

## FEE TITLE AND CONSERVATION EASEMENT RECOMMENDATION FOR THE HUMBUG VALLEY 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 Humbug Valley planning unit, located in Plumas County, consists of four legal parcels encompassing approximately 2,325 acres of land. All of these lands are outside of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) project boundaries and not necessary for current and future utility operations. Therefore, all of these lands have been made available for fee title donation.

In November 2010, Stewardship Council staff received land stewardship proposals (LSPs) from two organizations each seeking fee title donations to lands in this planning unit: the Maidu Summit Consortium (Summit) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Following discussions between these two organizations and the Feather River Land Trust (FRLT), in July 2013, the Summit and CDFW jointly prepared and submitted a collaborative proposal supplementing and modifying the LSPs that were previously submitted.

Based on a review and evaluation of the LSPs, the supplemental collaborative proposal, and follow-up discussions with the Summit, CDFW, and FRLT, Stewardship Council staff has developed the following set of recommendations, which have been endorsed by the Watershed Planning Committee (Planning Committee):

1. **Fee Title:** The Maidu Summit Consortium is recommended to be the prospective recipient of fee title to approximately 2,325 acres available for donation within four parcels subject to compliance with all of the requirements of the Land Conservation Commitment, including the following terms:
  - The Summit agrees to enter into a legally binding agreement to ensure that the conservation easement and other agreements executed pursuant to the Land Conservation Commitment remain enforceable in perpetuity; and

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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").

- Prior to the Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan (LCCP) for the Humbug Valley planning unit being adopted by the Stewardship Council Board of Directors (Board), the Summit successfully completes certain initial milestones established pursuant to a capacity-building grant to be developed and funded by the Stewardship Council.
- 2. **Conservation Easement:** CDFW and FRLT are recommended to become the joint holders of a conservation easement at Humbug Valley to permanently protect the BPVs.
- 3. **Management and Funding Agreement(s) for Development and Implementation of a Comprehensive Land Management Plan and Enhancements:** In recognition of the unique and important biological and cultural resources at Humbug Valley, it is recommended that the Stewardship Council enter into a Management and Funding Agreement for the development and implementation of a comprehensive land management plan and other enhancements. The final scope, budget, and timeline of such an agreement would be finalized and incorporated into the LCCP for Humbug Valley.
- 4. **Capacity-Building Grant:** In support and recognition of the Summit's proposed role in the future stewardship of Humbug Valley, it is recommended that the Stewardship Council develop a capacity-building grant agreement with the Summit to ensure that the Summit develops and maintains sufficient capacity for the preservation and enhancement of the BPVs at Humbug Valley.
- 5. **Conservation Easement Endowment:** In support of the proposed role of the FRLT as a co-holder of the conservation easement and consistent with the established conservation easement program funding calculator, it is recommended that the Stewardship Council develop a funding agreement and provide FRLT with funding for one-time costs and an endowment for future monitoring and maintenance of the conservation easement.
- 6. **Tax Neutrality:** It is recommended that the Stewardship Council fund the property tax neutrality obligation associated with the donation of the lands at Humbug Valley to the Summit.

If this set of recommendations is approved by the Stewardship Council Board, PG&E would enter into transaction negotiations with the parties, and the parties would negotiate the conservation easement for the property with involvement of the Stewardship Council. In addition, staff would work with the prospective donees on the development of the proposed management and funding agreement, capacity-building grant agreement, and conservation easement endowment funding agreement. Staff would also work with the Summit and other parties to develop a legally binding agreement to ensure that the conservation easement and other agreements executed pursuant to the Land Conservation Commitment remain enforceable in perpetuity. The management and funding agreement and conservation easement endowment agreement would be developed in coordination with the preparation of a draft LCCP. The proposed agreements and draft LCCP would be made available for public review and comment and presented to the Planning Committee and Board for consideration and approval. Final funding priorities for the development and implementation of a comprehensive land management

plan and enhancements and the Stewardship Council's proposed funding commitment would be reflected in the draft LCCP.

## I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In support of the subject set of recommendations, this memo includes the following information:

1. A description of the property, key features, and summary of the management objectives that were adopted by the Board for the Humbug Valley planning unit;
2. An overview of the process that was followed to solicit, engage, evaluate, and recommend prospective donees;
3. An overview of the programmatic, financial, and legal evaluation process that was used to evaluate the potential donees and their land stewardship proposals;
4. A summary of the evaluation of the organizational and financial capacity of the potential donees;
5. A summary of the joint submittal by CDFW and the Summit of a collaborative proposal;
6. The rationale for the recommendation, including the recommended transaction terms that would form the basis for subsequent negotiations with the prospective donees;
7. A summary of public outreach conducted by the Stewardship Council and public comments received and considered regarding the potential donees and future stewardship of the planning unit;
8. A discussion of next steps.

### *a. Planning Unit Description*

The Humbug Valley planning unit consists of approximately 2,325 acres of land currently owned by PG&E and located in Plumas County (see attached map). The planning unit is comprised of four legal parcels which are bounded to the south and east by U.S. Forest Service lands and to the west, north, and east by private lands.

The predominant feature of Humbug Valley is a scenic mountain meadow and Yellow Creek, a state designated wild trout fishery located at a 4,300 foot elevation surrounded by forested lands. The meadow, springs, streams, and associated area provide a diverse range of habitats for fish, wildlife, and plants.

The planning unit also features approximately 1,100 acres of forested lands comprising one Timber Management Unit, a semi-primitive campground operated by PG&E, the Soda Springs Historic Site and day use area, and two home site leases.

Humbug Valley contains significant historical and cultural resources including Native American bed rock mortars, ceremonial and spiritual sites, and ethno botanical resources. This area is within the ancestral territory of the Maidu.

Since 2000, PG&E management of the main meadow area has occurred in consultation with the Rock Creek-Cresta Ecological Resource Committee (ERC) pursuant to a settlement agreement.

#### *b. Donee Evaluation Process*

The Stewardship Council received statements of qualifications (SOQs) from a number of organizations<sup>2</sup> including the Summit and CDFW, however only the Summit and CDFW submitted LSPs in 2010, both expressing competing interests in acquiring fee title to lands available for donation within this planning unit. Following discussions between these two parties, they jointly prepared and submitted a collaborative proposal in July 2013.

