

## FEE TITLE DONEE RECOMMENDATION NARROWS PLANNING UNIT

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Stewardship Council was created to oversee Pacific Gas and Electric's (PG&E) Land Conservation Commitment, as set forth in the Settlement and Stipulation,<sup>1</sup> to protect over 140,000 acres of land and to preserve and enhance, on an overall basis, the following six beneficial public values (BPVs): protection of the natural habitat of fish, wildlife, and plants; preservation of open space; outdoor recreation by the general public; sustainable forestry; agricultural uses; and historic values. The Stewardship Council is responsible for developing a land conservation plan and recommending qualified organizations to become involved in the future stewardship of these lands.

The Narrows planning unit, located in Nevada and Yuba counties, consists of two legal parcels encompassing approximately 64 acres of land. Approximately 41 acres have been identified by PG&E as lands outside of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) project boundaries and not necessary for current and future utility operations. Therefore, these 41 acres of land have been made available for fee title donation. Stewardship Council staff received and evaluated one land stewardship proposal (LSP) from the Regents of the University of California, Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center (SFREC) seeking fee title to all of the land available for donation in this planning unit. Based on an evaluation of this proposal, and follow-up discussions with the SFREC, Stewardship Council staff developed the following recommendation which was endorsed by the Watershed Planning Committee (Planning Committee):

**SFREC** is being recommended to receive fee title to approximately 41 acres within one parcel (Parcel 916).

If this recommendation is adopted by the Stewardship Council Board (Board), Stewardship Council staff would work with the prospective donee on the development of a management and funding agreement. This agreement would be developed in coordination with the development of a Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan (LCCP). The proposed management and funding agreement and proposed LCCP would then be presented to the Board for consideration and approval.

### I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### *a. Planning Unit Description*

At an elevation of 800 feet, the Narrows planning unit is located 16 miles west of Grass Valley and 24 miles east of Marysville in Nevada and Yuba counties. The Narrows planning unit consists of two parcels of open space on the rocky slopes of the lower Yuba River, about 0.25 miles downstream of the Englebright Dam.

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<sup>1</sup> California Public Utilities Commission Decision 03-12-035, December 18, 2003 (the "Settlement") and the Stipulation Resolving Issues Regarding the Land Conservation Commitment dated September 25, 2003 (the "Stipulation").

The planning unit exhibits the natural, open space character of the area. The steep, exposed slopes of the Yuba River Canyon provide a dramatic setting for the grey pine-oak forest and grasslands, which sparsely populate the area around the Narrows planning unit. The planning unit provides scenic views of the lower Yuba River downstream of the Englebright Lake visitor's viewpoint.

The vegetation present on the planning unit provides wildlife habitat for many species, such as special status raptors. Over 100 bird species have been recorded in the nearby oak forests. In addition, the lower Yuba River provides unique spawning and rearing habitat for one of the last wild runs of chinook salmon and steelhead trout in the Central Valley.

No recreation opportunities are available in the Narrows planning unit due to steep and rocky banks, sensitive fisheries habitat, and concerns related to public safety. The planning unit contains one PG&E Timber Management Unit (TMU); however there is no marketable timber.

No agricultural activities take place within the planning unit. However, the SFREC conducts agricultural research on adjacent lands. The SFREC serves as a national and international center for research, extension, and teaching related to agriculture and natural resources management.

The Narrows planning unit lies within the ancestral territory of the Southern Maidu and Washoe people. To date, eighty percent of the land within the FERC boundary has been surveyed for cultural resources and two sites have been identified.

#### *b. Donee Evaluation Process*

The Stewardship Council received statements of qualifications (SOQs) from six organizations interested in acquiring fee title to lands available for donation within this planning unit. A list of organizations that submitted SOQs is attached. Based on a review of the SOQs, SFREC, Bureau of Land Management, Nevada County Land Trust (now known as the Bear Yuba Land Trust), Placer Land Trust, and San Joaquin County Office of Education were invited to submit LSPs. SFREC was the only organization that submitted an LSP.

In evaluating SFREC's LSP, the following factors were considered:

- The potential donees' programmatic, financial, and legal capacity to maintain the property interest so as to preserve and/or enhance the beneficial public values of the planning unit;
- Anticipated funding needs of the potential donees;
- The management objectives for the Narrows planning unit as set forth in Volume II of the Land Conservation Plan (LCP);
- Public comments received regarding the desired qualifications of potential donees and the future stewardship of the planning unit;
- The requirements of the Settlement and Stipulation; and,

- Other relevant policies, procedures, and goals adopted by the Stewardship Council.

## II. EVALUATION

SFREC is being recommended to receive a donation of fee title to approximately 41 acres of land available for donation in this planning unit. This recommendation is based on a determination that SFREC appears to have sufficient financial and organizational capacity to hold and maintain fee title interests on these lands, and that the addition of these lands to UC's adjacent agricultural research and extension center would result in the preservation and/or enhancement of the BPVs. Evaluation of SFREC and its LSP is further described below.

### *a. Donee Organizational Capacity*

Established in 1960, SFREC is located in Northern California's foothills along the Yuba River, 60 miles northeast of Sacramento. SFREC is one of nine agricultural research and extension centers administered by the University of California's Division of Agriculture & Natural Resources. SFREC provides land, labor, facilities, and management for agricultural research and assists in public education in matters relating to agriculture. Its vision is "to serve as a national and international center for research, extension, and teaching related to the supervision, stewardship, and function of Mediterranean woodland ecosystems, particularly as managed to produce a spectrum of benefits to society."

