

SHASTA RESOURCES COUNCIL

Securing Old Shasta's Future

July 22, 2005

Iron Mountain Mine Trustee Council
c/o Michelle Prowse, USBR

Dear Trustees:

Please consider this proposal for funds for land acquisition to address natural resource recovery of steelhead and salmonid habitat and public recreational losses as defined in the *Restoration Plan For Natural Resource Injuries from Iron Mountain Mine*.

The Shasta Resources Council wishes to purchase 350 acres in the Salt Creek watershed owned by the Bureau of Land Management and currently identified for disposal by the Redding BLM Resource Management Plan (Please see attached map). Salt Creek enters the west side of the Sacramento River approximately ½ mile below Keswick Dam. The creek and its tributary waters provide habitat for Steelhead and fall-run Chinook Salmon. The BLM parcels of interest contain important spawning and natal rearing habitat. Salt Creek is under consideration for inclusion as critical habitat by NOAA Fisheries.

In addition to salmonid habitat, the parcels contain a labyrinth of 3.6 miles of well maintained trails enjoyed by regional hikers, bikers and equestrians. These trails are in close proximity to several other trail systems very near to Keswick Dam and with connections to the Sacramento River Trail.

Salt Creek is the last remaining relatively undeveloped watershed in the rapidly growing Redding area. Currently the BLM is in negotiation to trade 215 acres with real estate developers who plan to build a 60 lot subdivision in the watershed. Acquisition would preserve and protect the existing riparian habitat. It would also contribute 3.6 miles of public recreational trails that will otherwise be lost should development occur on the property.

The desire to preserve the habitat, trails and mining-era historical artifacts of Salt Creek has broad support in the community of Old Shasta, in Redding and in Shasta County. Countless efforts have been made and letters sent urging Redding BLM to reconsider disposal plans for salmonid tributary properties such as Salt Creek and

Middle Creek and other tributaries that enter the Sacramento River just below Keswick Dam. Redding BLM RMP continues to designate these parcels as “disposal”.

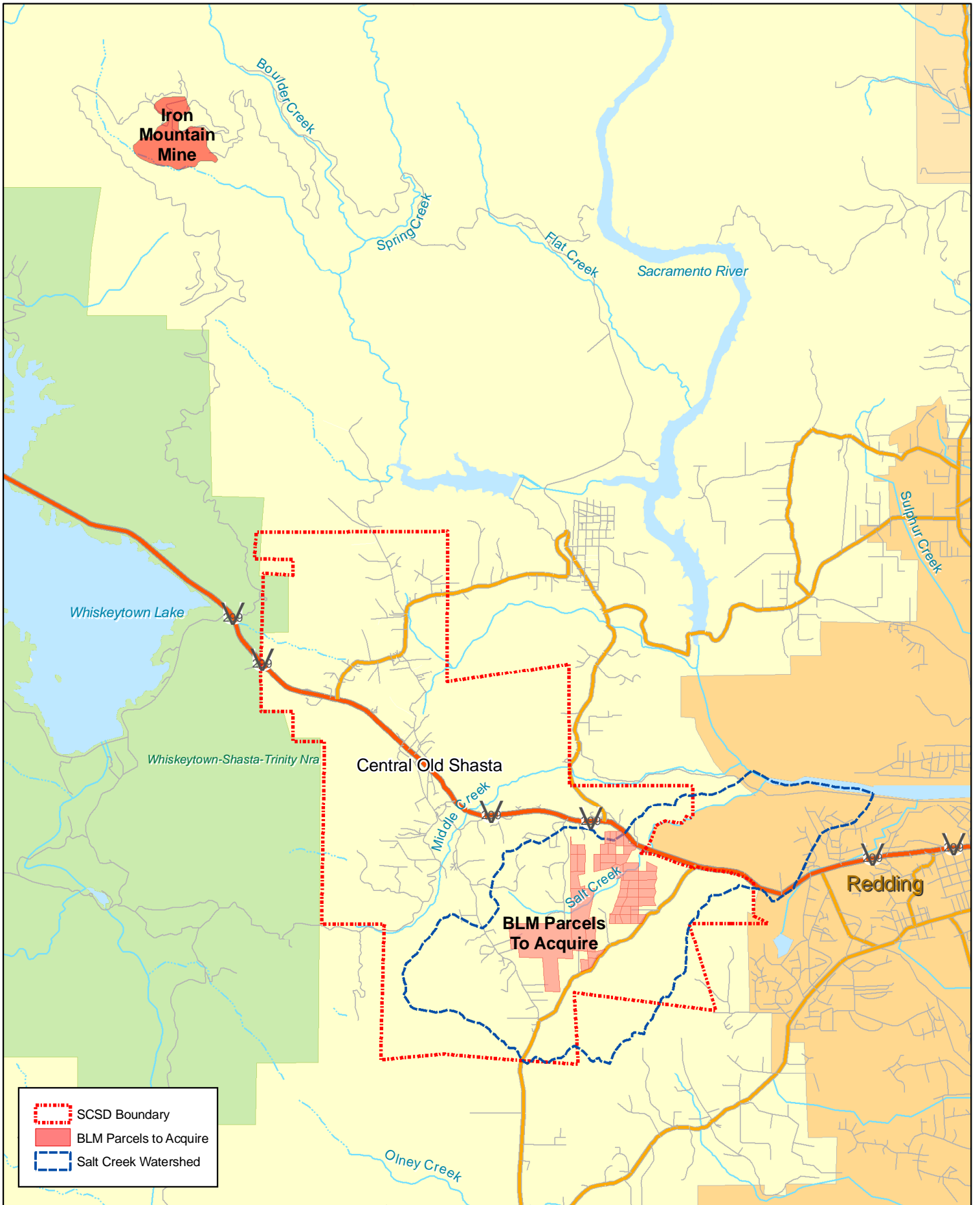
BLM has appraised the 215 acres which are the subject of a current trade proposal at approximately \$600,000. The remaining 135 acres have not been appraised at current market value but we would expect the total value of the land not to exceed \$1,000,000. In addition to acquisition costs, we would request an additional \$200,000 for an immediate fuel load reduction treatment to reduce the fire dangers to homes and the watershed.

Shasta Resources Council is exploring the feasibility of an assessment district to fund on-going maintenance of the property. Due to the preliminary nature of this proposal, we have not identified all potential partners. However, based on preliminary conversations with Mike Reeves of the Trust for Public Land, Mary Schroeder, District Manager of the Western Shasta Resource Conservation District, and J.R. Kaufman, Manager of the Shasta Community Services District, we are confident that title to the land can be held by an appropriate organization so the land will be permanently set aside as a natural recreation area with a stream of funding for on-going care.

We believe our proposal meets several criteria identified in the Restoration Plan. The location is only one mile downstream of Keswick Reservoir and Dam. The trails benefit recreational opportunities very near Iron Mountain. That Salt Creek is still relatively pristine means quantities of clean water are entering the Sacramento River just below Keswick Dam to aid in dilution of any contaminants entering from Iron Mountain Mine. Salt Creek has been identified by the Department of Fish and Game as an important habitat for endangered salmonids and by NOAA Fisheries as a Proposed Critical Habitat for Central Valley Steelhead. Preservation of these parcels will contribute to recovery of these species.

We thank the Trustee Council for their careful consideration of our proposal. Questions and requests for more information can be directed to:

Randall Hauser
Chair, Shasta Resources Council
1840 Churn Creek Road
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Location Map

SRC Acquisition Proposal

Prepared by Shasta Resources Council