In evaluating the collaborative proposal and the relevant portions of the LSPs, the following factors were considered:

- An evaluation of 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 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**

The Summit, CDFW, and FRLT are being recommended to become responsible for the future stewardship of Humbug Valley and to receive funding from the Stewardship Council to support their future roles and responsibilities. This recommendation is based on a determination that these organizations possess or will possess the organizational and financial capacity to perform their respective duties related to the preservation and enhancement of the BPVs at Humbug Valley taking into consideration the proposed financial support provided by the Stewardship Council. A summary of the evaluation of the organizational and financial capacity of each of these three organizations is provided below.

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<sup>2</sup> The following organizations submitted SOQs for the Humbug Valley planning unit: CDFW, Summit, FRLT, County of Plumas, Environmental Education Council of Marin, Native American Land Conservancy, Plumas Corporation, U.S. Forest Service – Plumas National Forest.

*a. Summit*

*Organizational and Financial Capacity of Summit*

The Summit is a consortium comprised of nine Mountain Maidu tribal entities with aboriginal ties to the land within the Humbug Valley planning unit, including recognized and petitioning tribes, non-profit organizations, and grassroots groups. The group formed in 2003, and has been operating since that time, although they only recently (2010) acquired 501(c)(3) nonprofit status from the IRS. The Summit was formed primarily in response to PG&E's Land Conservation Commitment and suggestions by the Stewardship Council for collaboration early in the Stewardship Council's process. Their home office is in Chester, California, which is within the immediate vicinity of Humbug Valley.

The mission of the Summit is the "preservation and protection of Mountain Maidu prehistoric and historic sites, education, consultation, coordination and cooperation with all interests in our homeland, including Native tribes and organizations, industries, natural resource agencies, conservation groups and residents and the conservation, preservation and protection of land and its natural resources and historic sites." The Summit Board consists of nine representatives of member organizations and six alternates, and is served by two staff and 13 volunteers.

Although the Summit as an organization does not own fee title to any land, the Summit's member organizations have relevant land ownership and/or management experience (e.g., Maidu Cultural and Development Group's National Pilot Stewardship Project, Roundhouse Council Traditional Ecology Knowledge (TEK) Camps, Susanville Rancheria's 160 acre Cradle Valley Project and Tasmam Koyom Foundation's successful agreements with PG&E to implement site protection projects in Humbug Valley in the past). The Summit also includes board members, volunteers affiliated with organizations represented on the Summit Board, as well as a community stewardship team (volunteers that act as stewards of parcels that contain culturally significant sites such as cemeteries and traditional gathering and resource processing areas in Lake Almanor and Humbug Valley). If the Humbug Valley planning unit is donated to the Summit, the Summit plans to institute a volunteer group of scientists and consultants from the region as part of a Resources Advisory Committee, to advise on land management plan development, project design and implementation.

Member organizations have committed some financial resources (Tsi-Akim Maidu and Tasmam Koyom Foundation have each committed funds to help grow organizational capacity), and members and partners have identified in-lieu contributions to the Summit including staff time and expertise, grant writing, capacity building, use of meeting space and office supplies. The Summit member organizations appear to exhibit strong ties to the local community and have worked collaboratively with various organizations in the region (e.g., Feather River Land Trust; Sierra Institute; Almanor Basin Watershed Advisory Committee; Feather River Coordinated Resource Management Group; Ecological Resources Committee) and exhibit a commitment to do so in the future. The Summit has established an MOU with the Native American Land Conservancy for capacity-building assistance. The Lassen National Forest has indicated a desire to partner with the Summit on resource management issues and on potential grant opportunities.

The Summit has developed a website and initiated the "Friends of Humbug Valley," which has successfully cultivated approximately 150 private donors and registered members. The Summit

has launched a regular newsletter (semiannual) and has begun providing tours and events at the Humbug site to interested parties (with permission from PG&E.). In addition, the Summit has created a dedicated “Summit Fundraising Team” and hired a trained grant writer. The Summit has identified a number of potential funding sources, some of which have already been secured as partners. A recommendation for a fee title donation to the Summit may enable the Summit to leverage additional funding from these sources.

*b. CDFW*

*Organizational Capacity of CDFW*

CDFW owns and manages over 700 properties throughout the state, encompassing 1.1 million acres of land that includes habitat for a rich diversity of fish, wildlife, and plant species. Over 700,000 acres of this total is comprised of 110 State Wildlife Areas that are managed by CDFW. CDFW currently holds conservation easements over 156,511 acres of land and has experience co-holding conservation easements with other entities. CDFW has been conserving California’s wildlife since 1870 and has statewide and regional specialists in many areas of expertise and could provide technical assistance for land management and enhancement projects at Humbug Valley.

*c. FRLT*

*Organizational and Financial Capacity of FRLT*

The mission of the FRLT, a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization incorporated on February 18, 2000, is to conserve the lands and waters of the Feather River Region and steward their ecological, cultural and educational values for current and future generations. FRLT currently owns and manages three preserves totaling 1,500 acres, manages three additional preserves, totaling 1,135 acres, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, and holds and monitors six conservation easements totaling over 3,500 acres. FRLT has played an essential role in ten other conservation easement transactions, totaling over 30,000 acres, which are currently held by partner organizations, including The Nature Conservancy and the California Rangeland Trust. With offices in Quincy, FRLT has seven staff members (6.0 FTE), eight board members, and a general operating budget of \$1,030,000 for FY 2013-2014. It is supported by more than 900 members. FRLT is a founding member of the Sierra-Cascade Land Trust Council and the Northern Sierra Partnership, and is a member of the California Council of Land Trusts and the Land Trust Alliance. FRLT is currently completing the LTA land trust accreditation process and expects to become accredited in 2014.