During the past 50 years, SFREC has been the lead teaching and research facility dedicated to oak woodland rangelands. It is comprised of approximately 5,721 acres, consisting of about 4,945 acres of dry annual rangeland; 160 acres of irrigated pastures; 272 acres of natural areas (un-grazed); and 353 acres developed with infrastructure to support research at the site. The developed area includes a laboratory, a dormitory, meeting rooms, cattle facilities, and over 23 miles of improved roads.

Research at SFREC focuses on enhancing livestock production with natural resource protection, including pasture development; water and soil quality and management; cattle nutrition and disease control; restoration of oaks and other native species; wildlife habitat improvements; and weed management. The research informs grazing management practices at a national and international level and to benefit the citizens of California.

Almost the entire watersheds of six permanent streams are located within the boundaries of SFREC. These watersheds have been continuously monitored for over 30 years and most of the riparian areas along these streams remain in their natural state. In addition, both UC and California Department of Fish and Game are involved in habitat restoration projects along four miles of the Yuba River that borders SFREC. The Yuba River is one of the last wild, self-sustaining anadromous fish runs in California without hatchery facilities.

SFREC has eight full-time and two part-time staff that manage facilities, natural resources, rangelands, and livestock. In addition to providing a managed setting for field-scale research, center staff is available to provide direct support to approved research projects. About 4,000 labor hours are allocated to research projects each year.

SFREC allows limited public access to the property in order to promote agricultural education. To this end, SFREC maintains the wheelchair accessible Porter Creek Nature Trail for public access. The interpretive trail is less than one-mile long with 11 numbered posts that highlight the

types of research projects conducted at SFREC, and the history and natural resources of the area. Through educational programs, SFREC serves as “an outdoor classroom for learning how to restore and sustain oak woodlands, as well as how this can be done in the context of a cattle enterprise.” SFREC hosts numerous meetings for federal and state government employees and the public, including school groups, with over 500 people attending these events each year. SFREC also manages the Yuba River Education Center which houses educational materials for public use, including K-6 science-based curriculum.

To achieve its mission, the University of California’s Division of Agriculture & Natural Resources has numerous partnerships with public and private entities. SFREC, specifically, collaborates with six universities: three UC campuses, Oregon State University, University of Nevada, Reno, and Iowa State University. SFREC also allows the California State Department of Forestry and Fire to train their employees on-site and partners with them to manage vegetation.

*b. Donee Financial Capacity*

The financial capacity of SFREC (a unit of the Research and Extension Center within the Regents of the University of California) was evaluated based on a review of its operating budget for the current year, as well as financial statements for the three most recent fiscal years for SFREC and the Regents of the University of California. Based on a review of financial statements submitted, SFREC appears to possess the financial capacity to own and manage the lands being recommended for donation in the Narrows planning unit.

*c. Management Objectives*

Volume II of the LCP established certain management objectives for the Narrows planning unit (see Volume II Planning Unit Report with attachments). SFREC is seeking fee title to 41 acres located within one parcel to expand its existing natural area (approximately 160 acres) down to the Yuba River. SFREC wishes to preserve this land as a natural area because it is contiguous with the Schubert watershed, which has been monitored and researched by SFREC for over 30 years.

SFREC’s natural areas are managed with no inputs or grazing because they serve as control areas to compare with areas treated for research (grazed, controlled burning, etc). If donated to SFREC, the 41-acre area would be maintained in its existing natural condition. Private and publically funded biological and cultural surveys may be permitted as long as they do not impact the natural state of the land.

The donated land would become part of the University of California’s Research and Extension Center system to support ongoing agricultural research. The management of these acres would be subject to oversight by the University of California’s Division of Agriculture & Natural Resources. This oversight would include compliance with SFREC’s existing natural resource management plan.

Since the area would be managed in its natural condition with no improvements, donation of the 41 acres to SFREC would support overall management objectives to preserve open space, wildlife and plant habitat, and cultural resources. Due to the remote, steep, and rocky condition of the area, there were no objectives established to preserve or enhance recreation, agriculture, or sustainable forestry opportunities within the planning unit.

*d. Funding*

Consistent with the Stewardship Council's Land Conservation Funding Policy, the Stewardship Council may elect to fund certain costs related to the transfer of fee title, satisfaction of property tax neutrality requirements and/or costs of enhancements to the beneficial public values on watershed lands. Any costs to be funded by the Stewardship Council would be identified in a management and funding agreement to be developed by the Stewardship Council in coordination with SFREC, the prospective donee.

*e. Requirements of the Settlement and Stipulation*

The Stewardship Council's recommendation that SFREC receive fee title to all the lands available for donation within this planning unit is subject to compliance with all the requirements of the Land Conservation Commitment. Several of these requirements are highlighted below.

The Stewardship Council would work with PG&E and Yuba County to ensure the land conveyance of these parcels achieves property tax neutrality.

Conservation easements will be established on the lands within the Narrows planning unit. The conservation easement for lands that are donated will include an express reservation of rights for continued operation and maintenance of hydroelectric facilities and associated water delivery facilities, including project replacements and improvements required to meet existing and future water delivery requirements for power generation and consumptive water use by existing users, and compliance with any FERC license, FERC license renewal, or other regulatory requirements on lands to be retained by PG&E. On lands to be conveyed to SFREC, the grant deed would reserve to PG&E similar rights for operation and maintenance of hydroelectric facilities and associated water delivery facilities.

