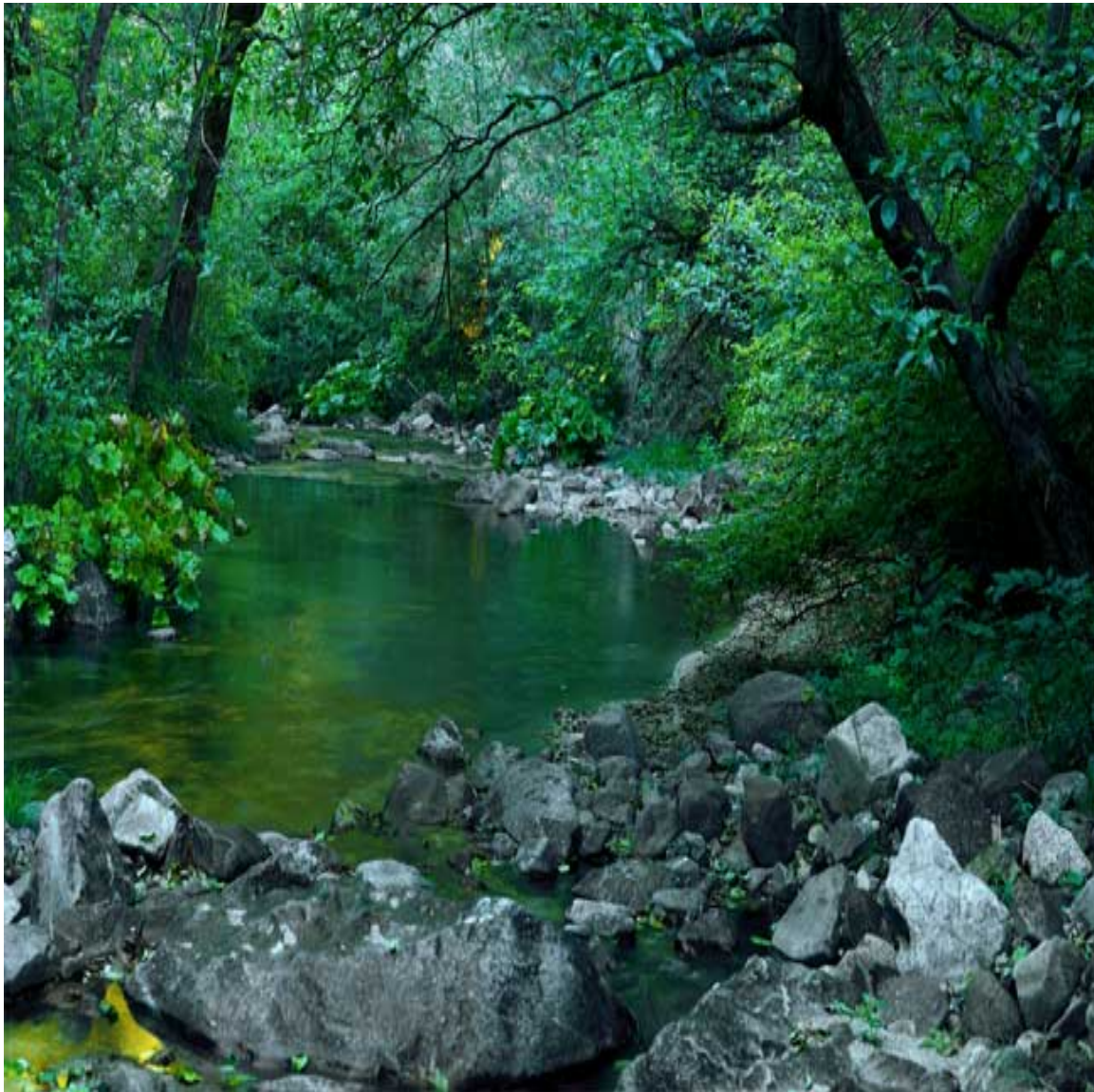


U.S DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
REDDING FIELD OFFICE
355 Hemsted Drive
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SALMON CREEK RESOURCES LAND EXCHANGE
Case File Number CA 43098



GRASS VALLEY CREEK, TRINITY CALIFORNIA

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

In 1984 Congress passed the Trinity River Basin Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act. This Act established the Trinity River Task Force, a group composed of state, Federal and county agencies and Native Americans. The Task force initiated several actions to restore the salmon and steelhead fishery in the Trinity River. One of those actions has been the acquisition and restoration of critically eroding land in the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Area. The Redding Resource Management Plan (RMP) and the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Management Plan were written with consideration of that initiative.

The BLM Redding Field Office finalized the RMP in 1993, thereby identifying the direction for the management of public lands within the Redding Resource Area. At that time, the Redding Resource Area consisted of more than a thousand scattered individual parcels of public land. The RMP identified the need to improve management efficiencies by simplifying the BLM land pattern and consolidating the scattered land base into larger management units. Those management areas were designated for the retention of land already in Federal ownership and the potential acquisition of available lands from willing sellers. Several management units were identified with critical or significant resource or recreation management needs for greater public benefit.

The Grass Valley Creek Watershed Area was selected as one of those management units, since surface management of that watershed was of critical importance to the protection and restoration of anadromous salmonid habitat in the Trinity River.

The Grass Valley Creek Watershed Management Plan was developed cooperatively in 1995 with the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Trinity County Resource Conservation District, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and several private land owners. The watershed plan identified a restoration strategy to reduce sedimentation and erosion within the fragile Grass Valley Creek watershed. The plan recommended that the BLM acquire lands within the watershed that have high erosion potential from willing sellers.

Since completion of the RMP, 16,000 acres have been acquired and BLM is now the primary land manager in the watershed area. Significant progress for short term watershed restoration has been implemented. However, seamless management is required for completion of the long term restoration effort. The Redding Field Office has been committed to acquire properties within the Grass Valley Creek watershed in support of that effort and the Trinity River Restoration program.

The parcel that Salmon Creek Resources is offering is one of the last few private parcels and comprises the largest inholding within the highly eroded portion of the watershed.

In addition to identifying management units, the 1993 RMP addressed the public demand for community development in urbanized areas. Parcels outside of key management units, including many tracts near communities, were identified for disposal as surplus to Federal needs. The designation of parcels available for disposal was made in recognition of critical resources, increasing population and facilities demand. Depending on location and surrounding land uses, many parcels appeared to be better suited for private development than to remain under the administrative jurisdiction of BLM to be managed as local, open space. Development needs are even greater today than in 1993 when the plan was approved. The selected Federal parcel was identified for disposal in the RMP. It is located within a rural residential area adjoining the rapidly growing city of Redding.

Exchange was selected as the primary method to dispose of the scattered Federal parcels that were identified as surplus in the RMP. The use of sales was not chosen as a tool at the time because funds from sales of public land would not have been available to acquire lands within the identified management units. Therefore, land tenure adjustment goals in the RMP would not have been met. However, with the passage of the Federal Land Transaction and Facilitation Act (FLTFA) in July of 2000, the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture are now allowed to retain a percentage of the proceeds from land sales to purchase lands within certain federally designated areas. FLTFA requires a sharing of dollars with National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Forest Service.

In support of FLTFA, an amendment to the RMP to allow sales as an additional tool for land tenure adjustment was implemented on August 4, 2005. The amendment was approved to allow the sale of Federal lands that were previously identified for disposal. The RMP amendment was completed with the prospect of using FLTFA proceeds to acquire lands within the RMP management units. However, all allocations are subject to Secretarial approval and there is no guarantee that any funding from sales would revert back to the contributing office.

LANDS CONSIDERED FOR EXCHANGE

FEDERAL LANDS

Location (Redding 1:100,000 USGS Surface Management Map)	Acres
Shasta County Mount Diablo Meridian, T.32N.,R.5W., Section 32, Lots 155,173,174,175,176,227,228,229; T.31N.,R.5W., Section 5, Lots 17,18,19,21,22,49,50; T.31N.,R.5W., Section 6, Lots 8,9,10,17,18,19,20,22,26	215.85+/-

NON-FEDERAL LANDS

Location (Weaverville 1:100,000 USGS Surface Management Map)	Acres
Trinity County Mount Diablo Meridian, T.32N.,R.8W., Portion of Section 22, excepting therefrom that portion of Buckhorn Dam as described in Book 273 of Official Records page 218, Trinity County Records	566+/-

A. LAND USE PLAN (LUP) CONFORMANCE

The proposed action and alternatives conform to the following approved land use plan: *1993 Redding Resource Management Plan (RMP)*.

