

**Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council  
Lake Almanor Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan (LCCP)  
Frequently Asked Questions**

PG&E Lands at the Lake Almanor Planning Unit in Plumas County

**1. Who is the Stewardship Council and what is PG&E's Land Conservation Commitment?**

Under a Settlement Agreement and associated Stipulation reached between Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and the California Public Utilities Commission in 2003, PG&E agreed to protect its more than 140,000 acres of Watershed Lands with conservation easements, or equivalent protections, and/or to make certain lands available for donation to public entities or qualified non-profit conservation organizations.

As part of the Settlement Agreement, in 2004 PG&E created and funded an independent nonprofit foundation, the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council ("Stewardship Council"), to oversee this land conservation effort as well as a separate Youth Investment Program. The Stewardship Council's 17 member Board of Directors is composed of a diverse group of organizations including state and federal agencies, water agencies, tribal and rural interests, forest industry, conservation organizations, the California Public Utilities Commission, and PG&E.

The Stewardship Council is responsible for developing and implementing a land conservation plan for PG&E's Watershed Lands, which includes providing PG&E with recommendations of qualified conservation organizations to receive fee and conservation easement interests in the Watershed Lands. The Watershed Lands are located in the Sierra Nevada, Cascades and North Coast Range Mountains. The lands include more than 1,000 parcels across 22 California counties that are being protected to preserve 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.

**2. What lands at Lake Almanor are involved in this process? Who is going to own the land?**

Land currently owned by PG&E in and around Lake Almanor is part of the Land Conservation Commitment described above. Maps of the property are included in the Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan (LCCP). The Stewardship Council seeks public comment on the LCCP for lands that PG&E will continue to own and manage at Lake Almanor, totaling approximately 29,057 acres.

**3. The proposed plan for Lake Almanor includes a conservation easement - What is a conservation easement and who will hold the conservation easement for the lands at Lake Almanor?**

The Settlement Agreement and Stipulation require that all lands within PG&E's Watershed Lands portfolio: (1) be subject to permanent conservation easements that protect and preserve the beneficial public values, and/or (2) be donated in fee simple to

one or more public entities or qualified nonprofit conservation organizations, whose ownership will ensure the protection of the beneficial public values.

Since PG&E will retain ownership of the subject lands at Lake Almanor, a conservation easement will be placed on the land pursuant to the requirements of the Settlement Agreement and Stipulation that govern the Land Conservation Commitment. The primary purpose of the conservation easement is to permanently protect the beneficial public values established by the Settlement Agreement and Stipulation which for this conservation easement include protection of the natural habitat of fish, wildlife, and plants; preservation of open space; outdoor recreation by the general public; sustainable forestry; and historic values. The conservation easement will be held by Feather River Land Trust, who is responsible for monitoring the lands, at least annually, to ensure the protection of the beneficial public values and that the terms and conditions of the conservation easement are being met.

Conservation easements on the Watershed Lands will include an express reservation of a 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 FERC license, FERC license renewal or other regulatory requirements. In addition, easements will honor existing agreements for economic uses, including consumptive water deliveries.

**4. Will recreation and public access to the lands at Lake Almanor be impacted by the proposed conservation easement?**

The Stewardship Council recognizes that Lake Almanor is an important regional recreation destination. The Settlement and Stipulation require that the conservation easements preserve or enhance reasonable public access to the Watershed Lands. The conservation easement for Lake Almanor includes outdoor recreation as a beneficial public value to be protected. Furthermore, the conservation easement recognizes that the PG&E lands at Lake Almanor have been used by third parties for recreation, cultural, and other non-commercial or informal purposes without formal written agreements to conduct such activities. The conservation easement requires that the landowner shall allow public access to the property that is substantially consistent with the public access existing at the time the conservation easement is recorded, subject to certain limitations including the landowner's right to make reasonable rules and regulations to control, limit, or, as necessary, exclude informal uses or public access.

**5. I own property near the lands at Lake Almanor that are owned by PG&E. How will this process affect my property?**

The proposed Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan and attached conservation easement only apply to the lands owned by PG&E. The Land Conservation Commitment cannot impose requirements for surrounding property owners. Any existing access agreements across PG&E lands will also not be affected.

