



EQIP Helps in Anza Road Restoration Project

By Kelcey Stricker, Environmental Director, Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians

The Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians live in the urban-wildland interface, on the border of Riverside and San Diego County. Once surrounded by range and orchard lands, the tribe has watched the city of Temecula grow.

When you approach the reservation from Anza Road, you see a neighborhood in the process of being constructed, as Temecula edges towards the reservation boundary. With that growth, the pressures of urban sprawl and careless neighbors have impacted the reservation's open space and traditional gathering areas.

The Anza Road Restoration Project was developed to restore traditional agriculture (e.g. plants that were traditionally gathered and utilized for food and fiber) to an area of the Pechanga Reservation that had suffered from trespass, dumping, and damage from the surrounding (non-tribal) community.

The Pechanga Public Works Department had worked hard and cleared illegally dumped trash multiple times over the years, but the trespass continued. Illegal off-road activity, dumping, fire-starting, and other abuses were present throughout the site. Sadly, even the oak trees had been impacted from someone throwing paint on them.

It was important to not just clean up and secure this area, but to restore it to its original condition as much as possible. For this project, trash was cleaned up, and the tribe applied for an Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract through the San Jacinto Field Office to install practices that would further the restoration.

Access control and fencing were installed to deter future dumping and illegal activity as well as eliminating erosion that was occurring by decommissioning makeshift roads. After this was completed, an on-site well that had been abandoned was rehabilitated with a solar powered pump and water storage tank. Temporary irrigation was installed along with native trees and shrubs, some mulch, and seeding of native herbaceous plants.

Funding for this project was primarily provided by NRCS, with some EPA funding used to clean out and secure the on-site well. The tribe is looking forward to working with the Tribal Youth Program this summer to further improve the site through weed removal and additional native plantings as well as educating participants on the names and traditional uses of the various plants.



Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

California



Indigenous Stewardship: Environmental Quality Incentives Program

California



Before the project, the site had long suffered from trespassers, dumping, and damage from the surrounding (non-tribal) community.



Shown above is the abandoned well before rehabilitation. Below is NRCS Soil Conservation Technician Bob Dunkle and Eddie Hernandez from the Pechanga Tribal environmental department with solar pump and restored well.



Things are looking much better after the restoration, and the tribe is looking forward to further improvements this summer. Shown left above, temporary irrigation was installed along with native trees and shrubs, some mulch, and seeding of native herbaceous plants. Shown below left, fencing was installed to deter dumping.

Want to learn more about conservation assistance available to tribes?

www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov

April 2019