Federal Land:

The Federal land involved in this exchange was analyzed as part of the Shasta Management Area in the RMP and associated Environmental Impact Statement. The RMP was finalized in 1993 which governed the disposition of the subject Federal lands in Shasta County and describes the goal of the land tenure program: *“to transform the scattered land base of the Redding Resource Area into consolidated resource management units to meet the needs of the public land users. This goal will be pursued primarily through exchange, sale, and acquisition, followed by some Recreation and Public Purposes Act leases and patents in support of the objectives of the RMP.” (RMP Record of Decision, page 17, as amended)*. The selected Federal land is a part of the scattered land base addressed in the RMP and has been identified as available for disposal. Based on the allocations and guidance in the RMP, the subject Federal parcel is suitable for consideration of exchange.

Land use allocations for the subject Federal land is described in the RMP on page 45, II.F.5 (as amended) *“Transfer via R&PP, or exchange, to the State of California, County of Shasta, City of Redding, community service districts or any other qualified organization administrative responsibility of any portion of 6,000 acres of public land to meet local communities’ services needs. Within two years from approval of the Final RMP, the organizations mentioned above will be given an opportunity to submit R&PP applications for specific parcels prior to the land being offered for exchange. Offer for exchange or sale to any party after two years from approval of the final RMP.”* No R&PP applications were received during the two year window and therefore, the parcel was segregated for disposal by exchange.

Non-Federal Land:

The non-Federal parcel involved in this exchange was analyzed as part of the Grass Valley Creek Watershed within the Trinity Management Area of the RMP Environmental Impact Statement. The resource condition objective of that watershed is to: *“Reduce the sediment load entering the Trinity River via Grass Valley Creek for the improvement of anadromous fisheries.” (RMP Record of Decision, page 39)*.

Land use allocations for the subject non-Federal lands are described in the RMP on page 40, II.D.9 *“Acquire available unimproved lands within the watershed via appropriate funding, exchange or donation”*

B. OTHER REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The proposed exchange allowing acquisition of the non-Federal parcel would be in support of the Trinity River Basin Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1984 and the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Management Plan dated March 1995.

Sections 102 and 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) require the Secretary of the Interior to develop land-use plans for all Federal land under the administration of BLM. The RMP conforms to FLPMA, the planning regulations of BLM found in Title 43, Part 1600 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality in Title 40, Part 1500 of the Code of Federal Regulations requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on significant Federal actions including land use plans in conformance with the National Environmental Policy Act. The RMP was approved on July 27, 1993.

Statutory authority for land exchanges is found in sec. 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716) and the implementing regulations are found in 43 CFR 2200.

According to 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 2201.3, the Federal and non-Federal parties to an exchange shall comply with the appraisal standards set forth in 43 CFR 2201.3-1 through 2201.3-4 and to the extent appropriate with the Department of Justice "Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions" when appraising the values of the Federal and non-Federal lands involved in an exchange. A qualified appraiser shall provide to the authorized officer appraisal estimating the market value of Federal and non-Federal properties involved in an exchange.

A fair market value appraisal has been completed for both the Federal and non-Federal land in this exchange by a qualified appraiser. The Federal and non-Federal lands in a land exchange must be of equal value, within 25% of the value of the Federal lands, to complete the exchange. The difference of value may be paid by the proponent or the BLM by way of a cash equalization payment. A cash equalization payment may be paid to either party of an exchange as long as it is within 25% of the Federal land value.

C. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

This exchange is proposed to implement one of the land tenure adjustment decisions in BLM's Redding Resource Management Plan (RMP). Acquisition of the non-Federal land for restoration of critically eroding land in the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Area complies with expectations of the Trinity River Basin Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1984 and the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Management Plan dated March 1995.

The exchange is being considered under the authority of Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) dated October 21, 1976, as amended. Maps showing the exchange proposal are attached.

The RMP guides the BLM's management of approximately 253,000 acres of public land scattered throughout Butte, Tehama, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Trinity Counties in Northern California. A major goal of the RMP is to improve management of public lands by disposing of scattered parcels while also acquiring lands in areas where Federal management for recreation and resource enhancement is appropriate. When fully implemented, the pattern of BLM public land ownership would change from more than 1,000 scattered parcels to a few large blocks of land.

One of the responsibilities of the BLM lands program is to transform the scattered land base of the Redding Resource Area into consolidated resource management units to meet the needs of the public land users. The land exchange process has been chosen as one of the tools to be used to reconfigure the public lands into more manageable units.

Lands identified as being isolated, difficult to manage, or having low resource values may be exchanged for other land within the Redding Resource Area having greater public benefits. The proposed exchange would assist in meeting the goals and objectives of the RMP and the Redding Field Office land tenure program by consolidating land ownership in the Grass Valley Creek watershed area, while also disposing of lands identified in the RMP as surplus.

PUBLIC BENEFITS OF THE EXCHANGE

- To rehabilitate an area identified as critical for resource protection;
- To further reduce the sediment load entering the Trinity River via Grass Valley Creek for the improvement and restoration of salmon and steelhead fisheries habitat;
- To enhance protection of endangered and BLM sensitive species;
- To maintain the existing scenic quality of the Grass Valley Creek Watershed area;
- To improve management efficiencies by reducing the scattered land base of the Redding Resource Area and consolidate larger management units, for example: to reduce the amount of boundary with non-Federal interests, reduce the probability of trespass onto or from Federal lands, and to enhance the effectiveness of BLM staff;
- Acquisition of the private parcel is vital to the seamless management effort that would not be possible in private ownership;
- To increase recreational opportunities in the Grass Valley Creek watershed and especially in proximity to Buckhorn Reservoir;
- To dispose of difficult to manage Federal lands with limited resource value and acquire land with critical resource and recreational management needs.

CHAPTER 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

A. PROPOSED ACTION

Salmon Creek Resources Inc. has offered a private parcel within the Grass Valley Creek watershed and has selected one parcel of Federal land administered by BLM's Redding Field Office as part of the exchange proposal. The proposed action is for the BLM to acquire approximately 566 acres of private land adjoining Buckhorn Reservoir within the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Area in Trinity County, California. In exchange, the BLM would dispose of approximately 215 acres of Federal land in Shasta County, California.

The Federal parcel selected is located in a rural residential area just west of Redding in the Salt Creek drainage. The proposal involves BLM disposing of an isolated parcel of Federal land which is uneconomic to manage and has been identified for disposal in the RMP. In return, private land surrounded by Federal property located within a critically important resource unit would be consolidated under BLM administrative jurisdiction.

The mineral estate would be transferred with the surface estate on both public and private lands. The grant deed issued to the United States for the non-Federal land would be subject to outstanding rights as approved by BLM's Regional Solicitor.

Any land transferred from the United States would be subject to all valid existing rights and a reservation for ditches or canals constructed by the United States under the authority of the Act of August 30, 1890 (43 U.S.C. 945). A covenant for stream protection on the Federal parcel would be included in the patent. BLM would alert Shasta County as to all archaeological sites present on the Federal parcel to assist in guiding future development of the parcel.

B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No-Action alternative, the Federal lands would not be exchanged for the non-Federal lands. The Federal lands would remain as open space under BLM administration. The non-Federal land would not be acquired.

BLM would provide custodial management of the parcel such as law enforcement patrol, rights-of-way and fuels management actions. These actions would typically be in response to specific critical public needs such as trash dumping, trespass or fire hazards, respectively.

The Federal land would be open to mining claims and locatable mineral development under appropriate BLM regulations for administration of the 1872 General Mining Law.

C. SALE ALTERNATIVE

In response to public comments, disposal of the Federal parcel by sale was considered as an alternative to the exchange. Under this alternative, the Federal lands would be sold pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976 (FLPMA). Disposal of the Federal parcel by sale would require seeking other revenue for acquisition of the offered non-Federal lands, i.e. the Grass Valley Creek parcel.

FLPMA provides BLM the authority to dispose of public land either through sale or exchange. Disposal of the Federal parcel by sale method would be processed consistent with regulatory requirements and policy found in Section 203 of FLPMA, Sections 205 & 206 of FLTFA, and 43 CFR 2700, along with guidance found in applicable BLM Manuals, Handbooks and Instruction Memoranda.

The policy for selecting the method of sale for disposal of the parcel is described in 43 CFR 2710.0-6(c) (3) (i) which states; *“Competitive sale as provided in 2711.3-1 of this title is the general procedure for sales of public lands and may be used where there would be a number of interested parties bidding for the lands and (A) wherever in the judgment of the authorized officer the lands are accessible and usable regardless of adjoining land ownership and (B) wherever the lands are within a developing or urbanizing area and land values are increasing due to their location and interest on the competitive market.”*

Due to its location amongst urban expansion in an area with a competitive market and increasing land values, the subject parcel would be offered through competitive bidding. Bidding would begin at no less than the current fair market value as determined by an appraisal provided by the Department of Interior Appraisal Services Directorate.

D. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT DISMISSED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

1. United States Easements Alternative

It has been suggested that the exchange include an easement reservation to the United States as a means to protect the stream corridor and trails. This Alternative would include exchanging the same lands as in the proposed action. However, the patent for the Federal land would reserve an easement for an existing trail and an easement for a creek corridor to the United States. This alternative would allow the existing trails and Salt Creek to remain in public ownership.

The BLM would maintain management authority of the easements. The easements would be administered by the BLM as open space, with expected periodic encroachments, attendant enforcement, resource management and administrative costs. A management plan would need to be established for long term management of the easements and would be subject to further environmental analysis.

Salt Creek traverses across Federal land, subdivision development and several private parcels. The majority of the riparian corridor does not exist within Federal jurisdiction. Without contiguous Federal ownership, Federal management activities along the riparian corridor would not be effective.

The 3.1 mile trail located on the Federal parcel meanders throughout the central portion of the property with several stems and loops throughout the majority of the parcel. The existing layout of the trail could substantially reduce the development potential of the parcel. A revision to the appraisal would be required and the value of the Federal exchange parcel would likely be reduced due to the substantial encumbrance on the property. With a reduction in value, the exchange equalization may not be met and the current exchange proposal would no longer be feasible.

The Redding RMP states that “land use authorizations which reduce the marketability of an exchange parcel will not be authorized.” An easement authorization would likely reduce the marketability of the parcel. This alternative would not conform to management objectives of the RMP and would not contribute to management efficiency. Moreover, the objectives of retaining the creek and trails in Federal ownership would be met in the No Action alternative. Therefore, this alternative has been dismissed from further analysis.

2. Disposal of Easement to Local and State Agencies

It has also been suggested that an easement for protection of the trails and Salt Creek be transferred to a local or state agency. This alternative is similar to the United States easement alternative except that the easement would not be managed by the BLM.

A BLM cadastral survey would be required in order to exclude the easement estate for the trails and Salt Creek from the Federal parcel. The agency would acquire the easement at fair market value via direct sale method and would assume all costs associated with management of the trails and creek.

A new appraisal would be required to separate the two estates (fee and easement). The easement would encumber a large portion of the parcel and would limit development potential. Since the future use would be limited, it is likely that the value of the two estates combined, would be less than the current fair market value of the parcel in its entirety. The exchange equalization would not be met and an exchange to acquire the non-Federal parcel would not be feasible.

This alternative would likely reduce the value of the parcel and would conflict with the RMP, which as previously stated, does not allow actions which would reduce the marketability of an exchange parcel.

Through this alternative, the Grass Valley Creek parcel would not be acquired and the marketability of the Federal parcel would be reduced.

Therefore, this alternative was not analyzed further.

3. Disposal of Federal Parcel to Local Agency via the Recreation and Public Purposes Act

The 1993 RMP allowed for transfer of selected Federal land via the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) to the State of California, County of Shasta, City of Redding, Community Service Districts or any other qualified organization within two years of the approval of the plan. The organizations were given to the end of 1995 to submit an application for specific parcels prior to the land being offered for exchange.

No application or expression of interest to dispose of the Federal parcel under the R&PP was received during that time. The RMP directs that any Federal parcels which were not identified by applications during that period would be offered for exchange or sale thereafter. The Federal parcel was not selected for disposal via R&PP within the two year window and therefore, was segregated for disposal by exchange.

During consideration of the current exchange proposal, BLM received a proposal for conveyance of the subject Federal lands to the Shasta County Community Services District via R&PP. This proposal, however, would not conform to BLM regulation and policy. *BLM regulations, 43 CFR 2741.4*, requires a statement that shows “*an established or definite proposed project for use of the land including a detailed plan, schedule for development, management plan, and a description of how any revenues would be used.*” No application has been submitted that meets the regulatory requirements.

As stated in the proposal, the primary recreational interest in acquiring the parcel was for open space and trail use. No facilities or substantial capital improvements were proposed. *BLM Manual 2740 provides limitations on the type of park and recreational area that may qualify for R&PP; open space, hiking, and other less intensive recreations uses of land ordinarily are not considered under the R&PP Act.*

A commitment for funding the project also has not been established. There is a risk that a source for funding the project would not be established.

The Federal parcel would need to be held in Federal ownership until an R&PP application is submitted. In addition, an R&PP would require a reversionary clause in a patent that would require the U.S.'s continued oversight; including monitoring every five years to ensure the land is being used for the purpose it was conveyed under R&PP.

Consideration of the proposal would require termination of the current exchange with Salmon Creek Resources and the offered non-Federal lands would not be acquired.

For the reasons discussed above, this alternative is dismissed from further consideration.

4. Disposal of Federal Parcel to a Local Agency via Exchange or Sale

A proposal was recently submitted (months after the comment period had ended) and the merits of the proposal have been considered to insure a complete and open analysis. The proposal offered acquisition of Federal land in the Salt Creek drainage and peripheral areas to include the subject Federal parcel. The proposal requests that the BLM “Suspend all further actions that could create a formal government commitment to the other alternative proposed by land developer Joe Rice prior to adequate and fair articulation, analysis and consideration of the community proposal. As indicated earlier, this is a preliminary proposal and its complete formulation will necessarily require time.”

This alternative proposes the sale or exchange of the Federal parcel to a citizen group or “Community Facilities District (CFD)” that has not yet been established. The CFD would assess fees from residents to provide funds to acquire the Federal property by sale or to purchase other lands to offer for exchange. No lands were offered for exchange in the proposal. If the Federal parcel were to be sold, the parcel would be offered competitively and there is no guarantee that the CFD would achieve the highest bid. In addition, the Grass Valley Creek parcel would not be acquired by the BLM.

The alternative where CFD would acquire the parcel via sale or exchange is not reasonable and is dismissed from further analysis for the following reasons:

(a) Considering the proposal to exchange with CFD would require termination of the exchange proposal with Salmon Creek Resources and would not allow for acquisition of the offered non-Federal land. The CFD proposal offers no guarantee of exchanging land with significant resource importance to the BLM and could take many years to process. Moreover, a district has not been established, there is no assurance that voters will approve an increase in taxes to finance the plan, and the interested parties could lose interest.

(b) Under the proposed action, the BLM is currently processing a proposed exchange which includes acquiring lands that are consistent with BLM’s management objectives. The CFD proposal did not offer any compelling reasons to withdraw from further consideration of a valid existing exchange proposal.

5. Retention of Federal Lands Alternative

During review of the proposal, citizens (mainly adjoining and nearby landowners) suggested that BLM retain and manage the Federal parcel as open space. Under this alternative, BLM would maintain management authority of the Federal parcel and the non-Federal land would not be acquired.

The RMP analyzed retention and disposal of lands including the subject parcels and determined that retention of the Federal parcel was not in the public interest due to its location within an urban expansion zone. Market forces are even greater today than in 1993 when the RMP was approved. The pattern of growth in west Redding confirms those predictions of the RMP.

This alternative contradicts the objectives of the RMP and would require an amendment. Moreover, retention of the parcel would not meet the purpose and need of the current proposal to implement the exchange. Therefore, this alternative is dismissed and is not analyzed further.

6. Modifying the Existing Exchange

A group of local residents have submitted several requests concerning the exchange and have continued to contact BLM about other alternatives. One of these requests is that BLM should “consider the possibility of exchanging other tracts in the Redding area that do not have such high recreational values.”

This alternative was discussed with the proponent. Other available Federal lands were considered to be exchanged for the non-Federal lands. The proponent is aware of other Federal lands available for exchange and originally selected other lands to include in the exchange. Those lands were dropped from consideration because they did not meet value equalization requirements. Therefore, the proponent selected the subject parcel which was expected to more likely meet equalization and is not interested in selecting any other available Federal lands.

There is no guarantee that any other Federal parcel that the proponent would select would contain less recreational values than the subject parcel. Other Federal parcels that are located amongst urban expansion also contain unregulated trails created by nearby neighbors who have become accustomed to using the local open space. Determination of how valuable those needs are to the larger public can only be determined through environmental analysis of each parcel. Recreational uses of the selected property would be analyzed in the No-Action Alternative.

Modifying the exchange proposal to include new Federal lands would require evaluating the feasibility of a new proposal. Essentially, the exchange process would start all over again. Studies and reports that have already been completed to evaluate the issues of exchanging the current lands, i.e.: appraisals, feasibility studies, mineral reports, biological studies, cultural reports, negotiations and agreement documentation, and other required studies, would need to be redone. Time consuming research to thoroughly scope out issues of any exchange proposal is necessary. There has been a time investment of approximately five years in processing the current exchange proposal.

