

## **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Stewardship Council Board of Directors

**From:** Watershed Planning Committee

**Date:** September 13, 2017

**Re:** Recommendation for Finding of No Significant Public Interest Value for parcel 1039 at the Bass Lake Planning Unit

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Bass Lake planning unit, located in Madera County, consists of 12 legal parcels, comprising approximately 1,086 acres of Watershed Lands. Parcel 1039, totaling approximately 0.06 acres in size, is being considered for a possible finding of No Significant Public Interest Value (NSPIV). The Sierra Foothill Conservancy (SFC) has requested Parcel 1039 be excluded from the Bass Lake planning unit conservation easement after evaluating the parcel and concluding that the parcel does not appear to contain natural or cultural resources, habitat, recreational values, or scenic/open space values.

The Planning Committee recommends the Board approve a NSPIV finding for Parcel 1039 at the Bass Lake planning unit.

### **BACKGROUND**

The subject parcel at the Bass Lake planning unit was brought to staff's attention for NSPIV consideration in early 2017. A site visit was conducted by staff on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017 and was followed up by subsequent visits by PG&E and SFC staff in May, 2017. Stewardship Council staff then began the board approval process of formally evaluating the parcels that is described in the attachment to this memo.

Staff presented the results of its evaluation to the NSPIV work group on June 14, 2017. At that meeting, the work group recommended the NSPIV findings for parcel 1039 at the Bass Lake planning unit be brought to the Planning Committee for approval.

On July 19, 2017 the Planning Committee conditionally approved the NSPIV finding for parcel 1039, and the finding was then released for a 30 day public review and comment period. Notice of the comment period for the proposed NSPIV finding was sent to a wide variety of stakeholders, including landowners within a mile radius of each site, local water agencies, the Madera County board of supervisors, and Native American tribes including tribes located in the vicinity of the sites and those identified by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), and was noticed in local newspapers. Stakeholders who submitted questions during the public comment period did not object to a NSPIV finding once clarification was made on what a finding of NSPIV would mean for the subject parcels and that the finding would not affect their private property.

## **RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE**

The Planning Committee recommends the Board approve a NSPIV finding for Parcel 1039 at the Bass Lake planning unit. This recommendation is based on the considerations and rationale described below. The background memo attached provides more specific information on the parcel.

### **Parcel 1039**

Parcel 1039 is not significantly separated from the rest of the Bass Lake planning unit, but is very small (.06 acres) and is encumbered by the front yard landscaping and private driveway of an adjacent landowner. The parcel is paved and is surrounded on either side by private residences. It does not contain any significant habitat, forestry resources, or open space value. The California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) currently has no recorded occurrences of special status species on Parcel 1039 but does indicate occurrences of an insect species known as Leech's skyline diving beetle (*Hydroporus leechi*) within a ¼-mile of Parcel 1039. However, there is no potential for Leech's skyline diving beetle to occur on Parcel 1039 as the parcel does not contain any water. The California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) database and the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) indicates there are no known cultural or historical resources within Parcel 852. The parcel is surrounded by a mix of privately owned buildings, roads, and forest, and though it is accessible to the public via the county road, it does not contain any recreation potential. There is no significant development concern as the parcel is very small, is already impacted, and will continue to be used as the private driveway and landscaping area for the adjacent land owner.