

Sierra Nevada Conservancy-Final Report

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant Program Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control River and Coastal Protection Act of 2008 (Proposition 84)

Grantee Name: Northern California Regional Land Trust

Project title: Tuscan Headwaters Project

SNC Reference Number: SNC 070354 **Submittal Date:** March 2012

Report Preparer: Jamison Watts **Phone #:** (530) 894-7738

Check one:

 6-Month Progress Report

X **Final Report**

6-Month Progress Reports should reflect the previous six months. Final Reports should reflect the entire grant period.
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A. Progress Report Summary: (Please provide a general description of work completed during this reporting period.)

The Northern California Regional Land Trust's (Land Trust) Tuscan Headwaters Project provided for the facilitation of coordinated outreach to local watershed conservation groups in Butte and Tehama counties with the intention of increasing stakeholder awareness and permanent protection of lands within the upper reaches of ten (10) prominent creeks (Antelope Creek, Battle Creek, Big Chico Creek, Butte Creek, Deer Creek, Lower Feather River/Honcut Creek, Little Chico Creek, Mill Creek, Paynes Creek, and Pine Creek) contained within the Tehama Land Formation.

The Land Trust worked with eight (8) watershed groups (Watershed Partners) that were involved in monitoring water quality and organizing stakeholders in the Project region. These watershed groups were:

- Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance
- Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Little Chico Creek Watershed Group
- Lower Feather River/Honcut Creek Watershed
- Mill Creek Conservancy
- Tehama County Resources Conservation District

In general terms, work completed during the entire grant period included the following:

- Developed outreach materials for mailing and presentations targeting approximately 1,000 landowners
- Constructed a geo-database of applicable landowners in the Project region using GIS
- Conducted outreach through direct mailings, presentations, and site visits
- Evaluated conservation easement project applications submitted by interested landowners in the Project region
- Developed nine (9) prospects for possible conservation easement acquisition

B. Deliverables or Outcomes completed during this Reporting Period or Milestones Achieved: (Include specific information, such as public meetings held, agency participation, partnerships developed, or acres mapped, treated or restored.)

Over the course of the Tuscan Headwaters Project, the following deliverables and/or outcomes were completed:

- Development of outreach materials:
 - A PowerPoint presentation titled, “Tuscan Headwater Project: Watershed Protection through Voluntary Land Conservation and Management Practices” was created (see attached).
 - A Tuscan Headwaters Watershed Protection brochure was created and printed (see attached). This brochure was directly mailed by the Land Trust to approximately 475 landowners in the Project region, as well as provided to the eight watershed groups for dissemination among stakeholders in their respective watersheds. In total, approximately 1,000 brochures were created and distributed.
 - A fact sheet titled, “Tuscan Headwaters Fact Sheet: Utilizing Agricultural and Conservation Easements for Watershed Protection in Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties” (see attached) was created and distributed during presentations and events featuring a Land Trust booth.
- Construct geo-database using GIS: Approximately 1,243 parcels of at least 40 acres (427 parcels in Butte County and 816 parcels in Tehama County) within 1 km of the ten (10) prominent creeks mentioned above were identified and used to construct a geo-database consisting of potential conservation easement acquisition properties.
- Conduct outreach through direct mailing, presentations, and site visits:
 - Outreach through direct mailing of the Tuscan Headwaters Project brochure involved approximately 475 recipients who received the brochure directly from the Land Trust. Additionally, each of the eight (8) watershed groups listed above were mailed 50 brochures that they, in turn, distributed to various stakeholders in their respective watersheds.

- Throughout the course of the Project, the Tuscan Headwaters PowerPoint presentation was given by Land Trust staff at these functions: a workshop hosted by the Tehama County RCD titled, “No-till Gardening” on 2/13/10 attended by approximately 20 people; the Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy Board of Directors Meeting on 4/22/10 attended by approximately 15 people; the Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy Annual Meeting held on 6/1/10 attended by approximately 10 people; the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance’s Upper Watershed Stewardship Field Trip on 6/11/10 attended by approximately 30 people; the Mill Creek Conservancy Board of Directors Meeting on 6/14/10 attended by approximately 10 people; and the Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy Board of Directors Meeting on 8/25/10 attended by approximately 15 people.
- Develop approximately ten (10) prospects for possible conservation easement acquisition: There are currently a total of nine (9) landowners participating in the Tuscan Headwaters Project that have agreed to work with the Land Trust on conservation easements acquisitions. If completed, they will protect approximately 7,709 acres of high quality riparian habitat along Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, Pine Creek, Deer Creek, and Mill Creek in Butte and Tehama counties.

C. Challenges or Opportunities Encountered: (Please describe what has worked and what hasn’t; include any solutions you initiated to resolve problems. If your project is not on schedule, please explain why here.)

One of the more difficult challenges during the course of the Tuscan Headwaters Project was the bond freeze enacted in December of 2008. This essentially suspended all project work until the Project was fully funded in November of 2009. The suspension of grant funding made it extremely difficult for the Land Trust to work collaboratively with the Watershed Partners. We compensated for this by spending less time on actual outreach efforts and focusing the efforts on the creation on quality outreach materials and strategizing on their dissemination.

Once the Project was fully funded, the coordination of the eight (8) watershed groups presented itself to be a challenge. Specifically, coordinating proper and timely invoice submittals for their materials, supplies, postage, and project coordination for their efforts on the Project was the greatest challenge. In order to help resolve any invoicing issues, we found it useful to send procedural reminders as well as invoice template forms that the watershed groups could simply plug their data and requests into and send back to us.

Through the strategic outreach of the Project, the opportunity to work with multiple, neighboring landowners in an attempt to acquire a large, aggregate conservation outcome with greater overall conservation value presented itself. The Little Chico Creek Linkage Project represents four (4) adjacent landowners coming together in an attempt to permanently protect their combined 414 acres

and approximately two miles of riverine/riparian habitat along Little Chico Creek while simultaneously creating a linkage to Department of Fish and Game-owned land that would permanently protect approximately 590 contiguous acres.

The Land Trust also encountered the opportunity to own its first piece of land through the Tuscan Headwaters Project. Western Rivers Conservancy met with one of our Watershed Partners, Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy, in early 2011 to discuss the possibility of selling approximately 600 acres of land (Lower Deer Creek Falls) that they had acquired along Deer Creek to the Land Trust. We are currently working to complete this transaction that would protect approximately 1.4 miles of riparian corridor along Deer Creek and surrounding forest and oak woodlands, including habitat for deer and mountain lion, Chinook salmon, the western pond turtle and the foothill yellow-legged frog while also allowing for the expansion of appropriate public use.

D. Unanticipated Successes Achieved: (Please describe any additional successes beyond completing scheduled tasks or meeting scheduled milestones.)

Due to the watershed partner capacity-building element of this Project, several of the more reclusive watershed groups have extended themselves to us in very meaningful ways. For example, for the first time ever, the Land Trust was invited to Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy's board meeting that took place in April 2010. At the meeting, we were able to introduce both ourselves and the Tuscan Headwaters Project while beginning to form an important conservation partnership.

Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy also extended to us an opportunity to become an advisory member of their board of directors, which we graciously accepted. They also ended up recommending us for the above-mentioned project on Deer Creek. At first glance, these gestures may not seem like much, but developing trust and relationships with these stakeholder-comprised groups and organizations is absolutely critical to successful land conservation and protection going forward.

E. Compare Actual Costs to Budgeted Costs: (Please refer to your grant agreement to list your deliverables/budget categories and budgeted costs compared to actual costs incurred during this reporting period in the table below.)

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	Budgeted SNC Dollars	Actual Dollars
A. Contract for completion of outreach materials, GIS database development, and presentations	\$65,037.21	\$65,037.21
B. Develop prospects and apply for CE acquisition funding	\$43,971.60	\$44,793.75
C. Materials, supplies, and postage for NCRLT	\$11,041.94	\$9,509.71
D. Travel for Executive Director	\$2,020.00	\$1,847.60
E. Coordination for watershed groups (8)	\$13,715.85	\$13,715.85
F. Materials and supplies/postage for watershed groups	\$10,853.40	\$10,853.40
GRAND TOTAL	\$146,640.00	\$145,757.52

F. Do you have information to report on the project-specific Performance Measures for your project? (If so, please list the Performance Measures below and describe your progress.)