Excluding the lands from the current exchange does not ensure that the Federal parcel would be retained for public recreation and open space. Upon transfer of lands outside of Federal management, there is no guarantee or ability to control how the parcel is maintained or developed.

This alternative could not be negotiated and is dismissed because of the uncertainties with the potential transactions involved and the likelihood that modification of the exchange could not be completed in a timely manner.

CHAPTER 3 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

GENERAL PARCEL DESCRIPTIONS

Federal Land

The Federal land within this exchange is located west of Redding in Shasta County, in northern California. The selected land is comprised of one parcel situated south of California Highway 299 and bounded respectively on the west and east by Swasey Drive and Lower Springs Road. Public access to the parcel exists via Victoria Drive and Lower Springs Road (both county roads). Additional access exists on the most northern point of the parcel but is limited due to terrain. The selected land is surrounded by residential development located on private lands in an area zoned in the Shasta County General Plan for Rural Residence (2 acre minimum subject to slope limitations). Approximately 200 homes are already built within a one mile radius of the Federal parcel and new subdivisions are being constructed. The parcel contains power lines, water lines, and roads that serve the surrounding residential developments.

The property lies between the 760 and 1,020 foot elevations and is mainly typified as gently sloping to rolling with well drained soils. The southwest portion of this parcel and some areas immediately bounding the major drainages are minority exceptions to this characterization. A seasonal, intermittent stream (Salt Creek) and its tributaries traverse through portions of the property. Vegetative cover is typically dense, comprised of upland chaparral species, poison oak, manzanita, interior live oak, gray pine, blue oak and some black oak. The plant, wildlife, and fisheries species are typical of Mixed Chaparral and Blue Oak-Foothill Pine habitats.

Non-Federal Land

The non-Federal parcel is located within the Grass Valley Creek Watershed, Trinity County, between Weaverville and Redding. The offered parcel falls completely within the watershed and the decomposing granite of the Shasta Bally batholith. Grass Valley Creek is a major tributary of the Trinity River situated in the southeastern portion of the Klamath River Basin. This year round creek flows through portions of the parcel and into the Trinity River just north of Grass Valley Creek Watershed. Several tributaries of Grass Valley Creek stem throughout the non-Federal parcel.

The subject parcel is located adjacent to Buckhorn Reservoir and is centered amongst a mountainous area with steep slopes, narrow valleys, and heavy vegetation. Topography is generally sloping hillside with steep and some level bench areas. Elevation ranges from 2,760 to 3,660 feet. Upland vegetation is dominated by mixed conifer forest including Ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, interior live oak and some black oak. Average annual precipitation in the watershed area, including rainfall and snow, ranges from 45 to 75 inches. The majority of sediment discharge into the Trinity River occurs during flood flows.

The parcel is zoned for timber production as a reflection of the forest cover. Some chaparral species dominate small upland patches. Riparian zones are dominated by a mix of willows and alder.

AIR QUALITY

Federal Land

The Federal parcel is located within the Shasta County District of the Sacramento Valley Air Basin, for the purposes of air quality monitoring. According to the Air Resources Board 2004 Almanac, Shasta County experienced 6 days above the State 24 hour standard for particulate matter (PM 10), 4 days above the state standard for ozone and no days above the State 8-hour standard for carbon monoxide. The Shasta County District is State non-attainment for Ozone and PM 10.

Non Federal Land

The non-Federal parcel is located within the Trinity County District of the North Coast Air Basin. Data is limited, but air quality is generally considered to be within standards. PM 10 in the Trinity County Air District is State non-attainment for PM 10.

COUNTY TAX BASE

Federal Land

Taxes are paid only on the private lands. BLM does make a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) of 10 cents per acre directly to qualifying counties on public land. BLM pays, therefore, \$21.50 annually to Shasta County in PILT for this parcel.

Non-Federal Land

The private land is assessed as a recreation and commercial timber production zone. Trinity County is paid \$2117.42 annual assessment for the 566 non-Federal acres.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Federal Land

The Federal parcel involved in the exchange was the scene of variable historic and prehistoric activities. There are 13 recorded archaeological sites within the area, all historic but one that contains evidence of prehistoric Indian activities. These sites include a very small segment of the Shasta-Red Bluff Road and a host of features related to placer and lode gold mining occurring from the latter half of the nineteenth century through the Great Depression.

These features include cabin foundations, trail/road segments, ditches, a small dam and a variety of workings. There are a few additional minor ditches, mine workings and several small earthen dams or containments which did not warrant official recordation.

The principal sites have been documented, discussed and evaluated for their National Register of Historic Places eligibility in a 1993 report by Dr. Eric Ritter titled *An Archaeological Inventory and Evaluation of Select West Redding Land Exchange Parcels, Shasta County* on file with the Redding BLM Field Office.

Originally it was thought that the Clear Creek Ditch, one of the earliest and most significant ditches in the County, flowed through the subject property, in an alignment locally dubbed the Curious Ditch. Subsequent survey by staff archaeologist Dr. Eric Ritter and historic consultant and engineer Charles Hornbeck has determined that the Curious Ditch is not part of the Clear Creek Ditch. The Clear Creek Ditch was found by Mr. Hornbeck to end at an elevation of 860 feet on a small tributary of South Salt Creek east of Lower Springs Road. The Curious Ditch is considered to be a distribution ditch originating within the Salt Creek drainage to serve local placer operations.

None of the recorded sites were deemed eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. These determinations are due principally to such factors as their lack of (1) good integrity and architectural distinctiveness; (2) complexity; (3) association with known individuals or events of local or regional importance; (4) uniqueness; and (5) ability to significantly contribute to regional history or prehistory beyond their current documentation. The California State Office of Historic Preservation concurred with this opinion. Correspondence with local Indian groups and archival research failed to reveal any Traditional Cultural Properties within the subject area.

Non-Federal Land

The non-Federal parcel is located in the Trinity River Basin which is home to two federally-recognized Indian tribes including the Hoopa Valley Tribe and the Yurok Tribe. Salmon, steelhead, sturgeon and lamprey that spawn in the Trinity River pass through the Yurok and Hoopa Valley reservations and are harvested in tribal fisheries.

The Federal government is interested in protecting tribal fisheries in the Trinity River. Federal projects and programs designed to restore anadromous fish populations and fishery habitats in the Trinity River are of keen importance to these Tribes. Both Tribes have expressed continued interest in the watershed and restoration health of Grass Valley Creek.

EXISTING RIGHTS

Federal Land

Authorized uses on the Federal land include two water facilities, one cable line, two power lines and two roads. All the existing rights serve nearby residences and encompass a small acreage of the parcel.

Non-Federal Land

Authorized uses on the non-Federal land include two logging road easements and one reciprocal road right-of-way.

FISHERIES

Federal Land

The subject Federal parcel contains approximately 1.28 miles of intermittent streams which includes Salt Creek and tributaries. The BLM and the California Department of Fish and Game have identified that the fisheries Special Status Species known or reasonably expected to use the Federal parcel include the federally threatened California Central Valley steelhead (CCVS) and the Federal candidate species, Central Valley fall-run-Chinook (CVFC).

Personal communications with staff of the California Department of Fish and Game and remarks from local residents have noted some Chinook salmon appear in Salt Creek mostly downstream of the subject parcel. Resident rainbow trout also are known within the area. However, the seasonal nature, alluvial load and relatively small size of Salt Creek impose significant limitations for the spawning and migration of anadromous salmonids into the Sacramento River. These constraints on spawning habitat also limit the value of upper Salt Creek and its tributaries within and near the parcel for use by resident trout.

Non-Federal Land

The subject non-Federal parcel contains approximately 3.11 miles of perennial streams which includes Grass Valley Creek and tributaries. Grass Valley Creek below Buckhorn Dam is known to provide habitat for seven species of fish including Steelhead trout, Rainbow trout, Chinook salmon, and Coho salmon. The California Department of Fish and Game also documented approximately 12,000 juvenile rainbow trout per mile in the short stretch of stream coming into Buckhorn Dam reservoir.

FUEL MANAGEMENT AND FIRE SAFETY

Federal Land

The Federal parcel has a vegetation type of mixed brush and oak pine forest. Like most lands west of Redding, lack of fire has created a very dense fuel loading that creates high fire hazard. Each year BLM receives calls from adjacent residents regarding downed trees and branches on the parcel behind their backyard fence.

Several years ago, a permit system was tested to give landowners the ability to clear vegetation on BLM land behind their homes. This became difficult and costly to administer and monitor which led to other non-permitted or unwanted activities on BLM lands such as herbicide use, heavy cutting of vegetation, planting of exotic species, and open brush pile burning.

In 1997, BLM thinned and masticated brush to create a shaded fuel break on approximately 10-acres of the parcel where there was some public access at the end of Victoria Drive. The vegetation, mainly manzanita, has since regrown to a significant degree.

