



SIERRA NEVADA ALLIANCE

*Keeping light in the range.*

## **Fellow Work Plan Sierra Corps Fellowship Program**

**Host Site:** Feather River Resource Conservation District

**Position Title:** Forest Program Development Fellow

**Designated Site Supervisors:** Brad Graevs, District Manager; Michael Hall, Forest Project Coordinator

**Term of Service:** May 18, 2020 – September 30, 2021

### **Organizational Background:**

Feather River Resource Conservation District is a special district located primarily in Plumas County, with some of the District covering Sierra County. The mission of the FRRCD is “to advocate resource conservation through education and collaborative efforts with willing landowners and organizations that promote economic and ecological sustainability.”

Feather River RCD works with a variety of stakeholders on a diverse range of projects focused on resource conservation, including watershed restoration, fuel reduction, forest restoration and reforestation, biomass utilization, water quality and quantity projects, and wildfire recovery.

**Organizational/Program Goals 2019-2020:** Feather River RCD has been identified as the local partner lead for the Sacramento-Feather River Geography of Sierra Nevada Conservancy’s WIP capacity program, funded by the Regional Forests and Fire Capacity program. This role requires the District to build the region’s planning and programmatic capacity, develop a strategy to implement landscape scale projects, provide capacity development assistance, and coordinate with stakeholders and partners to guide this process. The fellow will be working with the Forest Project Coordinator, who is currently developing a matrix to guide which conditions allow specific forest treatment options, and to pursue scoping this tool for use as a programmatic or conditional CEQA compliance. The process for developing this tool involves a collaborative demonstration project that will guide the prioritization based on local and regional stakeholder input.

The District has been focusing on completing environmental compliance for fuels, forest health, and watershed improvement projects, as CEQA and NEPA have become the most restrictive aspect of the current landscape stewardship process. Other types of projects the District will be leading in the coming year are: fuels reduction; coordinating educational workshops and trainings focusing on fuels reduction and prescribed fire activities; meadows and aspen stands enhancement; fuels reduction and forest health studies; wildfire restoration in the Moonlight, Walker, and Minerva fires; and forest habitat mitigation restoration. In addition, Feather River RCD will be signing a Master Stewardship

Agreement with the Plumas National Forest which will result in increased flexibility for the forest to accomplish its program of work and the District to pursue its mission.

During 2020/2021, Feather River RCD also has the following programs and projects active which will likely be relevant to the Sierra Corps Fellow role.

- Moonlight Fire Area Restoration Project: A large restoration project that focusses on reforestation of wildfire area that burnt as high severity, and also includes fuels reduction, meadow and aspen stand enhancement and protection, goat grazing as an alternative to herbicide pilot project, road decommissioning for water quality. The District is planning to work on the restoration two other fire areas with similar work.
- UCCE Stakeholders Exchange: UCCE facilitated regional capacity assessment and building program designed to keep regional partners informed of all current efforts, and evaluate where capacity is lacking in the region so as to be addressed.
- Evaluating Treatment Longevity and Maintenance Needs for Fuel Reduction Projects Implemented in the Wildland Urban Interface of Plumas County, CA: This project will assess the current maintenance needs on for all projects implemented, funded, or otherwise supported by the Plumas Fire Safe Council. This assessment will result in allow critical questions described in the Effectiveness Monitoring Committed (EMC) Strategic Plan to be answered spatially and quantitatively over all PCFSC treated lands in Plumas County. The goal will be to help inform the Plumas FSC on its treatment life cycle, so it may better plan for and fund future treatment maintenance and substantiate that the Fire Safe Council has and continues to utilize "best available science" in their treatment design and long-term maintenance strategy.
- UC Forestry Camp Fuels Reduction and Forest Restoration Demonstration Project: The purpose of the project is to develop a Forest Restoration Demonstration Site on the Plumas National Forest lands within and surrounding the UC Berkeley Forestry Camp and Baker Research Forest south of Meadow Valley. A key goal of the project is to continue to generate strong, science-based, empirical, and 'outreach ready' results for forest health and fuels reduction treatments that are relevant not only to the northern Sierra Nevada mixed conifer forests, but have region-wide significance through extension to other national forests, research forests, and other outdoor camps. Feather River RCD will be assisting with project design and environmental compliance.
- Lakes Basin Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project: A large fuels reduction project located in the Lakes Basin area, a popular recreation site with watershed and economic value that has been prioritized by PNF due to the multiple risk factors of tree mortality, diversity loss, overgrown stands and ecosystem losses related to climate change. Feather River RCD will be working with PNF to fund implementation of fuels reduction activities.
- Indian Valley Project: A collaborative, landscape-scale project in the early stages of its planning phase. This project is focused on approximately 100,000 acres of forested land around the Indian Valley area in Plumas County. The goal of this project is to enhance forest and watershed health while reducing fuel loading and stimulating the local economy by creating jobs. The other primary goal of this project is to leverage public funding for the environmental compliance of such a large area of mixed public and private ownership.

- Plumas Eureka State Park East Boundary Project: The Feather River RCD will be working with the California State Parks to fund and implement forest health and fuels reduction treatments on 40 acres, as well as completing a habitat analysis for future project planning.