Over the course of the Tuscan Headwaters Project, the following deliverables and/or outcomes were accomplished:

- Development of outreach materials:
 - A PowerPoint presentation titled, “Tuscan Headwater Project: Watershed Protection through Voluntary Land Conservation and Management Practices” was created (see attached).
 - A Tuscan Headwaters Watershed Protection brochure was created and printed (see attached). This brochure was directly mailed by the Land Trust to approximately 475 landowners in the Project region, as well as provided to the eight watershed groups for dissemination among stakeholders in their respective watersheds. In total, approximately 1,000 brochures were created and distributed.
 - A fact sheet titled, “Tuscan Headwaters Fact Sheet: Utilizing Agricultural and Conservation Easements for Watershed Protection in Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties” (see attached) was created and distributed during presentations and events featuring a Land Trust booth.
- Constructed geo-database using GIS: Approximately 1,243 parcels of at least 40 acres (427 parcels in Butte County and 816 parcels in Tehama County) within 1km of the (10) prominent creeks mentioned above were identified and used to construct a geo-database consisting of potential conservation easement acquisition properties.
- Conducted outreach through direct mailing, presentations, and site visits:
 - Outreach through direct mailing of the Tuscan Headwaters Project brochure involved approximately 475 recipients who received the brochure directly from the Land Trust. Additionally, each of the eight (8) watershed groups listed above were mailed 50 brochures that they, in turn, distributed to various stakeholders in their respective watersheds.
 - Throughout the course of the Project, the Tuscan Headwaters PowerPoint presentation was given by Land Trust staff at these functions: a workshop hosted by the Tehama County RCD titled, “No-till Gardening” on 2/13/10 attended by approximately 20 people; the Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy Board of Directors Meeting on 4/22/10 attended by approximately 15 people; the Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy Annual Meeting held on 6/1/10 attended by approximately 10 people; the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance’s Upper Watershed Stewardship Field Trip on 6/11/10 attended by approximately 30 people; the Mill Creek Conservancy Board of Directors Meeting on 6/14/10 attended by approximately 10 people;

and the Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy Board of Directors Meeting on 8/25/10 attended by approximately 15 people.

- Developed approximately nine (9) prospects for possible conservation easement acquisition that have the potential to permanently protect approximately 7,709 acres of high quality riparian habitat along Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, Pine Creek, Deer Creek, and Mill Creek in Butte and Tehama counties.

G. Were there any other relevant materials produced under the terms of this Agreement that are not a part of the budgeted deliverables? If so, please attach copies. (Include digital photos, maps, media coverage of project, or other work products.)

There were not any relevant materials produced under the terms of this Agreement that are not a part of the budgeted deliverables.

H. Next Steps: (Work anticipated in the next 6 months, including location and timing of any scheduled events related to the project.)

While the term of Tuscan Headwaters Project grant effectively ends March 1, 2012, we are still in the process of completing conservation easement and fee acquisition projects related to the Tuscan Headwaters Project.

We are currently working on finalizing the Deeds of Conservation Easement for the four (4) properties comprising the Little Chico Creek Linkage Project. Once that is complete, we will prepare option to purchase agreements and escrow instructions for each of the four (4) subject properties with an anticipated grant approval by the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) in May 2012 and closing in June 2012.

Simultaneously, we are in the process of finalizing escrow instructions for the Lower Deer Creek Falls fee acquisition project with Western Rivers Conservancy. We hope to close escrow on this project in the next couple of months.

Lastly, we will be continuously working on potential conservation easement acquisition projects stemming from the successful outreach achieved by this Project. All of the 1,500 Project brochures that were originally printed have been disseminated, but we are currently in the process of having an additional 1,000 printed so that we may continue to collaborate with our Watershed Partners in educating stakeholders and the public on responsible watershed stewardship practices and conservation opportunities after the Grant terminates on March 1, 2012.

Please Complete this Section for FINAL Report ONLY

Capacity-Building Results and Collaboration and Cooperation with Stakeholders:

(What partnerships did you initiate or strengthen as a result of this project? How did they affect the project outcome? If applicable, how did this grant increase your organization's capacity? What is your plan to sustain this increase?)

The Tuscan Headwaters Project allowed the Northern California Regional Land Trust to initiate invaluable partnerships with the following watershed protection organizations in our region:

- Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance
- Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Little Chico Creek Watershed Group
- Lower Feather River/Honcut Creek Watershed Group
- Mill Creek Conservancy
- Tehama County Resource Conservation District

These partnerships were paramount in completing the necessary outreach to landowners and stakeholders in the respective watersheds that have resulted in several pending conservation easement acquisition projects. Not only did the Watershed Partners listed above aid in our ability to reach landowners in their regions, but they were also able to realize an increased capacity to operate effectively themselves. Aside from providing funding that allowed Watershed Partner staff(s) to receive compensation for coordination efforts, some specific examples of increased Watershed Partner capacity directly resulting from the Tuscan Headwaters Project are as follows:

- Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy was able to revamp their website (www.battle-creek.net) that included important information on the Project and the benefits of conservation easements. They were also able to purchase a high-quality camera to be used for continual photo documentation of their watershed.
- Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance used Project funds to be able to participate in a career/internship faire that resulted in securing valuable volunteer interns lasting up to six months at a time. They were also able to revamp their website (www.bigchicocreek.org) and purchased a new laptop that greatly increased their capacity and efficiency in conducting environmental outreach and projects.
- Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy also increased their capacity with website design and training (www.buttecreekwatershed.org)
- Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy increased their capacity to hold their Annual Watershed Event in June 2011. The primary purpose of the event was to update and educate their local community, including representatives from land and resource conservation agencies and other organizations on current and future efforts towards responsible and sustainable resource management within their watershed.

- Little Chico Creek Watershed Group was able to create a website (www.littlechicocree.org), as well as meet with landowners involved in the Land Trust's Little Chico Creek Linkage Project in order to complete a letter of support that we used to strengthen our conservation easement acquisition proposal for that project.
- Lower Feather River/Honcut Creek Watershed Group increased their capacity in several ways as well. They were able to create welcome packets for watershed education and outreach that are readily available for interested parties within their watershed. Additionally, they were able to purchase a digital camera that allows them to photo document the watershed and a laptop to create outreach materials that will be incredibly useful for years to come. They were also able to launch their first website (<http://lfeatherriverhoncutcreek.blogspot.com>).
- Tehama County Resource Conservation District was able to purchase computers and workstation equipment that allowed them to increase their ability to run GIS and remote sensing software in order to strategically identify and contact landowners in their region regarding the Tuscan Headwaters Project. Additionally, they increased the amount of workspace available for office volunteers who assist with all of their outreach activities, including promotion of the Tuscan Headwaters Project.

We at the Land Trust were also able to greatly increase our capacity in various ways through the Project. The Tuscan Headwaters Project provided us with funding that allowed us to develop outreach materials; construct a geo-database using GIS; conduct outreach through direct-mailing, presentations, and site visits; evaluate submitted conservation easement acquisition applications; and fully develop conservation easement acquisition projects. Additionally, we were recently able to purchase a high-quality Trimble GeoXH GPS unit that will dramatically increase our ability to accurately delineate features and/or homesite areas when developing conservation easement projects. We also plan on making this equipment available to our Watershed Partners at no cost, so that they may work more efficiently within their watersheds as well.

Description of Project Accomplishments:

1. Most Significant Accomplishment

Describe in one concise, well-written paragraph, the most significant accomplishment that resulted from this grant.

The Tuscan Headwaters Project directly resulted in the Little Chico Creek Linkage Project (conservation easement acquisition) that is currently in its final stages. This project consists of the conveyance of four (4) conservation easements totaling approximately 414 acres in the Little Chico Creek Watershed. These 414 acres will create a vital habitat linkage with approximately 176 acres that is already permanently protected and owned by the California Department of Fish and Game, resulting in the permanent protection of approximately 590 contiguous acres and approximately two (2) miles of riverine/riparian habitat along Little Chico Creek. Other conservation values related to the Little Chico Creek Linkage Project include:

- Approximately 348 contiguous acres of blue oak woodland, as well as smaller inclusions of valley oak, black oak, interior live oak, oracle oak, canyon live oak, and scrub oak.
- Annual grassland, mixed chaparral, valley-foothill riparian habitat, and spring-fed wetlands.
- Scenic open space and several sensitive habitats and species, including but not limited to, Butte County Checkerbloom, Foothill Yellow-legged Frog, and Northwestern Pond Turtle.

2. WOW Factor

If applicable, please describe anything that happened as a result of the project or during the project that is particularly impressive.

The Land Trust encountered the opportunity to own its first piece of property in fee simple title through the Tuscan Headwaters Project. Western Rivers Conservancy met with one of our Watershed Partners, Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy, early in 2011 to discuss the possibility of selling approximately 600 acres of land (Lower Deer Creek Falls) that they had acquired along Deer Creek to the Land Trust. We are currently working to complete this transaction that would protect approximately 1.4 miles of riparian corridor along Deer Creek and surrounding forest and oak woodlands, including habitat for deer and mountain lion, Chinook salmon, the western pond turtle and the foothill yellow-legged frog while also allowing for the expansion of appropriate wild-life oriented public use.