The Federal parcel has challenges in conducting fuels management activities similar to other isolated parcels surrounded by residential homes. Because there are only three legal public access points, it is difficult to get to and across the public land. Nearly the entire parcel is behind residential homes and backyard fences. Lack of access and proximity to homes limits fuel treatment options on the public land. Standard methods of treating this vegetation type such as piling and burning, prescribed burning and using vehicles with chippers are not feasible on this parcel. The primary method to consider is a brush masticating machine. However, some slopes including relatively small drainages are a limiting factor in using brush masticating equipment on many portions of parcel.

In addition to fuel management costs, other administrative expenses such as trash clean-up, rights-of-way management, law enforcement, trespass monitoring and trespass abatement would be required. Administrative costs for Federal management vary significantly depending on the parcel. Parcels that are located in an urban interface, such as the Federal parcel in the exchange proposal, often have the highest per acre costs due to the proximity of moderate to high population densities. Simultaneously, these same parcels typically have moderate to low public values, in terms of regionally significant recreation opportunities and other public values and are therefore determined suitable for disposal in planning efforts. Overall the Federal parcel involved in the proposed action is currently very difficult, expensive, and time consuming to manage.

Non-Federal Land

The non-Federal parcel in Grass Valley Creek contains mixed conifer forest vegetation on a mid slope at the lower portion of the watershed. The 2002 BLM Grass Valley Creek Fire Management Plan has goals to reduce fire hazard and maintain watershed and forest health. BLM is beginning to implement a program of landscape level fuels treatments and prescribed burns. Having a section of private land mid-slope in the middle and bottom of a watershed makes it difficult to plan and implement a project without potentially impacting the private land.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Federal Land

An Environmental Site Assessment report (ESA) for the Federal land was completed on February 28, 2005. The parcel and surrounding area is known for its mining history and evidence of placer mining is common. The soil association on the Federal parcel is Auburn-Goulding-Neuns, which was often mined for gold from 1870 through 1930. There are numerous site conditions indicating past placer mining activities such as water ditches and small placer tailings.

Due to the evidence of placer mining activities located on the parcel and potential for the presence of mercury, water samples for heavy metals were taken. All tests came back with no elevated levels or “non-detects” for heavy metals including mercury. Although it is likely that mercury was used during mining activities, there is no evidence of any level that would affect the human environment.

The ESA noted that in addition to evidence of mining activities, small amounts of dumping consisting of mostly household waste could be found throughout the parcel. However, no signs of hazardous waste were located.

The findings of the ESA concluded that the parcel contained no recognized environmental conditions, did not reveal any environmental hazards and no further inquiry would be necessary.

Non-Federal Land

An Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) report for the non-Federal land was completed on February 28, 2005. Historical use of the property has been timber harvest and management. Grass Valley Creek traverses a portion of the site. The Grass Valley reservoir (Buckhorn Pond) is located immediately adjacent to the property. The site is undeveloped and contains no evidence that would suggest any structures ever existed. All soil types within the Grass Valley Creek watershed contain a common characteristic of decomposed granite, a very erosive forest soil. No hazardous waste was discovered on the property during site inspection.

The findings of the ESA concluded that the parcel contained no recognized environmental conditions, did not reveal any environmental hazards and no further inquiry would be necessary.

RECREATION

Background

The BLM Redding Field Office has long recognized that the demand for outdoor recreational uses continues to increase on public lands administered by the Field Office. With the increased population surrounding communities, public lands often provide the only public open space for multiple recreation use. The RMP was written with those recreation needs in mind. Consistent with the RMP, BLM has used exchange and acquisition programs to acquire lands in and around important public recreation areas. Since 1993, over 42,000 acres of land have been acquired by the BLM within recreational areas such as lower Clear Creek, Sacramento River Bend Area of Critical Environmental Concern, Interlakes Special Recreation Management Area, and the Grass Valley Creek watershed.

In addition, BLM has participated in development of many miles of trails within the city of Redding and nearby surrounding community. The Redding area facilitates a wealth of scenic trail systems and recreation areas enjoyed by the local residents. Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, for example, is located within two miles of the Federal parcel. Forest Service lands which offer many miles of trails are abundant west of Redding. In addition to the existing recreational use, a primary focus by the Redding BLM for trails includes a plan to complete a 27 mile trail loop along the Sacramento River between the City of Redding and Shasta Dam. Other trail systems in the Redding area that are maintained by BLM include those at the nearby Swasey Drive and Lower Clear Creek Recreation Areas.

Federal Land

The Federal parcel is centered amongst urban development and is surrounded by homes whose backyards abut the public lands. Numerous complaints of noise, shooting, and trash dumping have been reported by adjoining neighbors.

Over the last several years, the parcel has been used primarily by the adjacent landowners. Trails have been created by unregulated motorized vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian uses. The parcel is closed to off highway vehicle use due primarily to neighborhood complaints. Unauthorized trails have become popular with the nearby residents and local trail enthusiasts for mostly walking, jogging and mountain biking. Several stem trails lead directly to adjoining backyards for exclusive access to Federal lands. The 3.1 miles of informal trails on the public parcel are detached from any other Federal land, do not connect to any formal trail system; and, have a low potential to connect to other trail systems due to the many surrounding private parcels and residences.

Non-Federal Land

The non-Federal parcel is located near Weaverville, California in Trinity County. The Grass Valley Creek Watershed is an area that contains the scenic value that attracts recreational use. In addition to rehabilitation of the watershed, another goal for management of the parcel is for recreation. The area is highly suited for a variety of recreational uses such as hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, primitive camping, and vista points. Plans for recreation management within the watershed include potential development of a trail system, access points and vehicle parking.

SCENIC QUALITY

Scenic quality of an area is assessed in terms of generally accepted guidelines which are based upon popular acclaim to a very large degree. Within the Redding Resource Area most of the public land has been inventoried and has a scenic quality rating assigned either:

“A” for high scenic quality and high viewer sensitivity;

“B” for either high scenic quality but lower viewer sensitivity, or somewhat lower scenic quality but high viewer sensitivity;

“C” for areas where neither high scenic quality or viewer sensitivity are important considerations.

As stated on page 4-22 of the EIS, areas with a scenic quality of “B” or “C” will not be significantly affected by land use allocations. However, the scenic quality rating is determined as much by where an action occurs relative to view sheds and viewer sensitivity to those view sheds, as by what the particular action might involve in terms of landscape modification.

Federal Land

According to the RMP EIS page 4-21, *“the public lands immediately to the north and west of the City of Redding are of lower scenic quality and also are not considered significant landscapes to the area’s population. These lands are classified therefore as having a “C” scenic quality rating.”* The subject Federal parcel is located approximately one mile west of Redding and is surrounded by residential development typical of a growing community. As projected in the EIS (page 4-2, Reasonably Foreseeable Development), the development of the area has grown since the EIS was written and has changed from rural to mostly privately occupied land with rural homes every 2 to 5 acres. The spacing of the homes, terrain, and density of the trees allow the majority of private lots to maintain an open space quality.

The Federal parcel is an attractive piece of property similar to the private lots surrounding the parcel. However, the scenic value of the Federal parcel has been reduced to a small degree due to the close vicinity of homes creating a setting that is more rural residential than scenic. In fact, it is difficult to distinguish the public parcel from the adjoining private properties. The parcel has become part of the neighborhood setting. Due to the close proximity of increasing home development, the viewer sensitivity of the Federal parcel has increased to a small degree by a limited number of the public. However, the scenic attributes of the Federal parcel does not serve a majority of the Redding area population. Visitors to the parcel are limited to mostly nearby land owners and local trail users. Considering the lower scenic quality of the area and the limited viewer sensitivity of the parcel the scenic quality remains as a “C” scenic quality rating as stated in the EIS.

Non-Federal Land

The Non-Federal parcel has not been rated for scenic quality. However, the parcel is located in the center of approximately 16,000 acres of federally managed open space with high scenic value. The landscape on the parcel is mountainous open space with abundant wildlife. The parcel contains substantial scenic quality with miles of view overlooking the Grass Valley Watershed and Grass Valley Creek from the higher ridges of the parcel. The viewer sensitivity of the area is low but increasing as public ownership increases.

SOILS (EROSION POTENTIAL)

Federal Land

Approximately 80% of the selected public lands are comprised of soils (Diamond Springs Series) derived from granitic bedrock which either underlay or are found upslope of the parcel. Approximately 12% of the parcel includes soils (Auburn Series) derived from granitic and meta-volcanic rocks which immediately underlay the soils. The remaining 8% of the parcel includes soils (Goulding Series) derived from underlain greenstone.

