



WRITING WORKOUT

Can you redraft some of this language to be part of a donor appeal letter?

1) We are requesting funding for public outreach in the form of a bus tour of the Santa Clara River to take place in March of 2013. The purpose of this tour is to educate local electeds and members of the community by taking them to various locations along the river and providing speakers at those locations on various watershed issues. These will include farming, pesticides, salt build up, stormwater quality, endangered species and habitat, water supply and quality, and sustainable development. We will employ two tour buses that seat 60 people each. Each bus will have a tour guide, with additional specialist speakers along the route. A five-hour tour is envisioned, including a box lunch.

We have previously conducted river tours in the upper and lower watershed, always filling both buses and receiving enthusiastic approval from both volunteers and participants. However, we have not conducted a tour since 2006 due to funding issues.

2) This is a program designed to create comprehensively sustainable neighborhoods in low income, high crime areas of Richmond, CA. The proposal builds on several urban farms already created by Self-Sustaining Communities in partnership with community members for local food production in these areas, and the city-wide free distribution of more than 10,000 fruit, nut and olive trees. We have identified buildings next to and across from these urban farms, which can be joined to the urban farming and skills training effort to become functional demonstration sites for green renovation projects by and for the community, using environmentally sustainable materials and offering additional job skills and community skills training by disenfranchised community members and to the working poor, based on sweat equity. The residents will maintain and expand on the urban farms and buildings, as well as commit to helping other neighborhoods learn the skills necessary to create additional sustainable neighborhoods throughout the greater Richmond community.

3) The Sugar Pine Foundation (SPF) requests \$1,000 to conduct tree plantings with South Lake Tahoe 6th-graders to restore the forest in recently acquired industrial lots by the California Tahoe Conservancy.

Sugar pines, dubbed “the most princely” of pines, are the world’s largest pine. These striking trees often tower over their neighbors, dangling their enormous cones from their long, octopussy limbs. People love sugar pines for their unique shape and giant cones, but few realize that these trees are in trouble.

The plight of Tahoe’s sugar pines stems from two main problems. First, during the mining boom of the late 1800s, sugar pines were heavily logged off. Then, around the turn of the 20th century, a virulent fungal pathogen was accidentally unleashed in North America: white pine blister rust. Blister rust kills all white pines, including over 95% of sugar pines it infects. While sugar pines were once one in every four trees around Lake Tahoe, today they account for less than 5% of the forest composition.

In 2004, SPF founder John Pickett was working as a U.S. Forest Service technician in the Lake Tahoe Basin. That summer, John saw that most of Tahoe’s sugar pines were dying. John knew, however, that some sugar pines (3-5%) possess a natural genetic resistance to the blister rust fungus – and he decided to take action. By December of 2004, John had created the Sugar Pine Foundation (SPF) to capitalize on the fortuitous diversity in nature to bring back Tahoe’s sugar pines.