

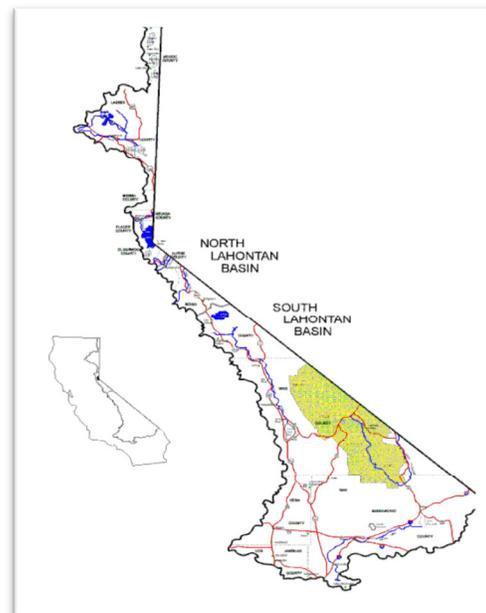


RIVERS & RANCHES

Proposition 84 Agricultural Water Quality Grant Program Grazing Management Practice Implementation and Assessment in the Lahontan Region

Please apply to be part of a grant funded effort to reduce the effect of your grazing activities on water quality and to develop and implement new grazing management practices (GMPs). This information can assist you and your neighbors to select GMPs that will be successful.

The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan Water Board) received a California State Water Bond grant for its Rivers & Ranches project. The intent of this project is to help landowners install GMPs and to monitor water quality before, during, and after their implementation. The Lahontan Region includes watersheds on the east side of the Sierra Nevada mountain range from the Mojave Desert to the Oregon border. The Sierra Business Council is assisting the Lahontan Water Board in managing the project and is partnering with the UC Cooperative Extension Rangeland Science Department to provide technical assistance.



All water quality monitoring data collected on private lands under this project is for the sole purpose of understanding how certain grazing management practices may or may not affect water quality—it is not the intent of the Lahontan Water Board to use the data gathered by this project for enforcement purposes.

Background

The Lahontan Water Board is a California state agency that regulates discharges of waste that could affect water quality. Livestock grazing supports an important economic commodity in the region. When not well managed, grazing activities can negatively impact water quality by increasing levels of pathogens, nutrients, sediment, and temperature in adjacent streams, and impact riparian habitat, making the water unsafe for humans and wildlife. Rivers & Ranches is a multi-year project (2012-2014) that offers financial and technical assistance to landowners in installing grazing management practices that can reduce or eliminate these impacts. Water quality will be monitored before, during and after implementation of the management practices to determine which are the most effective. Examples of common management practices include fencing, plantings, and spring development. The project will focus on ranches in the Carson, Owens, Susan, and Walker river watersheds. The objective of the project is to implement management practices with technical assistance from the UC Cooperative Extension that will demonstrate water quality improvements. Any additional permitting for the project will include assistance from the Sierra Business Council. The project will also result in the sharing of information to other ranchers to help them make informed decisions for use of limited resources to reduce water quality impacts from their operations.

Who Should Apply

Motivated ranchers with waters of the United States on/or adjacent to their property that want to improve their ranching operations to better protect water quality are encouraged to apply. The property must be located in the Lahontan Region. The size of the ranch or the extent of the proposed grazing management practices will not determine selection. The applicant does not need to be the owner of the property, but the operator must receive written permission of the owner. This portion of the grant specific to implementation of GMPs is only for private entities, not public agencies.



What are the Responsibilities of the Ranchers

The selected applicants must allow staff from the Sierra Business Council, UC Cooperative Extension, and the Lahontan Water Board access (with prior notification) to their properties during the project, including pre- and post- project water quality monitoring. The applicant will contribute a match of twenty-five percent (25%) monetarily or through in-kind services, such as labor or equipment, for installation of the grazing management practice(s). The applicant will need to maintain the management practices for a 20-year expected useful life. All water quality monitoring data collected on private lands under this project is for the sole purpose of understanding how certain grazing management practices may or may not affect water quality—it is not the intent of the Lahontan Water Board to use the data gathered by this project for enforcement action(s). Other information that may be needed from the ranchers includes a parcel map, number of livestock on the property, property size, and a description of irrigation practices.

When the Rivers and Ranches Projects Start

Pre-monitoring and selection of applicants will occur in 2012. Ranchers selected to participate should be willing to begin implementation practices as early as 2013 with practices installed according to a project plan approved by the Lahontan Water Board staff. Please visit the Sierra Business Council's webpage below for more information, including the application/contact information.



For more information

Lahontan Water Board
Sierra Business Council

<http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/lahontan/> 530-542-5400
<http://www.sbcouncil.org/Projects/Rivers-+-Ranches-Stewardship>
(grant specific webpage and includes application specifics)

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UC Cooperative Extension

<http://rangelandwatersheds.ucdavis.edu/index.htm>