Staff evaluated the organizational capacity of FRLT with respect to its Conservation Easement Monitoring, Enforcement, and Amendment Practices, and concluded that FRLT has the capacity to operate an effective conservation easement program

*Proposed Conservation Easement Structure for Humbug Valley*

FRLT and CDFW propose to co-hold the conservation easement at Humbug Valley. A jointly held conservation easement at Humbug Valley has the following benefits:



- FRLT is locally based, bringing a familiarity with the local resources, community members and other stakeholders.
- CDFW has the ability to draw on considerable staff and legal resources with a wide variety of expertise.
- Both parties propose to have a role in the monitoring and enforcement of the conservation easement providing an additional layer of oversight and accountability.
- FRLT and CDFW have an existing working conservation easement relationship at the Heart K Ranch project, where FRLT is the property owner and CDFW holds the conservation easement.

### **III. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND PROPOSED COLLABORATION**

Volume II of the Land Conservation Plan established certain management objectives for the Humbug Valley planning unit (see attached Volume II Planning Unit Report). Stewardship Council staff reviewed the LSPs and the collaborative proposal to determine how the proposed management and enhancement activities will contribute to the achievement of these management objectives. A summary of the management objectives from Volume II is provided below followed by a summary of the proposed goals of the collaboration between the Summit and CDFW related to these objectives. A more detailed description of the collaborative proposal and proposed management activities is provided in Attachment 1.

#### *Management Objectives for Humbug Valley*

Volume II of the LCP established the following management objectives for Humbug Valley:

- Preserve and enhance habitat in order to protect special biological resources.
- Preserve open space in order to protect natural and cultural resources and the undeveloped recreation setting.
- Enhance recreation and education opportunities in order to provide outdoor experiences consistent with the special cultural and biological resources present.
- Develop and implement forestry practices in order to contribute to a sustainable forest, preserve and enhance habitat, as well as to ensure appropriate fuel load and fire management.
- Assess the potential use of cattle grazing in order to maintain meadow habitat.
- Identify and manage cultural resources, incorporating traditional Native American uses and management of ethnobotanical resources, in order to ensure their protection.

### *Summary of Collaborative Proposal and Proposed Management*

The Summit and CDFW have developed a collaborative proposal that describes how the property would be managed and the roles and responsibilities of each of the partners. It is designed to contribute to the achievement of the following five goals:

- Establish a site within the traditional territory of the Mountain Maidu dedicated to the demonstration of Maidu traditional ecology with the purpose of integrating traditional ecological knowledge and modern science in the management, restoration, enhancement and protection of the site, promoting a mutual exchange of information and creating a demonstration site for purposes of educating the public.
- Provide CDFW the opportunity to support, monitor, and enforce protection of fish, wildlife and plant habitat and other BPVs present on the site by providing science and research guidance, developing enhancement projects, conducting baseline assessments, establishing an access easement granting CDFW permission to access the site and to enforce the terms of the conservation easement.
- Result in the coordinated development and implementation of a comprehensive land management plan intended to guide the management and protection of the property under Summit fee ownership, with CDFW serving as the conservation easement holder jointly with FRLT.
- Result in implementation of enhancements to the BPVs, including improved signage, interpretive programming, fencing to improve protection of threatened resources, and improvements to the Yellow Creek Campground.
- Attract major financial assistance from several foundations in support of the joint vision at Humbug Valley.

A more detailed description of the proposed collaborative proposal and proposed management activities is provided in Attachment 1.

## **IV. PROPOSED CAPACITY-BUILDING GRANT AGREEMENT**

Section II describes Stewardship Council staff's evaluation of the Summit's organizational and financial capacity. To ensure that the Summit is sufficiently prepared to receive the donation of lands at Humbug Valley and grant funding from the Stewardship Council for enhancement projects and to manage the subject lands, staff has explored with the Summit its organizational needs and areas where the Stewardship Council could make a financial contribution to support capacity building and leverage additional funding. Based on this evaluation and discussions with the Summit, staff is recommending, with the Planning Committee's endorsement, the development and funding of a capacity-building grant agreement with the Summit. This agreement may encompass funding for staffing, engagement of one or more consultants with relevant expertise in capacity-building, the identification of milestones, and the completion of tasks and achievement of the milestones.



## **V. OVERALL FUNDING AND FINANCIAL COSTS**

The Stewardship Council has adopted a Land Conservation Program Funding Policy pertaining to funding certain costs associated with the transfer of fee title, enhancements to the beneficial public values, and the establishment and monitoring of conservation easements. The Stewardship Council has also adopted a policy and guidelines on funding property tax neutrality. In accordance with these policies and guidelines, the Planning Committee has endorsed staff's recommendation to work with the prospective donees on the development of the proposed management and funding agreement, the capacity-building grant agreement, and the conservation easement endowment funding agreement. The actual amount of funding to be provided by the Stewardship Council would be identified in these proposed agreements. The Planning Committee also agreed that it would fund reasonable transaction costs.

## **VI. REQUIREMENTS OF THE SETTLEMENT AND STIPULATION**

A recommendation for the Summit to receive fee title to lands available for donation within this planning unit would be 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 Plumas County to ensure the conveyance of these parcels to a tax exempt entity achieves property tax neutrality.
- The grant deed and conservation easement would include an express reservation of right 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, compliance with any Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license, FERC license renewal, or other regulatory requirements.
- The conservation easement will honor existing agreements for economic uses and protect reasonable public access.

## **VII. CONSERVATION PARTNERS**

The permanent protection of the Humbug Valley planning unit, and the future preservation and enhancement of the BPVs, may involve, and benefit from, the participation of land conservation partners. Land conservation partners are defined as organizations other than the landowner or the conservation easement holders that become involved in future activities on the donated lands that contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the BPVs. Land conservation partners may be organizations that expressed interest in enhancement activities on the properties via a land stewardship proposal or organizations otherwise identified 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 recommended donees and the holders of the conservation easements and evaluate opportunities for land conservation partners.

