

## **PROJECT SUMMARY**

**County: Mono**

**Applicant: Mono Lake Committee**

**Project Title: Mono Basin Outdoor Education Center Planning**

### **PROJECT GOAL**

This project will conduct site planning and produce a specific plan and environmental impact report (SP/EIR) to satisfy the CEQA process necessary for the approval and construction of an outdoor education center in the Mono Basin. The delivery of a final SP/EIR is the goal of this planning grant. Mono County will serve as the lead agency. The site is located approximately six miles southwest of Mono Lake between Parker and Rush creeks, adjacent to the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area.

The Mono Basin Outdoor Education Center (OEC) site will directly benefit the Mono Basin and Los Angeles watershed in the Eastern Sierra. The site will provide a base for stewardship projects involving ecological restoration work, water quality monitoring, trail rehabilitation, and invasive plant removal along Mono Lake's tributary streams, at Mono Lake, and on surrounding public lands. The center will enable stewardship and education programs for 1200-1500 students a year through single and multi-day programs. The center will serve students from Los Angeles, the Eastern Sierra, and California, and it will demonstrate energy and water efficiency technology and practices. The center will incorporate the value of water conservation, recycling, xeriscaping, and rainwater/snowmelt capture and other efficient water uses in its design and function, exercising solutions which balance Public Trust values at Mono Lake with urban water needs at the other end of the Los Angeles aqueduct.

### **PROJECT SCOPE**

This grant will fund the work necessary to complete a final SP/EIR with Mono County serving as the lead agency in the CEQA process. Once completed, the project will allow for Specific Plan and final EIR decision by the Mono County Board of Supervisors. This planning project will ultimately benefit public lands managed by the Inyo National Forest, California State Parks, and the City of Los Angeles. This project would be the first of its kind for the Eastern Sierra and Los Angeles—an outdoor education center that exercises and protects Public Trust values through design and function—supporting watershed protection through stewardship and education.

This project will include surveys, studies, scoping, and analysis for the creation of a Specific Plan and EIR. The SP and draft EIR (DEIR) will describe baseline environmental conditions, project impacts, implementation, mitigation, the relationship of the project to the Mono County General Plan and other criteria set forth in §65451 of the California Government Code. The Specific Plan will include architectural drawings of buildings and landscape plans which will outline use and development at the site. After public comment and process on the draft SP/EIR the County will prepare a Final EIR for consideration before the Planning Commission in public hearing and Mono County Board of Supervisors public hearing and final decision.

The Mono Lake Committee (MLC) is the project applicant site lease-holder and will guide the project to completion. The Committee will contribute in-kind donations of staff time, travel/mileage, and administrative overhead toward the completion of this project. The primary project partner and site owner is the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). LADWP would provide the necessary support and expertise in the planning process as landowner and public utility. MLC and LADWP enjoy an educational partnership framed by an Agreement in Principle. In 2009 MLC entered

into a 30-year lease with LADWP in order to provide a more permanent home at the Cain Ranch site for an outdoor education and stewardship program which serves Los Angeles youth. Both partners recognized the need for improved facilities at the site.

At the heart of this project is the protection and restoration of Mono Lake, its tributary streams, and the Mono Basin-Los Angeles watershed. The completion of this project will ultimately (1) lead to the design of a facility that demonstrates solutions that balance competing water needs, (2) provide support for stewardship and restoration work, and (3) increase the number of students who will be able to participate in stewardship and the watershed education activities in the Mono Basin. The completion of this project is a first significant step in the growth of an Outdoor Education Center that implements science-guided stewardship and education programs for the next generation of Los Angeles and California residents entrusted with balancing the Public Trust values of protection and restoration with the real water needs of people.

### LETTERS OF SUPPORT

**Bob Peters, District 4 Mono County Supervisor**  
**California State Parks**  
**Inyo National Forest**  
**Los Angeles Department of Water and Power**  
**Mono County Board of Supervisors (in process pending Sept.14 Board Mtg.)**

### SNC PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
INCLUDE SPECIFIC TASKS IDENTIFIED IN SCOPE AND ALL REPORTS, ETC.	ASSUME START DATE 60 DAYS AFTER SNC BOARD AUTHORIZATION
Site surveys, scoping, studies, analysis, site programming and architectural drawings including alternatives	October 2011
Draft SP/EIR for public comment	December 2011
Draft Final SP/EIR	March 2012
<b>Final EIR for decision and Final Report to SNC</b>	<b>May 2012</b>

### SNC PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL SNC FUNDING
Staff time and project management	\$21,257
Specific Plan (SP): consultants and fees	\$24,000
Environmental Impact Report (EIR): consultants and fees	\$60,000
Architectural: plans for SP and EIR including alternatives	\$103,200
<b>SNC GRANT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$208,457</b>