*f. Conservation Partners*

The permanent protection of the Narrows planning unit and the future preservation and enhancement of the BPVs may benefit from the participation of land conservation partners. For the purposes of this recommendation, land conservation partners are defined as an organization, other than the prospective fee title donee or conservation easement holder, involved in future activities on the donated lands that contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the BPVs. Land conservation partners may be identified in the LSPs submitted by organizations interested in a fee title donation, or during or after the development of the LCCP. Such organizations and activities may be eligible for Stewardship Council funding, depending on the type of organization, proposed activities, availability of funds, and other factors. Staff would work with the prospective organizations recommended for donation of fee title and conservation easements in this planning unit and evaluate opportunities for land conservation partners. The results of this effort would be reflected in the management and funding agreements and LCCP.

Although no specific land conservation partners were identified in the LSP submitted by SFREC, staff would work with SFREC and the prospective conservation easement holder for this planning unit to evaluate opportunities for land conservation partners. The results of this effort would be reflected in the management and funding agreements and LCCP.

### III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Stewardship Council has implemented a public outreach program to engage stakeholders and solicit public input on the development and implementation of the land conservation plan. A summary of key public outreach activities and public comments associated with the Narrows planning unit is attached. Additional public comments received concerning this recommendation will be provided to the Board for consideration.

### IV. RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Staff is recommending that fee title to the 41 acres of lands available be donated to SFREC for the following reasons:

- Donation of these lands would further one of the key goals of the Land Conservation Commitment of donating lands to a qualified organization with the financial and organizational capacity to preserve and enhance existing BPVs.
- SFREC appears to have sufficient capacity and interest in preserving and/or enhancing the BPVs associated with these lands based on their years of experience managing the adjacent lands for similar resource values.
- Lands donated to SFREC would become part of the Research and Extension Center system and subject to oversight of the University of California's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources under established regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Donation of these lands to SFREC would increase the likelihood that existing BPVs would be preserved in the future.
- Donation of these lands to SFREC would advance knowledge in the field of agriculture and resource sustainability, by providing additional lands to be used as control areas and allowing access to the Yuba River for research, with benefits that would extend well beyond the watershed lands.
- Donation of these lands to SFREC would provide consistent ownership and management.

### V. NEXT STEPS

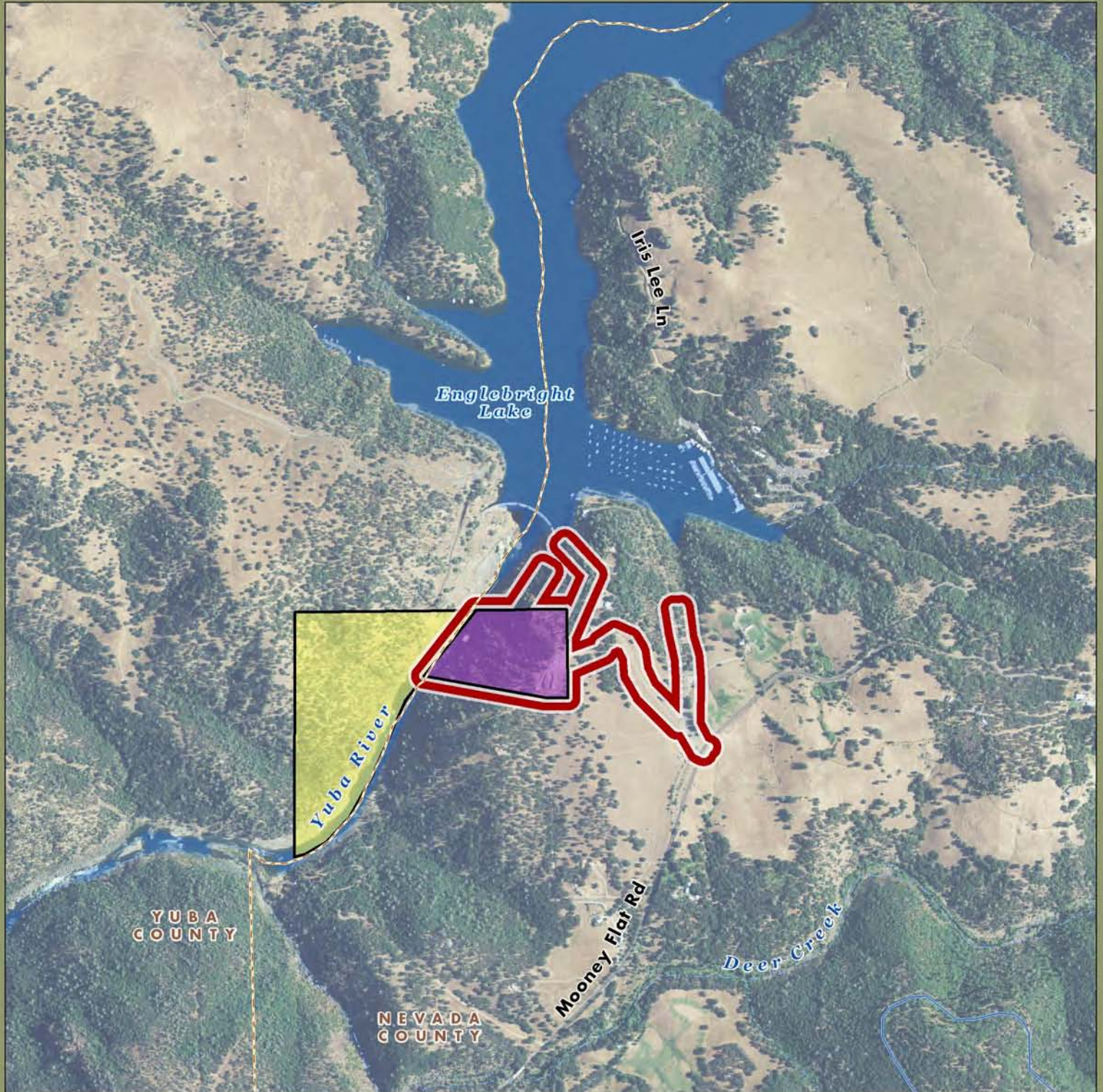
If this recommendation is adopted by the Board, staff would invite SFREC to negotiate specific terms of the transactions with PG&E and would work with SFREC to develop a management and funding agreement. The development of a management and funding agreement would be coordinated with the development of an LCCP.

