

FEE TITLE DONEE RECOMMENDATION LOWER DRUM 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,¹ 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 Lower Drum planning unit, located in Nevada and Placer counties, consists of 45 parcels encompassing approximately 1,106 acres of land. Approximately 721 acres have been identified by PG&E as lands outside of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) project boundaries and not necessary for current and future utility operations. Therefore, these lands have been made available for fee title donation, with the remaining approximately 385 acres to be retained by PG&E. The Stewardship Council received land stewardship proposals (LSPs) from three organizations interested in receiving a donation of fee title to lands in this planning unit: Placer County, Placer County Water Agency, and the Auburn Area Recreation and Park District. The Stewardship Council Board of Directors (Board) already adopted a recommendation for Placer County to receive fee title to approximately 15 acres located within Parcel 871, the only acreage in the planning unit of interest to the county. At this time, based on an evaluation of the Auburn Area Recreation and Park District's LSP, as well as follow-up discussions with them, Stewardship Council staff has developed the following recommendation endorsed by the Watershed Planning Committee (Planning Committee):

Auburn Area Recreation and Park District (ARD) is being recommended to receive fee title to approximately 64 acres within four parcels (Parcels 888, 893, 894, and 895).

The ARD was the only potential donee that expressed fee title interest in Parcels 893, 894, and 895. Placer County Water Agency expressed interest in owning a portion of Parcel 888; however that acreage is not of interest to ARD. Stewardship Council staff would continue to work with the Placer County Water Agency to assess the possibility of additional land transfers within the Lower Drum planning unit.

If this recommendation is adopted by the Stewardship Council Board (Board), Stewardship Council staff would work with the prospective donee on the development of a management and funding agreement. This agreement would be developed in coordination with the development of

¹ 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").

a Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan (LCCP). The proposed management and funding agreement and proposed LCCP would then be presented to the Planning Committee and Board for consideration and approval.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

a. Planning Unit Description

The Lower Drum planning unit is located in close proximity to the City of Auburn, and offers both recreation and open space opportunities. The elevation of this planning unit ranges between 700 to 2,000 feet. It is located in the Sierra Nevada foothills and is composed of small reservoirs, oak and pine woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands. The lands are located predominantly in Placer County with one small parcel located in Nevada County along Interstate 80. The lands in the vicinity of the planning unit are either privately owned or owned by the Bureau of Land Management, California Department of Fish and Game, Bureau of Reclamation, or Placer County.

The Lower Drum planning unit provides suitable habitat for a variety of species within its reservoirs, riparian corridors along the Bear River, oak and pine woodlands, and grasslands. Special status species found in this planning unit include the California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, northwestern pond turtle, and numerous bat species.

Fishing and hiking are the primary recreational activities within this planning unit. Most of the recreational facilities within the planning unit are focused at Halsey Forebay, which is stocked with fish by DFG, making it a popular local fishing spot. Additional reservoirs located within the planning unit include Rock Creek, Halsey Afterbay, and Wise Forebay. However, few recreational enhancements have been developed at these locations.

Forest resources within the Lower Drum planning unit consist of 255 acres of low elevation pine and mixed hardwood forests within two Timber Management Units. Current PG&E timber management consists of salvage only, in which management activities are restricted to mitigating for watershed and forest health issues, including emergency salvage harvesting following insect attack or a catastrophic event.

The Southern Maidu and Washoe once lived in the area around the Lower Drum planning unit. At the time of drafting the Land Conservation Plan (LCP Volume II), four historic and/or prehistoric sites had been identified within the planning unit. However, only limited portions of the planning unit have been inventoried for cultural resources.

b. Description of Parcels 888, 893, 894, and 895

Parcel 888

As shown on the attached planning unit map (note, Parcel 888 is shown on planning unit map #4), Parcel 888 contains four discrete sections of land, totaling 66 acres. Approximately 64 acres is available for fee title donation; however, the small section located south of Lake Arthur Road is identified as constrained due to the configuration of the FERC Project boundaries, which would require extensive survey and subdivision work in order to transfer fee title ownership.

PG&E leases 3.5 acres in the southwest corner of the largest portion of the parcel to ARD for park and sports field use.

ARD is interested in acquiring fee title to a portion of the parcel, totaling 40 acres, which is adjacent to its existing Christian Valley Park, including the 3.5-acre area that is leased from PG&E. This portion of the parcel has been leased by ARD from PG&E for over a decade.

Parcel 893

Parcel 893 (note, Parcel 893 is shown on planning unit map #5) contains 99 acres, of which 21 acres are available for fee title donation. ARD is interested in acquiring all the lands available for fee title donation in this parcel.

The parcel is separated into two sections by the Placer County maintained Bell Road. The smaller, southern section of the parcel contains the lands ARD has interest in and is located directly south of Placer County's Bell Road and generally west of New Airport Road. This section of the parcel is bordered by Parcel 894 to the east, Parcel 895 to the west, and private property to the south. PG&E's 115 kV electric transmission and distribution lines run through the parcel. Dry Creek also runs through this southern section of the parcel and into the Rock Creek Reservoir. Placer County's easement for a sanitary sewer line also runs across this section of the parcel. Terrain within this section of the parcel consists of gently sloping oak woodland, with areas of open grassland. PG&E will reserve water rights along all water courses located on the property.

Parcel 894

Parcel 894 (note, Parcel 894 is shown on planning unit map #5) contains two acres of land of which one acre is within FERC boundaries and will be retained by PG&E for operational use. ARD is interested in acquiring all the lands available for fee title donation in this parcel.

Parcel 893 borders this parcel to the north, south, and west; private property borders the parcel to the east. The Placer County maintained New Airport Road abuts this parcel along the eastern parcel boundary. The Rock Creek stream channel runs north-south through the entire parcel. Terrain within the parcel consists of gently sloping oak woodland.

Parcel 895

Parcel 895 (note, Parcel 895 is shown on planning unit map #5) contains less than 2 acres of land and is entirely available for fee title donation. ARD is interested in acquiring all the lands available for fee title donation in this parcel.

The Placer County maintained Sullivan Drive and the Sullivan Ranch Subdivision border the parcel to the west. The subdivision residents contact PG&E each year to request weed abatement on this parcel.

