



## Vegetation Management / Wildfire Mitigation Workforce Development Proposal

Presented to Sonoma County Office of Recovery and Resiliency

February 2021

Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) stands ready to serve Sonoma County by training a workforce to mitigate the risk of future catastrophic wildfires.

SRJC currently offers four workforce development programs focused on “pre-defeating” wildfires and protecting homes through vegetation management and fire-resilient landscaping. These programs are built and ready to scale up immediately to meet the urgency of this moment:

- 1) Fire Abatement and Prevention Certificate
- 2) Natural Resources Certificate
- 3) Animal Science Certificate
- 4) Landscape Design or Landscape Construction and Maintenance Certificate

The knowledge and skills taught in these four programs address the full spectrum of strategies for wildfire mitigation through vegetation management: fire resilient landscaping and creating defensible space; livestock grazing; arboriculture; ladder fuel reduction; watershed hydrology; improving soil and plant health; preparing for prescribed burns; invasive species eradication; and ecological restoration.

A modest investment of the PG&E settlement funds currently allocated for vegetation management will enable SRJC to ramp up these four workforce programs to train up to 500 new students over the next five years. Funding will support additional instructional staff; a bilingual student outreach coordinator; equipment; supplies; and paid student internships in these hands-on, experiential training programs based at Shone Farm, our 365-acre learning laboratory in Forestville. In the current COVID-19 environment, lecture coursework can be delivered online and fieldwork can be conducted safely outdoors with masks and social distancing.

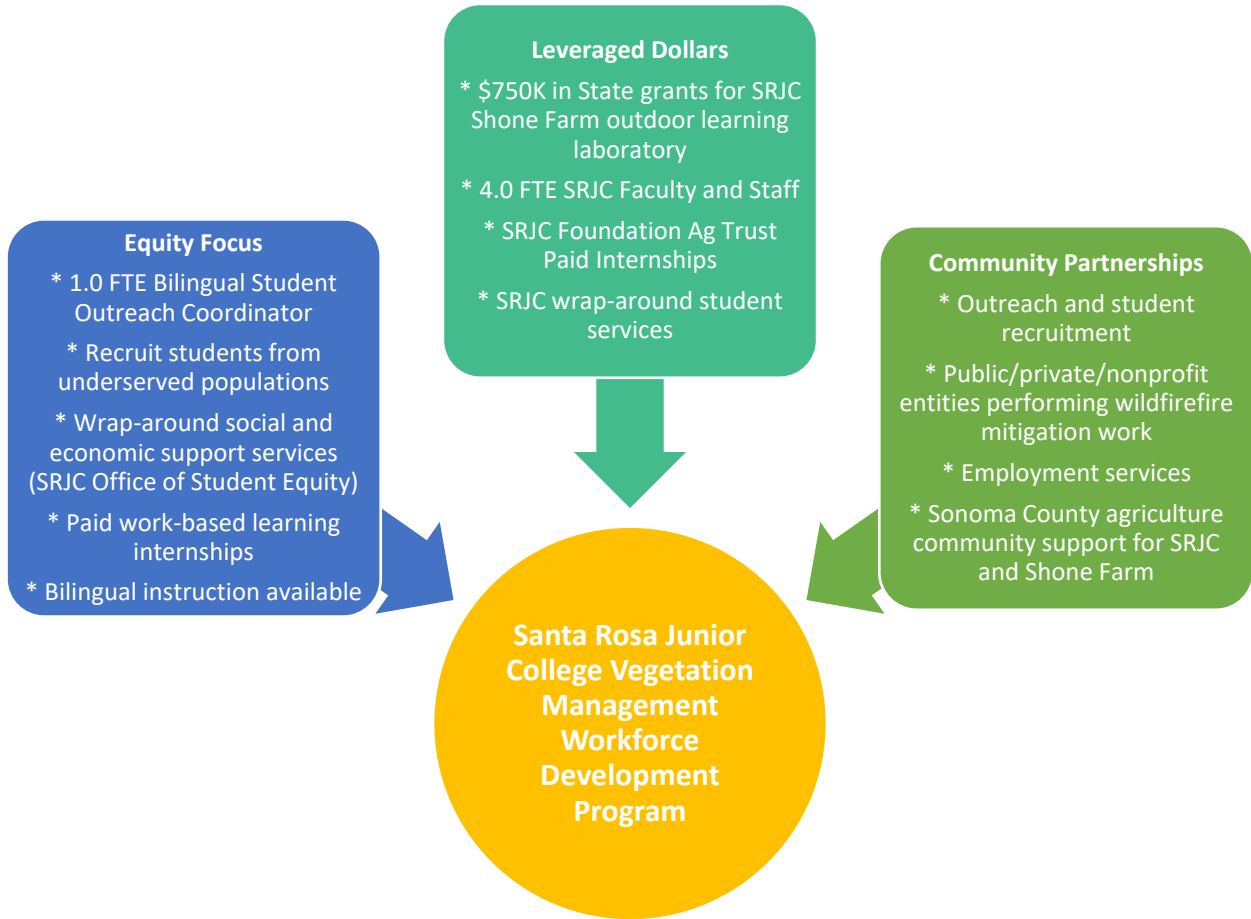
SRJC also offers Shone Farm—with its pastures, mixed hardwood forest, riparian areas, vineyards, row crops, orchards, and buildings—as an ideal demonstration site for community workshops on fire-safe land management practices, delivered in conjunction with the County and nonprofit partners.