3. Design and Implementation

When considering the design and implementation of this project, what lessons did you learn that might help other grantees implement similar work?

While at times a difficult undertaking, the involvement of the eight (8) Watershed Partners throughout the course of this Project was absolutely necessary to effectively conduct strategic outreach to the landowners and stakeholders in the respective regions. It was incredibly important for the Land Trust, operating on a regional scale, to be able to harness the trust and local relationships that the watershed groups had earned within their watersheds.

The most difficult aspect in working with eight (8) separate entities on one common Project was processing quarterly progress reports and requests for payment on Grant-related activities. The Land Trust found it helpful to create and provide invoicing and reporting templates to the Watershed Partners on a quarterly basis to simplify the process on their end.

4. Indirect Impact

Please describe any indirect benefits of the project such as information that has been developed as a result of the project being used by several other organizations to improve decision-making, or a conservation easement funded by this grant that

encouraged other landowners in the area to have conservation easements on their property.

The Tuscan Headwaters Project directly resulted in the Little Chico Creek Linkage Project (conservation easement acquisition) that is currently in its final stages. This project consists of the conveyance of four (4) conservation easements totaling approximately 414 acres in the Little Chico Creek Watershed. These 414 acres will create a vital habitat linkage with approximately 176 acres that is already permanently protected and owned by the California Department of Fish and Game, resulting in the permanent protection of approximately 590 contiguous acres and approximately two (2) miles of riverine/riparian habitat along Little Chico Creek.

The work on the Little Chico Creek Linkage Project has piqued the interest of two additional landowners downstream that make up another large contiguous block of property (please see attached Little Chico Creek Future Acquisitions figure). Successful completion of the Little Chico Creek Linkage Project could very well lead to the permanent protection of considerably more acreage in the Little Chico Creek Watershed.

Lastly, the Land Trust encountered the opportunity to own its first piece of property in fee simple title through the Tuscan Headwaters Project. Western Rivers Conservancy met with one of our Watershed Partners, Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy, early in 2011 to discuss the possibility of selling approximately 600 acres of land (Lower Deer Creek Falls) that they had acquired along Deer Creek to the Land Trust. We are currently working to complete this transaction that would protect approximately 1.4 miles of riparian corridor along Deer Creek and surrounding forest and oak woodlands, including habitat for deer and mountain lion, Chinook salmon, the western pond turtle and the foothill yellow-legged frog while also allowing for the expansion of appropriate public use.

5. Collaboration and Conflict Resolution

If you worked in collaboration or cooperation with other organizations or institutions, describe those arrangements and their importance to the project. Also, describe if you encountered conflict in the project and how you dealt with it, or if there was conflict avoided as a result of the project.

As mentioned previously, the Northern California Regional Land Trust worked in collaboration with eight (8) Watershed Partners (Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy, Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance, Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy, Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy, Little Chico Creek Watershed Group, Lower Feather River/Honcut Creek Watershed Group, Mill Creek Conservancy, and Tehama County Resource Conservation District). The land trust was able to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with each watershed partner that ultimately spelled out the Watershed Partners' duties as follows:

PROJECT SCOPE

This project will provide for the facilitation of coordinated outreach with local watershed conservation groups in Butte and Tehama counties with the intention of increasing stakeholder awareness and permanent protection of lands within the upper reaches of up to 10 prominent creeks contained within the Tuscan Land Formation.

Watershed Partners will receive up to \$5,000 through April 1, 2011 and will play an integral role in the Project by assisting NCRLT with the following:

Task 1: Project Planning

1. Sign Memorandum of Understanding with NCRLT.
2. Provide short, concise, quarterly progress reports via email.
3. Meet with NCRLT four (4) times during the period ending April 1, 2011 to review and assess progress made on the Project.

Task 2: Collaboration

1. Invite NCLT to present Project at two to four (2-4) pre-existing, normally scheduled watershed outreach events (e.g., stakeholder meetings, workshops, seminars, etc.) during the period ending April 1, 2011.
2. Help facilitate site visits with landowners potentially interested in conservation easements as necessary.
3. Share non-confidential/public watershed knowledge, documentation and expertise with NCRLT in support of Project.

Task 3: Promotion

1. Allow NCRLT to use Watershed Partner endorsement and logo in outreach materials created by and at the sole expense of NCRLT with prior approval of Watershed Partner.
2. In coordination with NCRLT, promote Project through print media and stakeholder communications.
3. Share Project progress at non-project and/or public meetings as appropriate.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

DETAILED PROJECT DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
Sign MOU with NCRLT	August–September 2008
Semi-annual meeting with NCRLT	October 2009
Invite NCRLT to ≥ 2 -4 normally scheduled outreach events	October 2009 – December 2011
Quarterly progress report and payment request (Oct-Dec 2009)	January 5, 2010
Quarterly progress report and payment request (Jan-Mar 2010)	April 5, 2010
Semi-annual meeting with NCRLT	April 2010
Quarterly progress report and payment request (Apr-June 2010)	July 5, 2010
Quarterly progress report and payment request (July-Sept 2010)	October 5, 2010
Semi-annual meeting with NCRLT	October 2010
Quarterly progress report and payment request (Oct-Dec 2011)	January 5, 2011
Semi-annual meeting with NCRLT	March 2011
Final quarterly progress report and payment request (Jan-Mar 2011)	April 1, 2011

PROJECT COSTS

PROJECT BUDGET CATEGORIES	TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDING
Project Coordination (includes Tasks 1-3 from Project Scope above and Mileage for Watershed activities)	\$2,202
Materials and supplies/postage for Watershed operations	\$2,798
GRAND TOTAL	\$5,000

Having the above Project Scope, Schedule, and Costs as part of a uniform, signed MOU with each watershed partner involved in the Tuscan Headwaters Project was incredibly important to the overall success of the Project.

6. Capacity-Building

SNC is interested in both the capacity of your organization, as well as local and regional capacity. Please describe the overall health of your organization including areas in need of assistance. SNC is interested in the strength and involvement of your board, significant changes to your staff, size and involvement of membership. In addition, describe how your project improved capabilities of partners, or the larger community.

The overall health of the Northern California Regional Land Trust is strong. As seems to be the case with most non-profits, the area most in need of assistance is fundraising and the procurement of consistent funding. Currently, we have a six-member Board of Directors, six committees, and a staff of four full-time employees (one of which was added as a direct result of the Project). NCRLT also has a non-voting membership base of approximately 60 individuals and businesses.

Through the Tuscan Headwaters Project, the Land Trust was able to greatly increase its capacity in various ways through the Project. The Tuscan Headwaters Project provided the Land Trust with funding that allowed us to develop outreach materials; construct a geo-database using GIS; conduct outreach through direct-mailing, presentations, and site visits; evaluate submitted conservation easement acquisition applications; and fully develop conservation easement acquisition projects. Additionally, we were recently able to purchase a high-quality Trimble GeoXH GPS unit that will dramatically increase our ability to accurately delineate features and/or homesite areas when developing conservation easement projects. We also plan on making this equipment available to our Watershed Partners at no cost, so that they may work more efficiently within their watersheds as well.

The Watershed Partners involved in the Project were able to increase their operating capacity as well. Aside from providing funding that allowed watershed partner staff to receive compensation for coordination efforts, some specific examples of permanent increased capacity within the watershed groups that were a direct result of the Tuscan Headwaters Project are as follows:

- Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy was able to revamp their website (www.battle-creek.net) that included important information on the Project and the benefits of conservation easements. They were also able to purchase a high-quality camera to be used for continual photo documentation of their watershed.
- Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance used Project funds to be able to participate in a career/internship faire that resulted in securing valuable volunteer interns lasting up to six months at a time. They were also able to revamp their website (www.bigchicocreek.org) and purchased a new laptop that greatly increased their capacity and efficiency in conducting environmental outreach and projects.
- Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy also increased their capacity with website design and training (www.buttecreekwatershed.org)
- Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy increased their capacity to hold their Annual Watershed Event in June 2011. The primary purpose of the event was to update and educate their local community, including representatives from land and resource conservation agencies and other organizations on current and future efforts towards responsible and sustainable resource management within their watershed.
- Little Chico Creek Watershed Group was able to create a website (www.littlechicocree.org), as well as meet with landowners involved in the Land Trust's Little Chico Creek Linkage Project in order to complete a letter of support that we used to strengthen our conservation easement acquisition proposal for that project.
- Lower Feather River/Honcut Creek Watershed Group increased their capacity in several ways as well. They were able create welcome packets for watershed education and outreach that are readily available for interested parties within their watershed. Additionally, they were able to purchase a digital camera that allows them to photo document the watershed and a laptop

to create outreach materials that will be incredibly useful for years to come. They were also able to launch their first website (<http://lfeatherriverhoncutcreek.blogspot.com>)

- Tehama County Resource Conservation District was able to purchase computers and workstation equipment that allowed them to increase their ability to run GIS and remote sensing software in order to strategically identify and contact landowners in their region regarding the Tuscan Headwaters Project. Additionally, they increased the amount of workspace available for office volunteers who assist with all of their outreach activities, including promotion of the Tuscan Headwaters Project.