A further description of this planning unit, including the BPVs and the management objectives that were previously approved by the Board for this planning unit, is included in the attached excerpted section of Volume II of the LCP.

c. Donee Evaluation Process

The Stewardship Council received statements of qualifications (SOQs) from eight organizations interested in acquiring fee title to lands available for donation within this planning unit. A list of organizations that submitted an SOQ is attached. Of these organizations, the following three organizations submitted LSPs for the Lower Drum planning unit:

- Auburn Area Recreation and Park District (ARD)
- Placer County
- Placer County Water Agency

Pursuant to this recommendation, approximately 64 acres of the 721 acres available for donation are being recommended for donation at this time. The ARD was the only potential donee that expressed fee title interest in Parcels 893, 894, and 895; however, Placer County Water Agency expressed interest in owning a portion of Parcel 888 that is not of interest to ARD. Stewardship Council staff would continue to work with the Placer County Water Agency to assess the possibility of additional land transfers within the Lower Drum planning unit.

In evaluating ARD's LSP, 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 BPVs of the planning unit;
- Anticipated funding needs of the potential donees;
- The management objectives for the Lower Drum planning unit as set forth in Volume II of the Land Conservation Plan;
- 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

ARD is being recommended to receive a donation of fee title to approximately 64 acres of land available for donation in this planning unit. This recommendation is based on a determination that ARD possesses the organizational and financial capacity to own and manage fee title to this land as further described below.

a. Donee Organizational Capacity

The organizational capacity of the ARD is summarized below.

- ARD is a public agency with over 60 years of experience developing and maintaining a public park system that offers a wide variety of recreational facilities and programs, including ball fields, tennis courts, public swimming pools, and community centers.
- ARD operates over a dozen major parks and facilities within a 100 square mile area, including 158 acres of developed park lands, four miles of pathways, and 60 acres of open space.
- In partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers, ARD manages a 10-acre nature preserve, which involves protection of wetlands, waterways, native plants, and wildlife habitat.
- ARD recently completed a 0.7 mile ADA paved pathway that loops the perimeter of the 22 acre Recreation Park. Recreation Park is considered the “heart” of the ARD system and includes a community center, gymnasium, ball fields, playgrounds, passive picnic areas, picnic shelters, and the only public swimming pool in the greater Auburn area.
- Under a PG&E lease, ARD manages 3.5 acres of PG&E land (within parcel 888) as a public sports field as part of its Christian Valley Park. Other amenities offered here by ARD include a playground, picnic area, and a preschool building.
- ARD’s LSP states that it utilizes established standards and best practices to manage property in compliance with local, state, and federal laws.
- ARD’s LSP states that it utilizes sustainable forestry practices to preserve urban forests, while ensuring public safety.
- ARD has 20 full time staff including a full-time maintenance and seasonal crew to inspect and maintain park facilities, which involves trash pick-up, mowing, and noxious weed removal. ARD also employs a number of seasonal staff as needed, such as lifeguards and staff related to the operation of camps. ARD also retains the services of a grant writing consultant as needed to secure grants.
- ARD has indicated that they have a history of successful partnerships with a variety of local stakeholders, volunteer organizations, and government entities. ARD partners with various youth sports organizations, including Placer High School, to develop and maintain recreation facilities and support fundraising. ARD also partners with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Placer County Resource Conservation District to manage its nature preserve and the Bureau of Reclamation to manage facilities through a 25 year agreement. ARD also partnered with the Ashley Memorial Dog Park Foundation to establish the first dog park in Auburn.

b. Donee Financial Capacity

The financial capacity of ARD was evaluated based on a review of its operating budget for the current fiscal year and proposed budget for the next fiscal year, as well as financial statements for the three most recent fiscal years. Based on a review of financial statements submitted, the ARD appears to possess the financial capacity to own and manage the lands available for donation and being recommended for transfer within the Lower Drum planning unit.

c. Management Objectives

Volume II of the Land Conservation Plan established certain management objectives for the Lower Drum planning unit (see attached Volume II Planning Unit Report). ARD is seeking fee title to approximately 64 acres of land within the Lower Drum planning unit to achieve a number of proposed management activities that are described below and appear to be consistent with the established management objectives.

ARD has expressed an interest in acquiring approximately 64 acres of land to preserve open space and enhance public access and recreational opportunities, where appropriate. ARD proposes to undertake the following objectives and activities on lands conveyed to it in the Lower Drum planning unit:

- Preserve portions of the 64 acres as open space to protect wildlife habitat, scenic values, and open space while exploring opportunities to establish both passive and active recreational opportunities.
- ARD proposes to develop natural surface trails with interpretive signage on Parcel 888 and, to support public access, develop a trailhead with a restroom facility on ARD's adjacent property. ARD also proposes exploring the potential for a small footbridge across the spill channel to connect both sides of the parcel and extend the natural surface trail to the easterly side of the channel. If developed, the area would receive daily maintenance, including trash pick-up.
- On parcels 893, 894, and 895, ARD proposes to provide multiple opportunities for recreational experiences while preserving open space and protecting habitat. ARD proposes to develop a portion of the property into an active recreational park that could include a multipurpose athletic field with supporting infrastructure, such as restrooms, benches, shade structures, pedestrian paths, and a parking area. It is proposed that the nature trails include educational kiosks that would bring a public awareness and knowledge of natural systems and enhanced stewardship appreciation. These proposed enhancements would be developed as part of a carefully designed master plan that would take into consideration development impacts on the property, maintaining natural open space, utilizing natural buffers from adjacent property, enhancing existing plant communities, and preserving and enhancing native habitat.
- In accordance with best practices, manage existing trees to ensure public safety, and regenerate new trees to preserve the urban forest.
- Develop a management plan that would guide future preservation and enhancement of the BPVs, including forest and fuels management.

The Stewardship Council will continue to evaluate the appropriateness of ARD's proposed enhancements and may consider a funding allocation as part of a future management and funding agreement.

d. Funding

Consistent with the Stewardship Council's Land Conservation Funding Policy, the Stewardship Council may elect to fund certain costs related to the transfer of fee title, satisfaction of property tax neutrality requirements and/or costs of enhancements to the beneficial public values on watershed lands. Any costs to be funded by the Stewardship Council would be identified in a management and funding agreement to be developed by the Stewardship Council in coordination with ARD, the prospective donee.

e. Requirements of the Settlement and Stipulation

The Stewardship Council's recommendation that ARD receives fee title to certain lands available for donation within this planning unit is 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 Placer County to ensure the land conveyance of these parcels achieves property tax neutrality.

PG&E currently manages one lease on 3.5 acres identified for donation in this recommendation. The lease permits ARD to maintain and manage a sports field for public use. Pursuant to this recommendation, this area is being proposed for transfer to the ARD, which would honor the existing uses provided under their lease.