About 20% of the total parcel located within the southwest portion of the tract has a relatively high probability of erosion if disturbed. This is based on a combination of soil type (Diamond Springs Series) and steeper slopes (30% to 50%). Small ribbons of Diamond Springs and Goulding series soils (approximately 3% of the total) are found on steeper slopes within stream corridors crossing the balance of the parcel. These small areas also have a higher probability of erosion because of steepness. The majority of the parcel (at least $\frac{3}{4}$), however, is typified by relatively modest slopes of between 8% and 30%. The majority of this area and a majority of the entire parcel are considered to have a moderate potential for erosion if disturbed.

Non-Federal Land

The soil on the parcel is highly erosive decomposed granite. The steep terrain along with high annual precipitation including rain and snowfall, contribute to erosion and sediment into the Trinity River. Approximately 99% of the offered lands are comprised of soils (Minersville Series and Valcreek – Minersville – Choop complex) derived from granitic bedrock. The soils are located on mountainous terrain (refer to Map C2) with slopes between 30% and 75%. The “...*hazard of water erosion is very severe*” within this parcel according to the Soil Survey of Trinity County, California, Weaverville Area (pages 70 & 92, USDA-NRCS, 1998).

As a result of decomposed granite and other sediment entering Trinity River from Grass Valley Creek, which smothered spawning beds and diminished fish holding pools, the Trinity River Stream Rectification Act (P.L. 96-335) was enacted into law in 1980. Its purpose was to provide for construction and maintenance of Buckhorn Dam (a sediment collection dam), and the Hamilton Ponds (two sediment collecting pools). The dam and ponds were constructed to capture sediment from the extremely fragile decomposed granite watershed. The sediment ponds require annual dredging and sediment removal.

Sediment from the subject parcel feeds into both the dam and into the ponds. The sediment collection system has been successful in reducing sediment flow into the Trinity River, generally, except in very wet years. This success also is attributable to extensive habitat rehabilitation activities on and in the watershed.

TERRESTRIAL SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

(These include Federal endangered, threatened or candidate species, as well as survey and manage species identified pursuant to the Northwest Forest Plan.)

Federal Land

No terrestrial special status species are known to occur on the parcel. The upland chaparral plant community is wide spread in distribution.

Non-Federal Land

Special Status Species occasioning the parcel and surrounding public lands include northern spotted owl, bald eagle, Pacific fisher, foothill yellow-legged frog, terrestrial mollusks, bat species, and numerous plant species.

TRAFFIC

Federal Land

The immediate area surrounding the Federal parcel currently supports approximately 200 single family homes. The area is served by Victoria Drive, Swasey Drive and Lower Springs Road which all connect to Highway 299. Highway 299 connects the area to downtown Redding and other routes such as Interstate 5 and Highway 44. It is estimated that the great majority of commuter traffic is via Highway 299 to Redding and surrounding areas.

Non-Federal Land

Highway 299 is located within 2 miles of the non-Federal parcel. Most activity in the area connects to Highway 299 through a system of gravel and dirt roads. Since the area is rural and sparsely populated, traffic is typically not a concern.

WATER QUALITY

Federal Land

The Federal parcel is undeveloped and does not support current activities which are likely to affect water quality. There are no known leach fields, underground storage tanks, or other activities which would include discharges to a waterway. The surrounding residential developments utilize leach fields for sewage disposal. Deposition of sediments from ground disturbing activities is likely to be very low.

Historical use of the parcel indicates that gold mining occurred during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Salt Creek and the areas behind containment dams located on the parcel have the potential of containing mercury which was used in gold mining activities. However, water samples for heavy metals were taken as part of an Environmental Site Assessment dated February 28, 2005. All tests came back with no elevated levels or “non-detects” for heavy metals. Although, it is likely that mercury was used during mining activities, there is no evidence of any level that would affect the human environment.

Non-Federal Land

Deposition of sediments into water bodies on and near the non-Federal parcel from ground disturbing activities is likely. Past timber harvesting activities in the area increased sediments into the Grass Valley Creek and Trinity River. Federal agencies have acquired most of the acreage in the area and have limited ground disturbing activities on federally managed land. However, Federal management control of disturbing activities on privately owned land is limited and could result in additional sedimentation. There are no known leach fields, underground storage tanks, or other activities on the non-Federal parcel which would facilitate discharges to a waterway.

WETLANDS/RIPARIAN ZONES

Federal Land

During field survey and geospatial data research, it has been determined that in addition to Salt Creek and its tributaries (previously discussed –Fisheries pages 12 &13), a storm water sediment retention pond (approximately 3,300 square feet - .07 acres) is located on the Federal parcel.

The small pond (Basin A), is part of a two-step storm water sediment retention pond system that has been created on public and private lands. Basin A, which occurs on public lands, has been created through the construction of a small dam. During flow drainage, Basin A discharges into Basin B which is located on private land. The drainage travels via a narrow overflow watercourse which has been created on private lands immediately downstream in a lower area. Basin B is a large, relatively deep pond in comparison and, due to its size (approximately 10,000 square feet - .20 acres), is functionally more valuable to water quality protection than Basin A, but the value of Basin A has not been discounted.

A significant quantity of accumulated sediment has filled Basin A, particularly the west side of the basin where wetland vegetation has become established. However, Basin A still has limited available storage which is expected to diminish over the next several years due to sedimentation. Eutrophication of the basin is expected due to the lower water depths, the influx of nitrogen and phosphorus, and the influence that sunlight penetration will have on the shallower water column and bottom. The sediment deposits at the west end of the basin have the unexpected benefit of providing habitat for aquatic and semi-aquatic vegetation, such as willow and rushes.

During high flow season, the center of Basin A contains approximately three feet of water with mature willow growth as emergent vegetation. The vegetated sediment flats and shallower (less than three feet) water comprised much of the western end of the basin in the vicinity of the inlet.

A man made dirt dam on the eastern side of the pond is not reinforced with riprap or other structural components. The outlet is at the eastern end of Basin A which discharges storm water runoff into Basin B. Vegetation composition of overflow watercourse is dominated by willow and cottonwood. The upland is composed of oak pine and manzanita.

There is clear demarcation where the presence of water has an overriding influence on the characteristics of the vegetation and soil conditions. Aquatic wildlife identified in Basin A consists of bullfrog and Pacific chorus frog. Bullfrog transformation from egg to larvae then frog takes more than one season, so their presence indicates permanent standing water in Basin A.

It has been determined that Basin A is a sediment retention pond with wetland characteristics (artificial wetland). However, Basin A is not a natural wetland but rather a sediment retention pond that will eventually fill in with sediment removing its wetland status.

Non-Federal Land

No known wetlands occur on the non-Federal lands. Grass Valley Creek, a permanent water source and its tributaries occur on the non-Federal parcel.

WILDLIFE

Federal Land

Within California, the Mixed Chaparral and Blue Oak-Foothill Pine habitats are found generally in the inland foothills north of Los Angeles to the Cascade and Siskiyou Mountain Ranges. General eastern and western boundaries of both habitats are the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Coast Ranges. There are no faunal species that are specific to Mixed Chaparral.

Some wildlife species prefer or are found regularly in Blue Oak-Foothill Pine habitat, including aquatic and terrestrial insects, amphibians, birds, mammals, and reptiles. Examples of wildlife that may be found on the Federal parcel include striped skunk, long tailed-weasel, ground squirrel, mule deer, coyote, gray fox, deer mouse, desert cottontail, opossum, raccoon, pacific tree frog, lizards, common kingsnake, common gartersnake, western rattlesnake, scrub jay, common raven, American robin, barn owl, acorn woodpecker, California quail, mourning dove, red-shouldered hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, and Coopers hawk. More general groups of species include shrews, voles, bats, sparrows, flycatchers, nuthatches, woodpeckers, and warblers.

Non-Federal Land

Plant, wildlife, and fisheries species are typical of the California Wildlife Habitats of Douglas Fir, Ponderosa Pine, Montane Hardwood, Montane Hardwood-Conifer, Klamath Mixed Conifer, Montane Chaparral, and Riverine. Species composition is similar to the Federal parcel with the additions of northern spotted owl, bald eagle, pacific fisher, foothill-yellow legged frog and other forest-related species.

CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the beneficial and negative impacts to key impact topics which are deemed relevant to this proposal, i.e. those resource values or uses which are at most risk if the proposed action or other alternative is selected. Each analysis considers short term, long term, direct, indirect and cumulative consequences. The discussion of each impact topic defines the topic, what is measured and the consequences of selecting each alternative.

1. TIERING TO THE 1992 REDDING RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)

In accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) 40 CFR 1508.28 (a), tiering from an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to an Environmental Assessment (EA) is appropriate when the sequence of analysis is *“From a program, plan, or policy environmental impact statement to a program, plan, or policy statement or analysis of lesser scope or to a site-specific statement or analysis”*.