7. Challenges

Did the project face internal or external challenges? How were they addressed? Describe each challenge and any actions that you took to address it. Was there something that SNC did or could have done to assist you? Did you have to change any of your key objectives in response to conditions “on the ground”?

One of the more difficult challenges during the course of the Tuscan Headwaters Project was the bond freeze enacted in December of 2008. This essentially suspended all project work until the Project was fully funded in November of 2009. The suspension of grant funding made it extremely difficult to the Land Trust to work collaboratively with the Watershed Partners. We compensated for this by spending less time on actual outreach efforts and focusing the efforts on the creation on quality outreach materials and strategizing on their dissemination.

Once the Project was fully funded, the coordination of the eight (8) watershed groups presented itself to be a challenge. Specifically, coordinating proper and timely invoice submittals for their materials, supplies, postage, and project coordination for their efforts on the Project was the greatest challenge. In order to help resolve any invoicing issues, we found it useful to send procedural reminders as well as invoice template forms that the watershed groups could simply plug their data and requests into.

It has also been quite challenging to identify sources of funding to complete conservation easement acquisition projects. In the case of the Little Chico Creek Linkage Project, we identified the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB) Oak Woodlands Conservation Program as a suitable source of funding. WCB has already approved the submitted appraisals on the project and made their final comments on the deeds of conservation easement. It is possible that we will close escrow on this conservation easement acquisition project in June 2012.

8. Photographs

Grantees are strongly encouraged to submit photos, slides or digital images whenever possible. These images will be used for SNC publications such as annual reports or on the website. Please make sure you clearly identify location, activity, and your project with each submitted image. Images will be credited to the submitting organization, unless specified otherwise.



NCRLT Land Projects Coordinator Zach Mendes (center) giving a presentation on the Tuscan Headwaters Project to attendees of an upper watershed tour of Big Chico Creek hosted by the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance on June 11, 2010.

9. Post Grant Plans

What are the post-grant plans for the project if it does not conclude with the grant? Include a description of the following (if applicable): (1) Changes in operations or scope; (2) Replication or use of findings; (3) Names of other organizations you expect to involve; (4) Plans to support the project financially, and; (5) Communication plans?

The Land Trust has recently used a portion of the remaining funds from the Tuscan Headwaters Project to purchase a Trimble GeoXH GPS unit and print an additional 1,000 copies of the 'Tuscan Headwaters Watershed Protection' brochure that will be available for our Watershed Partners to use free of charge.

Our Watershed Partners, typically with very little funding and/or resources, monitor water quality, actively promote watershed-based restoration, and perform invasive species removal and advocacy through community participation and collaborations.

By making the above-mentioned, valuable resources available to them at no cost, SNC funding will significantly increase not only the capacity of the Northern California Regional Land Trust, but that of the Watershed Partners as well, allowing for continued collaboration, stewardship, and conservation beyond the life of the Grant.

10. Post Grant Contact

Who can be contacted a few years from now to follow up on the project? Please provide name and contact information.

Jamison Watts, Executive Director
Northern California Regional Land Trust
167 East 3rd Avenue
Chico, CA 95926
(530) 894-7738

SNC-approved Performance Measures: (Please list each Performance Measure for your Project, as identified in your Grant Agreement, and the results/outcomes.)

1. Resources leveraged

As a result of this Project, the Land Trust currently has nine (9) conservation easement acquisition projects in various stages of completion. If successful, they will protect approximately 7,709 acres of high quality riparian habitat along Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, Pine Creek, Deer Creek, and Mill Creek in Butte and Tehama counties.

Of the conservation easement acquisition projects currently in the works, the Little Chico Creek Linkage Project is the closest to completion. When completed, this project will result in a grant of \$595,000 from WCB that will be used to secure four (4) conservation easements on the subject properties.

2. Impact on collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders

The Land Trust worked with eight (8) Watershed Partners that are involved in monitoring water quality and organizing stakeholders in the Project region:

- Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance
- Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy
- Little Chico Creek Watershed Group
- Lower Feather River/Honcut Creek Watershed
- Mill Creek Conservancy
- Tehama County Resources Conservation District

These partnerships were paramount in completing the necessary outreach to landowners and stakeholders in the respective watersheds that would result in potentially successful conservation easement acquisition projects.

Due to the watershed partner capacity-building element of this Project, several of the more reclusive watershed groups extended themselves to us in very meaningful ways. For example, for the first time ever, the Land Trust was invited to Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy's board meeting that took place in April 2010. At the meeting, we were able to introduce both ourselves and the Tuscan Headwaters Project while beginning to form an important conservation partnership.

Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy also extended to us an opportunity to become an advisory member of their board of directors, which we graciously accepted. They also ended up recommending us for the above-mentioned project on Deer Creek. At first glance, these gestures may not seem like much, but developing trust and relationships with these stakeholder-comprised groups and organizations is absolutely critical to successful land conservation and protection going forward.

3. Capacity building within region

Aside from providing funding that allowed watershed partner staff to receive compensation for coordination efforts, some specific examples of permanent increased capacity within the watershed groups that were a direct result of the Tuscan Headwaters Project are as follows:

- Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy was able to revamp their website (www.battle-creek.net) that included important information on the Project and the benefits of conservation easements. They were also able to purchase a high-quality camera to be used for continual photo documentation of their watershed.
- Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance used Project funds to be able to participate in a career/internship faire that resulted in securing valuable volunteer interns lasting up to six months at a time. They were also able to revamp their website (www.bigchicocreek.org) and also purchased a new laptop that greatly increased their capacity and efficiency in conducting environmental outreach and projects.
- Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy also increased their capacity with website design and training (www.buttecreekwatershed.org)
- Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy increased their capacity to hold their Annual Watershed Event in June 2011. The primary purpose of the event was to update and educate their local community, including representatives from land and resource conservation agencies and other organizations on current and future efforts towards responsible and sustainable resource management within their watershed.
- Little Chico Creek Watershed Group was able to create a website (www.littlechicocree.org), as well as meet with landowners involved in the Land Trust's Little Chico Creek Linkage Project in order to complete a letter of support that we used to strengthen our conservation easement acquisition proposal for that project.
- Lower Feather River/Honcut Creek Watershed Group increased their capacity in several ways as well. They were able create welcome packets for watershed education and outreach that are readily available for interested parties within their watershed. Additionally, they were able to purchase a digital camera that allows them to photo document the watershed and a laptop to create outreach materials that will be incredibly useful for years to come. They were also able to launch their first website (<http://lfeatherriverhoncutcreek.blogspot.com>).
- Tehama County Resource Conservation District was able to purchase computers and workstation equipment that allowed them to increase their ability to run GIS and remote sensing software in order to strategically identify and contact landowners in their region regarding the Tuscan Headwaters Project. Additionally, they increased the amount of workspace available for office volunteers who assist with all of their outreach activities, including promotion of the Tuscan Headwaters Project.

4. One-page description of Project accomplishments

Over the course of the Tuscan Headwaters Project, the following deliverables and/or outcomes were accomplished:

- Development of outreach materials:
 - A PowerPoint presentation titled, “Tuscan Headwater Project: Watershed Protection through Voluntary Land Conservation and Management Practices” was created (see attached).
 - A Tuscan Headwaters Watershed Protection brochure was created and printed (see attached). This brochure was directly mailed by the Land Trust to approximately 475 landowners in the Project region, as well as provided to the eight watershed groups for dissemination among stakeholders in their respective watersheds. In total, approximately 1,000 brochures were created and distributed.
 - A fact sheet titled, “Tuscan Headwaters Fact Sheet: Utilizing Agricultural and Conservation Easements for Watershed Protection in Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties” (see attached) was created and distributed during presentations and events featuring a Land Trust booth.
- Constructed geo-database using GIS: Approximately 1,243 parcels of at least 40 acres (427 parcels in Butte County and 816 parcels in Tehama County) within 1km of the (10) prominent creeks mentioned above were identified and used to construct a geo-database consisting of potential conservation easement acquisition properties.
- Conducted outreach through direct mailing, presentations, and site visits:
 - Outreach through direct mailing of the Tuscan Headwaters Project brochure involved approximately 475 recipients who received the brochure directly from the Land Trust. Additionally, each of the eight (8) watershed groups listed above were mailed 50 brochures that they, in turn, distributed to various stakeholders in their respective watersheds.
 - Throughout the course of the Project, the Tuscan Headwaters PowerPoint presentation was given by Land Trust staff at these functions: a workshop hosted by the Tehama County RCD titled, “No-till Gardening” on 2/13/10 attended by approximately 20 people; the Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy Board of Directors Meeting on 4/22/10 attended by approximately 15 people; the Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy Annual Meeting held on 6/1/10 attended by approximately 10 people; the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance’s Upper Watershed Stewardship Field Trip on 6/11/10 attended by approximately 30 people; the Mill Creek Conservancy Board of Directors Meeting on 6/14/10 attended by approximately 10 people; and the Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy Board of Directors Meeting on 8/25/10 attended by approximately 15 people.
- Developed approximately nine (9) prospects for possible conservation easement acquisition that have the potential to permanently protect approximately 7,709 acres of high quality riparian habitat along Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, Pine Creek, Deer Creek, and Mill Creek in Butte and Tehama counties.

