



County to Cinch Kennedy Land

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Tuolumne County will likely gain title to 244 acres surrounding Kennedy Meadows Resort and Pack Station.

The decision was made Wednesday night by an obscure foundation, the Stewardship Council, charged with divvying up 140,000 acres of land across 22 California counties as part of a Pacific Gas and Electric Co. bankruptcy agreement.

Kennedy Meadows was the first of many plots to receive a recommendation by the council's board of directors.

In February, a proposal from the U.S. Forest Service and a joint proposal from Tuolumne County, the Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District and Amador County-based Mother Lode Land Trust were turned in for review to the council.

Under the council's recommendation, the county would hold title to the land while the Mother Lode Land Trust would hold a conservation easement. The Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District, which was many people's first choice to hold title — including Kennedy Meadows Resort and Pack Station owner Matt Bloom — would "participate in the land management."

"We look forward to working with the selected organizations and other potential land conservation partners in the negotiation of final terms and development of a plan for the long-term stewardship of Kennedy Meadows," said Allene Zanger, Stewardship Council executive director.

Negotiations will soon begin between affected parties, including the county, Mother Lode Land Trust, Stewardship Council, Kennedy Meadows and PG&E.

During the negotiations, a land conservation plan will be developed, which will include a public review process. It could take up to two years before the land is actually transferred.

"All parties have pledged to collaborate with each other to preserve these lands treasured by local residents and visitors from far and wide," Zanger said.