

Working Landscapes Drought Resiliency Project

GOLD RIDGE RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT



COMPLETION DATE

December 31, 2019

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Estero Americano and Salmon Creek watersheds suffer from pool water security, compromised riparian habitat, and reduced streamflows. Climate change models predict these conditions will be exacerbated by increasingly erratic rainfall patterns, threatening forage production and groundwater stores. During the recent drought, agricultural operations had to increase hay purchases and truck in drinking water for livestock.

PROJECT GOALS

- Increased resiliency to climate change for the farming community of the Estero Americano and Salmon Creek watersheds
- Improved water supply reliability
- Enhanced soil health and drought resiliency on working lands
- Enhanced community capacity to understand, plan for, and act to improve community resiliency

THE SOLUTION

This project builds long-term drought resiliency for agricultural operations by increasing rainwater capture and storage and by enhancing soil water holding capacity through soil health improvements.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The project is currently in the assessment, planning and design stage for some agricultural enterprises while on others, construction and implementation activities have begun.

PROJECT BUDGET

IRWM funds:	\$ 332,460
Leveraged funds:	\$ 152,500
TOTAL	\$ 484,960

BENEFITS

Economic benefits

- Approximately \$5,500 per year in water supply produced through rainwater catchment for agricultural uses
- Enhanced forage production through soil health enhancement, with decreased reliance on imported feed

Water Supply

- When all projects planned through this effort are implemented, total water supply produced will total about 2.73 acre-feet yearly
- Avoided riparian diversions, groundwater withdrawals, or

water supply purchases equal to about 0.42 acre-feet yearly

Habitat and Ecosystem function benefits

- Species protection for endangered coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), threatened steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), and California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*), California freshwater shrimp (*Syncaris pacifica*), and northwestern pond turtle (*Clemmys marmorata marmorata*)

Cultural benefits

- Preservation of agricultural heritage
- Capacity building to empower community members to adapt to climate change

Jobs and Local Economic Benefits

- Nearly \$500,000 spent locally, using local supplies and labor when possible
- About 1.5 jobs created/maintained

NEXT STEPS

Gold Ridge RCD will continue to seek opportunities to empower farmers to protect and enhance their working lands, the species inhabiting them, and their agricultural heritage.

CONTACT

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