A conservation easement will be established on the lands within the Lower Drum planning unit. The conservation easement for lands that are donated will include an express reservation of rights 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, and compliance with any FERC license, FERC license renewal, or other regulatory requirements on lands to be retained by PG&E. On lands to be conveyed to ARD, the grant deed would reserve to PG&E similar rights for operation and maintenance of hydroelectric facilities and associated water delivery facilities.

f. Conservation Partners

The permanent protection of the Lower Drum planning unit, and the future preservation and enhancement of the BPVs, may involve, and benefit from, the participation of land conservation partners. For purposes of this recommendation, land conservation partners are defined as organizations other than the prospective fee title donee or conservation easement holder 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 identified in LSPs submitted by organizations interested in a fee title donation, or 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.

Stewardship Council staff would work with the prospective donees recommended for donation of fee title and conservation easements in this planning unit and evaluate opportunities for land

conservation partners. The results of this effort would be reflected in the management and funding agreements and LCCP.

ARD indicated that it would develop a partnership with the Placer County Resource Conservation District (RCD) to help conserve the natural resources on the property. Specifically ARD proposes to utilize the RCD's skills in developing management plans and site-specific plans. The RCD is an independent, self governing body that has been dedicated to the conservation of natural resources since 1946. ARD and RCD have an existing agreement that formalizes a partnership to manage a nature preserve.

ARD indicated that sports youth groups would participate in the basic management of the facilities, in addition to using the facilities. Through existing programs, ARD would also partner with local schools and churches to provide outdoor educational opportunities for youth.

III. 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 Lower Drum planning unit is attached. Additional public comments received concerning this recommendation will be provided to the Board for consideration.

IV. RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Stewardship Council staff is recommending that fee title to the subject 64 acres be donated to ARD for the following reasons:

1. Donation of these lands would further one of the key goals of the Land Conservation Commitment of donating lands to a qualified organization with the financial and organizational capacity to preserve and/or enhance the BPVs.
2. ARD appears to have sufficient capacity and interest in preserving and enhancing the BPVs associated with these lands.
3. Donation of these lands to ARD would significantly increase the likelihood that the existing use of the land and its contribution to the preservation and enhancement of the BPVs would continue.
4. Donation of these lands to ARD would increase the likelihood that the proposed management activities and enhancements described in section II would occur.

V. NEXT STEPS

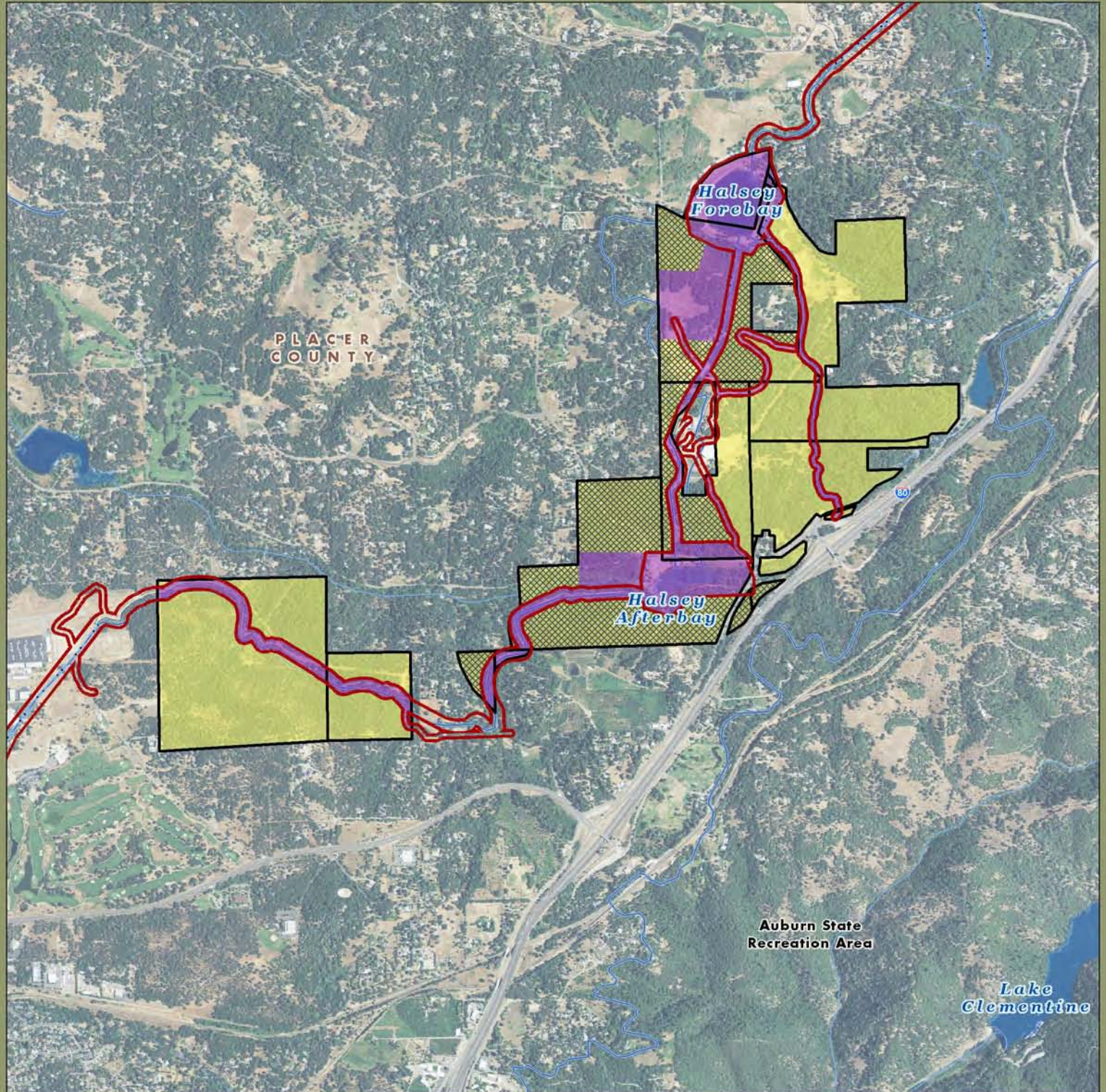
If this recommendation is adopted by the Board, staff would invite ARD to negotiate specific terms of the transactions with PG&E and would work with ARD to develop a management and funding agreement. The development of a management and funding agreement would be coordinated with the development of an LCCP.







Adoption of the LCCP by the Board would be the final step in the Stewardship Council's process for selecting donees. The proposed LCCP would be made available for public review and comment before it is approved by the Board.

