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## **STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL ANNOUNCES LAND DONATION TO UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA'S SIERRA FOOTHILL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CENTER IN YUBA COUNTY**

### ***Former PG&E Lands Donated to University of California; Public Values Permanently Protected***

**San Mateo, Calif., February 3, 2015** – The Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council (Stewardship Council) announces the donation of 41 acres of PG&E-owned watershed lands in Yuba County to the University of California's Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center (SFREC). The lands' conservation values will be permanently protected by a conservation easement held by Bear Yuba Land Trust.

The land transfer, finalized on January 29, 2015, is the first of several anticipated land transfers to the University of California that will be completed to implement the Land Conservation Commitment of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). The nonprofit Stewardship Council was created to implement this commitment through a stakeholder-driven Land Conservation Program designed to ensure 140,000 acres of California's pristine watershed lands—currently owned by PG&E—are permanently conserved for the public good.

The 41 acres are located adjacent to the Yuba River at Englebright Dam and are contiguous with the SFREC's property in the foothills of Yuba County 16 miles west of Grass Valley and 25 miles east of Marysville. The property 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. The lands donated to SFREC provide scenic views of the lower Yuba River downstream of the Englebright Lake visitor's viewpoint.

"This land donation to the University of California achieves protection for the scenic and open space values of the property, and contributes to SFREC's research on issues critical to the protection of the broader sierra foothills region," said Art Baggett, president of the Stewardship Council board of directors.

Jeremy James, Foothill Research and Extension Center director stated "We are excited to be able to manage this parcel because this new property will increase the size and connectivity between key research pastures at Sierra Foothill Research and Extension Center."

"In partnership with the many organizations that make up the Stewardship Council, PG&E is pleased to permanently protect the natural resources and beauty of the Narrows parcel and watershed lands associated with our hydroelectric system for the benefit of current and future generations," said Mike Schonherr, manager of PG&E's Land Conservation Commitment Department.

In addition to SFREC's stewardship of the lands, the open space and habitat values of the property will be permanently protected under a conservation easement donated to Bear Yuba Land Trust.

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Bear Yuba Land Trust will be responsible for monitoring the property to ensure SFREC manages the land consistent with the terms of the easement.

Bear Yuba Land Trust has 25 years of experience monitoring conservation easements on lands in Yuba and Nevada County with diverse landowners.

Marty Coleman-Hunt, Bear Yuba Land Trust executive director, said “This donation is the culmination of over a decade of planning and work with local conservation groups and the Stewardship Council. The permanent protection of this land below Englebright Dam is critical for the health of the important Yuba River salmon fishery and public recreation for the lower Yuba River.”

**About the Stewardship Council**

The Stewardship Council was established in 2004 as part of a settlement agreement between PG&E and the California Public Utilities Commission. The board of directors includes appointees from state and federal agencies, water districts, tribal and rural interests, forest and farm industry groups, conservation organizations, the California Public Utilities Commission, and PG&E. The Stewardship Council is charged with ensuring more than 140,000 acres of watershed lands located across the state are conserved and enhanced to provide a broad range of beneficial public values. To learn more about the organization and its work, visit [www.stewardshipcouncil.org](http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org).

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