5. Number of new landowners participating in the Tuscan Headwaters Project w/ signed agreements for Conservation Easements

There are a total of nine (9) landowners participating in the Tuscan Headwaters Project with signed agreements for conservation easements. If completed, they will protect approximately 7,709 acres of high quality riparian habitat along Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, Pine Creek, Deer Creek, and Mill Creek in Butte and Tehama counties.

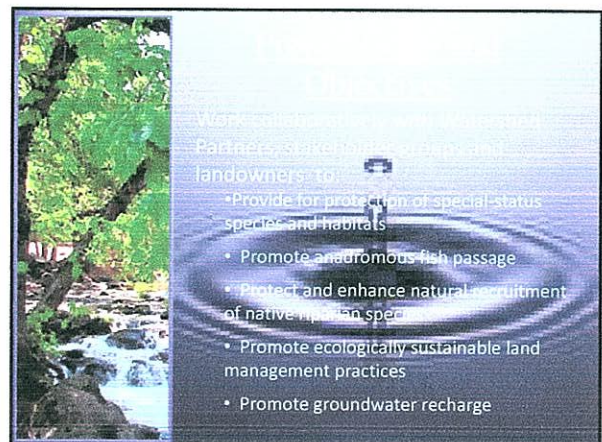
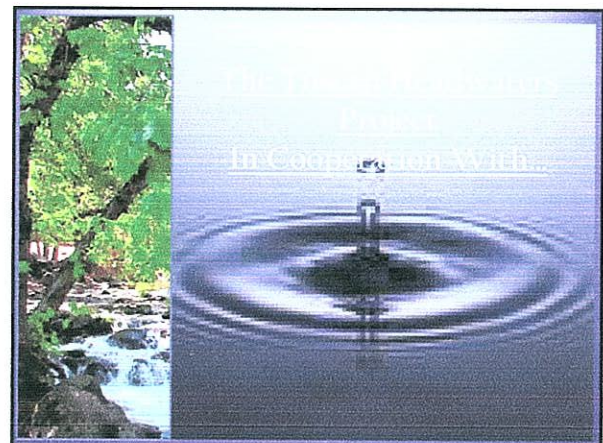
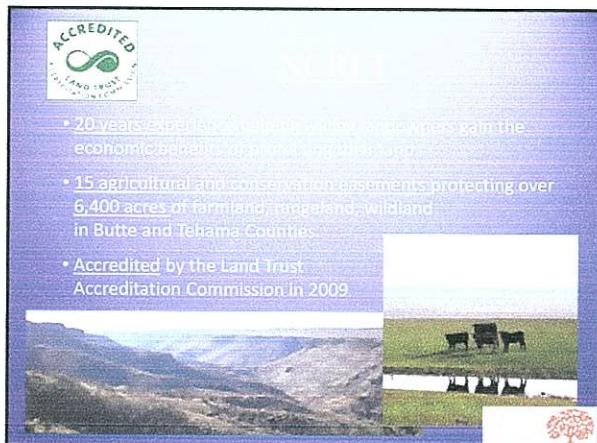
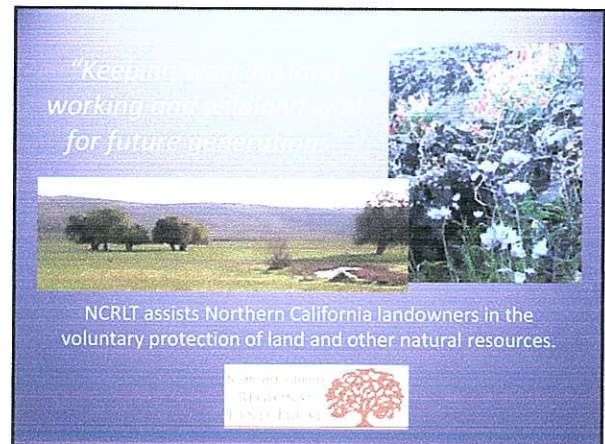
6. Number of creek miles and watershed acres protected under conservation easements through the NCRLT's Tuscan Headwaters effort

To date, none of the pending conservation easements that are a part of the Project have closed escrow; however, there are nine (9) projects in various stages that have the potential to protect approximately 7,709 acres of high quality riparian habitat, including approximately 15.3 creek miles along Big Chico Creek, Little Chico Creek, Pine Creek, Deer Creek, and Mill Creek in Butte and Tehama counties.

ATTACHMENT I


PowerPoint Presentation:

“Tuscan Headwater Project: Watershed Protection through Voluntary Land Conservation
and Management Practices”



California's Water Demands

- One acre-foot (AF) of water is 325,900 gallons of water
- On average, one AF is equivalent to the water needs of a family of five for one year (DWR)
- CA population estimated at just under 37 million in 2009, with over 22 million in Southern CA (US Census Bureau)
- California agriculture irrigates 9.6 million acres using roughly 34 of the 43 million acre-feet (MAF) used annually in California (DWR)




Sacramento Watershed

- Tuscan Headwaters (DWR)
 - Battle Creek
 - Antelope Creek
 - Paynes Creek
 - Mill Creek
 - Deer Creek
 - Pine Creek
 - Big Chico Creek
 - Butte Creek
 - Feather River/Honcut Creek
- Each tributary contributes to the quality of downstream waters

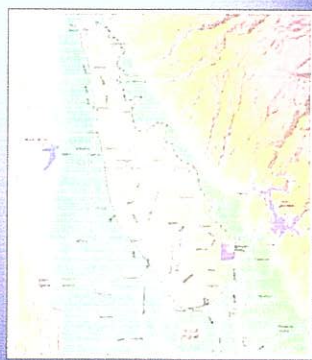




The Tuscan Aquifer

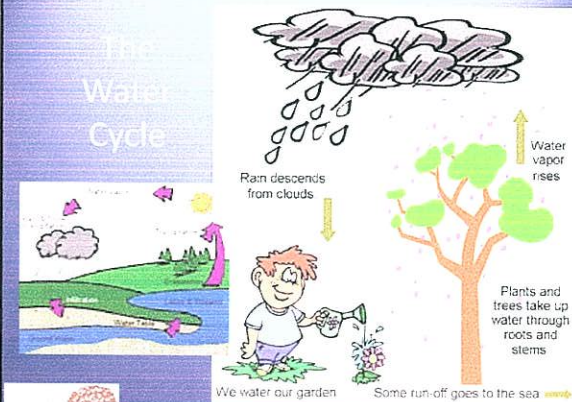
- The Tuscan aquifer is made up of sand, silt, and loose gravel, and is a large mass of water that is located in Butte, Colusa, and Tehama counties from Red Bluff to the Sutter County line
- The Tuscan Aquifer recharge zone is located in the Cascade foothills from east of Red Bluff to southeast of Chico, where the exposed portion of the Tuscan Formation occurs
- The Tuscan Aquifer holds approximately 30 MAF of water, roughly 10 times the storage capacity of Lake Oroville (DWR)



- The fresh water in the aquifer serves over 87% of Butte County residents and over 60% of Tehama County residents, along with supplementing surface supplies of irrigation water for Northern Sacramento Valley agriculture
- Like watersheds, the aquifer is sensitive to human influences, including pumping and land management practices

The Water Cycle




Rain descends from clouds

Water vapor rises

Plants and trees take up water through roots and stems


We water our garden


Some run-off goes to the sea



Maintaining Healthy Watersheds and Aquifer


- Proper application, disposal of pesticides and fertilizers
- Proper disposal of household and other agriculture related chemicals
- Minimize run-off from irrigated lands
- Maintain groundcover
- Maintain buffers of riparian vegetation
- Maintain dirt/gravel roads to minimize erosion







Volunteer Conservation Tools

- Contribute to projects through cost share programs
- Participate with your local watershed conservancy or working group
- Permanently protect the watershed value of your land through a conservation easement





Protecting Watersheds with Conservation Easements

What is a conservation easement?