ATTACHMENTS AND REFERENCE MATERIAL

- Lower Drum Planning Unit Map
- LCP Volume II Planning Unit Report for Lower Drum Planning Unit
- Organizations that Submitted SOQs for Lands Available in the Lower Drum Planning Unit
- Summary of Key Public Outreach Activities and Public Comments Associated with the Lower Drum Planning Unit



-  PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Donation
-  PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Retention

-  Certain Considerations May Make Donation Inadvisable
-  FERC Boundary

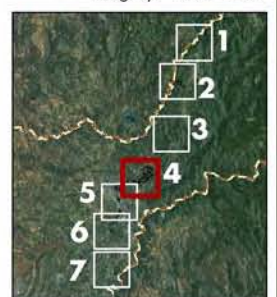
Acreage and location of lands preliminarily designated for retention by PG&E outside the FERC boundary are approximate. FERC boundary is approximate and may change over time.



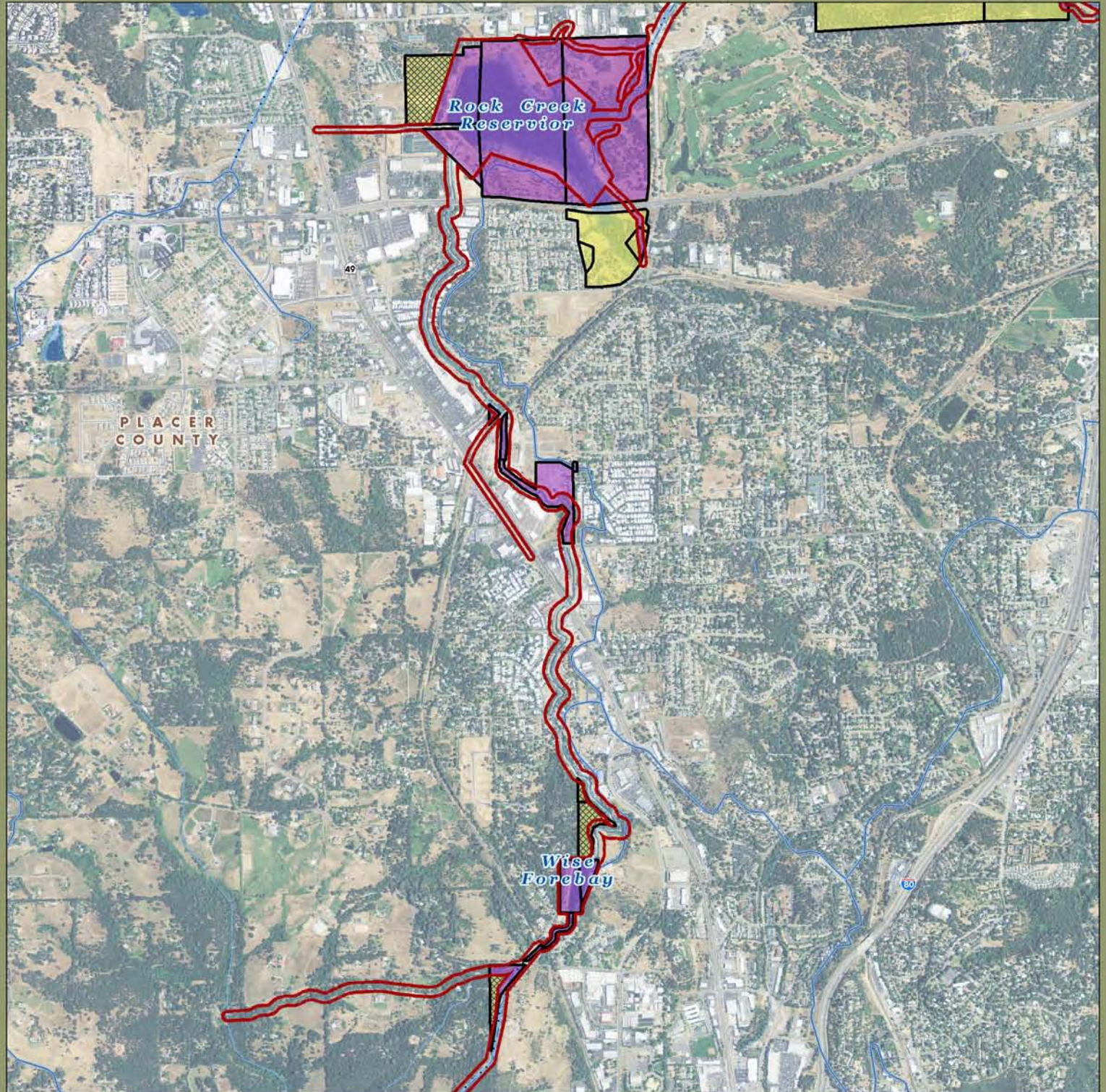
0 0.25 0.5 0.75 Miles

April 2011
AECOM


Imagery: NAIP 2009



Lower Drum Planning Unit: Map 5



 PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Donation

 Certain Considerations May Make Donation Inadvisable

 PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Retention

 FERC Boundary

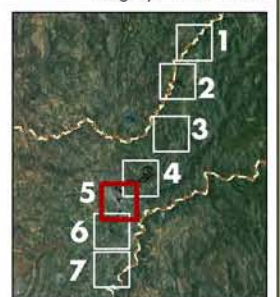
Acreage and location of lands preliminarily designated for retention by PG&E outside the FERC boundary are approximate. FERC boundary is approximate and may change over time.



