

SCENARIO #1:

Your project just received a \$500k implementation grant for a recreation & tourism project. However, the grant expires in 12 months and the Public agency you have partnered with has just informed you that they don't have the staff capacity to support your project for at least 6 months.

QUESTION:

What is your next move and why?

Kristy Williams -There's a fine line between what we can contract out and what an agency can do; had some success in backfilling for agencies

Danna Stroud -What was the role of the public agency partner? Are they bringing capacity or additional funding/match?

Meet agency to define the responsibilities they are willing to defer to outside partner agency.

Contract with a consultant, hire out. Find another fiscal agent who has capacity.

Partner with Career Nexus, and have them target recreation and tourism; and partner with education partners as well, to train and hire locally based staff.

Cathy Galino (Calavaras) -This happened to her; looking at more partnerships, and found a nonprofit developer who has a project that is shovel ready; work with nonprofits who do have capacity.

John Wentworth -This happened with Sierra Nevada Conservancy, and with Federal Government during shutdowns; We have to be prepared for this and be nimble, and we need to be able to pivot and move quickly; We have the advantage of asymmetrical capacity.

Elaine Kabala -Determine what scope can be achieved to move the project to a place where it can be advanced in the future if needed.

SCENARIO #2:

Imagine that a major statewide Rec & Tourism bill is being drafted in Sacramento. Because the Sierra is currently represented by seven different counties, the state legislators allocate 80% of available funds to more "organized" regions and models like the Coast or the High Desert, leaving the Sierra to compete for the remaining 20%.

QUESTION:

Assuming the region has established a cohesive regional identity, who will you turn to to advocate for an appropriate fiscal allocation to this region to benefit *your* project(s) and other similar projects?

John Wentworth -Fundraise by asking past donors; Go to your local community; hopefully you've got community support and you can engage your community to bring capacity and money to the project.

Cathy Galino -Partner with local agency to get services at no cost to applicant; need public benefit finding to do this, and Board of Sups can then vote on if there's a public benefit, and they can waive fees if there's a public benefit.

Also, if entity applying for the grant is an RCRC member, they can avail themselves of 0% financing for advancement of grant funds.

<https://www.gsfahome.org/programs/ed/grant-advance-LOC.shtml>

Danna Stroud -Seeking funding partners with flexible funding to complete the environmental analysis - "leverage"

Jenny - If there's a way to ask the funder if they can make an exception, this could be an option to pursue; what options are there to solve this problem, and you ask this question of the funder; this may be a way to reduce the cost.

Patrick Johnston -Depending on the capacity gap, there are technical assistance programs you might be able to leverage to move things forward.

Andy Carter -this is happening with Caltrans during our first phase of our project; for other phases, we're looking at where funding will come from, know the different phases which funding will cover different project costs (Planning/ construction/permitting); funding will depend on which phase you're in; good ideas in the chat today.

Matt Galvan -understand the ecosystem you're operating in; and the partners you're working with; there's more flexibility than you think; sometimes there's private investment; think outside the box.

Bradley Booker (Amador Trail Stewardship) - Understand what's happening in your area; there may be funding pools that you're not aware of; for example, cycling could be covered under a health-type grant; get on radar of local agencies, so when they have funding, they'll reach out to you.

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Jenny - We have done sustainable recreation tours for legislators; organized Sierra Day at Capitol; we need funding for capacity building, and not just for project implementation.

Danna Stroud - NOTE: Jobs First provided equal distribution of planning and Catalyst funding across the 13 regions. Just sayin'.....

Consider engaging with the organized regions for potential partnership opportunities.

There is also the note that these 7 counties aren't the only ones that make up the "Sierra" region - opportunity to bring in other parts of the Sierra for building awareness.

Seana Doherty (Agnew Beck) -Is the question--WHO is advocating for the region? Is that the question?

John Wentworth -Reach out to the partners who make up your regional identity to raise the region's voice

Travis Nabahe -Look at targeting other regional groups; target folks from other states like Arizona where residents are trying to escape the heat; Canadians love the Sierra Nevada/Death Valley; potential for Sierra Region to host/invite other countries who have their own tourism affairs offices to get California on their map.

Danna Stroud - There are existing tourism regions that have identities, including within this region; some counties overlap with more than one region (e.g. counties that are in both gold country and high sierra regions).

There is a regional collaborative that created Sierra Region Strategy.

Reach out to neighbors to the north, south, and west of you and see if there's a partnership possibility there.

Lean in to where there's an existing identity that has been created.

Danna Stroud -Visit California has created these regions and provides funding for advertising/marketing for those regions, and there is overlap between these regions; find out where you can leverage what is already in place to your benefit.

Mary Watts -E. Sierra and Mother Lode Counties face similar challenges; Columbia College/Cerro Coso College could exchange to help on education; geographically hard, but there is zoom; cohesive regional identity may help group be more organized and there could be more collaboration.

Elaine Kabala -Opportunity to share resources; but challenges....sometimes in regional model, it comes down to who has most capacity, and they end up getting the most attention; some communities won't get elevated because they don't have resources; saw this in Sierra Jobs First in Inyo County, which includes Death Valley...these communities struggle to get exposure in these efforts; need emphasis on elevating historically disadvantaged communities.

Shawna Doherty -catalyst project in the E. Sierra community foundation; if you want to inspire local efforts, there is hesitation where we have to do regional marketing for the area; how do you raise the uniqueness of individual areas within a region; who sees themselves as a region?

When you say where you're from, what do you say? Usually this is placed based, and not region based; we want to get to a place where Sierra means something to folks.

Urban bases and how they see our regionalism is important since that's where our visitors come from.

Matt Galvan -regional identity is about solidarity; region is vast, and it's hard to make decisions on how to allocate resources; don't want to lose autonomy.

We need to tell stories on our collaboration; it all starts with our solidarity.

Danna Stroud -Those areas - SoCal and Bay Area - are dependent on the Sierra for their water.....there is a way to integrate that messaging into an identity that might resonate with those urban areas.