



## Community Grant Program Application

Submit application by email to [staff@mbnep.org](mailto:staff@mbnep.org) or mail to the Morro Bay National Estuary Program's offices by 4pm on the due date. **Please be sure to include the summary coversheet below, the Priority Issue check list and Action Plan summary, and the Narrative Information Section.**

**Project Title:** Expanding Visibility for Coastal San Luis RCD

**Applicant:** Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (CSLRCD)

**Address:** 1203 Morro Bay, Suite B, Morro Bay, CA, 93442

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**Grant Amount Requested** (*cannot exceed \$5,000*): \$5,000

**Total Estimated Project Cost:** \$6,500

**Amount & Source of Other Funding (if relevant):**

\$1,500- SLO Community Foundation

**Project Description Summary** (fill in here or attach additional document; word limit 300):

**Project Need:** Despite our widespread on-the-ground efforts, our organization lacks capacity in the areas of outreach and education. Although our work does speak for itself, there are simple ways we can engage with stakeholders and the public that we have not pursued due to lack of resources. For example, our 2016-2017 Annual Plan lists updating our website and updating and expanding our mailing list as priorities that will help CSLRCD achieve expanded visibility without impacting our limited capacity, with just a small amount of resources to get things going. Funding from MBNEP's Community Grants Program will provide CSLRCD with support for a much needed website update.

**Project Goal:** To increase CSLRCD's visibility for stakeholders and the general public. Please see full application for project tasks.



Check off the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan Priority Issue(s) addressed by the proposed project:

- Sedimentation.
- Bacterial contamination.
- Elevated nutrient levels.
- Toxic pollutants.
- Scarce freshwater resources.
- Preserving biodiversity.
- Environmentally balanced uses.

The proposed project must work to implement, at a minimum, one of the Action Plans that address the Priority Issues listed above. Please list the relevant Action Plans that will be addressed by this project below. The Action Plans are detailed within the Management Plan which can be found at [MBNEP.org](http://MBNEP.org) or from the Estuary Program's office.

**MORRO BAY NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM  
COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION**

**NARRATIVE INFORMATION**

**PROJECT TITLE:** *EXPANDING VISIBILITY FOR COASTAL SAN LUIS RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT*

**FULL PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

**ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND**

For over sixty years, Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (CSLRCD) has assisted land users and local government officials in achieving resource management objectives including: water quality enhancement, prevention and control of soil erosion, control of water runoff and stormwater management, increased water use efficiency and water conservation, and improvement of local land productivity. CSLRCD works to achieve sustainable resources and enhanced ecological function within our District (Morro Bay to Oso Flaco).

The mission of CSLRCD is to *protect and enhance natural resources through education, restoration, and collaboration with local stakeholders*. We provide direct assistance to San Luis Obispo County farmers, ranchers, and landowners that work with us voluntarily to protect their soil, water, and natural habitats. We also partner with a wide range of organizations, agencies, and municipalities. Funding for programs and ongoing operations is derived entirely from grants and contracts, as CSLRCD does not have a tax base like most Special Districts. We have successfully completed and continue to pursue meaningful projects within the Morro Bay watershed, and routinely partner with the Morro Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP). Our partnership with MBNEP is deeply rooted in a shared commitment to conserve and protect natural resources. The goals of MBNEP's CCMP align with the goals of our organization.

**NEED FOR PROJECT**

Despite our widespread on-the-ground efforts, our organization lacks capacity in the areas of outreach and education. Although our work does speak for itself, there are simple ways we can engage with stakeholders and the public that we have not pursued due to lack of resources. For example, our 2016-2017 Annual Plan (Attachment 1) lists updating our website and updating and expanding our mailing list as priorities that will help CSLRCD achieve expanded visibility without impacting our limited capacity, with just a small amount of resources to get things going. Funding from MBNEP's Community Grant Program will provide CSLRCD with support for a much needed website update.

**PROJECT GOAL**

To increase CSLRCD's visibility for stakeholders and the general public. The objectives and associated tasks to achieve each objective are summarized below:

**OBJECTIVE 1- UPDATE WEBSITE:**

**- TASK 1: SELECT APPROPRIATE DESIGNER**

CSLRCD will hire a designer with experience working with non-profits and special districts. We have contacted the following RCD's and intend to use their websites as models: San Mateo County RCD, Napa County RCD, and RCD of Santa Monica Mountains. We have received a quote from one designer but intend to get quotes from multiple designers (three minimum). If we select a designer that one of the listed RCDs has worked with, a significant cost savings may result; this designer could use an existing design as a template for us. CSLRCD staff time will be used to complete this task.

