



NORTH MONTEREY COUNTY HABITAT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Progress Report: January 1 – March 31, 2019

Task 1. Restoration Success Monitoring (*Task 3 in overall project work plan*)

The CCWG will conduct biological monitoring for three (3) years after construction. Monitoring will include:

A. California Rapid Assessment Method (CRAM).

Description: CCWG staff will conduct CRAM, in conjunction with photo monitoring, four times throughout the project period (pre-implementation, post ground engineering, year 2 of restoration, and post restoration). CRAM is a cost-effective and scientifically defensible rapid assessment method for monitoring the conditions of wetlands throughout California and can be used to assess the performance of restoration projects. Running a CRAM assessment includes collecting information on surrounding landscape, hydrology, physical structure, and biotic (vegetation only) structure.

Progress: No progress this quarter. Spring CRAM assessments will be conducted in May 2019.

B. Vegetation Surveys:

Description: CCWG staff will conduct four Spring vegetation surveys throughout the project period (pre-implementation, year 2 of restoration, year 3 of restoration, and post restoration). Vegetation monitoring will be conducted using point intercept method or quadrat density estimates along established transects within each vegetation zone to help determine increased plant cover and diversity.

Progress: No progress this quarter. Spring vegetation surveys will be conducted in May 2019.

C. Bird Surveys:

Description: CCWG staff will work with an independent contractor to conduct Spring and Fall bird surveys before the project begins, at the half way point, and at the end of the project.

Progress: No progress this quarter. The next bird survey will be conducted in Fall 2019

D. Monitoring Reports:

Description: CCWG staff will produce 2 interim reports and one final report that show CRAM scores, vegetation, bird, and amphibian data over the project period.

Progress: No progress this quarter. The next interim report will be provided in July after Spring monitoring is complete and data is analyzed.

Task 2. Education and Outreach (*Task 4 in overall project work plan*)

A. Interpretive Signage:

Description: This task includes sign design, fabrication, and installation of low-profile signs at the restoration site. Low-profile interpretive signage will be installed along the trail system to help educate about the life history of the SCLTS and the importance of different types of wetland and upland habitat. CCWG will work with an interpretive sign designer and fabricator on this task. Seven low-profile signs will be fabricated and installed along the newly constructed trail at sites. Signs will be completed during the first 2 years of the project.

Progress: CCWG staff have been working with Wildways Illustrated on sign content. In January CCWG staff and Wildways Illustrated conducted a site visit to discuss sign themes, design, and locations. With input from staff at the RCD of Santa Cruz County and USFWS, draft text and species lists for each panel have been developed.

B. Education Days with NMCUSD:

Description: CCWG will work in partnership with the School District to Improve high school science students' knowledge about watershed health and endangered species, in alignment with the Next Generation Science Standards, through student participation in the Amphibian Habitat Enhancement Project. This task will include coordination with the School District and science teachers to hold several field experience days for students (plant propagation, weeding and planting days, or habitat monitoring) over the 3-year project period. Additional work may include in-class presentations to students, teacher workshops, and materials and equipment to support the education program. Portions of this task are dependent on funding through the NOAA B-WET grant.

Progress: The North Monterey County School District received a planning grant to develop a Specialized Secondary Pathway Program titled *Sustainable Environmental and Agricultural Careers* (SEA) at the high school which will include two courses: Natural Resource and Habitat Management and Rethinking Sustainability. The first course will be implemented in Fall 2019 and will utilize the project site for some of the class lessons and activities. CCWG staff have been working with School District staff and teachers to help develop content for this course.

CCWG staff have been working with the freshman Integrated Science 1 class teachers at North Monterey County High School for a plan to have students conduct student led research projects at the project site in May 2019.

CCWG staff and their Watershed Steward Program Americorps members coordinated and led a community planting day at the restoration site on Sunday, February 10th. More than 80 volunteers (many of whom were students in the school district) attended the four-hour planting event to contribute to the restoration of the parcel at North Monterey County High School. Over 1,660 native plants were put in the ground. The volunteers were fed with generous food and beverage donations from eight local businesses. At the event, CCWG's Watershed Stewards Program AmeriCorps Members conducted an "education station" to engage volunteers in an interactive conversation about the ongoing restoration, the local watershed, and the special-status species at the site.



Volunteers planting, learning, and eating, during the public planting day on February 10, 2019.

CCWG staff and interns have also been working with the high school's Slough Crew (afterschool environmental club) to plan and coordinate a high school Earth Day event. Slough Crew club members will take students on a tour of the site and discuss the restoration project and benefits of the project to special status species in the area. This event is planned for April 26, 2019.

Task 3. Project Management *(Task 6 in overall project work plan)*

Description: CCWG will help manage restoration (weeding and planting), monitoring, and education and outreach efforts and will send quarterly progress reports and invoices to the RCDSCC.

Progress: The CCWG project manager has been coordinating with project partners to set up sub contracts, establish task schedules, coordinate monitoring and restoration activities, and report on tasks. This represents the progress report for CCWG's work for the period of January 1-March 31st, 2019.