

ATTACHMENT 1.1

ADVENTURE RISK CHALLENGE

Project: Tahoe Community Leadership Program

Recommended Funding: \$100,000

Location: Various locations across the Lake Tahoe Basin.

Overview

Background

Adventure Risk Challenge (ARC) is an environmental education nonprofit focused on facilitating transformational opportunities for rural, low-income and English Learner high school students. Since its founding in Kings Beach, California in 2004, ARC has had over 325 summer graduates and over 2,600 year-round participants.

ARC expands equitable access to the outdoors and enriches activities for high school youth who experience barriers to academic success, sustainable employment, and outdoor recreation. Many ARC participants are Hispanic with 70-80 percent coming from households where English is not spoken at home. Most participants have financial limitations and live in Kings Beach, a disadvantaged community with one of the highest costs of living in the country. Nearly all of ARC's participants qualify for free or reduced-price lunch and would be the first in their families to attend college.

ARC's goal is to create experiences that encourage belonging and connection to peers, adults, and the natural environment and ecosystems where students live.

Detailed Description

1. Major Elements and/or Steps

The grant will allow ARC to expand its existing North Tahoe Community Leadership Program (Program). The multi-year Program consists of cohorts of 12-14 North Tahoe High School students, most of whom live in Kings Beach. It includes several elements: monthly outdoor excursions, one-on-one mentoring and English language instruction, a 34-day immersive summer backpacking course, environmental education, wilderness first aid training, poetry writing, and a student-led outdoor leadership day for middle school youth.

The grant will support staff time to develop and implement the Program and will pay for Program travel costs through summer 2025.

2. Overall Context and Benefits

The grant helps ARC expand the number of students enrolled in the Program. ARC will engage at least an additional 80 North Tahoe High School students, resulting in approximately 25,000 student-hours of programming through summer 2025.

Conservancy funding supports at least four multi-year cohorts during the three years of the grant term. Participation in the Program is free due to funding from this grant and other funding sources. Providing three years of funding helps ARC more strategically plan programs and staffing to accommodate the Program's expansion.

3. Schedule

The program operates over the academic year and summer programming beginning in fall 2022 and lasting through summer 2025.

Financing

The grant supports personnel costs for Program development, field instruction, and Program oversight. The grant also pays for travel costs such as fuel and rental vehicles to transport participants to Program activities.

The grant leverages an additional \$1,245,000 in Program funding from other grants, donors, foundations, and partners.

Staff recommends the grant budget as shown below. The budget may be adjusted between line items, but total expenditures under this grant will not exceed \$100,000.

Category	Amount
Program Personnel	\$92,000
Travel	\$8,000
Total	\$100,000

Authority

Consistency with the Conservancy's Strategic Plan

The recommended action advances Strategic Plan Goal 3 (Provide Public Access and Outdoor Recreation for All Communities) because it supports free outdoor programs for underserved youth. Conservancy funding helps local youth better understand Tahoe's unique ecosystems, gain leadership skills necessary for outdoor careers in natural resource management or recreation, learn English, and develop stewardship habits.

Additionally, the recommended action supports Strategic Plan Goals 1, 2, and 4 by building a pipeline for local Hispanic and other underserved community members for careers in conservation, forestry, and recreation.

Consistency with the Conservancy's Program Guidelines

The recommended action is consistent with the Conservancy's Grant Guidelines, Funding Considerations 1, 2, 9, and 10 because: the recommended action generates multiple benefits by providing direct access to the outdoors and is consistent with relevant existing plans and guidance; ARC has demonstrated a track record of high-quality work and relevant experience; and strong community and stakeholder support exists for the Program.

Compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act

Pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.), certain classes of activities are statutorily exempt from CEQA or are exempt because they have been determined by the Secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency to have no significant effect on the environment. Staff has evaluated this grant and has found it to be exempt under CEQA. The authorization of this grant qualifies for a categorical exemption under CEQA Guidelines section 15301 – Existing Facilities. Staff has prepared a notice of exemption (NOE) (see Attachment 1.3). If the Board approves this grant, staff will file the NOE with the State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, section 15062.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1.2 – Resolution 22-09-05.1

Attachment 1.3 – Notice of Exemption

- Exhibit A – Location Map