**6. Will the implementation of this plan change my ability to use and enjoy Lake Almanor?**

The conservation easement provides protections for continued public access and recreation at Lake Almanor and also allows for the continued use of boat docks and resorts on the shoreline for those lands that are owned and operated by PG&E. We do not anticipate any significant changes to how the general public uses the PG&E property as a result of the Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan or the conservation easement.

**7. How does the LCCP and associated conservation easement affect the boat dock and rip rap agreements around the lake?**

As required by the Settlement Agreement, the conservation easement granted to Feather River Land Trust is expressly subject to all existing third party agreements. The boat dock and rip rap agreements are described as Express Third Party Uses in Section 9 of the conservation easement and will be referenced in Exhibit H. Express Third Party Uses are senior to the conservation easement. PG&E will retain the right to maintain, renew, and replace all agreements memorializing the Express Third Party Uses. Per the terms of the conservation easement, Feather River Land Trust will consult with PG&E and make recommendations on how to bring the Express Third Party Uses and preservation of the beneficial public values into alignment to the fullest extent reasonably practicable, which PG&E will consider as agreements are renewed.

**8. Why isn't hunting included as part of the beneficial public values for Lake Almanor?**

After receiving recent public comments requesting hunting be added to the list of examples in the stated beneficial public value of outdoor recreation, and following consultation with PG&E and Feather River Land Trust, Stewardship Council staff believes that hunting should be added to the conservation easement in the description of the beneficial public values prior to the Stewardship Council board considering approval of the Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan.

**9. Is this a stewardship project to restore the lake to its natural condition?**

The implementation of the Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan will not result in any physical changes to the property or create a restoration project. Conservation easements are placed on the properties in "as-is" condition and do not compel PG&E to change the condition of the property. The conservation easement prohibits certain activities and enables the conservation easement holder to monitor and enforce those prohibitions, but does not affirmatively require PG&E or the conservation easement holder to create new environmental programs beyond those required to ensure compliance with the terms of the conservation easement.

## **10. What is the public process for making comments to the Stewardship Council?**

The Stewardship Council is committed to an open, inclusive, and collaborative process which involves advance public notice of proposed actions, public board meetings, public information meetings in the vicinity of the Watershed Lands, and a robust website and email list. The Stewardship Council has actively reached out to local communities and to many diverse organizations, including land trusts, county governments, and Native American entities, and to all stakeholders who express interest to receive such notifications.

Every land transaction is released to the public via a Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan (LCCP). The LCCP is released for a 30-day public review and comment period. The 30-day public review and comment period is widely announced via an e-mail sent to contacts in the Stewardship Council's database, a posting on the Stewardship Council's web site, and an advertisement placed in local community papers. A notice inviting review and comment on the draft LCCP is also sent to all landowners on record located within one mile of the subject PG&E parcel; each affected city, town, and water supply entity; and each affected tribe and/or co-licensee.

The LCCP itself is a guiding document, however it contains the full draft text of certain legal documents related to each transaction, including the conservation easement.

The comments received during the 30 day LCCP public comment process will be reviewed by Stewardship Council staff and provided to the Watershed Planning Committee, a committee of the Stewardship Council's Board of Directors. Following the completion of its review, the Watershed Planning Committee will forward the draft LCCP, the comments received, and any proposed modifications to the Stewardship Council Board of Directors. The Stewardship Council will post the proposed LCCP and issue an e-mail notice to its stakeholder database approximately 30 days in advance of a public board meeting to consider the final approval of the LCCP. To be added to the stakeholder database to receive advance notice regarding the date and location of this board meeting, please contact Steve Schweigerdt at [sschweigerdt@stewardshipcouncil.org](mailto:sschweigerdt@stewardshipcouncil.org).

Current information on the work at Lake Almanor, including the LCCP is available at this link: [http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org/land\\_conservation/planning\\_units/lake-almanor.htm](http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org/land_conservation/planning_units/lake-almanor.htm)

## **11. Who is the conservation easement holder Feather River Land Trust?**

Feather River Land Trust, is a private, non-profit organization founded by residents of the Feather River region that work with willing landowners and local communities to conserve land in the Feather River region and steward its ecological and cultural values for current and future generations. They have successfully protected nearly 60,000 acres of private lands that support outstanding biodiversity, waterways, fisheries, recreational and educational opportunities, cultural sites, agricultural lands, and spectacular scenery. Their offices are located in Quincy, CA.