Adoption of the LCCP by the Board would be the final step in the Stewardship Council's process for selecting donees. The proposed LCCP would be made available for public review and comment before it is approved by the Board.

## ATTACHMENTS AND REFERENCE MATERIAL

- Narrows Planning Unit Map
- LCP Volume II Planning Unit Report for the Narrows Planning Unit
- List of Registered Organizations That Submitted SOQs for Lands Available in the Narrows Planning Unit
- Summary of Key Public Outreach Activities and Public Comments Associated with the Narrows Planning Unit





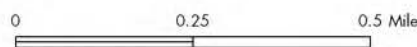
 PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Donation

 FERC Boundary

Imagery: NAIP 2009

 PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Retention

Acreage and location of lands preliminarily designated for retention by PG&E outside the FERC boundary are approximate. FERC boundary is approximate and may change over time.



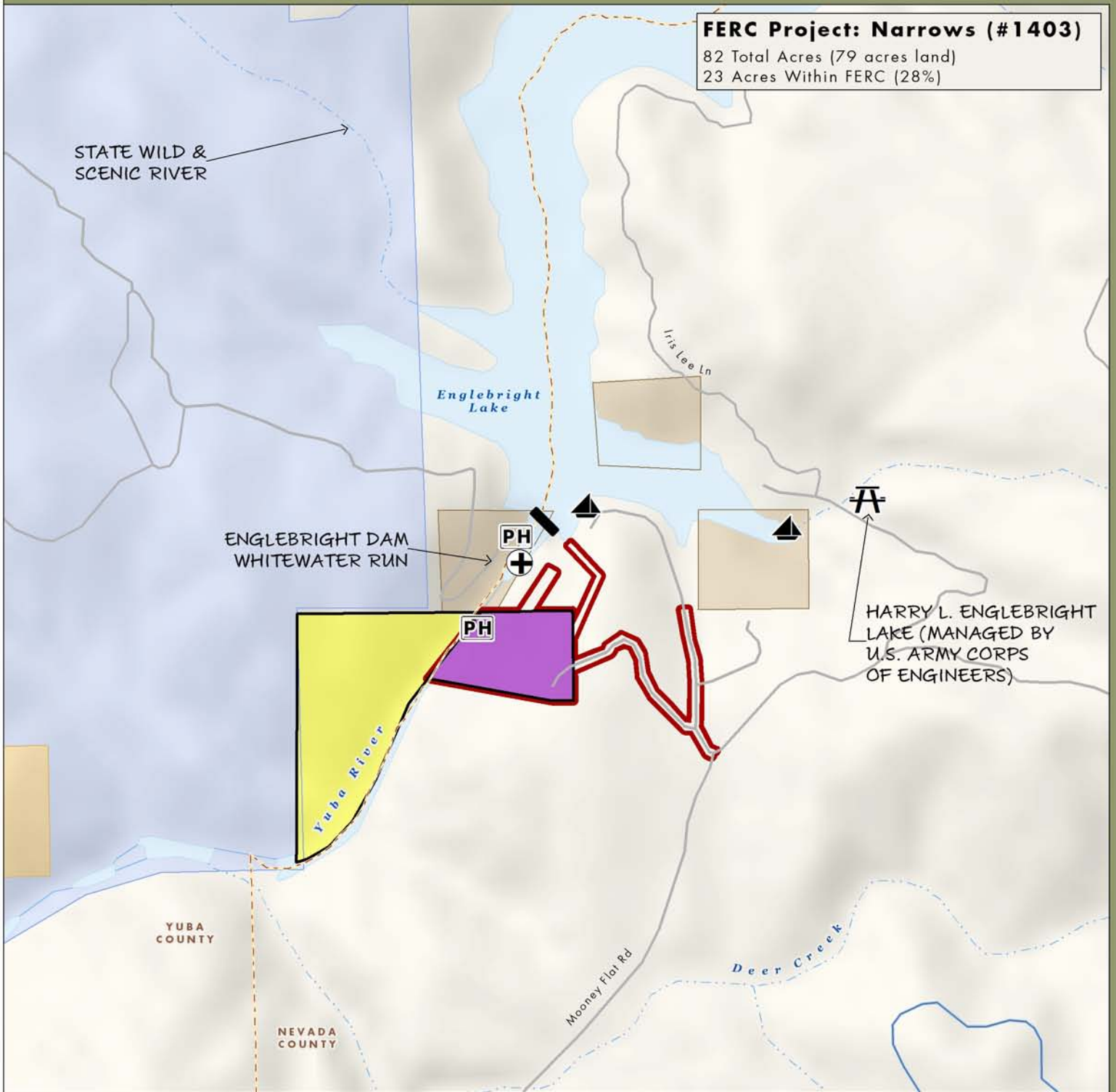
January 2011

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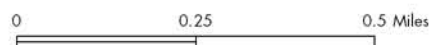
# Yuba-Bear River Watershed Narrows Planning Unit

**FERC Project: Narrows (#1403)**  
82 Total Acres (79 acres land)  
23 Acres Within FERC (28%)



- |   |         |             |                   |
|---|---------|-------------|-------------------|
| PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Donation  | BLM     | Boat Launch | Powerhouse        |
| PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Retention | DOD     | Dam         | Whitewater Put-In |
| FERC Boundary                                     | Private | Day Use     |                   |
|   | State   |             |                   |

Acreage and location of lands preliminarily designated for retention by PG&E outside the FERC boundary are approximate. FERC boundary is approximate and may change over time.



