

2015 Adaptive Management Initiative Projects

AMI Proposal Summary and Grants 2015

The following 14 projects were selected for the 2015 grant cycle of the Crown of the Continent Roundtable's Adaptive Management Initiative. Included in each description is the project title, funding awarded, contact information, and a brief summary of the project. More information will be added at the mid-term report phase.

1) Enhancing Resiliency of Native Plant Communities via Rocky Mountain Front Integrated Weed Management

Grant Amount: \$16,000

Erin Fairbank, Executive Director, noxious.weeds@gmail.com

Rocky Mountain Front Weed Roundtable

PO Box 663, Choteau, MT 59422. (406) 466-2090

Project summary: The Weed Roundtable seeks funding for 12 months, beginning December 1, 2014, to: 1) support the Executive Director to carry out collaborative and extensive watershed-based, volunteer-oriented noxious weed management on the Rocky Mountain Front portion of the Crown of The Continent (COTC) with a matching NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant, and 2) enhance the resiliency of native plant communities in the face of climate change through spotted knapweed biological control insect purchase, release, and monitoring.

2) Moving with Change: Advancing Adaptive Management by Helping Wildlife to Cross Highway 3

Grant Amount: \$20,000

Ryland Nelson, Southern Rockies Program Manager, ryland@wildsight.ca

Wildsight, 891 2nd Ave (Main Floor)

P.O. Box 537, Fernie, BC V0B 1M0, Canada, 250.423.3322

Project Summary: A connected landscape that provides safe passage across transportation corridors will ensure resiliency for wildlife in the Crown of the Continent in the face of environmental stressors, including climate change and competing land uses. Highway mitigation (including underpasses and fencing) ensures wildlife connectivity while improving human safety. Our mission is to ensure the safe passage of wildlife across a major transportation corridor in SE British Columbia by bringing together the science, policy, resources, and government agencies necessary to successfully make the case for highway mitigation in B.C. To accomplish this goal we will use a citizen-science framework, modeled after the Road Watch program on the Alberta portion of Highway 3, to involve local volunteers in the generation of knowledge required to support the case for mitigation. A new smart phone app will be developed to complement the on-line mapping tool developed for Road Watch to enable volunteer data collection and improve data accuracy

3) Leave It to Beavers. A natural solution to floods and droughts.

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Kim Good, kim@rockies.ca

Miistakis Institute

Room U271, 4825 Mount Royal Gate SW, Calgary, AB, T3E 6K6, 403.440.8444

Project Summary: This initiative of re-introducing beavers provides an important adaptation to floods and droughts resulting from climate change and human changes to watersheds. Beavers keep water on the landscape, leading to landscape stability and resiliency which benefits ecosystems, landowners, and land managers. This project, recognizing the attributes of beaver to assist in adapting to variability in flow regimes and the impacts of extreme events resulting from climate change will:

- Increase tolerance of beavers and understanding of management options to enable co-existence with beavers
- Support existing beaver populations, by implementing demonstration sites using application of management tools to mitigate negative impacts
- Facilitate and support beaver reintroductions in southern Alberta
- Test reintroductions and protocols for success

4) Activating Crown of the Continent Youth

Grant Amount: \$5,000

Len Broberg, Professor, Environmental Studies Program, len.broberg@umontana.edu

University of Montana Missoula, MT 59812, 406-243-5209

Project Summary: Our project aims to elevate the Crown of the Continent region in the minds of young people spanning the region through development of youth-oriented outreach tools that engage undergraduate students and secondary education students in a new way and bring them to conscious participation in the vision of the region. Our aim is to excite and involve these students in the affairs of the region and thereby build the foundation for a lasting Crown of the Continent Community.

Project Title: Activating Crown of the Continent Youth.

The core of the project will be a capstone undergraduate course offered concurrently at UM and MRU that will bring students from each campus to Missoula and Calgary for events such as the Crown Roundtable and to educate them on the unique regional approach to coordinated management, geo-tourism, and engagement that is ongoing in the area. Students will develop a youth oriented Facebook and Twitter site and populate it with posts, create and image sharing platform accessible to people locally and beyond and post blogs about the Crown of the Continents. Other Tools that are prime youth-oriented social media will also be explored.