A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust that permanently limits specific uses of the land in order to protect its wildland or agricultural value, both now and in the future.

- The landowner continues to own the property
- Agricultural conservation easements are flexible documents that are tailored to the specific property and needs of the landowner.




How long does a conservation easement last?

- Conservation easements "run with the land" and remain in place after sale or transfer of ownership
- The land trust that purchases the easement is responsible for insuring that continuing land uses are consistent with the terms of the conservation easement



What are the benefits of conservation easements?


- Reduce estate taxes
- Reduce property taxes
- Provide an infusion of unrestricted cash

What are the property rights?

By granting a conservation easement on your property you are only giving up the right to subdivide and develop those areas covered by the easement.







How Much is the Easement Worth?

The easement value is determined by a qualified appraiser.

- For example, Ed Johnson owns prime farmland worth \$1,000,000. With an agricultural conservation easement on the property it is worth \$600,000. The value of the agricultural conservation easement is \$400,000.
- Approximate easement payment to landowner = \$400,000



For More Information Please Contact Us




- Jamison Watts
Executive Director
- (530) 894-7738
- jwatts@landconservation.org
- www.landconservation.org

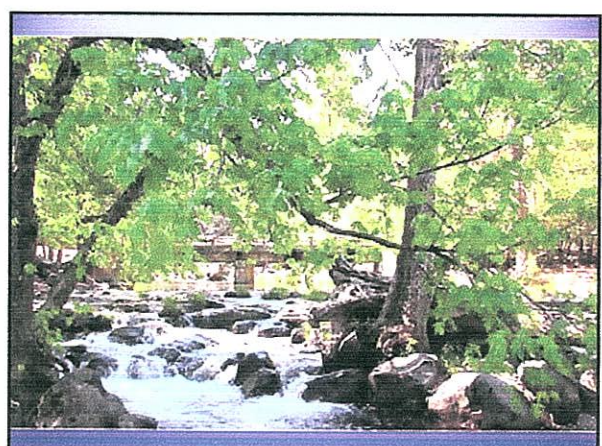
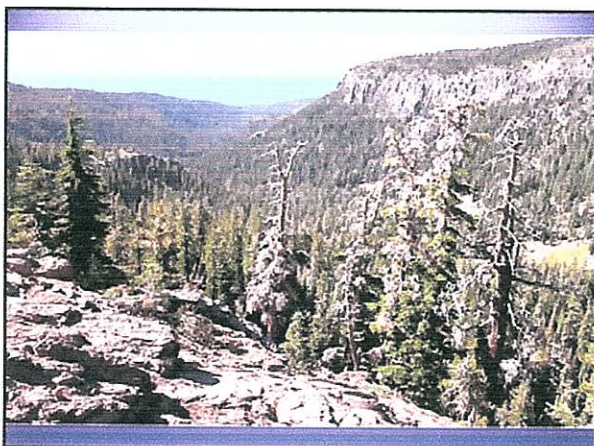


References

- Sacramento Valley Water and Soil Regional Water Management Plan. Northern California Water Association, Dec. 2006.
- CA Department of Water Resources
<http://www.water.ca.gov/>
- State of California, Department of Finance, *P-2 Short-term Statewide Population Projections 1995-2015*, Sacramento, California, January 2010



Questions?



ATTACHMENT II

Tuscan Headwaters Watershed Protection brochure



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tion on to a friend and recycling
it when you are through.

*Protection of the natural resources in our watersheds
is essential to maintain the viability of working lands
and the health of communities in the North State
region. An agricultural or open space conservation
easement is an effective and practical planning
tool that provides for environmental and economic
sustainability.*

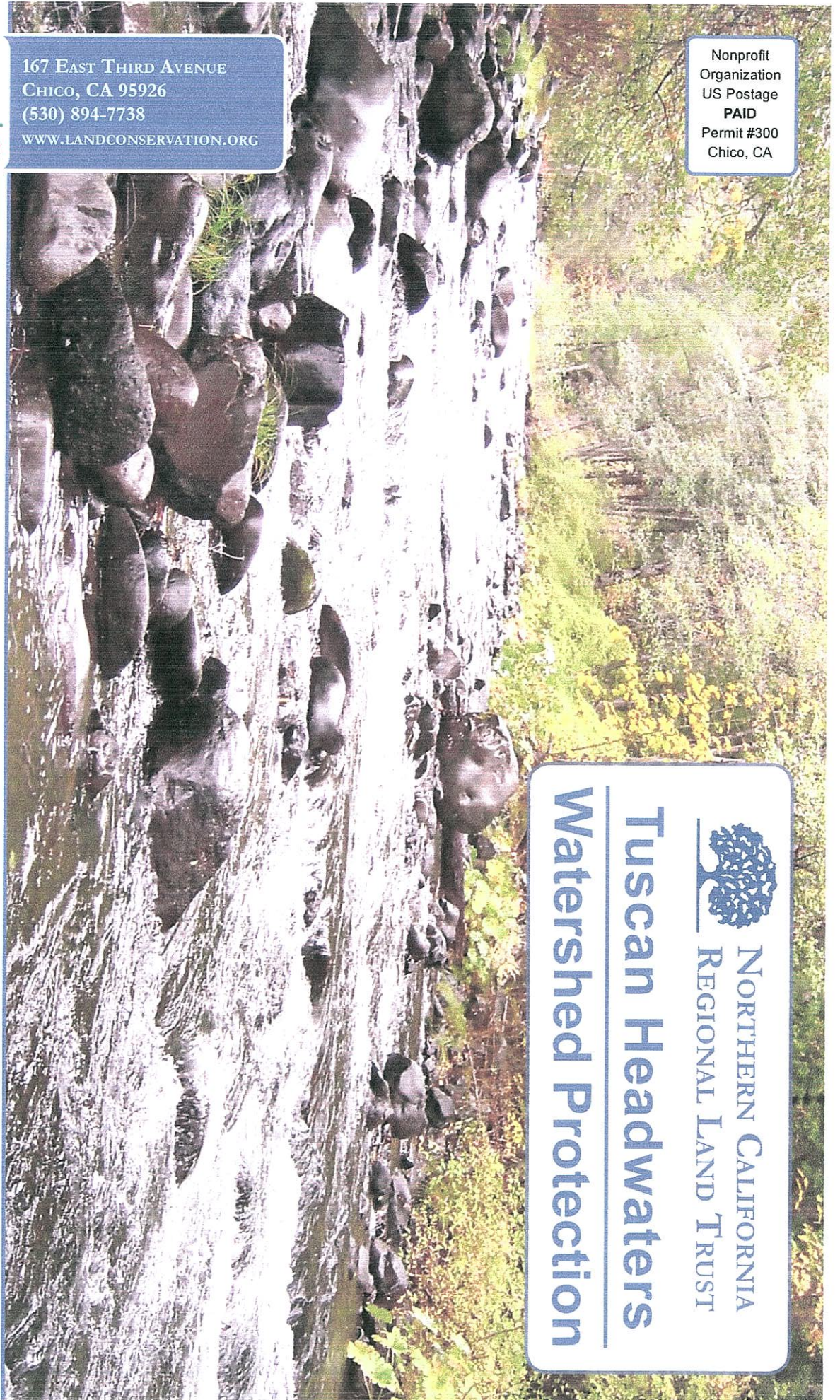
Cover Photo: Deer Creek, DCWC



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
REGIONAL LAND TRUST

Tuscan Headwaters

Watershed Protection



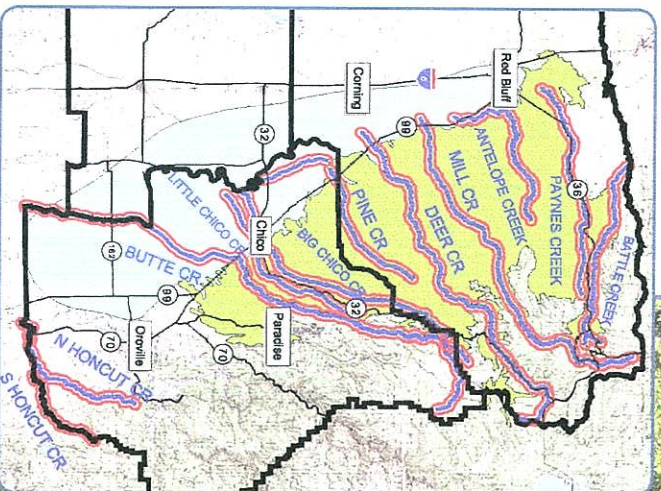
What is a Watershed?

