



Carson Valley Conservation District

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USDA Service Center

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May 14, 2015

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Proposed Budget and Work plan.

Budget: Money is scarce as usual. Our programs and management are funded by staff hunting down grants. The estimated budget for this year will be as follows. Wages and project costs will vary based on the project and the annual costs for permits, labor and materials.

NDOT Drainages: \$1,000,000.00 the watershed coordinator has a crew that specializes in repairing NDTO drainage's in our watershed. Watershed Coordinator reports project costs of about: \$980,500.00

Bioengineering: \$60,000.00 we will be addressing severely eroding river banks on the Carson River east of the Cradelbaugh Bridge. Work will begin late in the season when the river is low. There is enough funding to last about 90 days. Project Costs of about: \$38,000.00

Noxious Weeds: \$100,000.00 The County has funded us for noxious weed work, we will be seeking other funds from sources besides the county. Crews are hired, trained and deployed to agricultural produces, especially certified weed free growers. The crews locate, map and treat noxious weeds and we train them on chemical handling, application and safety. Priority is given to producers who have 100 acres or more and irrigate their food and fiber crops. Due to unusual weather conditions treatments started early this year. NDoA likes the program so much they want to use it as a model for the state. Project Costs of about: \$75,000.00

District Coordinator: \$25,000.00 has been funded by the county for this year. The district coordinator handles the day-to-day administration and coordination duties for the district. Project Costs of about \$20,000.00

Work Plan:

NDOT Drainages: We will be addressing the NDOT drainages year-round. Crews work and rework NDOT drainages to stop or slow down erosion. Crews use culvert linings and rock rip-wrap to line and stabilize the drainages. Much of the work is done on private property with the owner's invitation and permission.

Bioengineering: The bioengineering starts in the late fall when the river drops low enough to allow work crews to access the river banks. Work is preformed ion private property with the land owners invitation and permission. The banks are cleaned and a trench is dug at the toe where live willows are planted. When the willows take root they provide a strong matrix that helps to hold the bank in place and stop erosion. We use indigenous willows. We are allowed to only use hand crews. Property owners seem much more likely to allow work if we don't use heavy equipment.

Noxious Weed Control: Working closely with the County Weed Department crews are trained to identify, map and treat Nevada's Noxious Weeds. Crews are deployed to address noxious weeds. The County Weed Department gives us leads and we work closely with local producers to locate, map and treat noxious weeds in the county.

Crews are given NDoA training and encouraged to obtain their Restricted Use Cards. Although we do not use restricted use chemicals, the training for receiving the cars is very germane to our work.

District Coordinator: In order to complete the insane amount of meetings and paperwork required to receive grant funding the coordinator insures the district is in compliance with the terms and conditions to receive grants and be in good standing. The coordinator also performs customer relations, Human Resources, training, inspections, project site tours, weed awareness, Range Camp scholarships, writes grant requests, attends the legislature testifies on matters important to the district and local producers, hires, trains, deploys and pays weed and bioengineering crews, buys insurance, arranges the monthly meetings and annual dinner and elections and provides supervision of crews not involved in the NDOT projects; the Watershed Coordinator runs the NDOT programs.

State Funding: You can see from the size of the projects and the funding we receive that the tiny amount of money we receive through the Conservation District Program doesn't even come close to covering the costs of operating and coordinating district functions. The Watershed Coordinator and District Coordinator positions would require about \$76,000.00 a year. Cost vary per project. The cost of Workers Comp and Liability insurance is about \$4,000.00 a year. We are grateful to NRCS and USDA for providing us with office space computers, support and communication equipment; we honestly couldn't stay open without their generosity. Staff does not receive medical, dental or eye coverage and we have no retirement plan and have received no pay increases for cost of living. Total project revenue is about \$1,185,000.00 wages and district costs are about 80,000.00, project costs are about \$1,100,000.00.

Other Funding:

Funding from other sources than the state makes up the majority of our funds. There is a tremendous amount of eroded and eroding riverbank, stream banks and sloughs that could be project sites if additional funds were available. A program of about \$100,000.00 a year would allow us to increase the number of project sites but still be able to manage the projects. Some areas could use the "Hard Rock" solutions using heavy equipment to lay the banks back and placing fractured rock to stabilize the banks. Many property owners don't want to lose the amount of horizontal ground required to lay back bank 3:1 for rock placement. Bioengineering is almost universally accepted and welcome.