## **VIII. 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 Humbug Valley planning unit is attached.

## **IX. RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

Staff is proposing a set of recommendations as summarized in the Executive Summary above based on the following rationale:

1. The collaborative proposal supports the preservation and enhancement of the BPVs identified in the Stewardship Council's Land Conservation Plan (LCP); and the proposed preservation and enhancement measures are consistent with the management objectives for the property.
2. The FRLT holds six conservation easements on properties located in Plumas County and appears to possess the capacity and experience to hold and administer a conservation easement over the property, and supports the proposed collaboration.
3. CDFW holds a number of conservation easements on properties located throughout California and appears to possess the capacity and experience to co-hold and administer a conservation easement over the property. CDFW also has significant expertise in implementing wildlife habitat enhancement projects, and extensive previous experience working on the preservation and enhancement of natural resources in Humbug Valley working with the community, resource agencies, and PG&E. CDFW also supports the proposed collaboration.
4. The Summit and its member organizations have relevant land ownership and/or management experience and are well suited to manage Humbug Valley and to establish it as a national model of a partnership for the conservation and restoration of Humbug Valley using traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and the best modern science. The Summit also supports the proposed collaboration.
5. The collaborative proposal supports the continuation and enhancement of existing public recreational uses and economic uses (e.g., campground and home site leases) of the property.
6. The organizations that comprise the collaborative proposal team have demonstrated an interest in, knowledge of, and ability to seek grant funding for projects, including watershed improvement projects, meadow and stream restoration projects, and noxious weed management.
7. The collaborative proposal includes Native American involvement and supports the preservation of cultural values and resources.
8. The stated goals of the collaborative proposal are consistent with the Stewardship Council's core values, particularly with respect to collaboration.

## **X. NEXT STEPS**

If the Stewardship Council Board approves this recommendation on November 14, 2013, PG&E would enter into transaction negotiations with the parties, and the parties would negotiate the conservation easement for the property with the involvement of the Stewardship Council. In addition, staff would work with the prospective donees on the development of the proposed

management and funding agreement, capacity-building grant agreement, and conservation easement endowment funding agreement. Staff would also work with the Summit and other parties to develop a legally binding agreement to ensure that the conservation easement and other agreements executed pursuant to the Land Conservation Commitment remain enforceable in perpetuity. These agreements would be developed in coordination with the preparation of the LCCP. The proposed agreements and draft LCCP would be presented to the Planning Committee and Board for consideration and approval after an opportunity for public comment. Final funding priorities for the development and implementation of a comprehensive land management plan and enhancements and the Stewardship Council's proposed funding commitment would be reflected in the draft LCCP.

#### **ATTACHMENTS AND REFERENCE MATERIAL**

1. Summary of Collaborative Proposal and Proposed Management Activities
2. Humbug Valley Planning Unit Map
3. LCP Volume II Report for the Humbug Valley Planning Unit
4. Summary of Key Public Outreach Activities and Public Comments Associated with the Humbug Valley Planning Unit
5. Joint Submittal of Supplement to Land Stewardship Proposals
6. Letters of Commitment- CDFW, Maidu Summit Consortium, and Feather River Land Trust

## ATTACHMENT 1

### Summary of Collaborative Proposal and Proposed Management Activities

In July, 2013, the Summit and CDFW jointly submitted a collaborative proposal for Humbug Valley. The proposal identifies the following management and enhancement activities that will contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the BPVs:

#### Habitat Values

- Enhanced seasonal wildlife and rare plant surveys to inform protection of habitat and improved management of populations
- Potential enhancement of deer habitat through logging and fuels reduction projects, meadow enhancement, and potential aspen regeneration projects
- Invasive plant species surveys, development and implementation of an invasive plants management plan, and noxious weed removal
- Wild trout assessments and native fishery restoration consistent with the wild trout status of Yellow Creek.
- Bank stabilization and re-vegetation of the upper meadow to recover the system from past grazing practices
- Explore introduction of beaver to the site as to improve meadow health
- Fishery surveys to inform revisions to the CDFW fishery management plan. The plan will recommend stream improvement projects to enhance fish habitat
- Installation of interpretive signage including angling regulation signs

#### Agricultural Uses

- Cultivate and collect culturally significant plant and animal resources specific to the Maidu traditions
- Potentially implement limited and managed grazing to maintain meadow plant communities and control invasive weeds. Lease measures such as yields, animal unit month or animal days per acre estimates will be based on vegetation response outcomes relative to objectives.

#### Historic Values:

- Identify and protect culturally sensitive areas based upon surveys, documented historical uses, and through Maidu traditional narratives
- Create interpretive Maidu dwellings and a roundhouse for ceremonial use
- Identification of certain culturally sensitive areas for monitoring, fencing or protection via other means

- Restoration of the historic building near Humbug Road, in the middle of the valley for use as an interpretive site to serve the public

### **Preservation of Open Space**

- Establishment of the conservation easement and implementation of a management plan to achieve protection for the open space values within the planning unit
- Monitor and enforce the area for prohibited uses identified in the conservation easement

### **Outdoor Recreational Opportunities**

- Improve Yellow Creek Campground facilities, area parking, road access and create expanded trail network
- Implement interpretive kiosk, as well as an amphitheater at Yellow Creek campground for outdoor presentations and use by visiting classes
- Educational materials and programs pertaining to Maidu culture, natural resources, property regulations and allowed uses will be provided at informational kiosks, and other appropriate sites, such as the mineral springs and at the campground
- Implement health and wellness projects, educational tourism and interpretive services
- Continue creel surveys and angler surveys to enhance the angling experience
- Conduct tours to highlight natural and cultural resources

### **Sustainable Forestry Values**

- Conduct TEK guided timber harvesting for ecosystem health and to enhance the occurrence of traditional species, and promote habitat conditions and requirements for wildlife.
- Implement fuels management practices

## **Humbug Valley Planning Unit**

The Humbug Valley Planning Unit report located in LCP Volume II can be found at this link:

[http://lcp.stewardshipcouncil.org/Vol\\_2/pdf/17\\_1\\_HumbugValleyText.pdf](http://lcp.stewardshipcouncil.org/Vol_2/pdf/17_1_HumbugValleyText.pdf)

The aerial map to the Humbug Valley Planning Unit can be found at this link:

[http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org/maps/Humbug\\_aerial\\_letter\\_reduced.pdf](http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org/maps/Humbug_aerial_letter_reduced.pdf)

The existing conditions maps to the Humbug Valley Planning Unit can be found at this link:

[http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org/maps/Humbug\\_ex\\_letter\\_reduced.pdf](http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org/maps/Humbug_ex_letter_reduced.pdf)



## **SUMMARY OF KEY PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES AND PUBLIC COMMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HUMBUG VALLEY 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. Comments were received via email, the Stewardship Council website, and hardcopy letters. The comments were reviewed and responded to individually, and the text in the Draft LCP was revised as appropriate. During public review of Volumes I and II of the LCP, six individuals as well as one organization submitted comments concerning the Humbug Valley planning unit.