SRJC brings a deep commitment to social equity to all our work. Grant funds will support a dedicated bilingual student outreach coordinator for this program. We will leverage our extensive partnerships with community-based organizations serving underrepresented residents of Sonoma County to recruit new students. We have also initiated conversations with the Sonoma County Probation Camp and Ya-Ka-Ama Indian Education Center about future partnerships on vegetation management training.

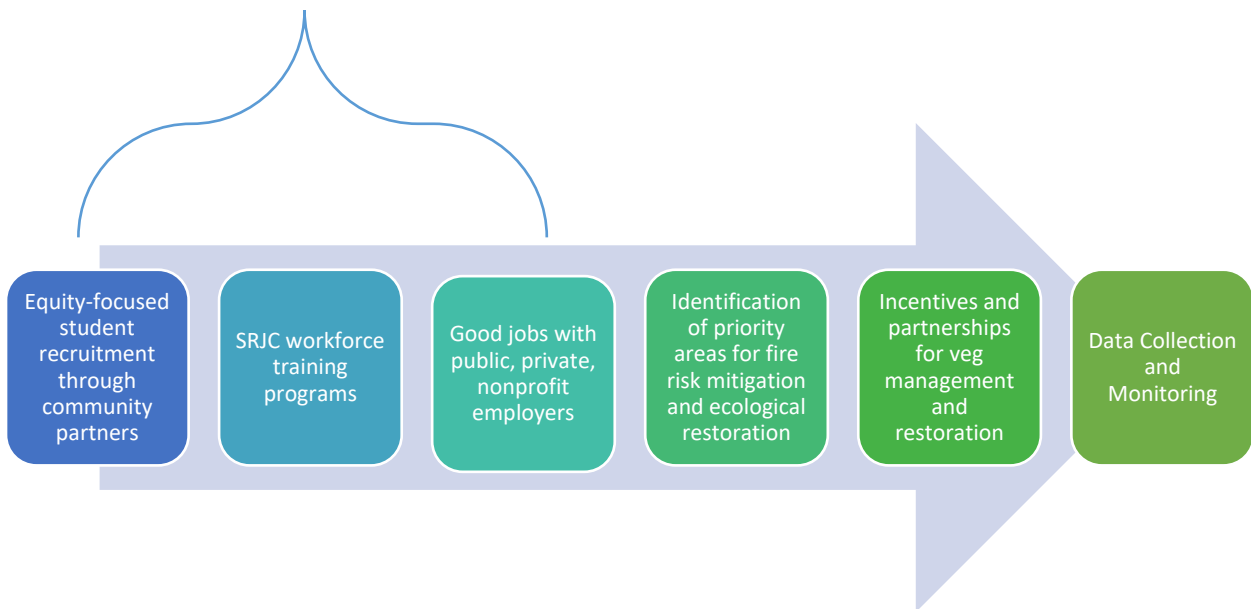
This is a critical moment for the future of Sonoma County. A steady pipeline of well-trained and qualified workers is essential to the success of Sonoma County’s generational investment in fire prevention and mitigation. SRJC is ready to do our part by quickly training 300 new workers in wildfire mitigation through vegetation management. We are prepared to launch the first cohort of new students in summer or fall of 2021.

We welcome feedback and additional dialogue with the County on this proposal.