Watersheds are "that area of land, a bounded hydrologic system, within which all living things are inextricably linked by their common water course and where, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become part of a community."

—John Wesley Powell

All watersheds have two things in common:

1. Watersheds contribute to our waterways through precipitation in the form of snow melt and rain, surface water and groundwater, along with wastewater runoff. They contribute to aquifer recharge through infiltration and subsurface flow.
2. Watersheds and the rivers and groundwater sources they supply are influenced by human activity, including land use practices.



The **eastern Sacramento River Watershed** is a collection of smaller watersheds, including those in Butte and eastern Tehama counties that recharge the **Tuscan Aquifer**. The Tuscan Aquifer is a large underground formation of rock, loose gravel, sand, and clay holding a large mass of water underlying portions of **Butte, Glenn, and Tehama counties**. Like watersheds, the aquifer is sensitive to human influences, including pumping and land management practices.

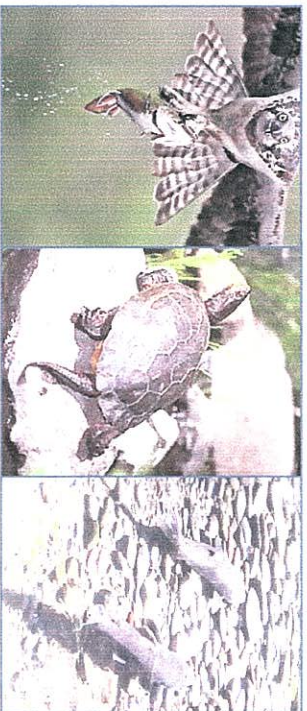
The Tuscan Aquifer is the **fresh water source** for over 87% of Butte County residents and over 60% of Tehama County residents. It also supports surface supplies of **irrigation water** for northern **Sacramento Valley agriculture**.

Background Photo: Oaks along Humboldt Road, Chico, LCCWG. Inset photos: Battle Creek, BCWG; Battle Creek, BCWG; Childs Meadow, R. Lindsey. Inset map: Tuscan Headwaters map, NCRLT.



What is a Conservation Easement?

J.A. Galletto, G. Corsi, DCWC.



- A tool that landowners can use to permanently protect the watershed values of their property, while continuing to own and utilize their property.
- A legal agreement between the landowner and a land trust that permanently limits development on the property.
- Conservation easements are tailor made to meet the needs of an individual landowner and protect the significant conservation values of a property.

Economic Benefits of a Conservation Easement

- Pass land intact to your heirs.
- Reduce estate taxes by excluding the easement value from taxable value of the estate.
- Reduce property taxes by reducing the value of the property.
- Receive income tax benefits by donating all or part of the easement value.
- Provide new capital for farming or ranching operations.

How to Calculate the Value of Your Easement

$$\begin{aligned} &(\# \text{ of acres}) \times (\text{value per acre without easement}) = \\ &\quad \text{before easement value} \\ &(\# \text{ of acres}) \times (\text{value per acre with easement}) = \\ &\quad \text{after easement value} \\ &(\text{before easement value}) - (\text{after easement value}) = \\ &\quad \text{easement payment to landowner} \end{aligned}$$

How to Get Started

- Determine if conservation or agriculture is in your future plans.
- Talk to your financial and legal advisors.
- Fill out and submit a Land Project Application to NCRLT.
- Meet with NCRLT staff and begin discussing your project.

Questions? Contact Us!

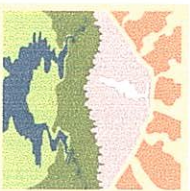
Northern California Regional Land Trust
167 East 3rd Avenue, Chico, CA 95926
Phone: (530) 894-7738
Email: jwatts@landconservation.org

The work upon which this publication is based was funded in whole or in part through a grant awarded by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy.



Local Watershed Partners

Local watershed groups, like the eight Tuscan Headwaters partners shown here, are voluntary, non-regulatory organizations created to preserve and protect various attributes of your watershed. For more information, please contact NCRLT or your local watershed group.



BATTLE CREEK
WATERSHED
CONSERVANCY

Battle Creek

The Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy's goal is to preserve the environmental and economic resources of the Battle Creek Watershed through responsible stewardship, liaison, cooperation, and education. www.battle-creek.net



BUTTE CREEK
WATERSHED CONSERVANCY

Butte Creek

"The Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy was established to protect, restore and enhance the cultural, economic and ecological heritage of the Butte Creek Watershed through cooperative landowner action." <http://butte creekwatershed.org>



Lower Feather River /
Honcut Creek Watershed Group
CARING FOR THE FUTURE

Feather/Lower Honcut

We are a group of residents concerned with protecting the natural resources and social benefits associated with a healthy watershed. mmsierrafarms@oroville.com, (530) 532-4226

MILL CREEK CONSERVANCY

Mill Creek

The Mill Creek Conservancy is a group of landowners and concerned citizens whose primary goal is to protect the resources of the Mill Creek Watershed. burtbundy@sbcglobal.net, (530) 528-7411



BIG CHICO CREEK
Watershed Alliance

Big Chico Creek

The mission of the Big Chico Creek Watershed Alliance is to protect and enhance the ecological integrity and economic vitality of the Big Chico Creek Watershed through cooperative efforts. In partnership with landowners, interested citizens, government agencies and private enterprise, we work to foster education, understanding, sustainable land management, and ecosystem and water quality restoration and conservation. www.bigchicocreek.org



DEER
CREEK
WATERSHED
CONSERVANCY

Deer Creek: Deer Creek Watershed Conservancy is dedicated to preserving natural resources, private property rights, and responsible land stewardship. <http://site.deercreekconservancy.org>

LITTLE CHICO
CREEK
WATERSHED
GROUP

Little Chico Creek: The Little Chico Creek Watershed Group was established to preserve, protect, restore and enhance the ecological integrity and economic vitality of the Little Chico Creek Watershed through the cooperative effort of private citizens and public agencies. (530) 828-4983



Tehama County Resource Conservation District

Tehama County RCD: To assist citizens with managing, conserving, and improving the natural resources of Tehama County. www.tehamacountyrcd.org

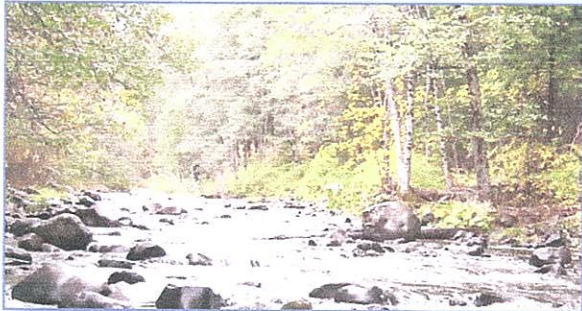


ATTACHMENT III

“Tuscan Headwaters Fact Sheet: Utilizing Agricultural and Conservation Easements for Watershed Protection in Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties”

TUSCAN HEADWATERS FACT SHEET

Utilizing Agricultural and Conservation Easements for Watershed Protection in Butte, Glenn, and Tehama Counties



Deer Creek, DCWC

WHAT IS A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

A legal agreement between a landowner ("grantor") and a land trust ("grantee") that permanently limits development in order that land uses are compatible with the long-term conservation values of the property. Easements can cover an entire parcel or portions of a property.

WHAT IS AN AGRICULTURAL EASEMENT?

An agricultural easement is a way for a landowner to permanently protect the agricultural values of his or her land, while continuing to own it and utilize it for production purposes. Agricultural easements are specific to working lands, being tailor made to meet the needs of the landowner. Tax benefits and/or financial compensation are often available for grantors of agricultural or conservation easements.



HOW TO CALCULATE THE VALUE OF AN EASEMENT

(# of acres) x (value per acre without easement) = **before easement value**
 (# of acres) x (value per acre with easement) = **after easement value**
 before easement value - after easement value = **easement payment to landowner**

WHAT ARE THE RESTRICTIONS?

Typically, an easement restricts development and subdivision to the degree that is necessary to protect the significant conservation or agricultural values of the particular property. Some easements include "home sites" where development is allowed for a residence. Landowners and land trusts work together to draft easements that reflect both the landowner's desires and the need to protect the conservation and/or agricultural values of the property.

HOW LONG DOES THE EASEMENT LAST?

Most easements "run with the land," binding the original owner and all subsequent owners to the easement's restrictions. The easement is recorded with the county records office.

DO I RETAIN ANY PROPERTY RIGHTS?

By granting a conservation or agricultural easement on your property you are only giving up the right to subdivide/develop those areas covered by the easement. The landowner retains title to his or her property and therefore can still sell or use the property as collateral on a loan, restrict public access, farm the land, and remain eligible for state and federal programs. Property subject to a conservation or agricultural easement remains on the local tax roles.