The comments emphasized the following regarding the future management of the property:

- Support for the donation of lands in Humbug Valley to the Maidu
- Additional protection and enhancement of cultural resources and sites, as well as the continued use of the site for traditional ceremonies and cultural practices.
- Coordination of resource protection efforts with Rock Creek-Cresta Ecological Resource Committee (ERC)
- Modify grazing practices to reduce impacts to ecological resources
- Conservation easement should preserve viewshed and prohibit development
- Support for continued public access except where it is appropriate to limit access to protect resources.
- Prioritize continued restoration and enhancement of the meadow and Yellow Creek in conjunction with the ERC

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE HUMBUG VALLEY PLANNING UNIT**

A public information meeting was hosted by the Stewardship Council on October 22, 2009 at the Chester Memorial Hall in Chester, California. The meeting concerned the following four planning units Butt Valley Reservoir, Humbug Valley, Lake Almanor, and Mountain Meadows Reservoir planning units. A total of 61 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 four 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 four planning units. During the meeting, participants were invited to ask

questions and provide comments on the important qualifications of future landowners and conservation easement holders. Stations were set up with maps, other pertinent information, and easels with blank paper. Below is a summary of comments related to the Humbug Valley planning unit.

### **Humbug Valley**

- Donee should honor leases in perpetuity (current lessees are stewards of the land)
- Support for a collaborative with different organizations (multiple fee-title donees)
- Local people [should be] given priority (e.g., Maidu) over federal government (e.g., Forest Service) for fee title
- A donee who will preserve the Cowboy Cabin
- Consult with locals on historic/cultural preservation

### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS RECEIVED**

The Stewardship Council also received public comments regarding the future management of the Humbug Valley planning unit, as summarized below:

- Concern over long-term impact of PG&E's salvage logging operation following the Chips Fire
- Support for future management at the site that accounts for the full diversity of resources, and which supports native culture
- Concern that the trout fishery in Yellow Creek has deteriorated, and that the future fee donee demonstrate the financial capacity and expertise to ensure the trout population in Yellow Creek is well managed

ATTACHMENT 5

Supplement to Land Stewardship Proposal  
Humbug Valley Planning Unit

Joint Submittal by the Maidu Summit Consortium and the  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife

July 2013

The Maidu Summit Consortium (“Summit”) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (“CDFW”) have prepared the following supplement to the land stewardship proposals that were previously submitted to the Stewardship Council. The purpose of this supplement is to describe the proposed collaboration between the Summit, CDFW, and the Feather River Land Trust (FRLT) (collectively the “Parties”). The site-specific and conservation partnership between the Summit and the CDFW at Humbug Valley is a historic opportunity to learn from each other and to build a legacy alliance for the protection and enhancement of the Humbug Valley using Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) as well as the best modern science to meet management goals.

This collaboration will contribute to the achievement of the following four goals for the Parties:

- Re-establishing a site within the ancestral territory of the Mountain Maidu Homeland dedicated to the demonstration of Maidu traditional ecology through education, healing, protection, and ecosystem management. This re-establishes and ensures the Summit has permanent access to Humbug Valley to achieve these goals.
- Integrating TEK and modern science in management, restoration, enhancement and protection of the natural habitat and species associated with the site. Indigenous scholars and the scientific community can benefit by mutual exchange of information, interpreting the information collaboratively and educating one another and the public.
- Permanently preserving and enhancing the six beneficial public values prescribed by the Stewardship Council principles and the collective principles of the Parties.
- Sharing resources and leverage funding opportunities to accomplish the goals described herein and in the land management plan.

### **Statement of Purpose**

1. Please describe the proposed structure of the collaboration and roles and responsibilities of the parties with respect to fee title ownership, the conservation easement, and management and enhancement activities at the site.

The Summit desires to be fee title owner of the Humbug Valley parcels. Humbug Valley represents a very important place for the Maidu people, that promises to provide the missing place to carry on our traditional ways. Humbug Valley is the final remaining pristine valley in the Maidu territory and ownership would provide certain access and opportunity to preserve it and re-establish the health of the Maidu community and a place for ceremony. CDFW desires to be sole grantee (or co-grantee with FRLT) to a conservation and access easement over the Humbug Valley parcels and to partner with the Summit (and FRLT, if it is a co-grantee) as described in the goals above. Such an easement(s) would capture the Parties’ goals and intentions for working together cooperatively to identify and implement management and restoration projects. As conservation easement grantee, CDFW would monitor and ensure preservation and enhancement of the beneficial public values. This partnership would also demonstrate the Summit’s ability to manage and restore the Humbug Valley property and would provide CDFW’s natural resource and land management experience, providing support for the Summit as appropriate. CDFW would provide science and research guidance, develop enhancement projects, grant proposals

and budgets and arrange or conduct baseline assessments prior to developing and implementing projects. The FRLT may (TBD).

#### Proposed Management and/or Enhancement Activities

2. Please describe, at least conceptually, the proposed management and enhancement activities (including any capital improvements) at the site, and who will be involved in performing these activities.

The Summit and CDFW have collectively identified capital outlay and enhancement projects that are desirable with the Summit fee title ownership of the property and the collaborative relationship between the Parties.