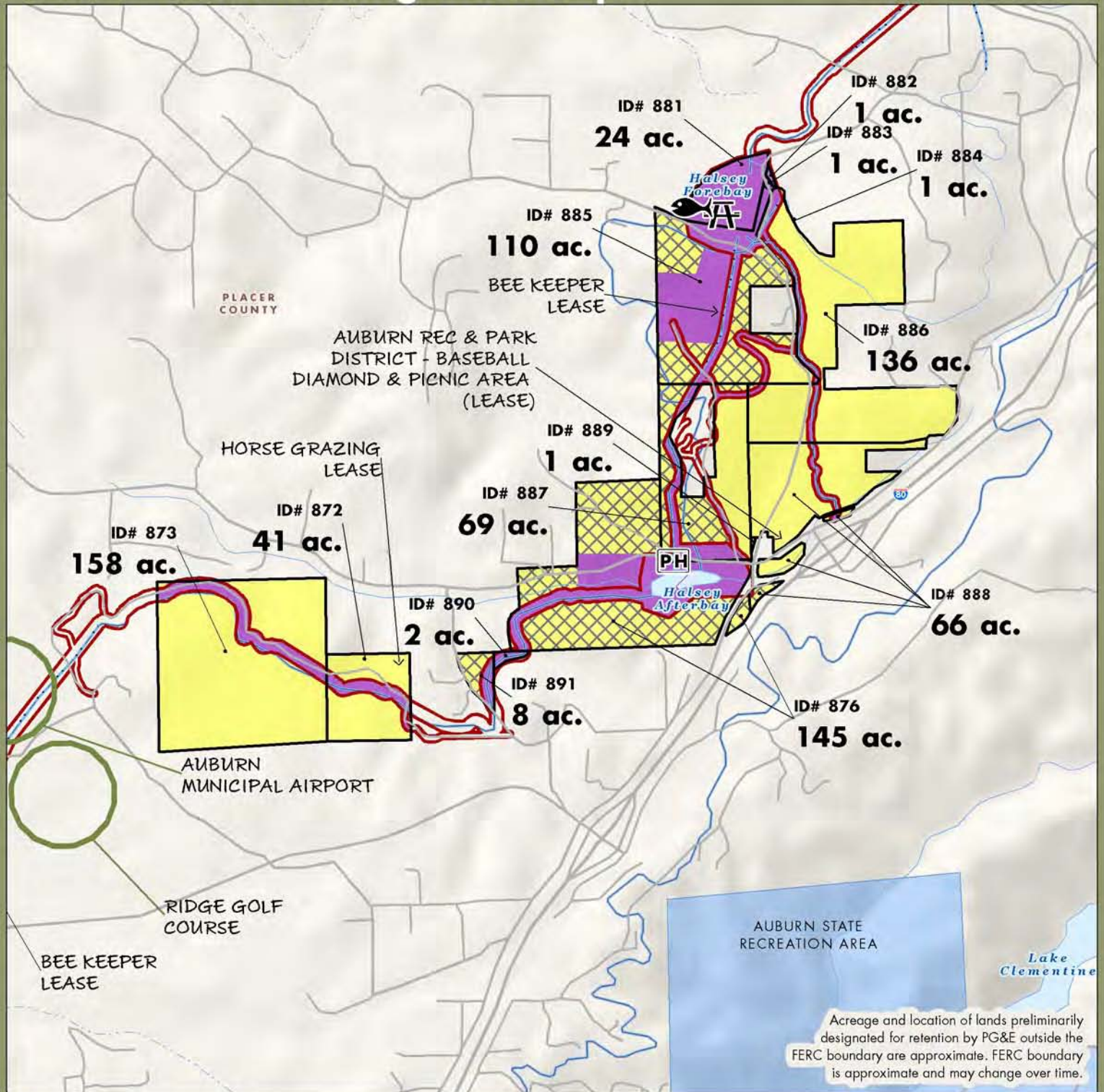
0 0.25 0.5 0.75 Miles

April 2011
AECOM

Imagery: NAIP 2009



Lower Drum Planning Unit: Map 4



- PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Donation
- PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Retention
- PG&E Lands Under Water
- Legal Parcel Boundary and Id Number
- Certain Considerations May Make Donation Inadvisable
- FERC Boundary