# NARROWS PLANNING UNIT

## Yuba-Bear River Watershed

### Existing Conditions & Uses

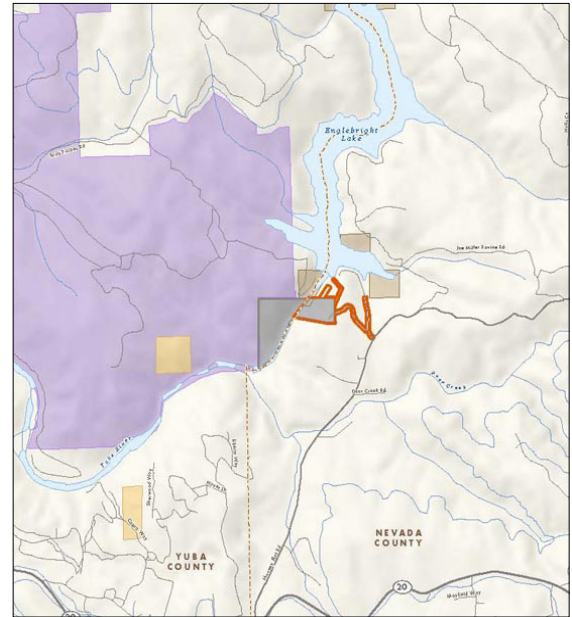
#### Overview

- Over 80 acres on the border of Nevada and Yuba Counties
- Rocky slopes with grey pine-oak forest overlooking the lower Yuba River, which provides one of the last remaining wild runs of chinook salmon and steelhead trout
- Comprises the Narrows Project (FERC # 1403); New License issued in 1993 and expires in 2023
- 59 acres outside the FERC boundary; 23 acres inside

As shown in Figure YB-7, the Narrows Planning Unit contains two parcels of open space on the rocky slopes of the lower Yuba River, about 0.25 miles downstream of the Englebright Dam. At an elevation of 800 feet, the Narrows Planning Unit is located 16 miles west of Grass Valley and 24 miles east of Marysville. The site can be reached from Highway 20 and Mooney Flat Road. The eastern parcel is accessible via private roads, and the western parcel is accessible through the Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center (SFREC) of the University of California, Davis. The



View south from Englebright Dam



Narrows Planning Unit  
Nevada & Yuba Counties

parcels abut U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), State, BLM, and private lands.

The Narrows Planning Unit is found in a reach of the Yuba River between two dams, the Englebright Dam and Daguerre Point Dam. Both dams are operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and were constructed in the early half of the 20th century to store hydraulic gold mining debris. Through contracts with USACE and the Yuba County Water Agency (YCWA), PG&E regulates water releases from Englebright Lake. In addition to the PG&E-operated powerhouse, a second powerhouse is located on the other side of the lower Yuba River and is owned and operated by the YCWA. The YCWA's powerhouse also utilizes water stored in Englebright Lake for hydroelectric power generation. Upstream of the planning unit, the 40-mile reach of the Yuba River between the Spaulding and Englebright Lakes is designated as a State Wild and Scenic River.

Mining is an historic activity in the area and the effects of widespread hydraulic mining are evident today. Mining in the Yuba and Bear River Watersheds have resulted in increased amounts of mercury and methylmercury in these aquatic systems. Various groups have been



# Narrows Planning Unit

## Existing Conditions



- PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Retention
  - PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Disposition
  - BIA
  - BIM
  - BOR
  - DOD
  - NPS
  - Other/NGO
  - State
  - USFS
  - Federal Wilderness
  - Boat launch
  - Compiground
  - Dam
  - Day Use
  - Feature of Importance
  - Fishing
  - Fish Barrier Dam
  - Gate
  - Lodging
  - Non-Motorized Boating
  - Parking
  - Powerhouse
  - Private Camp
  - Ranch
  - Trailhead
  - Whitewater Park/In/Take-Out
  - FERC Boundary
  - Stream / River
  - Canal / Ditch
  - Pipeline
  - Highly Valued Stream
  - Primary Roads
  - Secondary Roads
  - OHV Roads
  - Trail
- All symbols may not appear on the map