- **TASK 2: IDENTIFY WEBSITE HOSTING PLATFORM**

CSLRCD staff has conducted preliminary research to identify an appropriate website hosting platform based on our needs. Our needs include the following: must be highly adaptable, easy to manage in-house, scalable to changing needs, provide interactive resources to partners, does not require designer or IT specialist once set up. CSLRCD staff time and designer time will be utilized in this task.

- **TASK 3: WEBSITE OVERHAUL**

CSLRCD staff has also done some initial research into the design and format of our website that would greatly improve our website’s ability to provide the public and partners with better resources. Our current website is out-of-date and challenging for staff to manage. CSLRCD staff would work closely with the designer to make sure are needs are captured. In addition to providing resources to partners and landowners/managers, our website will also showcase our work in a meaningful way. Our website can display at a minimum: cumulative accomplishments of CSLRCD’s work on a watershed basis, links to partner resources, funding opportunities, flood and erosion control resources, project highlights, etc. CSLRCD staff will solicit feedback from watershed partners including MBNEP before the final website goes live. CSLRCD staff time and designer time will be utilized in this task.

**OBJECTIVE 2: EXPAND/ UPDATE MAILING LIST**

- **TASK 4: STREAMLINE/ UPDATE EXISTING MAILING LISTS**

Currently, CSLRCD has contact lists in multiple and various formats (including but not limited to Excel, MailChimp, Constant Contact, archived emails, and lists within project folders). We currently use Constant Contact, but due to the scattered nature of our contacts, not everyone is captured. CSLRCD’s contacts will be streamlined into one single list, and this list will be utilized to expand our current reach. This task will be accomplished by CSLRCD staff.

- **TASK 5: PUBLISH QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER/ BLOG**

Upon completion of Task 4, CSLRCD will upgrade the format of its quarterly newsletters and start completing blog posts. This task will be accomplished by CSLRCD staff.

- **TASK 6: TRACK SUCCESS**

We use Google Analytics to track the number of website visitors to our current website. If funded, we will provide the number of website visitors looking at our current website (pre-project), and we will compare this to the number of website visitors a few months following the release of the upgraded website (post-project). We anticipate that our website traffic will increase. We also track the number of subscribers to our newsletter via Constant Contact. If funded, we will provide the current (pre-project) number of subscribers and the number of subscribers after two newsletters/ blog posts have been released (post-project). We anticipate that the number of subscribers will increase. CSLRCD will accomplish this task.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF TASK DELIVERABLES**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Timing</b>
1	Provide at least three bids for design and justification of designer selection	ASAP (notice of funding; 2-3 weeks)
2	Notice and justification of selected web platform	Within 30 days of contract execution
3	Draft Website Content, Final Website	Within 8 months of contract execution

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF TASK DELIVERABLES**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Timing</b>
4	Starting and finishing number of mailing list entrants	Within 8 months of contract execution
5	Newsletters and/or blog posts	Quarterly for duration of contract
6	No. website visitors and newsletter and/or blog subscribers pre- and post- project	Pre-: within 30 days of contract execution Post-: 1 year after contract execution

By funding the above tasks, MBNEP is providing CSLRCD with the capacity to conduct outreach that is currently lacking.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

The outcome of this project will be enhanced community engagement. We will solicit and incorporate feedback from watershed partners including MBNEP throughout each task listed in the previous section to ensure our website is going to be a powerful resource in the community. After the project is complete, CSLRCD's ability to engage with the community in a meaningful way greatly increases. CSLRCD works routinely with extremely diverse partners, from municipalities and residents interested in stormwater resources to growers and rangeland managers interested in water efficiency and carbon sequestration. Once we have a new website, CSLRCD will have the proper means to demonstrate these successful relationships among and throughout the communities within which we work, increasing the reach of our programs and initiatives. This in turn benefits all of the partners who work with us.

**AUDIENCE:**

The target audience for our project is diverse since the nature of our work is diverse. Our increased visibility will enhance our ability to provide technical assistance to landowners, managers, growers, vineyards, etc. We also work closely with municipalities and community residents, regulatory agencies, non-profits, and County officials. Our website will demonstrate benefits as a result of our programs and projects. Finally, we will also target the general public by providing educational materials and project highlights. Currently, our number of website visitors is 4,800; we have 152 newsletter subscribers. We anticipate that once this project is completed, both of these numbers will significantly increase.