The 1992 Redding Resource Management Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressed impacts associated with acquisition and disposal of lands within the Redding Resource area in implementation of land tenure adjustment. The analysis included assumptions for land use and community development. The proposed action falls within the scope of analysis of the EIS. This section of analysis will incorporate by reference the general discussions of the EIS as they relate specifically to the lands involved in this exchange.

The EIS (chapter 4, page 3) predicted that *“due to the higher demand for rural and suburban residences near Redding and the limited ability of local government to acquire and manage public lands under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act for specific public purposes, transfers of public land via exchange to the private sector are more likely to occur. Of public land made available for transfer to local government or the private sector under any land-use management alternative, in or near the sphere of influence of Redding, between 25% and 60% will be developed in accordance with currently approved adjoining zoning designations.”* Chapter 4, page 4 of the EIS describes that *“Of the public lands available for disposal via exchange to the private sector, between 20,000 and 70,000 acres would actually be transferred. Of this range, 1,000 to 3,000 acres would be zoned and subsequently developed for intensive land uses mainly around Redding.”*

Of the totals shown in the Redding EIS, approximately 750 acres have been disposed of by BLM in the West Redding area. Approximately 100 acres of those patented lands have been developed for residential use. It is expected that dependent on county processing, almost the entire 750 acres will eventually be developed for residential use.

The total acreage disposed of within the Redding Field Office planning area is approximately 37,000 acres, while acquisitions are approximately 43,000 acres. Both the overall acreage and the West Redding figures are near the midpoint of the ranges predicted by the EIS. The forecasts and analysis provided by the EIS continue to be viable.

Today, predictions of future land uses for the Federal and non-Federal lands fall consistent with the expectations described in the EIS. These predictions “reasonable foreseeable development scenario” ensure that assumptions that guide each analysis are similar. These predictions were based on an examination of existing approved land uses on adjoining parcels, consideration of the nature of the landscape, e.g. mountainous terrain, and discussion among the inter-disciplinary team conducting the analyses. The foreseeable development scenario is an example of the pattern of growth in the community of Redding. This pattern of growth is driven by current community needs and market forces.

2. REASONABLY FORSEEABLE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

Federal Land

Considering the highest and best use of the parcel, the most likely consequence of the proposed action is rural residential development. Conversations with the prospective new land owner indicate that he is considering developing the parcel. Considering the pattern of growth in the surrounding area it is likely that under any alternative, the parcel would likely be developed sooner or later if transferred to private ownership. For the purpose of this environmental assessment, BLM assumes that some level of rural residential development will occur if the parcel were to be transferred to private ownership.

The Shasta County General Plan zones all the surrounding private lands as “RA”, i.e. rural residential with a 2-5 acre minimum. The actual size of each parcel, however, could be larger based on the steepness of the slopes (especially over 30%) which limit potential development as addressed by Shasta County Grading Ordinance. Public land in Shasta County is automatically designated Natural Resource Protection -Open Space (N-O) and is zoned Unclassified (U). The N-O designation allows a maximum density of one dwelling per 20 acres. A rezoning application and General Plan amendment would be required along with permits and other requirements for subdivision development.

On November 29, 2004, Salmon Creek Resources submitted a pre-application to Shasta County for subdivision development of the property if it were to be transferred to private ownership. A pre-application is an informal request for an opinion from the county on a development idea and does not imply approval or non-approval of a project. The pre-application requested a review of a potential General Plan amendment, zone amendment, property line adjustments and subdivision map to develop the 215 acres. The project included a total of 59 potential lots. The majority of lots identified were located in the generally flatter, central portion of the parcel.

As stated in a letter from Shasta County Department of Resource Management dated January 11, 2005 (responding to the pre-application), several issues would need to be addressed during the County's subdivision development process. Those issues include Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geologic Hazards, Water Quality, Fire Safety, Recreation, Transportation, and Public Services. The potential impact of those issues would depend on the degree of development allowed by the County planning process. As the plan development progresses, the County would ensure that the potential impacts of development would be analyzed in accordance with California Environmental Quality Act prior to permitting any development.

In addition, permits from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may be required along with coordination with several others including California Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Transportation, Shasta Community Services District, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Shasta County Fire Department, Shasta County Department of Public Works and Shasta County Department of Resource Management, Environmental Health Division. The property currently does not contain water service and water rights would need to be acquired prior to development. A sewage system would also need to be established.

In addition to the above County planning requirements, based on California Department of Fish and Game recommendation, a covenant restricting development along Salt Creek would be included in the patent of the Federal parcel. The covenant would not permit development within 50 feet of the top of each bank or 25 feet from the outside edge of the riparian vegetation drip line of the upper and lower forks of Salt Creek, whichever is greater. Permanent structures could be constructed to allow crossing of the upper and lower forks of Salt Creek, but would be required by the covenant to be free span bridges, bottomless arched culverts, or standard culverts at gradient such that water flow would not be impaired and upstream or downstream of fish would be assured at all times. Bottoms of temporary and permanent culverts would be required to be placed such that the lower 25% of the diameter of the culvert would be below grade of the stream channel to allow the formation over time of a more natural stream bottom. Exceptions to the covenant would only be granted through written approval of the California Department of Fish and Game.

It is anticipated that any development of the subject Federal parcel that may disturb Salt Creek would require Federal permitting (through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), and be subject to consultation under the Endangered Species Act. Access for fire ingress and egress would be required as part of a subdivision plan. It is likely that an extension of Victoria Drive would be developed as part of subdivision development. There is an unknown potential to develop between one and three additional perpendicular crossings of the main stem (1 total) and main tributaries (2 total) to accommodate full development of the parcel.

Considering the surrounding development, topography of the parcel, mandatory setbacks, access, and other issues, the parcel could be zoned residential with a home site for every 2-20 acres. Due to the factors above, it is anticipated that approximately 50% of the parcel is suitable for development subject to county approval. The anticipated development would allow much of the native vegetation to remain unaltered as is the case in the surrounding neighborhoods.

The response from the County indicated that plans of developing the parcel could be subject to a complex, costly and time consuming process and there was no guarantee that the parcel could be developed into a subdivision of 59 lots. The county did state that they would typically support the continuation of an Open Space designation which would allow a maximum density of one dwelling per 20 acre minimums (or as few as 10 homesites). However, for the purposes of this assessment, BLM staff assumed that the 215 acre parcel could be subdivided into as many as 59 rural residential lots if the proposed action is implemented.

If the No Action Alternative is selected, the Federal land would remain zoned Unclassified (U) and used as open space with anticipated periodic encroachments including mining claim locations. The selected public land would have increased ad hoc trail development and use if not exchanged, i.e. No active BLM management for resource programs are anticipated for the selected Federal land. However, some law enforcement and, especially, fuels management activities would be required of BLM as long as the parcel is Federal land. The parcel would continue to be considered for disposal as directed in the RMP.

Non-Federal Land

Should the Proposed Action Alternative be selected, the parcel would be managed consistent with the surrounding public land. The parcel is within the Northwest Forest Plan area, where protection of Riparian Reserves and the Aquatic Conservation Strategy coincides directly with the Trinity River Restoration Program and Grass Valley Creek Watershed Restoration program.

These forest management guidelines and restoration programs promote ecosystem and fisheries conservation. The area is actively managed by the Federal government to protect the integrity of the watershed as a means to conserve salmonid spawning habitat in the Trinity River.

The principal future use on the non-Federal lands would be the continuance of area restoration as described in the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Management Plan. Stabilization efforts would be a high priority under Federal ownership. The primary goal of the restoration project is to reduce erosion and sedimentation.

Any land use activity would be required to meet this overriding criterion. The restoration project would not prohibit other management objectives, but would be considered first and foremost when evaluating other opportunities. Forest management practices would be implemented to reduce risk of catastrophic wildfire.

In addition to rehabilitation of the watershed, the parcel is suitable for recreational opportunities. The 1995 Grass Valley Creek Watershed Coordinated Resource Management Plan addresses the plan to enhance recreational opportunities within the watershed area. The area has been nominated by the Trinity County Resource Conservation District as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

The parcel would be managed in accordance with the RMP which describes the management objectives for the Grass Valley Creek watershed as the following:

- Manage as Visual Resource Management class II.
- Manage as semi-primitive motorized.
- Limit vehicle use to designated roads and trails.
- BLM- administered roads and trails within the zone of decomposed granite-derived soils would be closed to vehicle use during the rainy season and would be closed on a year-round basis at the discretion of the BLM to protect the resource values of erosion sensitive areas. Also, soil disturbing activities would be conducted only when no new, long-term increases to erosion would result.
- Mineral material disposals are permitted if they enhance or are not in conflict with, the protection of the watershed.
- Available for mineral leasing with no surface occupancy.
- Closed to locatable mineral entry. (Upon transfer into Federal ownership, the lands would be withdrawn from mineral location)
- Closed to livestock grazing.