### **Fellow Work Plan Overview and Outcomes:**

The Project Management Fellow performs tasks that differentiate depending on the funder and project or program at hand. The fellow is expected to be aware of all grant guidelines, deliverables and timelines. The fellow will be asked to think creatively about the tasks at hand to see how a project may be able to be leveraged or improved. The Program Development Fellow manages projects and programs while keeping District's best interests at hand. This position requires attention to detail, anticipating changes or adaptations, building in preventatives, ability to multi-task, and time management.

During the year, the fellow will be primarily expected to support project management, partner coordination, and outreach and engagement activities associated with Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Programmatic funding. This includes working closely with the Forest Project Coordinator to develop forest health treatment options and strategy, meeting with partners, and supporting partners as requested to complete prioritization processes. A portion of the RFFC program work will be to collaborate with UCCE Forestry Advisor for the development and implementation of a stakeholder's exchange: a capacity building symposium. The remaining share of the fellow's time will be spent supporting Feather River RCD projects, working with partner organizations to develop forestry and fuels projects in the District.

### **Major Projects:**

#### **1. Forest Health Management**

- a. **Title and Focus Area(s):** Sacramento Feather River Regional Forest and Fire Capacity program - planning, mapping, treatment development and scoping, and demonstration project development, grant writing.
  - i. **Priority Project:** *Sierra Corps Fellow will work to support programmatic environmental compliance development covering Plumas County. This will include drafting treatment options for different conditions (forest treatment matrix). The Fellow will co-develop this matrix with the Forest Project Coordinator and under the direction of the District Manager, as well as in collaboration with partnering organizations and stakeholders. Once stakeholders have provided input the treatment matrix will be opened to public comment and scoping, which the Fellow will co-lead. Through this program, the Fellow will also collaboratively plan demonstration projects, prioritize projects for grant proposals and pursue funding sources through grant writing. With supervision from Feather River RCD staff, and coordinated with Sierra Nevada Conservancy program goals, Sierra Corps Fellow will assist Forest Project Coordinator with managing subgrantees and ensuring completion of project deliverables.*
  - ii. **Projected Hours:** 1704 hours (60%)

iii. **Estimated Acres Restored, # of people educated/reached, amount of funding secured:** *Approximately 2,000 people reached through public input and participation. Some funding secured through the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity program, and \$250,000-\$500,000 funding to be pursued for demonstration projects.*

b. **Title and Focus Areas:** Forest Health Monitoring and Research Project Support-planning, assessment, grant writing, mapping

i. **Priority Project:** *The Sierra Corps Fellow will work along side the Forest Project Coordinator on the “UC Forestry Camp Fuels Reduction and Forest Restoration Demonstration Project” as well as the project titled “Evaluating Treatment Longevity and Maintenance Needs for Fuel Reduction Projects Implemented in the Wildland Urban Interface of Plumas County, CA”. The former of these two projects is under development, which the Fellow will work with RCD staff and partner organizations to design and complete environmental compliance for. This project may also benefit from additional funding due to COVID related setbacks, of which the Fellow would pursue through grant writing. The latter of the two projects is a monitoring study of past fuels treatment implementation areas, which the Fellow will coordinate with partnering organizations and lead the mapping portion of the monitoring.*

ii. **Projected Hours:** 426 (15%)

iii. **Estimated Acres Restored, # of people educated/reached, amount of funding secured:** 7,000 people outreached for public input. \$50,000 pursued for additional project development support.

## 2. Biomass Utilization

a. **Title and Focus Area(s):** Biomass Utilization Specific Project Development

i. **Priority Project:** As part of ongoing and planned projects, the Sierra Corps Fellow will work with local and regional biomass power facilities as well as public and private land owners to develop plans and agreements to incorporate biomass utilization into fuels reduction and forest health projects. The Fellow may use Feather River RCD’s Master Stewardship Agreement, which will be signed in the next month, or pursue grants to fund biomass utilization costs.

ii. **Projected Hours:** 142 (5%)

iii. **Estimated Acres Restored, # of people educated/reached, amount of funding secured:** Approximately \$100,000 secured through MSA/Specific Project Agreements or grant funds.

## 3. Wildfire Recovery

a. **Title and Focus Area:** Moonlight Fire Area Restoration Project, Walker Fire Reforestation, Minerva Fire Reforestation - project management, monitoring, project permitting, project layout, assist in contract design and inspection.

- i. Priority Project:** These projects, funded by the U.S. Forest Service, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, CALFIRE California Climate Investment Fund Forest Health program, Plumas County Fire Safe Council, and One Tree Planted, is implementing a suite of planning and implementation projects, primarily focused around wildfire recovery, of which over 150,000 acres burned – most at high-severity. The Fellow will a) assist the District Manager, Forest Project Coordinator, and Restoration Project Coordinator with project management and communications with project partners; b) identify and track performance measures related to grant and contract deliverables; c) provide technical assistance to Walker and Minerva Fires project planning as needed; e) work with Plumas National Forest partners on implementation projects and potentially assist with assessments or monitoring activities.
- ii. Projected Hours:** 568 (20%)
- iii. Estimated Acres Restored, # of people educated/reached, amount of funding secured:** *up to 3000 acres restored, 7,000 people reached*

**Percentage Totals (insert as many sub sections as needed):**

- 1. **Project 1a:** 60%
- 2. **Project 1b:** 15%
- 3. **Project 2a:** 5%
- 4. **Project 3a:** 20%