

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

ACCG Request for Project Support Submission Form

Instructions: Complete this form when seeking project support from the ACCG. Before completing this form, please review the ACCG Project Development & Approval Process (link to flowchart here) and ACCG Project Endorsement Guidelines (link to document). Do not hesitate to contact the ACCG Administrator with any questions: Regine Miller, regine.chips@gmail.com.

Submission Date: June 19, 2109

Project Name: Three Meadows Restoration

Organization making request: Amador Ranger District, Eldorado National Forest

Project Proponent Contact (name, phone, and email address): Gwen Starrett, 209 256-5243, gstarrett@volcano.net

Grant Program (if applicable): NFWF Norcal Forest (planning grant funded August 2019, implementation grant submitted March 2019)

Name and address to who the Letter of Support from the ACCG should be addressed: Richard Hopson, District Ranger, Eldorado National Forest, Amador Ranger District via email to comments-pacificsouthwest-eldorado-amador@fs.fed.us with Subject: Three Meadow Restoration Comments.

Due Date for Letter of Support: July 12, 2019

Project Budget Total Amount: Approximately \$475,000

Project Dollar Amount Being Requested through Grant Program (if applicable): Approximately \$400,000.

Has this project been presented to the ACCG before? If so, when? Yes, numerous times between 2018 and present. Most recently, the project designs and the draft Scoping Document were presented to ACCG planning group at the April 2019 meeting.

Describe the environmental, social, and local economic benefits of this project. Reference ACCG's Principles (link to document here).

The Three Meadow Restoration Project purpose is to improve the natural morphology and hydrologic functions of the meadow systems. By arresting channel head cutting and increasing sediment deposition in the meadow, water quality and groundwater storage will improve, and late season flows will be prolonged. The proposed project would halt the encroachment of upland plant species, particularly lodgepole pine, while increasing the extent and quality of wet meadow and riparian vegetation. By improving the meadow hydrology, the project would also improve and increase habitat potentially available for Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frogs, expand willow habitat for nesting

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songbirds and improve habitat quality for sensitive species associated with wet meadows such as broad-nerved hump-moss (*Meesia uliginosa*), moonworts (*Botrychium* spp.) and Bolander's bruchia (*Burchia bolanderi*).

The project is administered by the Amador Resource Conservation District, providing this organization a leadership role in meadow restoration actions, A minor economic benefit to this organization, via grant administration, is expected. Significant in-kind support has been provided by numerous ACCG members and volunteers, increasing the local knowledge of wetland restoration, meadow monitoring, and restoration practices.

Provide a brief written summary of the project:

The Three Meadows Project includes three small high-elevation meadows: Upper Onion, High Onion, and Tyler. High Onion and Upper Onion are located within the Cole Creek Watershed. Tyler meadow is located in the Bear River Watershed. Currently the meadows are degraded through incised (down cut) channels resulting from over 100 years of land use and natural events. The cumulative effects of these impacts can leave the meadow landscapes vulnerable to damage during major floods and through the reduction in function of meadow hydrology and habitat values. As a result of the degraded meadow condition, wildlife habitat has been degraded, including habitat for vulnerable federally Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive (TES) species.

The proposed restoration actions for Upper Onion Valley include installation of rock riffles and log weirs. The constructed rock riffles and log weirs would be located in existing, incised channels to raise the base level of the channel, encourage aggradation, reduce overall channel capacity, and raise the groundwater table. To control the overall base level of the restored meadow, a roughened channel will be constructed at the downstream end of meadow. A road may be realigned and berms created on a short section of the user-created camping road to prevent creek capture. The proposed action for High Onion Meadow includes the installation of log weir grade control structures in the primary meadow channel to limit additional downcutting and protect seepage sources from cattle grazing. To discourage cattle use around sensitive areas and seepage sources, the project proposes to place large logs\log barriers that would prevent cattle access and usage of these areas. The proposed restoration actions for Tyler Meadow include limiting access by OHVs and installation of approximately 10-12 log weir grade control structures to limit additional downcutting. To reduce encroachment of conifers, small conifers in the meadow footprint and meadow boundary (diameters ≤ 10 inches at base) will be hand thinned (chainsaws, chippers, hand tools).

Specify the treatments planned and describe any actions that could potentially be controversial among ACCG members. Reference the ACCG's evaluation tool which delineates areas of agreement and disagreement ([link to document here](#)).

Treatments are noted above. The ACCG planning group did not find areas of disagreement and requested support of the project to the full ACCG.

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Describe desired outcomes/future conditions that the project achieves/supports:

- Improve/Restore the natural hydrology of the meadow to raise the groundwater elevation and increase natural water storage,
- Restore the natural morphology of the meadow to recover sediment deposition function,
- Arrest channel head cutting,
- Increase and prolong the duration of late-season flows for the benefit of flora and fauna and downstream water users,
- Reduce downstream flood peaks,
- Halt the encroachment of upland plant species, particularly lodgepole pine,
- Increase extent and quality of wet meadow and riparian vegetation, and
- Improve habitat for meadow species, with focus on sensitive plant species and the Sierra Nevada Yellow-legged Frog (SNYLF).

Describe status of environmental documentation (NEPA/CEQA/other): Scoping is anticipated mid-June 2019 to mid-July 2019. During the 2019 field season, environmental assessments will be conducted. A signed decision is anticipated by July 2020.

Attach project map and any other supporting documentation that would enhance the ACCG's understanding of the project.

Please refer to the maps provided in the scoping document.