Specifically:

- a) How would proposed management and enhancement activities contribute to the protection of the beneficial public values on the site?
  - i. Protection of the natural habitat of fish, wildlife, and plants: Meadow restoration projects such as bank stabilization and re-vegetation of the upper meadow are needed to restore natural vegetation and recover the system from past grazing practices. The Summit supports introduction of beaver to the site as a natural way to improve the meadow health. CDFW will revise its fishery management plan based on fisheries surveys and recommend stream improvement projects to enhance habitat for fisheries. CDFW and the Summit are both interested in restoring a native fishery consistent with the Wild Trout status of Yellow Creek. CDFW wildlife biologists will conduct enhanced surveys of rare and game wildlife species specific to Humbug Valley on a seasonal basis to inform management. Surveys for rare plants and invasive weeds will be conducted as resources allow and results of these surveys will contribute to protection of wildlife populations and their habitat. Deer habitat will be enhanced through logging and fuels reduction projects. Deer fawning habitat could be improved through meadow enhancement and aspen regeneration projects. An invasive plant species eradication/management plan will be developed and implemented by the Summit and CDFW.
  - ii. Agricultural uses: Cultivation and collection of culturally significant plant and animal resources specific to the Maidu traditions will be implemented. The Summit may consider the implementation of limited and managed grazing to maintain meadow plant communities and control invasive weeds. Lease measures such as yields, animal unit month or animal days per acre estimates will be based on vegetation response outcomes relative to objectives.
  - iii. Historic values: Investigations and Maidu Traditional Narratives, surveys and documented historical uses will be used to identify and protect culturally sensitive areas as well as to create interpretive Maidu dwellings and a

roundhouse for ceremonial use. Some culturally sensitive areas will be identified, fenced or protected by other means, and the Summit will monitor these sites. The historic building near Humbug Road, in the middle of the valley, will be restored and improved. It shall be used as an interpretive site open to the public.

- iv. Preservation of open space: By the conservation easement and implementation of the management plan goals open space values will be protected. The Summit and CDFW will monitor and enforce the area for prohibited uses identified in the conservation easement to protect this and other beneficial public values.
- v. Outdoor recreation by the general public: baseline – The Summit will provide health and wellness projects, educational tourism and interpretive services. Public education on Maidu culture, habitats, species, invasive plants, climate change, regulations and trails will be provided at informational kiosks, the proposed amphitheater, and at other sites, such as the mineral springs and at the campground. CDFW will continue its creel surveys and angler surveys to enhance the angling experience. CDFW will enhance angler survey boxes in the area to accomplish collecting the data. Outdoor recreation may be enhanced by CDFW providing special managed hunts for game species as the Summit, as landowner, determines appropriate. CDFW wildlife interpreters will be available to conduct tours in concert with the Summit to highlight natural and cultural resources.
- vi. Sustainable forestry: The Summit may conduct TEKguided timber harvesting subject to state law for ecosystem health and to enhance the occurrence of traditional species consistent with habitat conditions and requirements for wildlife species and to reduce fuels for wildfire. TEK guided timber harvesting may also be conducted to promote oak and aspen regeneration.

b) What capital improvements at the site are anticipated in the first five years following fee title transfer?

Installation of gates. It may be necessary to install gates on two ancillary sections of road within the site in order to control or restrict vehicular access and prevent damage to sensitive cultural and ecological sites.

Angling Signage. CDFW will post angling regulation signs at heavily used areas and major access points. Angler signage will be inspected annually and replaced as signs are vandalized or age, or in the case of a change in angling regulations.

Angler Survey Boxes. CDFW will construct and install additional angler survey boxes in high use areas and access points to gain additional information on catch rates and use of Yellow Creek by the angling public.



Graphic Interpretive Signage. The Summit will contract design and construction of graphic interpretive signage that will introduce the public to the area and the biological and cultural resource values. Graphic interpretive signs may also contain historical, cultural and regulatory information specific to the Humbug Valley property.

Fencing of Property. The split rail fencing surrounding the Big Springs needs to be repaired. Should grazing be reinstituted, the campground perimeter will need to be fenced. It may also be desirable to fence a riparian corridor along the stream, depending on the intensity of grazing prescribed.

Parking areas and road/trail networks will be improved and new trails will be established to direct foot traffic to developed trails and abandon undesirable trails to minimize public use impacts.

Cultural resources threatened by off road vehicle use or vandalism will be fenced to protect them, where MSC deems advisable, and an encumbrance will be constructed to prevent off-road access at Maidu Cemetery. Several sites around Humbug Valley hold significant cultural and religious value to the Maidu and these specific areas will be safeguarded, either by fence or reduced means of public access.

Yellow Creek Campground enhancements. Capital improvements to the existing Yellow Creek Campground in Humbug Valley will include: a) installation of alternative energy production/storage capacity, probably solar power, b) construction of a new public restroom building with flush toilets with septic tank, c) construction of an outdoor kitchen facility with tie-in to existing water source and new grey water leach system, with cooking area that can utilize portable propane tanks, as well as a large pit style cooking area and, d) addition of new campsites.

Amphitheater near Yellow Creek Campground. A basic stage structure located near the forest edge, that would face out into the meadow with a semi-circumference audience area shaped with earth. This site would become a vital part of the education programs to be held in Humbug Valley. The stage could be used for a small production summer concert series, as well as a conference area for various outreach programs. The site could be rented to visitors and partner organizations for similar uses when unused by the Summit and when those uses are compatible with the conservation goals. This component of the capital investment portion of the Summit Proposal will be a key factor in our developing self-sustaining economic opportunity in Humbug Valley.

Kiosk installation. Design plans that were produced through the agreement made between the Summit and the Lands Stewardship Council in 2012 will be used to construct the interpretive kiosk in Humbug Valley. This project will carry a one-time capital improvement expense, with a modest maintenance cost to be afforded by the annual operating budget.

Historic building restoration. Fortification of the historically significant outpost for cattle ranch laborers shall be undertaken by construction services contracted with the Summit, by the same company and at the same time that the interpretive kiosk is erected. The sites are quite near to each other. Adequate fortification for public access into the building for interpretive purposes is the goal.

c) Would the proposed management and enhancement activities impact current public use of the site and/or existing economic uses? To what extent and how?

It is anticipated that baseline and enhancement land management activities will impact public use through creation of outdoor recreation options such as ecotourism, and educational opportunities. These options will likely increase the level of public use from existing use. Public access may be further impacted during capital outlay and enhancement project implementation phases. Public use will be limited for the purposes of ensuring public safety. We anticipate these impacts will be limited to the project areas and will be temporary and minimal impacts. It is anticipated that existing economic uses will be affected where those uses are tourism based. Enhanced ecosystem function and the unique character of these lands (dedicated to Traditional Ecology) will likely improve economic outcomes in the area. Negative effects to existing economic uses are not expected.

d) Please attach the proposed outline of the conceptual land management plan that would be developed and implemented for the site.

