

May 2003

Joint Proposal by the Shasta Community Services District and the Greater Redding Trails and Bikeways Council to BLM for Patent/Conveyance under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act of property located in the north east corner of section 6 (T-3/N R-5W); or, request BLM amend management plan to retain this parcel for public recreation.

Proposed Use of Land (Summary)

A well maintained trail system exists on this parcel. There is excellent potential for this system of trails to connect to the Sacramento River trail and to the Westside Trails. Much of the trail system is along remnants of the historic Great/Clear Creek Ditch. SCSD and T&BC would like these trails to continue to be enjoyed by community walkers, bikers and equestrians.

SCSD, Victoria Drive Homeowners and other local residents would like to continue fire hazard reduction efforts on this parcel that have already been made on nearby properties. Our proposal includes seeking grants and permits for future construction of a seasonal emergency fire escape route from the end of Victoria Drive to Lower Springs Road.

Headwater streams and the main stem of Salt Creek traverse this parcel. Salt Creek supports spawning runs of Salmon and Steelhead trout as well as resident Rainbow trout. Accepted watershed protection and management practices recognize that the "headwater streams, the first small rivulets that gather in swales or flow out of marshland, account for 50 percent of the total stream-miles in a watershed." For this reason and because of the steep terrain and erosive soils of the watershed we propose this parcel be retained for public recreational and watershed protection purposes and not traded for development.

Numerous mining and archaeological sites exist on the property that reflect the history and character of "Old" Shasta. Preserving the trail system built on water ditches connecting mining sites along a trout and salmon stream is important to the identity of this community.

Need

Land west of Redding, including this Bureau of Land Management (BLM) parcel, consists primarily of hillsides covered by a dense cover of chaparral and woodland and cut by several canyons carved by both seasonal and year-round tributaries of the Sacramento River. A relatively moist and shaded ribbon extending the length of these canyon bottomlands constitutes a biologically rich riparian zone which is capable of supporting a large population of and a wide variety of plants and animals if left intact or managed with care. If these hillsides and canyons are undisturbed, erosion is minimal and these streams run clear. As development spreads outward from Redding onto this often steep terrain, these riparian zones become the last remaining wildlife corridors between the Sacramento River flood plain and the forests of the surrounding mountains. Development, especially if done carelessly, can greatly accelerate erosion, silting the

We believe that our proposal, if enacted will result in sustainable development that should enhance local property values and public safety, preserve historic artifacts, protect watershed, fisheries, and wildlife habitat as well as expand scenic and recreational opportunities. We believe that if public and private interests support these requests regarding the future use of this land, the entire community will benefit.

Benefit

Benefits include continued use of the existing trail system by the community; expansion of use of trail system by growing housing development in the area; potential linkage to the Sacramento River Trail and the Westside Trail; protection of as yet relatively pristine trout and salmon tributary to the Sacramento River; improved fire protection for the residents of this high fire danger area; preservation of segments of the historic Great/Clear Creek Water Ditch.

Location of Improvements

Well maintained trails already exist on this parcel as depicted on attached map. Public access already exists at the end of Victoria Drive. We propose to extend the existing trail to Lower Springs Road for additional public access. Depending on the stipulation of permits, grants and surveying, we propose a seasonal emergency fire escape road from the end of Victoria Drive, crossing the streambed along an old road remnant and exiting on Lower Springs in the vicinity of the trail access.

Estimates of Cost and Schedule

There will be no cost to construct trails as they have already been done by local residents. Fuel load reduction efforts will continue and be on-going in cooperation with homeowners, the SCSD and the Western Shasta Resource Conservation District. If conveyance of this property to SCSD and TBC is likely, we will make an earnest effort to identify sources of funding, permits and a time table for the seasonal fire escape.

Management Plan

We propose that the Shasta Community Services District, an authorized government agency, be responsible for overall "management" of the parcel. SCSD will enter into an agreement with the Greater Redding Trails and Bikeways Council, a 501-3C charitable organization for operation of the trails system. Signage, postings, and rules of use will be developed and implemented jointly by the two organizations. Plans for construction and maintenance of the fire escape route will be a combined effort by the SCSD, resident homeowners, and appropriate funding agencies.

Maintenance and Upkeep

The only upkeep will relate to the trails and fire route. The trails are already maintained by local residents and people using the trails. The TBC would provide formal oversight. streams, contribute to downstream flooding, and destroy the natural biodiversity. These hills become extremely flammable during the dry summer months and, as they become dotted with houses, the risk and social and economic cost of future wildfires continues to grow.

Maintenance of the fire route will depend on permits, county codes and funding authority and will be formalized prior to construction.

Sincerely,
SCSD
T&BC