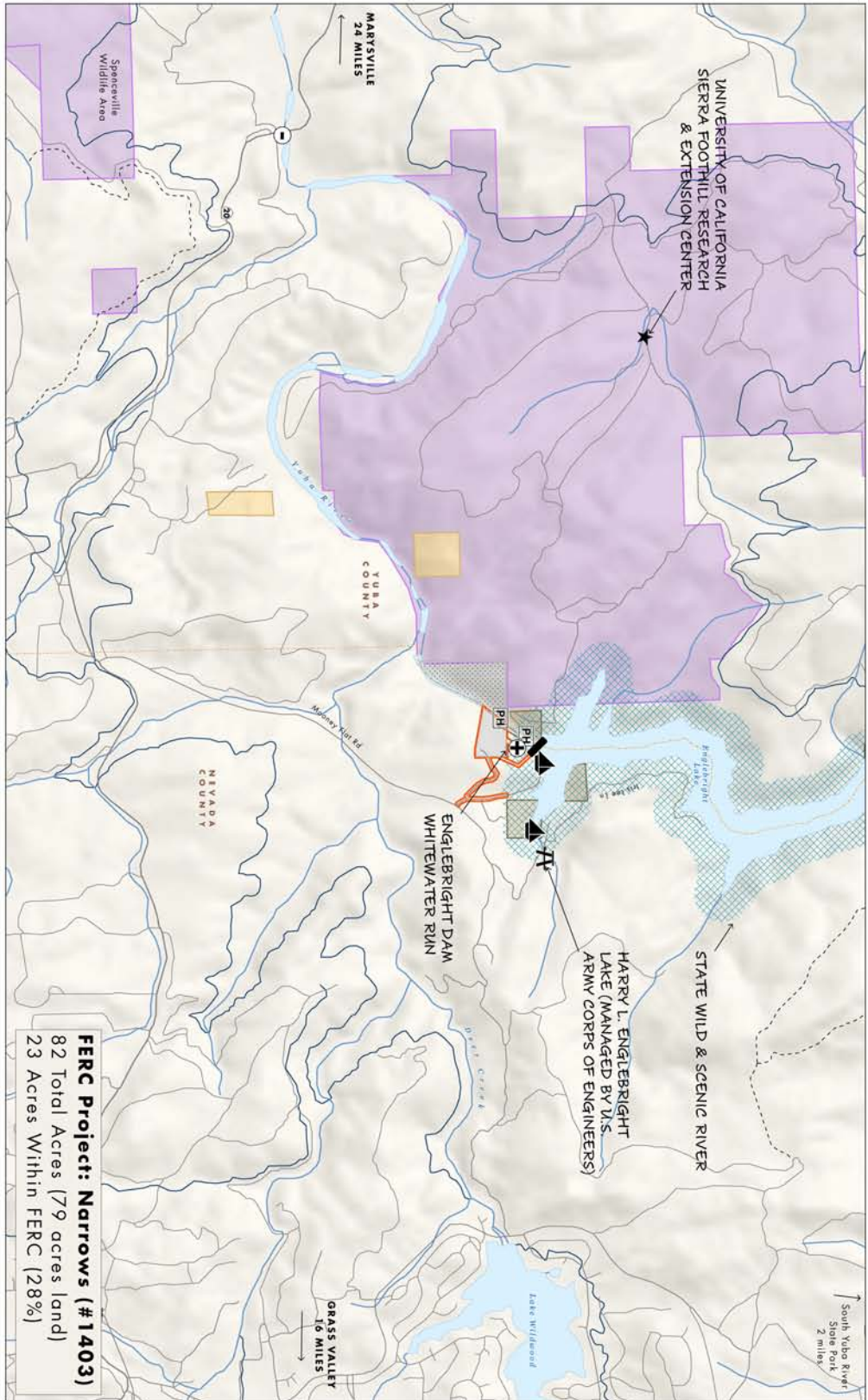


Figure YB-7

# NARROWS PLANNING UNIT

## Yuba-Bear River Watershed

examining this critical health concern over the past few years.<sup>1</sup> One study focused on fish and found that mercury concentrations in smallmouth and spotted bass in Englebright Lake were greater than the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment's threshold.

### Fish, Plant, and Wildlife Habitat

The steep, exposed slopes of the Yuba River Canyon provide a dramatic setting for the grey pine-oak forest and grasslands, which sparsely populate the area around the Narrows Planning Unit. This vegetation type provides wildlife habitat for many species such as special status raptors, including golden eagle, peregrine falcon, and bald eagle, which have been recorded within one mile of the FERC boundary. Over 100 bird species have been recorded in the nearby oak forests of the SFREC. Given the occurrence of special status bird species, an enhancement plan for bald eagles at Englebright Lake as well as a raptor protection plan have been undertaken by PG&E.

Surveys conducted since 1993 for special status species found no occurrences. A rare plant survey within the one-mile buffer of the FERC boundary resulted in a similar finding.

The lower Yuba River provides unique spawning and rearing habitat for one of the last wild runs of chinook salmon and steelhead in the Central Valley.<sup>2</sup> Currently, the Englebright Dam is the upstream limit of fish migration. A post-licensing PG&E Habitat Conservation Plan determined that the Narrows Project is not expected to detrimentally affect steelhead and spring-run chinook salmon or their habitat due to project impacts on instream flows, water temperatures, and water quality in the lower Yuba River.<sup>3</sup> After relicensing, PG&E developed a Fisheries Enhancement Plan which supports efforts such as ongoing biological evaluations in the lower Yuba River and screening and fish passage improvements. PG&E completes a yearly report that outlines proposed fisheries enhancements for the upcoming year.

Since 2002, the YCWA has been collaborating with a coalition of agricultural, environmental, and fisheries interests to draft a proposal for the Lower Yuba River Accord.<sup>4</sup> Planned for implementation in 2006, the Lower Yuba River Accord includes a 24-mile reach of the Yuba River, extending from Englebright Dam to the Feather River confluence. The Fisheries Agreement of this accord seeks to improve habitat in the lower Yuba River for steelhead and chinook salmon populations through higher flow requirements and improved stream habitat conditions. The Yuba Accord River Management Team will also conduct long-term scientific fisheries studies, monitoring, and physical restoration projects in the reach.

Adjacent to planning unit lands on the northern shore of the South Yuba River, the SFREC extends over 5,721 acres. This facility conducts research on range and pasture development, livestock health and management, and natural resource management. Once primarily focused on research that supported livestock and agronomic productivity, the center has expanded its research breadth over the past decade to include wildlife, open space, and watershed management. Present research includes oak woodland ecology and regeneration.

### Open Space

The planning unit is situated in a remote area abutting grey pine-oak forest and provides scenic



Englebright Dam viewpoint & interpretive signs



# NARROWS PLANNING UNIT

## Yuba-Bear River Watershed

views downstream of the Englebright Lake visitor's viewpoint. The planning unit exhibits the natural, open space character of the area.

