support addresses planning and implementation of conservation practices within El Dorado County and respective jurisdictional boundaries of the El Dorado County & Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation Districts. These RCD employ staff under an existing Memorandum of Understanding that allows the proposed activities to span beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of each district to extend throughout El Dorado County.

Task 1. Technical assistance to evaluate EQIP applications. RCD staff will assist the NRCS in the evaluation of EQIP applications using locally developed ranking criteria in partnership with the Placerville Field office.

Task 2. Landowner Conservation Planning Assistance. RCD staff will provide conservation practice implementation assistance to landowners.

Task 3. GIS database maintenance. The RCD will provide GIS application assistance complimentary to the Customer Service Toolkit used in the NRCS planning process.

Task 4. Aerial Photo collection maintenance. The RCD will maintain up-to-date aerial photos to be integrated into the GIS database and will be used for the planning purposes and compared with photos from earlier years to document land use changes.

Task 5. Administrative assistance. The RCD will provide administrative assistance related to managing the FY 2005 EQIP program.

Task 6. Encourage landowner participation in state and federal cost-share programs. This will be accomplished by NRCS staff, but will include RCD staff assistance with outreach and education on the various programs.

Task 7. Partner in the development and coordination of workshops for small landowners (e.g., pond management, irrigation, horse management, fuels and fire issues, GIS, etc.).

Goal 3. District Funded Projects

Task 1. Provide all technical and administrative services as needed for contract completion; monitor, supervise and review all work performed; and coordinate budgeting and scheduling to assure that the contract is completed within budget, on schedule and in accordance with approved procedures, applicable laws and regulations.

Task 2. Ensure that the contract requirements are met through completion of timely Status Reports and through regular communication with the Contract Manager. The progress reports shall describe activities undertaken and accomplishments of each task during the quarter, milestones achieved, and any problems encountered in the performance of the work under this contract. The description of activities and accomplishments of each task during

the quarter shall be in sufficient detail to provide a basis for payment of invoices and shall be translated into percent of task completed for the purpose of calculating invoice amounts.

Task 3. Award subcontract to appropriate organizations and individuals to perform contract services. Document steps taken in soliciting and awarding the subcontract and submit to the District Board for review.

Agricultural Watershed Management Program

Task 1. Establish a community-based stewardship program within the boundaries of El Dorado County to be known as the “***El Dorado County Agricultural Watershed Group***” and define the terms and conditions under which the parties will cooperate and coordinate activities necessary for the maintenance and improvement of water quality. The parties are committed to scientifically based watershed management for the El Dorado County watersheds and will foster further collaboration to meet the objectives in the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (§Water Code 13000 et seq.). The emphasis of these activities shall be focused upon the development and implementation of Best Management Practices. The signatory agencies and organizations shall cooperate in seeking funding to support the activities of the ***El Dorado County Agricultural Watershed Group***. In addition, public education and community outreach will be a primary goal of the parties.

Task 2. *Water Quality Monitoring.* In order to meet the conditions of the State Water Resources Control Boards Conditional Waiver for Irrigated Lands the El Dorado County Agricultural Watershed Group has adopted the Sacramento Valley Water Quality Coalition’s Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP). The scope of work for the MRP include the following:

- 1) **Water Quality Sampling and Analysis:** water quality monitoring sampling and analysis at the sites and according to the schedule listed in Exhibit A (SVWQC Annual Monitoring for Phase 1) consistent with the Coalition MRP approved by the Regional Board.
- 2) **Monitoring Program Management:** develop Monitoring Implementation Plan, manage and implement the monitoring program, manage data (SWAMP compliant), assist the Coalition with communications of water quality results.

Task 3. *Education & Outreach:* A minimum of three workshops will be held in every year of the program. Information fact sheets and technical reports will be obtained and distributed to all participants. Once a year a Water Quality Short course will be held that teaches the basin concepts of watersheds, nonpoint sources of pollution, site-assessment techniques, and techniques for evaluating the success of recommended practices. Recommended practices for each cropping system are presented. Course participants complete nonpoint source site-assessments and farm water quality plans that integrate production goals with water quality, habitat conservation, and soil conservation goals.