5) Engaging and Educating Stakeholders on CSKT Water Compact as a Critical Tools for Climate Adaptation

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Mark Aagenes, Conservation Director, Mark@Montanatu.org, Montana Trout Unlimited, P.O. Box 7186, Missoula, MT 59807, 406.543.0054

Project Summary: Montana Trout Unlimited is assisting the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) in their effort to establish a Water Compact with the State of Montana and federal government. Among other things it will institutionalize tribal instream-flow water rights for fisheries – on and off the Flathead Indian Reservation – in the Flathead, Swan, Blackfoot, and Clark Fork River basins in perpetuity. Ratification and implementation of this accord will provide legal protection for streamflows, aiding adaptation of aquatic ecosystems to climate change. The project seeks to educate important interests, including off-reservation landowners and irrigators, business people, legislators, agencies, and conservation groups, about how the Compact's settlement of treaty-guaranteed reserve water rights creates certainty for water use and conservation in the Crown's rivers and streams. Because it settles long-standing water right disputes affecting half of Montana, incentivizes water conservations in agriculture and establishes legal instream flows benefiting fish and wildlife, it is important for Montanans to better understand and support ratification of the Compact. Montana TU will help accomplish that by meeting with policy makers, participating in public meetings, creating educational tools and generating opinion pieces and news stories about the Compact's benefits. Importantly, once the Montana Legislature, Congress and tribal government ratify the accord, Montana TU will play a key role in collaborative efforts, including establishment of local drought plans and committees that will be necessary for the on-the-ground implementation of the Compact off-reservation. Once successfully implemented, the Compact on and off the Flathead Indian Reservation will better protect aquatic ecosystems from a climate future that could mean less water and warmer temperatures.

6) Cross Cultural Capacity Building: Landscape Conservation and Climate Conservation and Climate Change Adaptation with the Blackfeet Nation

Grant Amount: \$5,000

Laura Caplins, MS, laura@nature-link.org
Nature-Link Institute, Missoula, MT, 406-241-5356

Project Summary: The purpose of the project is to increase the "cross cultural capacity" (Craig et al. 2012:241) of indigenous and non-indigenous groups to collaborate on climate adaptation in the Crown of the Continent (CoC). In order to achieve this purpose, the objectives of this project are to conduct a pilot study 1) to identify the necessary protocols for collaboration between the Blackfeet Nation and government and non-government agencies active in the CoC, and 2) to identify the priorities of the Blackfeet Nation in climate change adaptation. The outcomes of this project will include both written and presented material on the priorities of, and protocols for working with the Blackfeet Nation, including a widely distributed public brochure, local community presentations, and national academic presentations.

7) Implementing Climate Adaptation Projects in the Crown of the Continent
Grant Amount: \$20,000

Stephen Legault, Initiative Coordinator, stephen@crownconservation.net.
Crown of the Continent Conservation Initiative (CCCI)
Unit 200, 1240 Railway Ave., Canmore, Alberta, T1W 1P4; (403) 609-2965
CCCI is hosted by the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative

Project Summary: CCCI and the CMP will continue our successful collaboration to address the impacts of climate change on the ecology of the Crown of the Continent. We will use the best available NGO and Agency science on the impacts of climate change to develop and implement pilot projects for native trout species and whitebark pine in order to determine the best course of collaborative action to preserve these species, while creating a methodology for our future work together.

8) Engaging Schools and Communities in Ecosystem Monitoring and Discussions on Climate Change

Grant Amount: \$20,000
Cory Davis, SWCC Monitoring Coordinator, cory.davis@cfc.umt.edu
University of Montana, Missoula, MT (406) 257-3166

Project Summary: We will facilitate stream and forest monitoring by engaging with schools and local citizens to gather scientific data, a.k.a. "citizen science". We will continue work in three communities and four schools in the Southwestern Crown of the Continent (Seeley Lake Elementary and Seeley Swan High School, Condon, and Lincoln) and expand the monitoring to a fourth community and fifth school (Ovando). Over the last year our project established and instrumented three stream sites, completed the first season of stream measurements and forest assessments, taught methods to participants, refined and extended supporting materials, conducted complementary biological sampling, involved additional volunteers, and purchased required equipment. We propose to continue the project for a second year to add relevant data for understanding climate effects; deepen the engagement of local communities; refine methods and curriculum; build connections among the participating schools; facilitate outreach to communities by students; conduct outreach to other interested parties in the Crown of the Continent; evaluate participant outcomes; and strengthen and expand sources of ongoing funding

9) Whitefish Range Partnership: Public Land Projects Sustaining Landscapes, Lifestyles and Livelihoods

Grant Amount: \$20,000

Michael Jamison, mjamison@npca.org
National Parks Conservation Association
PO Box 4485 Whitefish, MT 59937, 406.862.6722,