The noxious weed work is an ongoing program. It's been said that there is about a ten-year seed bank in the ground so the noxious weeds will keep coming back year after year. Using an integrated approach is the best solution. Unfortunately many property owners do not reseed after eliminating the noxious weeds and this just opens the ground up to more noxious weeds since they are the first plant to take hold in disturbed ground. Also, over grazing is a reality. Field and grazing management is expensive and some operators just can't afford it. We have about a 120 day growing season in our area and many of the producers graze behind their hay cutting so these people are really intensely using their resources to produce food and fiber. Here again, we'd be out of business if we didn't receive funding from the county for this program.

Bioengineering:

Only hand crews are used to place the materials.



Eroded bank before bioengineering is applies.



Noxious Weed Control:



Crews wear PPE when mixing and applying chemicals.



Mike Hayes
CVCD Coordinator



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775-782-3661 ext.112 River-Grants

Re: Financial Statement and Final Report
September 7th, 2016

Annual Work Plan and Financial Report Summary: The CVCD will continue to pursue funding to continue to operate.

CLEAR AND SNAG FUNDS: We successfully lobbied the state to reload the Snagging and Clearing Fund in the State Engineer's Office. The original amount was \$250,000.00 but we were only successful in obtaining \$200,000.00. We plan to lobby for the full amount since the State Engineer, Legislature and public were favorable regarding our request for funds. We were disappointed that the \$200,000.00 was not shown in the State Engineer's budget this year. We will ask that \$250,000.00 be allotted annually to the State Engineer for Snagging and Clearing and River Maintenance funds because there is work to be done that goes beyond the work associated with Snagging and Clearing.

319 AND CWSD: Bioengineering and riverbank repairs are also important to water quality and wildlife habitat. NDEP has some funding for 319, Water Quality which could be matched by funds from local jurisdictions. Often time's local jurisdictions forget the importance of budgeting to maintain the river corridor in a safe and healthy condition. All districts should take the time to speak with their county's elected officials and Emergency Service personnel about river safety and health. The river corridor and agriculture production land is often and incorrectly assumed to be the public's "Open Space" or "Green Belts" when they are so much more. In our county the agriculture land is the floodway and flood plain, its passive infrastructure that would cost tens of millions to recreate with concrete and rebar structures that would not support wildlife or a healthy living river system like we currently have. The importance of communicating these facts to your county's and state elected officials can't be overstated. Nobody thinks about the ecosystem as long as it's healthy and doing its job.

Unfortunately, it's only when the systems are overloaded or fail that they get the attention they deserve. It's not too hard to sell people on the importance of maintaining safe and healthy river systems but it's often overlooked.

DISTRICT FULLY FUNDED: To run a district like it should be run so we can do projects with local producers and help to maintain a safe and healthy ecosystem we need about \$500,000.00. We obtained close to \$200,000.00 from the state and local government for the snagging and clearing work we did and \$125,000.00 from our county. \$25,000.00 for administration and \$100,000.00 for our noxious weed program. Apparently this was a one shot deal. We have a contract with NDOT's Hydraulic Department for \$500,000.00 - \$600,000.00 for working on drainages that end up in a river. If the Clean Water Act was to be implemented in Nevada we would be dealing with drainages that drain into a Waters of the US. This program will term out at the end of 2017. This is a program and funding source that other districts should look into. Managing programs like these should be a salaried position. As it is the program manager has to bill into the program to obtain wages. I believe we could manage more projects if we had full-time project managers, administrative assistants and district managers who were paid a comparable wage to that of other department heads, managers and assistants.

LOCAL FUNDS: As stated above, we were successful in obtaining funding from our local county government for a successful and wide ranging noxious weed control program, \$100,000.00 and district operating funds of \$25,000.00. These funds continue to keep the doors open and allow us to seek grant funds to do projects related to natural resources and conservation. We also secured \$22,000.00 from the CWSD for bioengineering along the Carson River. Our county understands the importance of agriculture and our rural lifestyle but they have to be reminded each time new commissioners are elected to office. It's an annual task to keep the local government focused on, and informed about, agriculture's role in natural resource management and an environment that is also safe because we are proactive in managing resources like a living river system.