**BENEFITS:**

At any given time, CSLRCD has multiple projects within the Morro Bay watershed. We view our work as a compliment to the work completed by the MBNEP. We have conducted countless workshops within the Morro Bay watershed that range in focus from rangeland management tools, nutrient management, erosion prevention, and agricultural water efficiency. We also provide technical assistance and help secure project funding for private growers and landowners that want to implement various BMPs that positively impact the bay and estuary downstream. We are constantly pursuing new initiatives such as healthy soils and carbon sequestration. We have very positive and long standing working relationships with many landowners throughout the Morro Bay watershed and have successfully implemented and continue to pursue and implement projects within its boundaries. We also own parcels of land that are along the downstream-most extent of both Chorro and Los Osos Creeks, before they enter Morro Bay (Chorro Flats and Los Osos Wetland Reserve). All of the work CSLRCD completes within Morro Bay watershed is largely underrepresented by our current website. This project if funded will allow CSLRCD

to demonstrate the effectiveness of various watershed BMPs that will benefit the downstream estuary and bay. In addition, we routinely participate in review of MBNEP’s projects (i.e., pikeminnow, CCER) and can further highlight the importance of our partnership with an updated website. Finally, we recently conducted a presentation for MBNEP that focused on cumulative restoration within the Morro Bay watershed. Our website can be a means to communicate the reach of completed programs within the watershed to a wide audience, allowing MBNEP to further leverage their current following.

**PROJECT BUDGET:**

**TABLE 2: BUDGET**

Budget Category	Total Cost*	MBNEP Grant Request	Community Foundation (secured)**
Direct Personnel Costs (CSLRCD Staff Time)	\$3,500	\$2,000	\$1,500
Sub-contractor (Website design support)	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0
Total	\$6,500	\$5,000	\$1,500

\*- Total cost does not reflect possible in-kind contributions. Many of CSLRCD’s grants have a small education and outreach component. It is possible that grant-specific funds covering CSLRCD staff time not covered by MBNEP’s Community Grant or SLO Community Foundation can be utilized as match to this grant, but this would need to be examined on a project-by-project basis to ensure the grant is not being matched to another source.  
 \*\*- CSLRCD receives an annual contribution of \$1,500 from the SLO County Community Foundation to assist us with our communication efforts.

**EVALUATION:**

The prior description in Task 6 includes tracking of pre- and post- project website analytics and newsletter/blog subscribers.

**SCHEDULE:**

A schedule for task deliverables was included in the Project Description section (Table 1). The below schedule (Table 3) for task completion assumes contracts are executed and funds are awarded by May 31, 2017, and the grant agreement is for May 31, 2017 through May 31, 2018:

**TABLE 3: PROJECT SCHEDULE**

Task	Description	Timing
1	Select designer	Starting now thru April 30, 2017
2	Identify website hosting platform	by June 30, 2017
3	Website overhaul	July 1, 2017 through February 1, 2018
4	Streamline/ update mailing list	July 1, 2017 through October 1, 2017
5	Publish quarterly newsletter/ blog	1- Fall 2017 (exact date TBD) 2- Winter 2018 (exact date TBD) 3- Spring 2018 (exact date TBD, before May 1, 2018)
6	Track success	May 15, 2018

**QUALIFICATIONS:**

**ORGANIZATION** CSLRCD was formed in 1953 and is guided by a Board of Directors who are appointed by the County Board of Supervisors to serve voluntarily and represent a broad spectrum of experience including farming, ranching, financial, engineering and non-profit land conservation management. Key staff that will provide support for this project are listed below:

**JACQUELYN CRABB, DISTRICT MANAGER** B.S. Agricultural Business Management. 12 plus years of executive management including personnel, budget and finances, property management, record keeping, fundraising, membership development, legislative affairs, outreach, collaboration with other organizations, public speaking, working with media, legislative work, and member communications.

**JEN NIX, CONSERVATION PROGRAMS MANAGER** M.S. Environmental Science and Management, B.S. in Biology and Chemistry. Diverse experience ranges from erosion prevention, creek restoration, water conservation, rangeland management, stormwater management, restoration planning, landscape ecology, vegetation and land cover mapping, and sensitive species monitoring and management. Skilled with various forms of technology, eye for design and vision of what the updated website should function as. Worked for MBNEP and understands the strength of a solid outreach/ communications program and website.

**HALLIE RICHARD, PROJECT MANAGER** B.A. in Environmental Studies and the Urban Environment. Specializes in irrigation management and soil health, project and grant management, resource conservation plan development. Works closely with diverse landowners and managers and will provide support to ensure website contains resources for those she works with.

**CINDY GONZALES, ACCOUNTS MANAGER** Fifteen years of grant finance experience, with the North County Women's Resource Center in Atascadero, the Sponsored Programs department at Cal Poly Corporation and Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District. Will be providing admin support

**OTHER RCDs** We will be communicating with the other RCDs for their input.

**SELECTED DESIGNER** The selected designer will have demonstrated experience working with RCDs and non-profits on website development. CSLRCD will provide bids, qualifications, and justification for selection if our proposal is considered.

**COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION SPECIAL NOTES TO APPLICANTS:**

Due to timing of the deadline in submitting this application we do not have a resolution. However, the Board approved our 2016-17 Annual Strategic plan which lists updating our website and updating and expanding our mailing list as a priority (Attachment 1).

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1- 2016 – 2017 Annual Plan

# Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District

## Annual Plan

### 2016-2017

#### 1. STRENGTHEN/EXPAND EXISTING PROGRAMS AND LAUNCH NEW INITIATIVES

Specific priority actions described below implement the following strategies:

- Improve and protect sustainable groundwater basins, water storage and watersheds.
- Reduce the impacts caused by climate change and take steps to manage/adapt to the potential changes of the environment.
- Enhance the wildlife habitats for plants and animals.

Action No.	Description	Who? Directors – D Staff – S Partner - P	When?	Funded?	Task Complete? Yes No Ongoing
1.01	Expand our storm rewards rebate program	S & P	3rd -4th qtr	Y	
1.02	Assist cities and county in developing stormwater resource plans	S & P	3rd – 4th qtr	Y	
1.03	Continue the MIL (NRCS & County) and expand the SWEEP (CDFA)	S	1st – 4th qtr	Y	
1.04	Begin Phase 2 of the County Watershed Management Plan	S & P	4th qtr	N	
1.05	Strengthen ARP and research ag ponds initiatives	S & D	2nd – 4th qtr	N	
1.06	Research aquifer recharge programs	S	3rd – 4th qtr	N	
1.07	Research mitigation programs	S	3rd – 4th qtr	N	
1.08	Research carbon farming and healthy soils initiatives	S	3rd – 4th qtr	N	
1.09	Expand the climate ready rangeland program	S & P	2nd – 4th qtr	N	
1.10	Develop a robust PIR	S & P	1st – 4th qtr	N	
1.11	Seek funding for Phases 2 for the Los Osos Restoration project	S & P	3rd – 4th qtr	Y	
1.12	Develop long term plans for RCD-owned properties and seek funding for management	S, D & P	3rd – 4th qtr	N	

#### 2. ENGAGE PARTNERS & THE COMMUNITY



Specific priority actions described below implement the following strategies:

- Increase the visibility of CSLRCD among partners and the community.
- Build partnerships that strengthen the CSLRCDs’ ability to reach their resource goals.
- Capitalize on the enthusiasm and skill set of our local volunteer community.

Action No.	Description	Who? Directors – D Staff – S Partner - P	When?	Funded?	Task Complete? Yes No Ongoing
2.1	Update website	S	1st - 4th qtr	No	
2.2	Update and expand our mailing list	S	1st - 4th qtr	Partial	
2.3	Biannual meeting with BOS	D & S	1st & 3rd qtr	No	
2.4	Develop a Volunteer Plan	S	1st - 4th qtr	No	
2.5	At least 4 press releases		1st - 4th qtr	Partial	
2.6	Annually meet with each City Council members	D & S	2nd qtr	No	
2.7	Build a relationship with the EVC, Chamber of Comm. and Farm Bureau	D & S	1st - 4th qtr	No	

### 3. ENHANCE CAPACITY IN ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS

Specific priority actions described below implement the following strategies:

- Increase and diversify funding sources and leverage funding.
- Ensure that the CSLRCD has strong and diverse Boards of Directors.
- Ensure that the CSLRCD has a diverse and talented staff.
- All administrative, financial and legal requirements are met.

Action No.	Description	Who? Directors – D Staff – S Partner - P	When?	Funded?	Task Complete? Yes No Ongoing
3.01	Expand our Fee for Service Program	S & D	1st - 4th qtr	Yes	
3.02	Build a 6 month operational reserve	D & S	1st -4th qtr	No	
3.03	Set up an equipment replacement account	D & S	1st - 4th qtr	No	
3.04	Develop a cost allocation plan that is Board approved	S & D	1st - 2nd qtr	No	

3.05	Create a new Director training program and informational packet	D & S	1st - 2nd qtr	Yes	
3.06	Develop Injury & Illness Prevention Program	S & D	1st qtr	No	
3.07	Provide staff with a Savings Incentive Match Plan	D	1st qtr	No	
3.08	Develop Organization Chart and Accounting Process/Internal Controls	D & S	1st - 2nd qtr	Yes	
3.09	Develop Bidding/Procurement Policy and Statement of Qualifications	D & S	1st - 2nd qtr	Yes	
3.10	Develop/Update Travel, Retention and Fee for Service policies	D & S	1st - 2nd qtr	Yes	

*2015-20 Strategic Plan Final 12\_16\_2016*

*Board Approved December 16, 2016*