**SRJC's proposal addresses all three criteria identified by Sonoma County Board of Supervisors for allocation of PG&E settlement funds: equity, leveraged dollars, and community partnerships**



**SRJC's contributions to Sonoma County's generational investment in wildfire mitigation and equity-driven workforce development**



## SRJC Vegetation Management Workforce Development: Four Certificate Programs

PROGRAM	DURATION	COURSES
<b>FIRE ABATEMENT AND PREVENTION CERTIFICATE (HANDS-ON "BOOT CAMP")</b>	132 hours (noncredit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Introduction to Vegetation Management for Fire Prevention</li> <li>* Introduction to Tree Maintenance and Pruning</li> <li>* Landscape Equipment Operations</li> <li>* OSHA 30--General Industry Procedures</li> </ul>
<b>NATURAL RESOURCES CERTIFICATE</b>	1 year; 20 units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Soil &amp; Plant Nutrition</li> <li>* Intro to Environmental Conservation</li> <li>* Wildland Trees and Shrubs</li> <li>* Forest Management and Assessment</li> <li>* Intro to Fish and Wildlife Conservation</li> <li>* GIS Applications in Natural Resources</li> <li>* Watershed Ecology and Restoration</li> <li>* Natural Resources Occupational Internship</li> </ul>
<b>ANIMAL SCIENCE CERTIFICATE</b>	1 year; 24 units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Basic Animal Science</li> <li>* Introduction to Farm Animal Health</li> <li>* Livestock Feeding and Nutrition</li> <li>* Livestock Reproduction</li> <li>* Rangeland Management</li> <li>* Sustainable Animal Production Systems</li> <li>* Agricultural Machinery and Equipment Skills</li> <li>* Livestock Elective</li> <li>* Animal Science Occupational Internship</li> </ul>
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL HORTICULTURE CERTIFICATE: LANDSCAPE DESIGN OR LANDSCAPE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE</b>	1 year; 22-25 units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Introduction to Horticulture</li> <li>* Landscape Maintenance</li> <li>* Landscape Construction/Estimation</li> <li>* Landscape Irrigation</li> <li>* Landscape Drafting and Design</li> <li>* Plant Materials: Summer/Fall</li> <li>* Plant Materials: Winter/Spring</li> <li>* Introduction to Arboriculture</li> <li>* Horticulture Occupational Internship</li> </ul>

## SRJC Vegetation Management Workforce Development Proposal: Annual Budget

- ❖ Funding will support rapid expansion to train 100 students/year across four certificate programs
- ❖ Bilingual Student Outreach Coordinator for equity-oriented recruitment
- ❖ Hands-on, experiential learning at SRJC’s Shone Farm
- ❖ Online lecture and in-person fieldwork with Covid-19 safety precautions
- ❖ Paid summer internships
- ❖ 8-10 community vegetation management workshops per year
- ❖ Direct or in-kind SRJC match funding for all categories

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	GRANT REQUEST	SRJC MATCH
<b>PERSONNEL (SALARIES AND BENEFITS)</b>	1.0 FTE Bilingual Student Outreach Coordinator 1.0 FTE Livestock Lab Assistant 1.0 FTE Forest and Landscape Lab Assistant 0.5 FTE Professional Experts (prescribed grazing, fire science, arboriculture)	\$375,000	District in-kind personnel: 2.0 FTE Faculty 1.5 FTE Farm staff 0.5 FTE Program administration \$425,000
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	Student PPE Hand tools Power tools Electric fencing	\$45,000	District in-kind tools and farm equipment >\$500,000 existing equipment
<b>SUPPLIES</b>	Livestock feed Plant propagation materials Veg management supplies	\$25,000	District or SRJC Foundation match 1-1 \$25,000
<b>SERVICES/ CONSULTING</b>	Veterinary services Professional Forester Equipment maintenance	\$35,000	District match 1-1 \$35,000
<b>PAID STUDENT INTERNSHIPS</b>	Paid student work-based internships at Shone Farm	\$50,000	District and SRJC Foundation 1-1 match \$50,000
<b>COMMUNITY SEMINARS/ WORKSHOPS</b>	8-10 community vegetation management workshops per year	\$0	In-kind District contribution (venue, staff, workshop logistics)
<b>ANNUAL TOTAL</b>		\$530,000	\$535,000*
<b>3-YEAR TOTAL</b>		\$1,590,000	\$1,605,000*
<b>5-YEAR TOTAL</b>		\$2,650,000	\$2,675,000*

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\*existing equipment excluded