NDOT FUNDS: We have been obligated to a contract with NDOT to rework drainages in our district and in other districts boundaries. We will not renew this contract once it lapses in 2017. The total work done for NDOT is about \$600,000.00 using an independent contractor to supervise the program. This program does not help the CVCD as expected. There is only a small amount of money the district can receive for doing large amounts of work so the Board does not look favorably on this obligation and will let the program lapse when it ends. It also created some friction with another conservation district over who should be doing this work within their district's boundary. This friction was due to the independent contractor, who was supervising the work. It was my understanding that he went to the Dayton Valley Conservation District and told, rather than asked them, that NDOT would be doing drainage work in their district. The DVCD should have had the opportunity to do the work within their district boundaries, but the independent contractor just went ahead without formal approval from DVCD's Board. Conversely, the DVCD manager contacted CVCD to get approval to spray Pepperweed in an area where our district overlap. Our Board gladly approved the work. DVCD did the proper thing by contacting us, the independent contractor just pushed into another

district without their approval. Other districts should contact NDOT about their program for rebuilding or modifying highway drainage into river systems so that the river receives the cleanest water possible. It's a funding opportunity that we believe could provide funds to other conservation districts.

Q-1 FUNDS We have been contacted regarding Q-1 funding for large scale projects relating to the river and the environment. We are investigating project sites that the county is interested in because we will need a county buy-in to be successful. These funds have not been available for a while so it's nice to see them back. The new River-Grant Manager will be looking for projects and try to work out a 5 year plan for using and matching (50%) these funds. There may be as much as \$10 million available for land purchase, water, and recreation access and river corridor improvement work. While the county, rather than the district, has to apply for these funds the districts will be the main actual work entity. We will need to collaborate with State Lands, NDEP, SHIPO, Douglas County, CWSD, and others. Because this will be a collaborative effort we can anticipate cooperation and success with the projects. We will actively pursue these funds for projects in our district boundaries but to date we have not come up with a specific project site. The county may want to make improvements to a water park that would qualify for Q-1 funds. But have not tied down a specific project so far.

CLEARING AND SNAGGING FUNDS: Project costs will vary based on the scope and location of the project and the amount of regulatory bureaucracy that has to be included and worked through. Some projects can be top heavy with administrative costs due to the requirement that we work with or through a regulatory bureaucracy that does not have standard requirements or is uncertain of the goals of the work, the accepted work designs and standards, scheduling processes so they keep requesting meetings and more and more redundant or unnecessary paperwork. As an example the Clear and Snag project was shut down by a regulatory bureaucrat because, even though we had all the permits in place and the project had started, we had to stop work because a bureaucrat noticed that the start date had been left off some paperwork so they shut down the project and cost us half a day worth of work. We were racing to beat the spring runoff to get the project done and it could have been corrected with a phone call; but for whatever reason the bureaucrat decided the correct thing to do was shut down the whole project. The process needs to be streamlined to allow work to flow rather than hiccup along, especially when you are racing the clock to beat peak runoff flows.

REGULATORY BUREAUCRACY OVERREACH: Things like this make me nuts. The bureaucrat overseeing the project obviously didn't understand the process or critical timeline for finishing the work even though it was stated in the request for permits. Also, when the project was finished another group for bureaucrats from Carson City were touring an area close to where our clear and snag work was done and a bureaucrat didn't like the way the project looked and turned us into the Army Corps of Engineers. It wasn't this person's project but they inserted themselves into it in an adversary role and complained to the USACoE because a temporary coffer dam was used to divert water towards the new channel to hydrate the new channel and vegetation that was dying because it had not had water from the river in over ten years. The

coffer dam breached just as we knew it would when flows exceeded 1,300 cfs. and returned to the full width of the river channel during high flows from runoff.

We now have to do mitigation work for the Corps under the Nationwide Permit but we have no idea of the scope or cost of this work. It's noteworthy that this particular bureaucrat complained because they didn't see "sinuosity" in the project and didn't think it was an "emergency" despite the fact that our Emergency Service Chief told us, the state and the county that in fact it was an emergency to get the work done to prevent flooding of a hospital and assisted living facility. Also noteworthy is the fact that the bureaucrat was watching the river at peak runoff when it runs bank to bank with peak flows. The "sinuosity" they were looking for comes at low flow when the river isn't raging with snowmelt runoff. The work and design was done by local ranchers who use the river for surface water irrigation and have institutional knowledge of how the river works in drought, normal flows and extreme flood events. The local agriculture producers like the design and finished project just fine. Our physical location is unfortunate. We're very close to Carson City so our work gets scrutinized because we're close enough for a "field trip" and lunch at our outstanding Basque restaurant. If we were in Lovelock, we'd never see these people.