### Outdoor Recreation

No recreation opportunities are available in the Narrows Planning Unit due to limited public access, steep and rocky banks, sensitive fisheries habitat, and concerns related to public safety. The reach of the Yuba River below Englebright Dam is regarded as a high quality fishing spot, but access is limited because it is a fish hatching area. Downstream of the parcels on the South Yuba River, DFG provides angling opportunities to a limited number of people via a raffle. Below the Englebright Dam, there is a put-in for a six-mile, Class III whitewater run. Outside of the Narrows Planning Unit, recreation facilities are found in the vicinity at South Yuba River State Park, Spencerville Wildlife Area, and Englebright Lake.<sup>5</sup>

### Forest Resources

The Narrows Planning Unit contains one PG&E Timber Management Unit (TMU) which includes no timbered acres. No timber extraction takes place within the planning unit.

### Agricultural Uses

No agricultural activities take place within the planning unit. However, the Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center conducts agricultural research on adjacent lands. The SFREC serves as a national and international center for research, extension, and teaching related to agriculture and natural resources management.

### Historic Resources

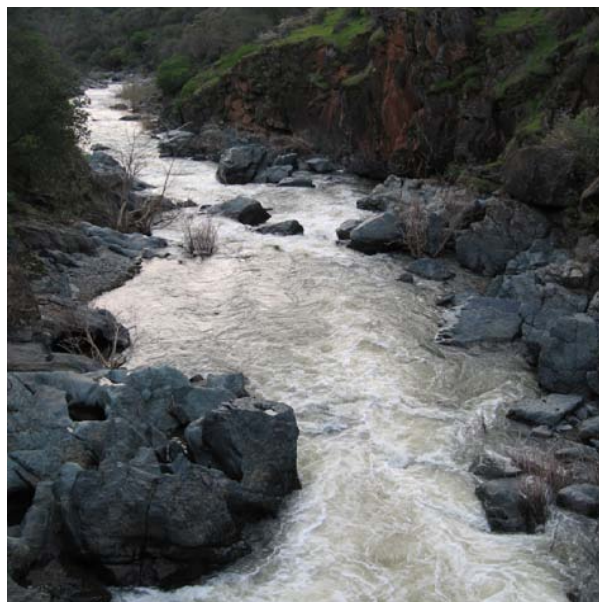
The Southern Maidu and Washoe once lived in the area around the Narrows Planning Unit. Eighty percent of the land within the

FERC boundary has been surveyed for cultural resources and two sites have been identified. No cultural resources within the FERC boundary have been determined to be eligible for the NRHP. The Yuba Powerhouse Foothill Preserve dates back to 1898 and is located in the vicinity of the planning unit.

## Stewardship Council Recommendations

The Stewardship Council recommends that the land and land uses in the Narrows Planning Unit be preserved and enhanced by focusing on the important terrestrial and aquatic habitat values, opportunities for research and restoration, cultural resources, and viewsheds available within in the planning unit. In presenting the Recommended Concept provided here (see Figure YB-8), our objective is to preserve and enhance biological resources, and preserve cultural resources and open space. We recommend this effort be conducted in close coordination with PG&E.

**Objective: Preserve and enhance biological resources while preserving cultural resources and open space.**



Deer Creek from Mooney Flat Road

# NARROWS PLANNING UNIT

## Yuba-Bear River Watershed

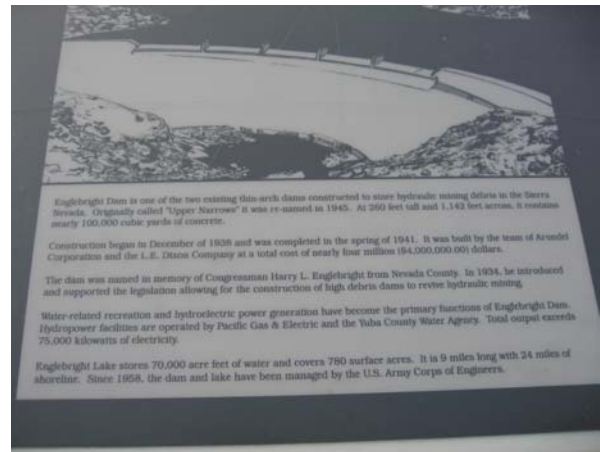
As shown on Table YB-4, the Stewardship Council has identified a number of preservation and/or enhancement measures that may contribute to the conservation management program for the Narrows Planning Unit. Additional detail and background regarding these potential measures can be found in the Supporting Analysis for Recommendations, provided under separate cover. These measures are intended to be illustrative in nature, not prescriptive, and will be amended, deleted, or augmented over time in coordination with future land owners and managers to best meet the objective for this planning unit.

### Fish, Plant, and Wildlife Habitat

**Objective: Preserve and enhance habitat in order to protect special biological resources.**

The grasslands and grey pine-oak forest of the Narrows Planning Unit support a variety of species. The Yuba River is also home to unique spawning and rearing habitat for one of the last wild runs of chinook salmon and steelhead trout in the Central Valley. In order to preserve and enhance the habitat and resources found here, the Stewardship Council recommends that baseline studies and plans be developed to gain a clear understanding of the resources (particularly outside the FERC relicensing study area where little information is currently available). These studies will likely be followed by management plans to ensure implementation of preservation and enhancement measures for specific resources. Management of the property to preserve and enhance habitat will also include addressing noxious weeds.