Project Summary: In 2012 and throughout 2013, the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) convened the multi-stakeholder Whitefish Range Partnership (WRP), representing 30 distinct industry, conservation, recreation, business and community interests. This historic process achieved unanimous approval of a multiple-use management and climate-adaptation plan for 300,000 U.S. Forest Service (USFS) acres adjacent to Glacier National Park's western border, along the boundary between Montana and British Columbia. Today, WRP members continue to work together toward implementation of their agreement through an ongoing Flathead National Forest plan revision process. In addition, WRP members have since gone beyond US Forest Service planning, with new initiatives to build detailed, on-the-ground projects that achieve multiple goals – ie. a public-land timber sale that also secures wildlife habitat and restores watersheds, while at the same time establishing wild land corridors, protecting municipal water supplies, and providing enhanced recreational access on public lands. These efforts are intended to provide a sustainable and resilient future both for public-land forests and the adjacent communities (MT and BC) that share the larger Crown landscape.

10) Dutch Creek Restoration Pilot Project

Grant Amount: \$21,000

Shannon Frank, Executive Director, Oldman Watershed Council, Shannon@oldmanbasin.org
100, 5401 – 1st Avenue South, Lethbridge, Alberta, T1J 4V6, 403-382-4239

Project Summary: The goal of this collaborative, multi-year demonstration project in the Dutch Creek watershed is to develop a proven methodology to restore and enhance watershed health and resiliency to climate change along Alberta's Eastern Slopes. Stakeholders and especially recreational users will be strategically engaged to ensure the restoration process will be understood, supported and stand the test of time. Policy review, learning from other jurisdictions and alignment with the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) are all critical components necessary to support the restoration process and will also inform the development of a provincial access management framework. The first year of the project will focus on engaging stakeholders, public and recreation user education and awareness, collecting baseline environmental and social data and aligning with initiatives coming out of the SSRP.

11) Southeast BC Invasive Plant Management

Grant Amount: \$5,000

Todd Larsen, Program Manager, coordinator@ekipc.com

East Kootenay Invasive Plant Council (EKIPC)

1902 Theatre Rd, Cranbrook BC V1C7G1, 1-888-553-5472

Project Summary: This project will significantly contribute to preserving the ecological integrity of two important valleys –Elk and Flathead –within the BC portion of the Crown of the Continent ecosystem. These relatively pristine regions are under threat of invasive plant infestations. By working with neighbouring collaborators across the Crown of the Continent, EKIPC will utilize funds towards preventative and eradication measures within these two keystone valleys. AMI funding will be leveraged with other sources including private, regional, provincial, and federal grants.

12) Strengthening Drought Resiliency in the Sun River Watershed

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Alan Rollo, Coordinator

Sun River Watershed Group

816 Grizzly Drive, Great Falls, MT 59404, 406-727-4437

Project Summary: There is not enough water in the Sun River to meet the current water user needs in the watershed. Prolonged drought and changing climate are exacerbating the already over-allocated water supplies. This project seeks to place a Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) member with the Sun River Watershed Group (SRWG) to help increase their capacity to work with water users through education, outreach and water monitoring. Through these activities the member will engage the communities to develop and implement water conservation strategies and activities

13) Blackfeet Natural Resource Conservation District

Grant Amount: \$7,500

Mike Stone, BNRCD Chair

Blackfeet Natural Resource Conservation District

Project Summary: This proposed project, if funded will support the BNRCD efforts to bring Stake Holders together to plan and develop management plans and strategies that address Noxious Weed on and around the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. It will also continue the cooperative biocontrol effort with the Rocky Mountain Front Weed Roundtable.

14) CSKT Climate Change Plan Implementation

Grant Amount: \$5,000

Michael Durglo

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

PO Box 278, Pablo, MT 59855, 406-675-2700 ext. 7227

Project Summary: The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) have completed a CSKT Climate Change Strategic Plan (The Plan) with funding assistance from the Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent Adaptive Management Initiative through the Kresge foundation and the Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative. The CSKT respectfully requests additional funding to assist in identifying, implementing and communicating the goals and objectives outlined in The Plan. This phase of the project will establish and maintain a Climate Change Oversight Committee (CCOC) which will identify "next steps" in implementation of The Plan, coordinate funding requests and collaboration with regional climate change centers, research centers, academic institutions, and other Tribes within the Crown of the Continent, Regionally and Nationally. The CCOC will develop an Implementation Plan (IP) to measure and monitor progress in implementing the preparedness actions recommended within the planning sectors of The Plan, and identify whether these efforts are helping the Tribes meet their goals.