Task 4. *Conservation Planning Technical Assistance:* Resource professionals from the local RCD’s, NRCS, and UCCE will work collaboratively to develop Conservation Planning Technical Assistance Reports for individual irrigated agricultural landowners aimed at protecting water quality. Conservation Planning Technical Assistance will follow the three-phase, nine-step process used by NRCS (180-VI-NPPH, Amend. 4, March 2003). Landowners involved with the Water Quality Short Course will develop a Conservation Plan as a requirement of the course.

Task 4. *Project Assessment and Evaluation Plan:* The El Dorado County Agricultural Watershed Group will work with project partners and Regional Board staff to identify the appropriate methods for calculating load reductions. The proposed models that will be used include the Spreadsheet Tool for Estimating Pollutant Load (STEPL), Agricultural Non-Point Source Pollution Model (AGNPS), The Soil and Water Assessment Tool (SWAT).

Watershed Management

In June 2004 the RCD and the South Fork American River Watershed Group (SFARWG) with funding from the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program developed a South Fork American River Stewardship Strategy (Project #99-N19). The primary objectives of the Stewardship Strategy include the protection and improvement of water

quality and a reduction of fuel loading to decrease the threat of broad scale catastrophic wildfire through community based stewardship of the South Fork American River watershed (SFAR). FY 2005-2006 will seek project funding to continuously implement components of the Stewardship Strategy while maintaining focus on developing watershed management options for the implementation of watershed improvement projects.

Task 1. Support the South Fork American River Watershed Group (SFARWG) to facilitate and improve coordination, collaboration, and assistance among government agencies, other organizations, and private landowners. This round-table collaborative planning process offers a means for all interested citizens to express their concerns for natural resources of the watershed and to provide input into watershed restoration activities. Through the implementation of the Stewardship Strategy watershed advocacy will build as resource issues are addressed.

Task 2. Continue collaboration with the American River Watershed Group (middle and north forks of the American River) under existing Memorandum of Understanding to ensure an American River scale commitment is consistent and cooperative in its geographical scope.

Task 3. Develop a Regional Watershed Coordination Committee comprised of Watershed Coordinators from the American River, Cosumnes River, Bear River, and other neighboring watersheds to set priorities in the develop regional watershed management plans.

Task 4. Coordination with Federal and State agencies through project distribution and the development of informational brochures to maintain watershed advocacy.

Task 5. Implement a strategy that will ensure support and long-term sustainability of local watershed activities. Continued support for the SFARWG will ensure the long-term sustainability for watershed activities through grant writing and cost share incentive partnerships. In addition, addressing water quality and fuel load problems directly benefits ecosystem health of the Delta-Bay system and are a priority for CALFED. Long-term success will be measured by the number of individuals and organizations participating in improving watershed health and measuring the amount of funding received to implement the Stewardship Strategy and restoration activities.

Watershed Education

Throughout the implementation of the Stewardship Strategy the RCD will adhere to meeting the fundamental goals of informing stakeholders that we live in a watershed, and that we understand how to live within it. Education programs will facilitate community involvement and provide communities with a framework to better understand the state of water quality and fuel load issues within their watershed. The design of watershed education component that create this awareness is of fundamental importance. The District will implement four watershed education program components as described in summary in the following sections.

Task 1. Maintain natural resource information, GIS Database (Maps), and a library of resource information/research.

Task 2. Partner on taking students and interested community members on creek and stream educational field trips.

Task 3. Participate in outreach and media events such as the Home & Garden Show, Harvest Far, Earth Day Celebration, National Monitoring Day, Georgetown Nature Area Festival, Hangtown Creek Day and other various community events.

Task 4 (PRIORITY). Maintain an informational web-sit (EIDoradoRCD.org) where educational materials related to watershed stewardship programs, activities and related resource information will be available. In addition, this web-site will interact with the American River Watershed Portal to expand the ability of users to access information within a “seamless” interface of abundant resource information.

Task 5. Continue to promote outreach and education and provide technical assistance to agricultural community in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the University of California Cooperative Extension, and the Department of Agriculture.