- BLM
- BOR
- Private
- State
- Trail

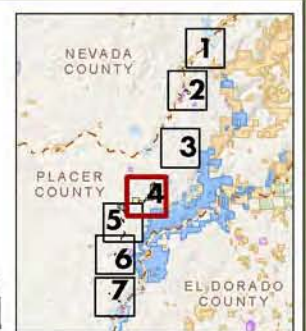
- Campground
- Dam
- Day Use Area

- Fishing
- Parking
- Powerhouse



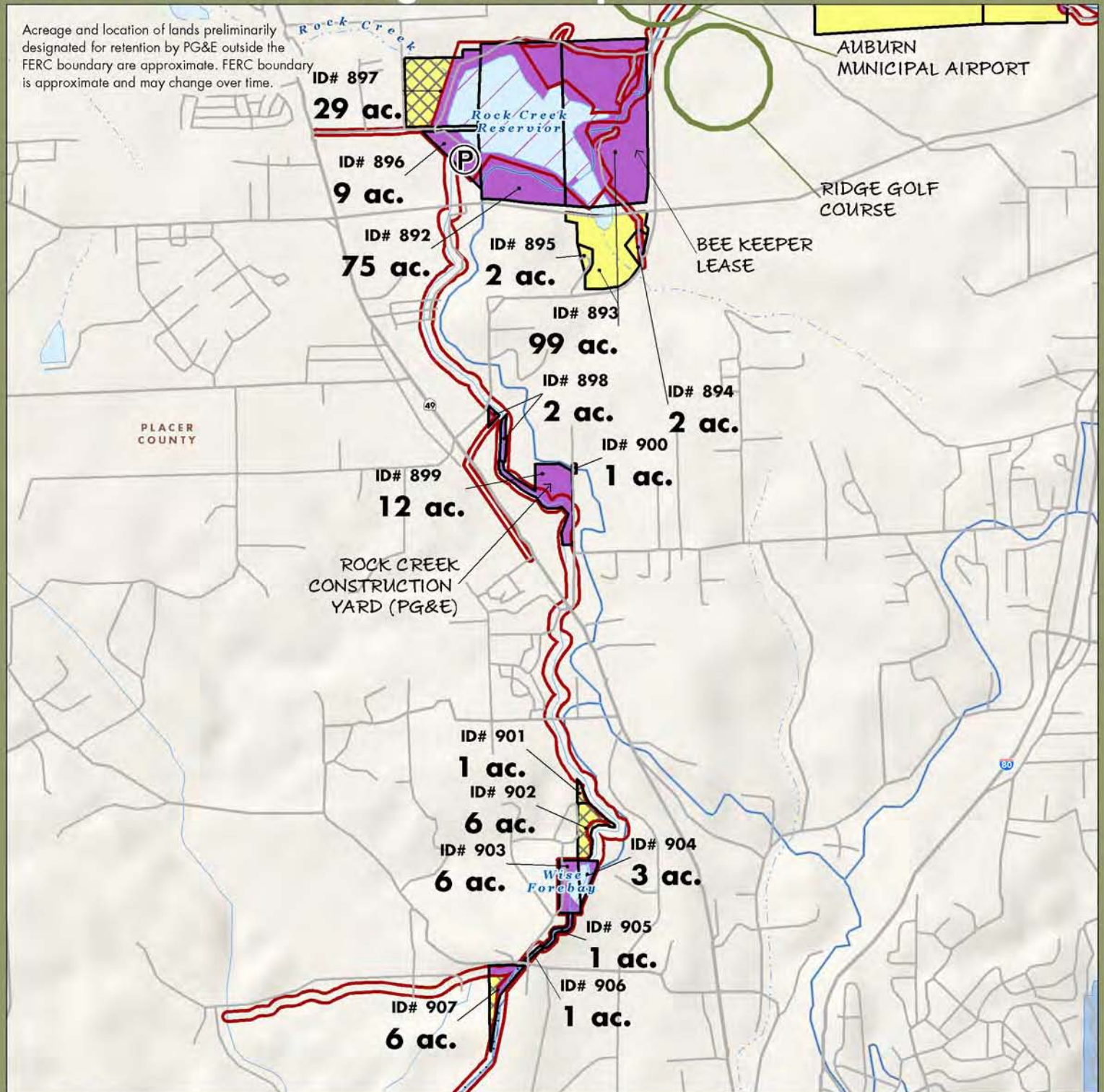
0 0.25 0.5 0.75 Miles

April 2011
AECOM



Lower Drum Planning Unit: Map 5

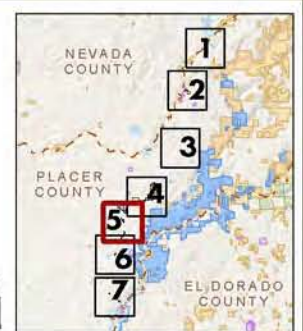
Acreage and location of lands preliminarily designated for retention by PG&E outside the FERC boundary are approximate. FERC boundary is approximate and may change over time.



- PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Donation
- PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Retention
- PG&E Lands Under Water
- Legal Parcel Boundary and Id Number
- Certain Considerations May Make Donation Inadvisable
- FERC Boundary

- BLM
- BOR
- Private
- State
- Trail
- Campground
- Dam
- Day Use Area

- Fishing
- Parking
- Powerhouse



LOWER DRUM PLANNING UNIT

Yuba-Bear River Watershed

Existing Conditions & Uses

Overview

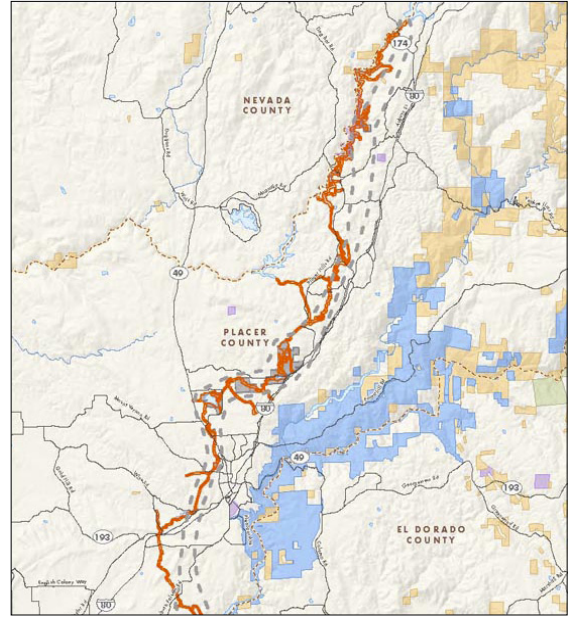
- Provides open space and recreation opportunities within the Sierra Nevada foothills
- 1,098 acres in Placer and Nevada Counties
- 789 acres outside the FERC boundary; 309 acres inside
- Part of the Drum-Spaulding Project (FERC #2310); License expires in 2013, relicensing expected to begin in 2007

As shown in Figure YB-9, the Lower Drum Planning Unit lies in close proximity to the City of Auburn, providing both recreation and open space opportunities in the Sierra Nevada foothills. The planning unit straddles an elevation range of 700 to 2,000 feet in this foothill region composed of small reservoirs, oak and pine woodlands, wetlands, and grasslands. The lands are located predominantly in Placer County with one small parcel found in Nevada County along Interstate 80. The planning unit is adjacent to a mixture of private, BLM, DFG, Bureau of Reclamation, and Placer County lands.

Several hydropower facilities and associated infrastructure are located in the Lower Drum



Wetland habitat by Rock Creek Reservoir



Lower Drum Planning Unit
Nevada & Placer Counties

Planning Unit. PG&E operates four powerhouses within this planning unit, and the Nevada Irrigation District owns and operates the Rollins Powerhouse.

Fish, Plant, and Wildlife Habitat

The Lower Drum Planning Unit offers a diversity of habitat for flora and fauna. The planning unit provides aquatic and emergent wetland habitat within its reservoirs, riparian habitat along the Bear River, and oak and pine woodlands and grassland within the upland areas. The planning unit provides suitable habitat for a variety of species, including many special status species such as California red-legged frog, foothill yellow-legged frog, northwestern pond turtle, oak titmouse, and numerous bat species. One special status species, the coast horned lizard, is likely to be found in the vicinity of the planning unit. Two special status plants, big-scale balsamroot and Brandegee's clarkia, have been documented within a one-mile buffer of the FERC boundary.

Open Space

Many of the parcels in this planning unit serve as open space buffers in areas of suburban



Lower Drum Planning Unit Existing Conditions

- PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Retention
 - PG&E Lands Preliminarily Designated for Disposition
 - BIA
 - BUM
 - BOR
 - DOD
 - NPS
 - Other/NGO
 - State
 - USFS
 - Federal Wilderness
 - Boat Launch
 - Campground
 - Dam
 - Day Use
 - Feature of Importance
 - Fishing
 - Fish Barrier Dam
 - Gate
 - Lodging
 - Non-Motorized Boating
 - Parking
 - Powerhouse
 - Private Camp
 - Ranch
 - Trailhead
 - Whitewater Put-In/Take-Out
 - FERC Boundary
 - Stream / River
 - Canal / Ditch
 - Pipeline
 - Highly Valued Stream
 - Primary Roads
 - Secondary Roads
 - OHV Roads
 - Trail
- All symbols may not appear on the map