3. Please include a proposed timeline for the development and implementation of the proposed management and enhancement activities.

The Summit, CDFW and, if applicable, the FRLT will develop the initial management plan including developing the goals, objectives, access, management activities and enhancement projects. The Parties are interested in initiating development of this plan after the Stewardship Council makes its recommendation and prior to fee title transfer actually occurring. The Parties believe the plan could be completed within 12 to 18 months of initiation.

CDFW will assist the Summit in conducting baseline assessments and resources surveys over a 12-month period following completion of the initial management plan. The results of these surveys will be used to inform development of a more detailed final management plan which will be finalized within 12 to 18 months of completing the baseline assessments.

Several enhancement activities anticipated to occur within the first five years include:

1) A fuels reduction project at the Miller site. The area adjacent to the Miller Home-place Historic Site shall be thinned of the overly forested area of young conifer trees. Using principles prescribed in TEK forest management, the Summit shall direct and undertake necessary tasks involved with tree reduction and related wood material chipping.

2) An invasive plant species assessment and control and/or eradication. Bull thistle has been identified on the site in discrete locations and will be the initial and more immediate target to prevent spread. Baseline assessment data will be used to develop an invasive species management plan to address managing introduction and spread.

3) An education series, led by the Summit that will provide the public with regular presentations on TEK interpretation. Other facets of modern approaches to resource management and enhancement will be topics covered in presentations given at that time. This series will often be a collaborative effort by Summit and CDFW personnel.

4) A primary objective for the Summit is to perform five cultural site protection projects within the first several years of managing Humbug Valley. The sites in question are not adequately protected. The locations are modest in size and are not in regular public use zones. These areas will become limited access sites.

#### Preliminary Proposed Project Budget

4. Please provide a preliminary project budget with an estimate of the costs associated with the transfer of fee title and the proposed management and enhancement activities identified above. The budget should indicate how much funding the parties would seek from the Stewardship Council, and if alternative sources of funding have been identified or would be sought for any of the estimated costs. Please identify any in-kind contributions anticipated.

The Summit anticipates assistance from many community volunteers on several of the capital outlay and enhancement projects. CDFW plans to contribute staff time and resources described herein. Minimal funds are requested from the Stewardship Council by CDFW.

#### Attachments

- A letter of commitment from each organization involved in the collaboration.
- An outline of the proposed management plan.
- Any relevant update to the organizational information that was provided in Part 1 of original Land Stewardship Proposals submitted to the Stewardship Council (e.g., organizational experience, staffing).

**Conceptual Land Management Proposal for Humbug Valley**  
Attachment for Stewardship Supplement Item 2 (d)

1. Purpose of Acquisition and Conservation
2. Purpose of Land Stewardship Plan
  - a. Describe existing beneficial public values
3. Property Description
  - a. Geography
  - b. Access –existing private and public
  - c. Boundaries
  - d. Adjacent ownership and land use
  - e. Easements, encumbrances and rights – existing
4. Physical Characteristics
  - a. Geology and topography
  - b. Soils
  - c. Climate
  - d. Hydrology
5. Fire and Land Use History
6. Prehistory and Ethnographic Land Use (Cultural Resources)
  - a. Investigations and Maidu Traditional Narratives
  - b. Overview of cultural resources
7. Existing Land Use and Facilities
  - a. Public Use Allowed
  - b. Existing Facilities
  - c. Closed Areas/Periods
8. Habitat and Species Descriptions
  - a. Vegetation communities
  - b. Wildlife
  - c. Species of conservation need
  - d. Non-natives
  - e. Diseases
  - f. Habitat linkages/corridors
9. Public Benefit Values Management and Enhancement
  - a. Sustainable Forestry
    - i. Fire and Vegetation Management
    - ii. Traditional Species Management
  - b. Outdoor Recreation/Public Use
    - i. Permitted and non-permitted (prohibited) public use

- ii. Future access
    - iii. Educational tourism
    - iv. Hunting and fishing
  - c. Agriculture
  - d. Historic Values and Cultural Resources
    - i. Landscape level for ecosystem function
    - ii. Individual and community based for cultural perpetuation
    - iii. Implementation for economics
  - e. Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation
  - f. Preservation of Open Space
- 10. Management Objectives, Strategies/Best Management Practices and Environmental Impacts
- 11. Baseline Assessments
- 12. Compatible Economic Uses Element
- 13. Facilities Element
- 14. Monitoring and Adaptive Management
- 15. Management Coordination
- 16. Collaborative Opportunities, Projects and Roles and Responsibilities
  - a. Land owner(s)
  - b. Adjacent land owners
  - c. Agencies (FS, CDFW, etc)
  - d. Easement holders
  - e. Land Conservation Partners (CDFW and FRLT)
  - f. PG&E
  - g. NALTA (Native American Land Trust Alliance)
  - h. FR Land Trust (Feather River)
  - i. Educational Institutions
  - j. Feather River College
  - k. Lassen College
  - l. Butte College
  - m. Chico State
  - n. UN Reno
  - o. UC Davis
- 17. Implications of Climate Change
- 18. Ecosystem Heterogeneity (TEK maximum species diversity and health) = adaptability

19. Applicable laws for projects

20. Attachments

Maps –

parcels, acreage, roads, infrastructure

historical and cultural resources

natural resource values (plants, wildlife, habitats)

outdoor recreation

agriculture

forestry

open space

Conservation Easement





State of California – Natural Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
Director's Office  
1416 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Rm 1205  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
[www.wildlife.ca.gov](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov)

*EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor*  
*CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director*



July 16, 2013

Art Baggett, Jr.  
President, Stewardship Council Board of Directors  
15 North Ellsworth, Suite 100  
San Mateo, CA 94401-2831

Dear Mr. Baggett:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has been working collaboratively with the Maidu Summit Consortium (Summit) on a joint proposal for transfer of fee title of the Humbug Valley parcels. We realized we have similar goals for the area that prompted us to develop a joint proposal that envisions an ongoing collaboration for management and enhancement of the parcels. While the Department originally sought fee title interest in the Humbug Valley lands, we have developed a deep respect for the Summit's desire to re-establish some of its ancestral territory and to manage the land in their traditional ways and we are excited to be a part of the transaction and future activities. This collaboration between the Summit and the Department at Humbug Valley is an historic opportunity to learn from each other and to build a legacy alliance for the protection and enhancement of the Humbug Valley using Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) as well as the best modern science to meet management goals. The final goal of our close partnership with the Summit includes the Summit as fee title owner of the parcels, part of the Mountain Maidu's ancestral homeland.