We also recommend supporting oak and river restoration efforts in the area, including fisheries habitat monitoring. Support (including providing access to the planning unit) of mercury contamination research, monitoring, and restoration efforts carried out by interested stakeholders is also recommended by the Stewardship Council in order to more fully understand this complex situation throughout



Interpretive sign at the Englebright Dam viewpoint the watershed. We encourage close coordination with the resource-focused organizations working in the area. Habitat preservation and enhancement measures should be consistent with FERC license requirements.

### Open Space

**Objective: Preserve open space in order to protect natural and cultural resources and viewsheds.**

This concept would preserve open space by limiting construction to minor alterations associated with restoration efforts, as well as through permanent conservation easements. Conservation easements would describe all prohibited uses to maintain open space values, including the level of uses allowed and the requirement to maintain scenic qualities.

### Preservation of Historic Values

**Objective: Identify cultural resources in order to ensure their protection.**

A few cultural resources are known to be present in the Narrows Planning Unit and there is a high likelihood that additional resources are present. The Stewardship Council aims to support an increased understanding of these resources and ensure they are appropriately protected. To meet this objective, we recommend that cultural

# NARROWS PLANNING UNIT

## Yuba-Bear River Watershed



PG&E FERC project sign, Narrows Project

resource studies be conducted to understand the resources found in the Narrows Planning Unit (particularly outside the FERC relicensing study area where less information is available). Throughout this effort, the Stewardship Council recommends close coordination with Native American entities.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Recently, the EPA, in coordination with Federal and local agencies, removed mercury-contaminated gravels and sluice box wood from the Polar Star Mine tunnel in the Bear River Planning Unit. This was the first attempt to clean up an abandoned mine in the area and serves as a trial for future remediation and restoration efforts. The CALFED Bay-Delta Program, the State Water Resources Control Board, and other programs targeting water quality problems have also provided insight to the issue of mercury contamination; however, there is no comprehensive assessment of mercury loading, accompanying monitoring of the aquatic systems, or impacts to human and wildlife populations.

<sup>2</sup> Central Valley steelhead and spring-run chinook salmon are currently listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and the Central Valley late fall-run chinook salmon has been designated as a candidate for listing, under the Federal ESA.

<sup>3</sup> Flow fluctuations, however, have the potential to contribute to dewatering and stranding of steelhead and chinook salmon redds and juveniles. An ongoing monitoring and evaluation plan was developed by the YCWA in 2002 to assess the impacts of flows on these special status anadromous fish.

<sup>4</sup> The Lower Yuba River Accord is a collaborative agreement that addresses the issue of instream flow requirements in the lower Yuba River.

<sup>5</sup> Englebright Lake offers picnicking, angling, camping, and boating. A fishing access provides angling opportunities for rainbow trout (5,000 of which are stocked by PG&E annually), large and small mouth bass, and catfish. Boating enthusiasts are provided with two paved boat launches and over 100 boat-in campsites with grills and picnic tables.



**Norrows Planning Unit**  
Organizations That Submitted a  
Statement of Qualifications  
for Fee-Title Interests

Bureau of Land Management  
Cherokees of California  
Nevada County Land Trust  
Placer Land Trust  
San Joaquin County Office of Education  
University of California



## SUMMARY OF KEY PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES AND PUBLIC COMMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE NARROWS PLANNING UNIT

### PUBLIC REVIEW OF VOLUMES I AND II OF THE LCP

The Draft Land Conservation Plan (LCP) Volumes I and II were released in June 2007 for a 60-day public comment period. During this time, the Stewardship Council held ten public meetings to publicize the availability of the Draft LCP and to encourage public comment. During public review of Volumes I and II of the LCP, there were no comments received specifically regarding the Narrows planning unit.

### PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE NARROWS PLANNING UNIT

A public information meeting was hosted by the Stewardship Council on April 14, 2011 at the Auburn Parks and Recreation District Community Center in Auburn, California. The meeting concerned the following six planning units: Bear River, Chili Bar, Fordyce Lake, Lake Spaulding, Lower Drum, and Narrows. A total of 58 people attended and participated in the meeting, representing a wide variety of interests, including local and federal governments, community organizations, and community members. The meeting was advertised via an e-mail sent to contacts in our database, an announcement posted on the Stewardship Council's web site, a press release in the local newspaper, and a postcard sent to all landowners on record that reside within one mile of any PG&E parcel associated with the six planning units that were the focus of the meeting.

The purpose of this meeting was to: (1) provide a review and update on the Stewardship Council's Land Conservation Program; and, (2) solicit additional public input on future stewardship of the eight planning units. During the meeting, participants were invited to ask questions and provide comments on the eight planning units. Stations were set up with maps, other pertinent information, and easels with blank paper. Below is a summary of comments related to the Narrows planning unit that were recorded on the easels and provided on comment cards.

#### *Narrows Planning Unit*

- Support for the lands available for donation to be transferred to the University of California.
- Protect anadromous fish habitat.

#### *General Comments Concerning the Yuba-Bear Watershed Area*

- Mineral resources should be included as a beneficial public value.
- Lands available for donation should be transferred to an entity that will preserve and enhance public access.
- Understand that all of the parcels have a history of land use and are no longer pristine.
- Provide adequate time for the public to review and provide comments on the land stewardship proposals, proposed donee recommendations, and conservation easements.

- Provide parcel-specific goals to promote public understanding and comment.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS RECEIVED

The Stewardship Council also received other public comments and letters from individuals and organizations regarding the future management of the Yuba Bear watershed area, as summarized below:

- Provide river access to the Lower Yuba River Technical Working Group to support fisheries and streambed enhancements.
- The protection of sensitive cultural resources should be prioritized.
- Watershed health and water quality should be protected.
- Secure funding for future enhancements.
- Engage tribes in the management of the watershed lands.
- Ensure Native American access to the watershed lands.