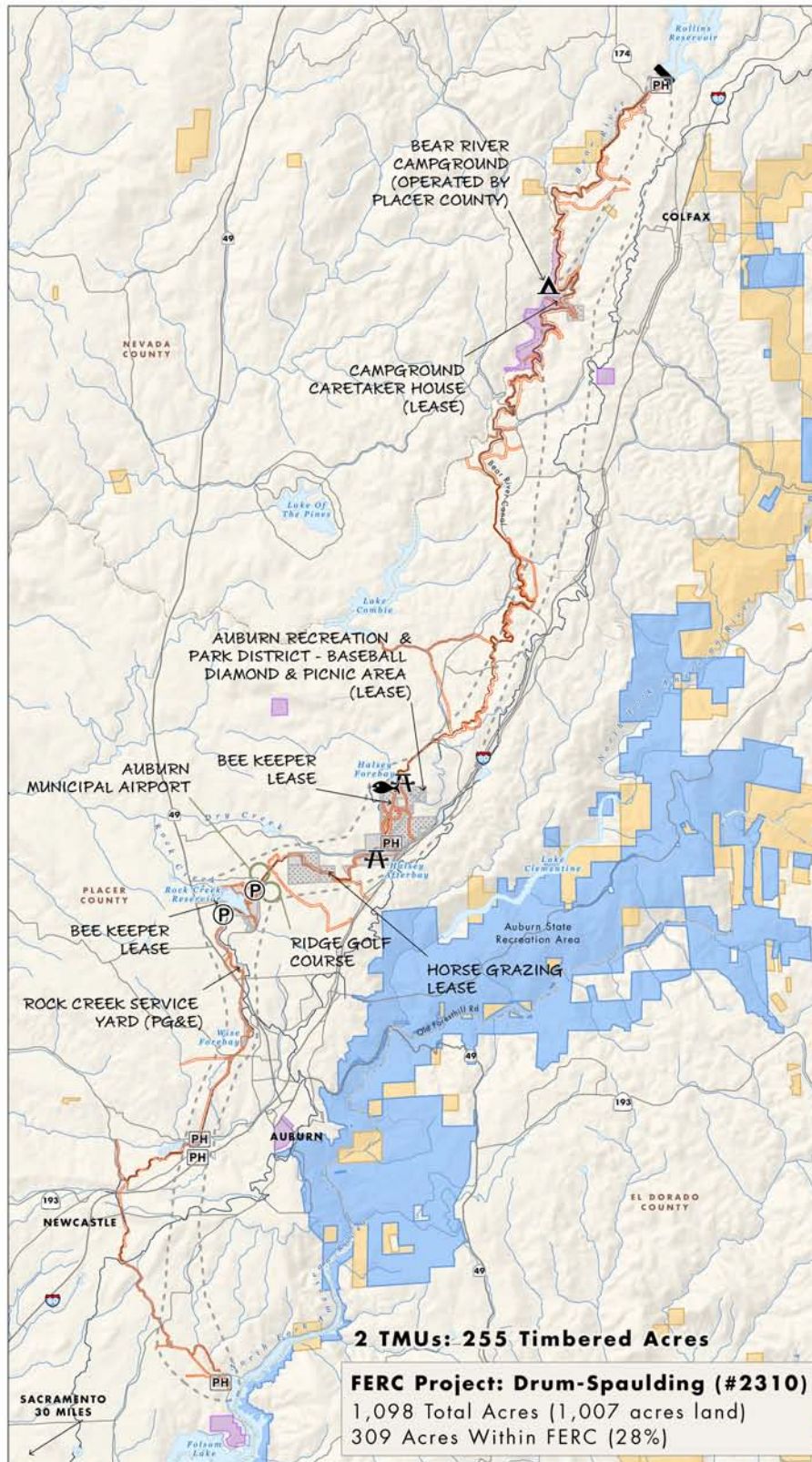


Figure YB-9

LOWER DRUM PLANNING UNIT

Yuba-Bear River Watershed

development. This is especially true for parcels near the City of Auburn which are surrounded by urban development such as the Auburn Municipal Airport, The Ridge Golf Course, light industry, and residential tracts.

Outdoor Recreation

Fishing and hiking are the primary recreational activities within the Lower Drum Planning Unit. The majority of the recreation facilities in the planning unit are focused at Halsey Forebay. This forebay is stocked with fish by DFG, making it a popular fishing spot for the surrounding community. Facilities at the forebay include a parking area, picnic tables, and a restroom.

Recreation opportunities in a natural environment also exist at Rock Creek Reservoir. Located in the gently rolling hills outside the City of Auburn, this area offers a rare mixture of recreation and open space within a developed landscape. This reservoir is edged by a mile of shoreline and is surrounded by wetlands and oak and pine woodland. Currently, the reservoir has few recreation enhancements – a gravel parking area and a single gravel trail along the southern shore. The reservoir serves as the drinking water supply for the City of Auburn and Placer County so boating and swimming are prohibited.

Additional reservoirs within the planning unit include the Halsey Afterbay and Wise Forebay. Both are lightly used and contain few recreation enhancements. To the north, parcels are located within the Bear River riparian corridor, and include a lease for a campground caretaker residence and a trail system from the Bear River Campground. The Auburn Area Recreation and Park District holds a lease for a baseball field and picnic area near Halsey Afterbay.

Forest Resources

Forest resources within the Lower Drum Planning Unit consist of 255 acres of low elevation pine and mixed hardwood forests within two Timber Management Units (TMUs). The TMUs are both

managed under a Salvage prescription, which allows emergency harvesting following an insect attack or a catastrophic event.

Agricultural Uses

There are three agricultural leases in this planning unit. One is a 5-acre horse grazing operation, located near Dry Creek and the Rock Ridge Golf Course; the other two are beekeeping operations. The majority of parcels are non-contiguous in nature, surrounded by suburban development, and are not well suited to agricultural activities.

Historic Resources

The Southern Maidu and Washoe once lived in the area around the Lower Drum Planning Unit; however, very little of this area has been inventoried for cultural resources. At this time four historic and/or prehistoric sites have been identified within the planning unit. The terrain lends itself to Native American and historic Euro-American settlement; potential existing for the presence of additional cultural resources within the planning unit.



Rock Creek Reservoir

LOWER DRUM PLANNING UNIT

Yuba-Bear River Watershed

Stewardship Council Recommendations

The Stewardship Council recommends that the land and land uses in the Lower Drum Planning Unit be preserved and enhanced by focusing on the importance of recreation at the site to the local community, as well as the need to provide ongoing protection to natural and cultural resources in the planning unit. In presenting the Recommended Concept provided here (see Figure YB-10), our objective is to preserve and enhance recreation and public access, and protect natural and cultural resources in this residentially developed area of the Sierra foothills.

Objective: Preserve and enhance biological and cultural resources, and enhance public access, recreation opportunities, and sustainable forestry management.

As shown in Table YB-5, the Stewardship Council has identified a number of preservation and/or enhancement measures that may contribute to the conservation management program for the Lower Drum Planning Unit. Additional detail and background regarding these potential measures can be found in the Supporting Analysis for Recommendations, provided under separate cover. These measures are intended to be illustrative in nature, not prescriptive and will be amended, deleted or augmented over time in coordination with future land owner and managers to best meet the objective for this planning unit.

Fish, Plant, and Wildlife Habitat

Objective: Preserve and enhance habitat in order to protect special biological resources.

