**Project:**  ACT Outreach Program – NRCS Cooperative Agreement

**Lead:** Tuolumne County RCD

**Summary:** Outreach and marketing to landowners/stewards in Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne counties on available resources including NRCS programs.

**Dates:** December 2023 – September 2026

The purpose of this project is to address climate resiliency and drought by increasing carbon sequestration practices, improve plant and forest health and productivity by recruiting and offering landowner a menu of different opportunities to assist them with mitigating fire with fuels treatment and maintenance. This practice will directly improve plant conditions, woody forest fire fuel loads, air quality/avoidance of greenhouse gas emissions from wildfire, and water quality and quantity. Specifically, forest health and quality will be improved by introducing our large land stewards to practices supported by Farm Bill funding. This planning program proposed will offer technical assistance to NRCS staff in the use of agency-approved resource assessment tools, assistance with determining resource objectives, assisting with and participating in the formulation of conservation alternatives, evaluation of conservation alternatives and assisting land stewards with decision making.

For the purposes of this project ARCD, CCRCD, and TCRCD will be providing the following in order to facilitate the completion of tasks;

TCRCD is the project lead and fiscal sponsor for this program. TCRCD has a cooperative agreement with NRCS and will manage subcontracts with CCRCD and ARCD through this partnership agreement. Reporting and Invoicing requirements are detailed below.

Contracted funds cover work between December 1st 2023- August 31, 2026.

**Staffing:**

* ARCD will provide staffing in the form of either employees or contractors that will serve the service area of the NRCS Jackson LPO. ARCD employees will report directly to ARCD.
* CCRCD will provide staffing in the form of either employees or contractors that will serve the service area of the NRCS Jackson LPO. CCRCD employees will report directly to CCRCD.
* TCRCD will provide staffing in the form of either employees or contractors that will serve the service area of the NRCS Jackson LPO.TCRCD employees will report directly to TCRCD.

The **budget** per RCD is as follows:

Each county has a budget of $10,829.16 to compensate them for their time collaborating on this project. This amount includes the cost of benefits. When submitting an invoice for related staff time, the rate per hour per staff member should be combined as one amount per participant.

**Project Management:** TCRCD will provide project over site, including project records and reporting, management of staffing, and accounting.

**Invoicing**

TCRCD will be responsible for invoicing to the NRCS for reimbursement. The TCRCD will prepare invoices and project reporting.

ARCD and CCRCD will provide a quarterly summary of work to TCRCD.

**Documents to be submitted:**

* + - Invoice
    - Quarterly Summary of Activities

**Communication**

TCRCD will provide all pertinent information to each RCD by email.

ARCD, CCRCD, and TCRCD will meet monthly to discuss the project and review progress in grant deliverables.

The tasks and budget for this project are detailed in the NRCS Cooperative Agreement NR239104XXXXC029 with TCRCD. Project details are outlined in the agreement as well as summarized below. Any amendments to the agreement will be agreed upon in writing by all three districts and incorporated into this agreement.

**Scope of Work**

The first six months will be collaborating on the determination of a marketing best practice. Beginning shortly after 8/31/23, the ACT team will meet once a month for three months to outline and timeline outreach coordination planning with specific tasks and deliverables assigned per meeting. Topics will be research, reporting and results focused. Focus will be to discern who is the target, what do they need to know, what are the target dates for messaging, how will land stewards get the information, how can the team best serve these stewards, and where will this messaging take place. Next step will be the creation and implementation of identified practices. (MARCH/2024)

Messaging and marketing to target audiences will be the focus in the following twelve months. Practices will likely be attending agency meetings for the messaging. Example agencies targeted: Fire Safe Council meetings, Farm Bureau, UC Extension Master Gardeners, Cattleman’s, and Cattlewomen’s associations.

Other messaging will be accomplished via ads in local news and newspapers. Dedicated pages will be created on RCD’s websites with approved messaging and NRCS direction. Creation and distribution of a County Resource Guide is an anticipated deliverable. The ACT collaborative has discussed holding at least one resource information meeting for general public in each county. Tribal engagement/projects will be a priority focus along with the intent to assist underserved Non-Industrial Private Forest Land (NIPFs) and the economically disadvantaged landowners in the counties. (MARCH/2025)

For the remainder of this funding opportunity the ACT team will collaborate on how to collect contact information so that land stewards can be connected to qualified programs. This program will also service NIPF landowners who can participate in NRCS projects and other agency’s project funding. All of this will help the pace and scale of land management plans and wildfire resilience projects get applied on the ground in the subject counties. (SEPTEMBER/2026)

A successful outreach program will be identified and implemented. The following are deliverables to present to the grantor:

Evidence of marketing efforts will be submitted to the funder with pdf snapshots of materials or ads.

Copies of agendas from Agency meetings listing ACT team as presentation guests as proof of presentation will be submitted. Pictures from public meetings will be submitted.

Copy of County Resource Guide will be submitted.

NRCS DC to provide grantor a count by county of new application submissions since inception of this program. (SEPTEMBER/2026)

Estimated quantity and type of deliverables over three-year grant period are shown below. Estimation of deliverable is based 877 hours (.45 Full Time Equivalent - FTE) of personnel time. Deliverables report will be provided with each reimbursement request. Deliverables documentation format will be prepared by mutual agreement with TC RCD and NRCS and include date of deliverable encounter, client information including, when possible, name, location of clients’ property, property size, and type of products delivered (e.g., general outreach visit, outreach event, outreach materials).

Number of outreach efforts and products:

a. Outreach events: 3

b. PDF copy of ads for events: 3

c. County resource guides: 3

d. Number of private/tribal forestland landowners receiving outreach: 36 -90 landowners