INTERAGENCY COOPERATION: We need cooperation from sister agencies, not abrasive, overreaching control freaks who have to slow us down to their speed in order for them to try and understand the work concept and are only content only when they have five pounds of reports, permits and photographs and about 30% of the funds being spent to satisfy their need. The overreaching regulatory bureaucracy is killing our ability to do our work quickly and efficiently and get as much actual physical work done as we can before we start to eat up the budget with paperwork, meetings, reports, photographs, inspections and other redundant and unnecessary busy work so the bureaucrat can walk around with a five pound folder and talk about "their" project. If they actually helped it would be very different. We could do more work because the focus of the work would be the actual project, not the regulatory bureaucrat. In our situation it makes me personally reluctant to try and do work with or for this persons agency who should be supporting our efforts rather than slowing us down and turning us in to the US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS because they don't see sinuosity in peak flows and challenge the county's Emergency Services Director's call for emergency work to increase channel capacity and take pressure off a bank that would fail and send a slug of water towards a hospital and assisted living facility. It's ridiculous.

AGENCY CONTINUITY: It seems that when we get a regulatory bureaucrat educated and comfortable with the work we do they get promoted or replaced with a new person who requires us to start the education process over again to gain their trust and understanding of our work. Overreaching, undereducated bureaucrats are the bane of my existence. All projects require us to try to educate the people we are required to get permits or permission to do work from. Why can't we have a standardized, streamlined process for getting actual physical work done? We're hamstrung as natural resource managers by the current system.

FAST TRACK AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: We need a fast track and/or emergency approval process so we can react quickly to needs that jeopardize the safety, livelihood or wellbeing of the community. Can the state agencies get together and form a committee to review and approve projects in less than 10 working days rather than 90? And can an Emergency Process

be crafted so that we can do emergency repairs within 24 hours of being notified of an emergency without going through the 90 day cycle? Who needs a 90 day process for paperwork and meetings when that actual project itself takes less than 30 days to complete? This is an eternity in seasonal time and we do our work in seasonal time, not calendar time. 90 days of waiting can push a project into the next year's season for work and that can play havoc with funding sources. There is a valid need to be able to get a program approved, funded and underway in 10 days or less. Can these systems be streamlined?

DETERMINATION OF EMERGENCY BY A FIRE CHIEF: There were components of the Snagging and Clearing project that were determined to be an emergency by the Fire Chief and Chief of Emergency Services, primarily a hospital and assisted living facility, yet obstacles were thrown up and the process hiccupped along rather than running smoothly and quickly. We need a process that can be used if an emergency arises or is declared by the jurisdiction. Conservation Districts are the best entities to deal with flooding and emergency river issues, at least in our district that is the case.

Districts should be seen as an asset that can be deployed to rapidly and correctly deal with water and natural resource issues. Districts can do much more than just print flyers, attend meetings and have weenie roasts for outreach. We can do the boots on the ground, shovel ready, brick and mortar work needed to protect or enhance the natural resources within our districts. Work that our agriculture community, with decades of institutional knowledge, request. It takes time to earn the trust of the agriculture community so that they will allow us to do work on their property. Our district has earned that trust, the state and federal agencies have not. Currently the state and federal regulatory agencies are seen as interlopers who cannot be trusted. Being turned in to the Army Corps by a sister agency just reinforces the image of regulatory bureaucrats who overstep their authority and cause us problems working with cooperators; the very job we're supposed to be doing. They end up making us look bad. It takes about five years to earn their trust and about ten minutes to lose it.

NEW REVENUE SOURCES: As always, the revenue streams are tenuous and difficult to secure. The reason CVCD has been successful in finding and securing funding is because we go out and beat the bushes for funds. If we were to just sit around the office and wait for work to come to us we'd be turning out the lights and locking the doors within a year. Vigorous pursuit of funds is a top priority for the district. CVCD is an active district and because of that some work offers have come our way. The trust of the agriculture producer is paramount in our ability to continue to do work on natural resources because in our district about 99% of the ground abutting the river is private property and the river contains the most diverse natural resources in the county. If we are to stay in business we need the support of the agriculture community and sister agencies.

ELECTIONS: We will be holding a mass meeting on November 1st for our election cycle. This year we have three openings.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

The Revised budget for the CVCD is as follows:

CVCD in-House

Administration:	\$25,000.00
Noxious Weeds	\$100,000.00
Snagging and Clearing	\$189,000.00
Bioengineering	\$22,000.00
Q-1	To be determined????
Total:	\$336,000.00

Independent Contractor

NDOT Drainages \$500,000.00 - \$600,000.00

All Work: \$836,000.00 - \$936,000.00


Mike Hayes
CVCD Coordinator