Battle Creek, BCWC;
Deer Creek, DCWC



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT NCRLT

Northern California Regional Land Trust (NCRLT)

167 East 3rd Avenue, Chico, CA, 95926

(530) 894-7738 • www.landconservation.org



ARE THERE ANY TAX BENEFITS TO AN EASEMENT?

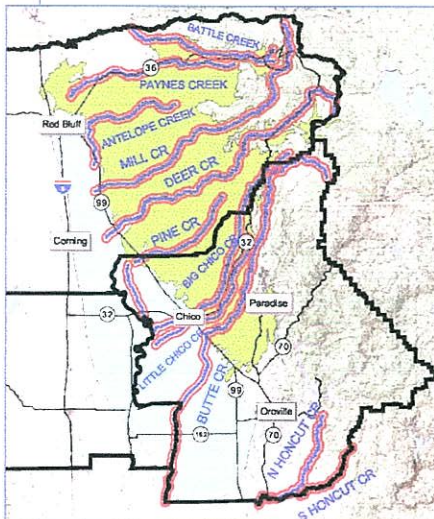
INCOME TAX BENEFITS

The Pension Reform bill (2006) provides family farmers, ranchers, and other moderate-income landowners a significant tax benefit for the charitable donation of a conservation easement. The conservation tax incentive was adjusted in 2006 to:

- Raise the maximum deduction for donating an easement from 30% of adjusted gross income (AGI) in any year to 50%;
- Allow farmers and ranchers who qualify under the IRS definition to deduct up to 100% of AGI; and
- Extend the carry-forward period to take tax deductions for a voluntary conservation agreement from 5 to 15 years.

Similar to the federal income tax incentives, most state income tax laws provide for charitable deductions of agricultural easements.

In addition, when a landowner places an easement on their property, it typically reduces the value of the land for estate tax purposes. To the extent that the restricted value is lower than fair market value, the estate will be subject to a lower tax.



The Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act (2001) expanded an estate tax incentive for landowners to grant conservation easements. Under Section 2031(c) of the tax code, executors can exclude 40% of the value of land subject to a donated, qualified conservation easement. This exclusion is limited to \$500,000 but is in addition to any reduction in the value of the estate as a result of a conservation easement. The full benefit is available for easements that reduce the fair

market value of the property by at least 30%. A smaller exclusion is available for easements that reduce property value by less than 30% (AFT 2006).

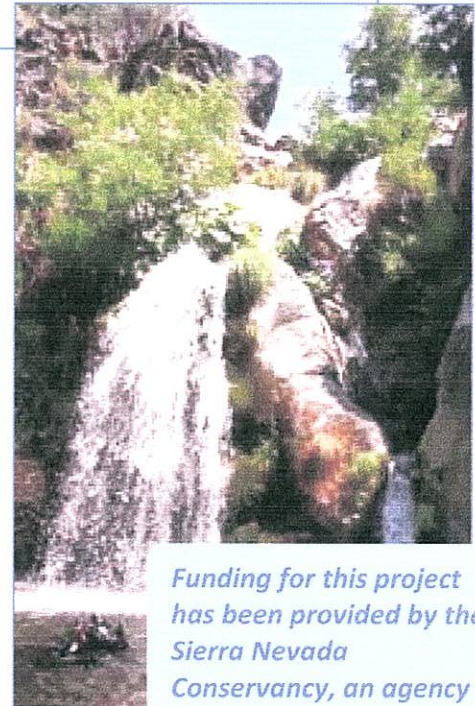


NCRLT is dedicated to promoting the conservation and preservation of Northern California's open

spaces, agricultural lands and natural resources with cooperation between the community, private landowners, public agencies and other nonprofit groups.

WHAT IS A LAND TRUST?

A nonprofit organization formed for the purpose of holding land (or restrictive easements on land) for its conservation, historic preservation, wildlife protection and/or recreation values, among other things.



Funding for this project has been provided by the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, an agency of the State of California.

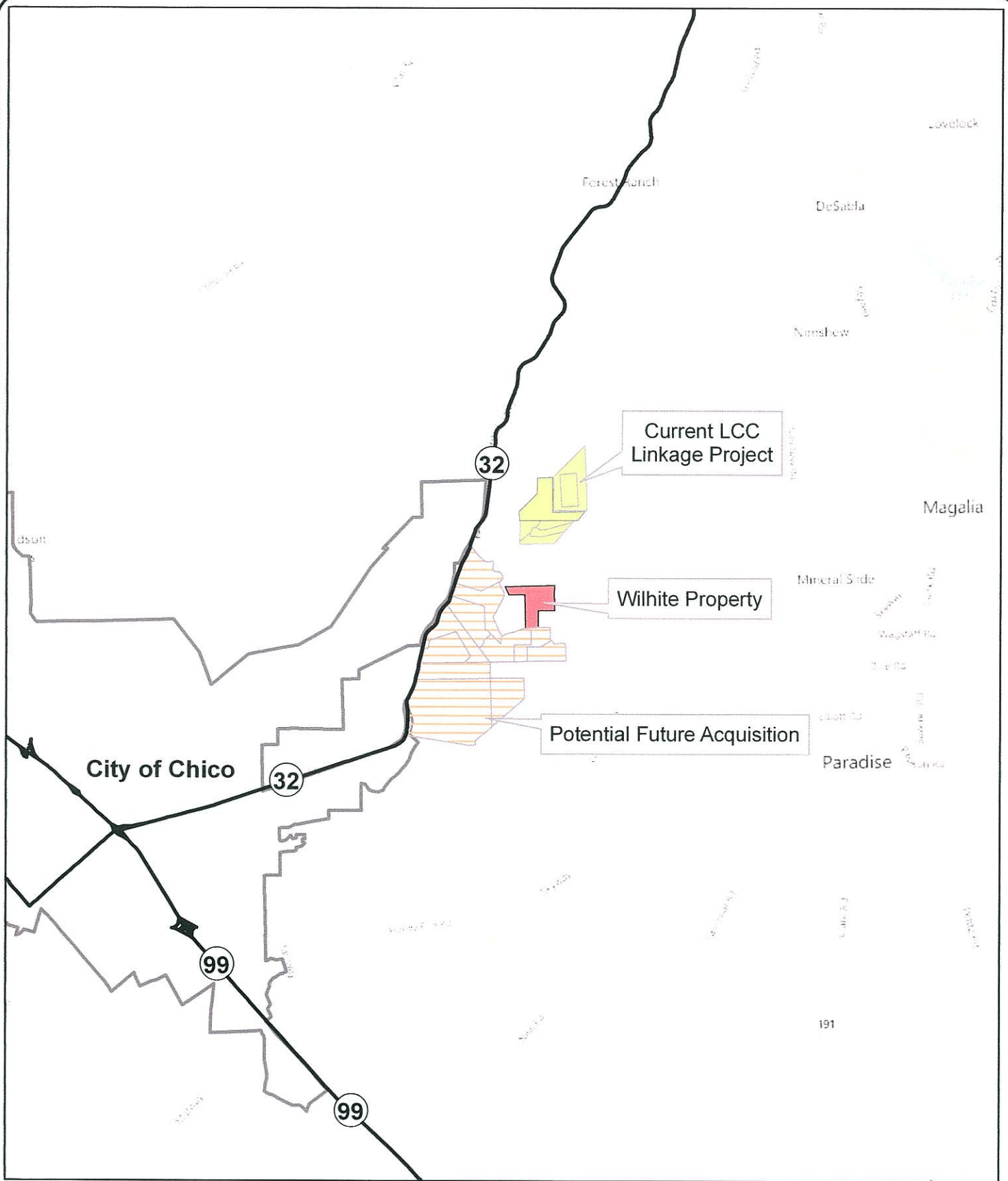





















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ATTACHMENT IV

Little Chico Creek Future Acquisitions Figure



 <p>NORTHERN CALIFORNIA</p>	<p>N</p> <p>0 2 Miles</p> <p>Date: 11/2/2011 Prepared by Dan Larson Sources: Butte County, ESRI, and Tele Atlas.</p>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td> Wilhite Property</td> <td> Chico SOI</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Existing LCC Project</td> <td> Major Roads</td> </tr> <tr> <td> Isom Property</td> <td> DFG Property</td> </tr> </table>	 Wilhite Property	 Chico SOI	 Existing LCC Project	 Major Roads	 Isom Property	 DFG Property	<p>Little Chico Creek Linkage Project</p> <p>Wilhite</p>
 Wilhite Property	 Chico SOI								
 Existing LCC Project	 Major Roads								
 Isom Property	 DFG Property								