Task 6. Provide awareness of noxious weeds to land owners/managers within the RCD. Make weed management information readily accessible to land owners/managers. This task will be accomplished in cooperation with the El Dorado County Noxious Weed Management Group and the University of California Cooperative Extension. This task will consist of staff's participation in monthly work groups and assistance with related outreach campaigns.

Watershed Stewardship

Educating residents about the individual role they play in the watershed and communicating specific messages about positive and negative behaviors. The RCD will develop a means for stakeholders to engage in personnel stewardship by:

Task 1. Developing Watershed Stewardship Brochure/ Watershed information brochure (what is a watershed?).

Task 3. Conduct watershed education programs in the schools to increase the number of students and teachers participating in hands-on field activities located with priority watersheds. Elementary and High school located with each priority sub-basin will participate in stream restoration and monitoring programs. These schools include: Oak Ridge High School, El Dorado High School, Union Mine High School, Golden Sierra High School, Gold Oak elementary, Black Oak Union Mine Middle School, and Schnell Elementary School.

Task 4. Enlist the assistance with program coordination of professional mentors to provide leadership with hand-on student activities.

Task 5. Develop a Homeowners Erosion Control Manual.

Task 6. Maintain commitment to schedule a long-range community stewardship mini-grant program in partnership with Federal, State, and local governments. The program will also maintain its commitment through cooperation from local organizations, Industry, and private business owners. This purpose for engaging in a local stewardship mini-grant program will ensure the stakeholders working towards watershed education and restoration the tools to promote such stewardship.

Professional Training and Engagement

The RCD has developed a variety of professional training tools to bring the community into awareness of the water quality and fuel load hazards throughout the watershed and integrate on how to apply the tools of watershed protection. Watershed monitoring and assessment methods have been developed to enable citizen monitoring groups be involved with the evaluation, adaptive management, and decision making process with partnering resource professionals from the USFS, SWRCB the Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District and others. Professional erosion and sediment workshops aimed at promoting responsible stewardship on private lands will provide the tools for technically sound, cost effective, management practices.

Task 1. Promote Stream Restoration Projects. An example currently underway in the sub-basin of Hangtown Creek at Ivy House involves removal of invasive species, planting of native vegetation, trash removal and water quality monitoring. This collaborative program is utilizing the partnerships of the American River Conservancy, the City of Placerville, Community Pride, Native Plant Society, Trails Now!, and students from El Dorado High School, Union Mine High School, and Oak Ridge High School.

Task 2. Volunteer Monitoring Training & Water Quality Workshops. Water quality monitoring will follow certain quality assurance and protocol that will enable the evaluation of existing restoration activities, adaptive management, and improved collaborative decision making. The Watershed Education Summit has been active for six-years conducting water quality data for three major tributaries of the South Fork American River within the Crystal Basin. This program will be the model for additional monitoring programs to be developed throughout the priority watershed that occur in a more urban setting.

Task 3. Conduct irrigation evaluation and water conservation assistance on a one-on-one basis specific to private landowner needs.

Catastrophic Wildfire

Significantly reduce the risk to life, property and watershed health resulting from wildfire, through the support of fuel management plans, projects and public information programs.

Task 1. Work with CDF, the U.S. Forest Service, local volunteer fire departments, UC Cooperative Extension, local working groups and El Dorado County to coordinate the implementation a fuel reduction plan in the District. This will be accomplished by staff and their participation in local planning efforts such as the El Dorado County Fire Safe Council, the Cosumnes River Task Force and the South Fork American River Watershed Group.

Task 2. Deliver information to private landowners on fire safety for private residences and lots. Work with subdivision homeowners' groups where communities identified as high risk to catastrophic wildfire will be prioritized. This will be accomplished in cooperation with the El Dorado County Fire Safe Council and the UC Extension and will consist of staff assistance on various information campaigns.

Task 3. Work with CDF and the Fire Safe Council on the implementation of the community wide chipper programs within the District.

Task 4. Work with the El Dorado County Noxious Weed Group and partnering agencies to identify and manage selective invasive weeds within the Weed Management Area. Recent aerial photos will help in mapping this and enable multiple partners to share accurate and current data.