Both the Summit and the Department contemplate Feather River Land Trust (FRLT), as co-easement holder with the Department and a partner in beneficial public values enhancement projects. The Department views the goal of the Summit as fee title owner, with the Department and FRLT as co-easement holders as the best arrangement for conserving and enhancing the unique habitat and cultural values of Humbug Valley and Yellow Creek in perpetuity.

The Department wishes to express its commitment to a long-term collaboration with the Summit and support for the Stewardship Council's consideration of our joint proposal, and ask that full consideration be given to the proposal for the Maidu Summit to become fee title owner, with the Department and Feather River Land Trust as co-easement holders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. Bonham", written over a horizontal line.

Charlton Bonham  
Director

cc: Allene Zanger, Executive Director  
Stewardship Council  
15 North Ellsworth, Suite 100  
San Mateo, CA 94401-2831

Farrell Cunningham, Executive Director  
Maidu Summit Consortium  
P.O Box 1122, Greenville, CA 95947

Paul Hardy, Executive Director  
Feather River Land Trust  
75 Court Street  
Quincy, CA 95971

ec: Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Kevin Hunting, Chief Deputy Director  
Steven Ingram, Senior Staff Counsel and Tribal Liaison  
Dan Yparraguirre, Deputy Director

*North Central Region*

Tina Bartlett, Regional Manager  
Katherine Hill, Environmental Program Manager  
Kevin Thomas, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisor)  
William Somer, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist)



## MAIDU SUMMIT CONSORTIUM

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July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013

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Director of Public Relations

**Brenda Heard**  
**Tasmam Koyom Foundation**  
Grants Coordinator

**Trina Cunningham**  
**Maidu**  
Feather River Land Trust Rep.

Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council  
1107 Ninth Street, Suite 705  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Bagget and Stewardship Council Board

This letter of commitment is written on behalf of the Maidu Summit Consortium and all its member organizations.

We are pleased to submit to the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council the attached proposal, which has been produced as a collaborative effort between the Maidu Summit Consortium (MSC) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Services (CDFW).

The proposal represents our appeal for assuming fee-title to the planning unit at Humbug Valley, of Plumas County, California. It also establishes a mutual agreement between the two aforementioned parties, which identifies MSC as the best candidate for owning Humbug Valley, while maintaining that a conservation easement for the site should be administered by CDFW and their pending partnership with Feather River Land Trust.

Our groups share interests in the sustained protection and enhancement of resources and public access in Humbug Valley. Whereas, this proposal provides MSC and the Maidu people a significant opportunity by assuming ownership of this property, measured in the Maidu's perpetual access to necessary resources for cultural practice, and MSC's unique ability to provide the public a source of new conservation and resource enhancement models through Traditional Ecological Knowledge education and application; CDFW would also be assuming, through conservation easement, the capacity to sustain and promote public access to the area and to carry out fish and wildlife protection. Together, we feel this is the best method for protecting and enhancing Beneficial Public Values in Humbug Valley.

These goals are of great importance to both entities. This collaboration would introduce a new scenario for groups like ours in other regions and would be seen as a key development in land conservation practice.

In regards to our respective goals for Humbug Valley and the elements contained within the attached proposal, our organization is honored by and committed to carrying out the duties and responsibilities, as described.

Sincerely,

Farrell Cunningham  
Chairperson  
Maidu Summit Consortium

## FEATHER RIVER



## LAND TRUST

### *Protecting the Places that Make the Feather River Country Special*

September 24, 2013

PO Box 1826  
Quincy, CA 95971  
TEL: 530.283.5758  
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Web: [www.frlt.org](http://www.frlt.org)

Art Baggett, Jr.  
President, Stewardship Council Board of Directors  
15 North Ellsworth, Suite 100  
San Mateo, CA 94401-2831

Dear Mr. Baggett,

#### **Mission Statement**

To conserve land in the Feather River region and steward its ecological and cultural values for current and future generations.

#### **Board of Directors**

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*Conservation Director*

**Susan Payne**  
*Operations Manager*

**Vanessa Vasquez**  
*Program Assistant*

The Feather River Land Trust (FRLT) has been working in partnership with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) and the Maidu Summit Consortium (Summit) on a joint proposal for transfer of fee title of the PG&E-owned Humbug Valley parcels, along with associated conservation easement(s). As a local, Plumas-County-based nonprofit organization, FRLT is very supportive of the Summit's desire to re-establish some of its ancestral lands and to manage Humbug Valley using Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). We are also very supportive of co-holding an easement over these lands with the Department and collaborating on projects with both the Summit and the Department.

The permanent conservation of Humbug Valley and its beneficial public values has been a top priority for FRLT since its inception and the FRLT Board and I greatly value the opportunity to play a role in achieving this goal. We feel that collaboration among the Summit, the Department, and FRLT represents an historic opportunity to learn from each other and build a long-term partnership for the conservation and restoration of Humbug Valley using both TEK and the best science to meet management goals.

FRLT thanks the Stewardship Council for your courage and innovation in working to conserve and enhance Humbug Valley and Yellow Creek, while concomitantly helping the Summit rebuild the health and sustainability of Maidu culture and resources within the Feather River region. FRLT shares your commitment to Humbug Valley and to a long-term partnership among FRLT, the Department, and the Summit, and asks for the Stewardship Council's support of the Summit as fee title holder, with FRLT and the Department as co-easement holders.

Sincerely,

Paul Hardy  
Executive Director