



## County Discusses Kennedy Meadows

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Stewardship Council staff's recent recommendation that Tuolumne County hold title to the 240 acres surrounding Kennedy Meadows Resort and Pack Station was discussed at Tuesday's Board of Supervisor's meeting.

No action was taken by the board.

The Stewardship Council was formed to divvy up 140,000 acres of land across 22 California counties as part of a Pacific Gas & Electric Co. bankruptcy agreement.

Kennedy Meadows was the first of many plots to receive a recommendation.

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

In council staff's recommendation, which was different than any of the proposals, the county would hold title to the land, while 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, would "participate in the land management."

Ty Wivell, vice chairman of the conservation district, urged the board to go forth with the process and accept the title if offered, despite expressing disappointment the district wasn't given a larger role.

"We'll stand ready and would appreciate the opportunity," Wivell said of the conservation district participating in the land's management.

Several supervisors still envisioned a large role for the district.

Supervisor Teri Murrison said that this was the type of thing the district was created to do.

"RCD can get the job done," she said, adding that if the county is chosen, negotiations will include defining the conservation district's role.

The Mother Lode Land Trust was also represented at the meeting.

"We accept the recommendation," said Ellie Routt, executive director of the trust. Routt explained that the trust is located in Amador County, but holds 17 conservation easements, including one property in Calaveras and Alpine counties.

If the recommendation is approved, the trust would look to get Tuolumne County residents on the trust's board of directors, Routt said.

Supervisor Liz Bass questioned if being the title holder would demand additional county personnel and increase government.

"To be completely honest, I'm weary of this," she said.

Daniel Richardson, deputy county administrator, said the task could be done with the current staff. He likened it to the deal the county has on Lake Tulloch, where it subleases services to a concessionaire, like it would to Matt Bloom, owner of Kennedy Meadows.

The concessionaire agreement could bring the county around \$50,000 a year, he added. That money would be set aside for improvements on the property.

The recommendation will come before the Stewardship Council Board of Directors at a June 10 meeting, where a decision is expected. Then negotiations would begin between affected parties, including the county, Mother Lode Land Trust, the Stewardship Council, Kennedy Meadows and PG&E.

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