The Lower Drum Planning Unit offers a diversity of terrestrial and aquatic habitats, which support many species, potentially

including several special status species. In order to preserve and enhance the habitat and resources found here, the Stewardship Council recommends that baseline studies and plans be developed to gain a clear understanding of the resources (particularly outside the relicensing study area where little information is currently available or will be provided by relicensing studies). These studies may be followed by specific management plans to ensure implementation of preservation and enhancement measures for specific resources if deemed necessary. Management of the property to preserve and enhance habitat will also include addressing noxious weeds and impacts of recreation on habitat values.

The Stewardship Council also recommends considering establishing a nature preserve at Rock Creek Reservoir. We recognize that the Lower Drum Planning Unit is an important resource in the regional setting and strongly encourage close coordination with local entities in implementing all biological resource protection measures and plans. The noxious weed management plan should be consistent with any future FERC license required plans as well as the fuels and forest management plans.

Open Space

Objective: Preserve open space in order to protect natural and cultural resources and the recreation setting.



Rock Creek Reservoir with wet meadows

LOWER DRUM PLANNING UNIT

Yuba-Bear River Watershed

This concept would preserve open space through permanent conservation easements. Conservation easements would describe all prohibited uses to maintain open space values, including the level of uses allowed and required to maintain open space qualities in this important area at the urban interface.

Outdoor Recreation

Objective: Enhance recreational facilities in order to provide additional public access, education, and recreation opportunities.

The Lower Drum Planning Unit is an important recreation resource for the residents of the larger Auburn area. The Stewardship Council looks to enhance recreation opportunities by recommending day use facilities and public access enhancements. The Stewardship Council recommends enhancements focused on potential new day use areas in three locations, interpretive signage to promote natural and cultural resource awareness, and potential trail connections. The Stewardship Council also recommends developing a recreation management plan for lands outside the FERC boundary, exploring potential public access sites at Rock Creek Reservoir, and enhancing public safety at the reservoir around canals and flumes. We recommend these enhancements be considered in close cooperation with PG&E as well as upcoming FERC relicensing efforts and related recreation planning.

Sustainable Forestry

Objective: 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.



Geese on Rock Creek Reservoir

The Lower Drum Planning Unit contains 255 timbered acres near the City of Auburn and other developments. The Stewardship Council recommends that future care and management of the Lower Drum Planning Unit include developing a long-term vision for forest management in the area, addressing silvicultural practices, holistic watershed management, fuels management, and fire management and response. The fire management and response, fuels and forest management plans should be consistent with future FERC license required plans, as well as the noxious weed management plan. We expect that all of these plans would be developed in coordination with adjacent landowner management and practices as appropriate.



Catching trout at Halsey Forebay

LOWER DRUM PLANNING UNIT

Yuba-Bear River Watershed

Agricultural Uses

Objective: Preserve and enhance grazing in order to support associated economic benefits, as well as to protect open space and habitat resources.

Currently, there are two beekeeping leases and one horse grazing lease within the planning unit. The Stewardship Council looks to preserve these uses as part of the long-term management of the Lower Drum Planning Unit. To support this effort, we anticipate a baseline conditions report will be required to describe current agricultural uses, physical, and overall biological conditions of the area, as well as the potential demand and feasibility of enhancing both beekeeping and horse grazing. From this type of assessment, specific determinations can be made to identify and manage these uses in balance with other uses and values of the property.

understanding of these resources and ensure they are appropriately protected. To meet this objective, we recommend that cultural resource studies be conducted to understand the resources found in the Lower Drum Planning Unit (particularly outside the relicensing study area where less information is available or will be provided by relicensing studies), that appropriate management plans be developed and implemented, and that opportunities to support public education regarding cultural resources be considered. Throughout all of these efforts, the Stewardship Council recommends close coordination with Native American entities, as well as PG&E and upcoming FERC relicensing efforts.

Preservation of Historic Values

Objective: Identify and manage cultural resources in order to ensure their protection, as well as to support opportunities for public education.

A few cultural resources are known to be present in the planning unit, and there is a high likelihood additional cultural resources are present. The Stewardship Council aims to support increased



Grasslands & wetlands at Rock Creek Reservoir



Lower Drum Planning Unit

Organizations That Submitted a Statement of Qualifications for Fee-Title Interests

Auburn Area Recreation and Park District
Bureau of Land Management
Cherokees of California
Nevada County Land Trust
Placer County
Placer County Water Agency
Placer Land Trust
San Joaquin County Office of Education

SUMMARY OF KEY PUBLIC OUTREACH ACTIVITIES AND PUBLIC COMMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LOWER DRUM 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. During public review of Volumes I and II of the LCP, there were no comments received regarding the Lower Drum planning unit.

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING FOR THE LOWER DRUM PLANNING UNIT

A public information meeting was hosted by the Stewardship Council on April 14, 2011 at the Auburn Parks and Recreation District Community Center in Auburn, California. The meeting concerned the following six planning units: Bear River, Chili Bar, Fordyce Lake, Lake Spaulding, Lower Drum, and Narrows. A total of 58 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 six 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 eight planning units. During the meeting, participants were invited to ask questions and provide comments on the eight planning units. Stations were set up with maps, other pertinent information, and easels with blank paper. Below is a summary of comments related to the Lower Drum planning unit that were recorded on the easels and provided on comment cards.

Lower Drum Planning Unit

- Enhance recreation in the Rock Creek Reservoir area for nearby residents
- Develop an equestrian trail on Parcel 876 from Halsey Afterbay to Halsey Forebay, Sugar Pine Mountain Trail, and Winchester Trail
- Develop a trail that would provide access to the entire planning unit
- Develop a baseball field northeast of Halsey Afterbay on Parcel 888
- Improve fishing access on Parcels 877 and 878 (the area between Rollins Reservoir and Hwy 174)
- Some areas are extremely overgrown and in need of fire prevention treatment
- Support for Placer County to acquire Parcel 871 in order to establish a riparian recreation area

- Support for the lands available for donation to be transferred to the Auburn Area Recreation and Park District

General Comments Concerning the Yuba-Bear Watershed Area

- Mineral resources should be included as a beneficial public value
- Lands available for donation should be transferred to an entity that will preserve and enhance public access
- Provide adequate time for the public to review and provide comments on the land stewardship proposals, proposed donee recommendations, and conservation easements
- Understand that all of the parcels have a history of land use and are no longer pristine
- Provide parcel-specific goals to promote public understanding and comment

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS RECEIVED

The Stewardship Council also received other public comments and letters from individuals and organizations regarding the future management of the Lower Drum planning unit, as summarized below:

- The protection of sensitive cultural resources should be prioritized
- Watershed health and water quality should be protected
- Secure funding for future enhancements
- Engage tribes in the management of the watershed lands
- Ensure Native American access to the watershed lands