Historically, the parcel and surrounding area have been heavily logged. Timber production has increased sedimentation into the Trinity River. If the parcel were to remain in private ownership, the anticipated land use would be commercial timber production which could potentially result in some level of sediment transfer to the Trinity River. This will likely frustrate ongoing restoration efforts.

In addition to logging, the scenic setting of the parcel would increase the potential for recreational development such as camp grounds or remote home sites. Access is considered adequate for logging purposes, but would need to be improved for other forms of development such as residential or some recreational uses.

B. CRITICAL ELEMENTS AND KEY IMPACT TOPICS CONSIDERED

BLM is obligated to consider all relevant aspects of the human environment when analyzing and disclosing the impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives. BLM is specifically directed to consider the impacts to specific "critical elements" listed in BLM Manual H-1790-1, Appendix 5, as amended.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

Environmental Element	Proposed Action and Sale Alternative		No Action Alternative		Comments
	Affected	No Effect	Affected	No Effect	
Air Quality	X			X	Refer to Air Quality Sections
(ACEC) Areas of Critical Environmental Concern		X		X	Not within an ACEC
Cultural Resources	X		X		Refer to Cultural Resources Sections
Environmental Justice		X		X	Not Applicable
Farmlands		X		X	Not Applicable
Floodplains		X		X	None identified
Invasive, Non-Native Plant Species		X		X	None identified
Native American Concerns		X		X	Refer to Cultural Resources Sections
Threatened or Endangered Species (Animal)	X		X		Refer to Fisheries Sections
Threatened or Endangered Species (Plant)		X		X	None identified
Wastes (Hazardous/Solid)		X		X	Refer to Hazardous Materials Sections
Water Quality	X		X		Refer to Water Quality Sections
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	X		X		Refer to Wetlands/Riparian Zones Sections
Wild and Scenic Rivers		X		X	Not located within a Wild and Scenic River Corridor
Wilderness		X		X	Not Applicable

Impact Topics Brought Forward for Analysis

As a result of public scoping and discussion among the interdisciplinary planning team and cooperators, BLM is analyzing effects to the human environment of the elements listed below. In some cases, the impacts to an element are negligible. However, they are discussed to provide the reader with the reasoning behind the determination. The impact topics include critical and non-critical elements:

- Air Quality
- County Tax Base
- Cultural Resources
- Existing Rights
- Fisheries (Threatened/Endangered Species)
- Fuel Management and Fire Safety
- Hazardous Materials
- Recreation
- Scenic Quality
- Soils (Erosion Potential)
- Terrestrial Special Status Species
- Traffic
- Water Quality
- Wetlands/Riparian Zones
- Wildlife

The following analysis will consider impacts of the reasonably foreseeable development scenario. The topics that were considered in the 1992 Redding Resource Management Plan Final EIS, (cultural resources, fisheries, and scenic value) will be incorporated by reference.

C. PROPOSED ACTION - ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

AIR QUALITY

Federal Land

In the short term (2-5 years), there would be a temporary increase in fugitive dust associated with potential new home construction. Best management practices would need to be employed to mitigate fugitive dust. Over the long term, air emissions typical of single family homes (for example: chimneys and gas vents) would be increased due to the presence of up to 50 new homes. Both the short and long term impacts to air quality are not expected to be significant. Any increases in vehicle traffic would slightly increase vehicle emissions including ozone precursors to the air. However, the minor amount of emissions contributed would not affect the overall air quality in the area and would be monitored by the Shasta County Resources Board as part of Sacramento Valley Air Basin.

Non-Federal

There are no anticipated effects to air quality on the non-Federal lands under the proposed action.

COUNTY TAX BASE

Federal Land

If the Federal land were disposed to the private sector, annual payments to the County of Shasta would increase from \$21.50 (\$.10 per acre) currently paid by BLM as Payment in Lieu of Taxes to an initial estimate of approximately \$9,000. This estimate is based only on the 1% tax assessment of the fair market value that would be established at the time of the exchange and does not include bonds and other applicable fees. It is very likely that tax assessments on the former public land would increase substantially subsequent to any approved subdivision of the subject land. Cumulative annual payments to Shasta County would vary from \$25,000 for 10 undeveloped lots to over \$2,000,000 if 60 lots were developed in keeping with recent nearby developments.

Non-Federal Land

The 566 acres of non-Federal land are presently assessed as recreation and commercial timber production with \$2,117.42 paid annually to Trinity County. If the proposed action is selected, payments to Trinity County would be reduced to the \$.10 per acre or \$56.60 paid by BLM as Payment In Lieu of Taxes. Although this proposal indicates a decrease in tax revenue to Trinity County, there has been an overall increase in revenue from past land exchanges processed by the BLM Redding Field Office.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Federal Land

Approximately one mile total of mid to late nineteenth century ditch segments are located on the Federal parcel. More than half of this total is located on steeper slopes with little likelihood of future development. These segments would likely disappear over a long period of time via natural processes.

The remainder of the ditch segments as well as most of the other mining-related historic features is located in proximity to areas with higher likelihoods of future development, i.e. on flatter terrain. Without any development, they too would likely be largely lost through time to natural processes. It is likely, however, that these historic mining features would be more quickly impacted by future developments. The severity of impacts would be directly related to the levels of future development and the proximity of those features to the developments.

The EIS (Page 4-48, Impacts to Archaeological Resources) predicted that *“BLM would lose management authority over approximately 150-700 sites, mostly (around 80-90%) non-National Register quality locations. These sites would potentially be subjected to increased impacts where less oversight and protective regulations would apply, as in development and from looting and vandalism. This is most likely in the areas around Redding”*.

The proposed exchange would have no effect on properties listed on or deemed eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, i.e. the features on the parcel do not merit protection under the National Historic Preservation Act. The features were determined to have only local significance due to their relatively poor integrity, lack of association with important persons, non-distinctive designs and widespread distribution of these types of features on public and private lands within western Shasta County.

As details of development unfold, Shasta County Department of Resource Management would analyze the development potential and would conduct a survey to determine the impacts of the proposed project to cultural resources including possible archaeological sites and historic artifacts. Mitigation by assessment or avoidance may be required by the county. BLM has completed inventories of cultural resources on the parcel and would provide the data to Shasta County to assist in their analysis.

Non-Federal Land

If the proposed action is selected, cultural inventories would be implemented to identify cultural resources on the parcel. Any cultural sites identified would be managed in accordance with Federal laws.

EXISTING RIGHTS

Federal Land

Valid existing rights would be handled in accordance with applicable laws and regulations that describe the disposition of Federal rights-of-way prior to disposal. The exchange proponent and rights-of-way holders would be encouraged to negotiate easements in place of the rights-of-way. If an easement agreement is not met, the patent would be made subject to any valid existing rights.

Non-Federal Land

The authorized uses on the non-Federal land would likely be revoked through time since their utility in respect to the surrounding public land is unnecessary. These revocations should not have any impact on the present holders of those rights.

FISHERIES

Federal Land

The land exchange, potential foreseeable development, and associated creek corridor setback covenant resulting from this land exchange would result in a no net change to pre-exchange environmental conditions of the creek corridor. Discussions with the California Department of Fish and Game confirm this opinion. County, State, and Federal laws and regulations ensure the appropriate environmental conservation for future development actions. Therefore, there would be no net loss to fisheries species, their critical habitat, and their Essential Fish Habitat.

That determination is also consistent with the findings in the EIS, (Pages 4-17 and 18, Impacts to Anadromous Salmonid Habitat) which describe the key habitat areas within the Redding Resource area. Salt Creek was not determined to be a key habitat for anadromous salmonids in that regional analysis. NOAA Fisheries, through the proposed critical habitat designation process for C CVS and CVFC, does not include any portion of Salt Creek south of California Highway 299, as critical habitat. The subject parcel is located south of Highway 299.

The existing habitat and environmental conditions for Central Valley steelhead and Central Valley fall-run Chinook are not considered high quality by BLM and California Department of Fish and Game due to limiting conditions of the water quality, habitat access, habitat elements, channel conditions, and flow conditions in the seasonally intermittent creek. Existing conditions limit winter and spring upstream and downstream fish migration. The culvert under Highway 299 is a partial barrier to fish migration. However, if this passage was improved, the limiting conditions of the habitat within the Federal land would still limit the value for spawning of salmonid species.

BLM, as required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, has consulted with NOAA Fisheries for California Central Valley steelhead, Central Valley fall and late fall-run Chinook, and Proposed Critical Habitat for California Central Valley steelhead.

NOAA Fisheries concluded that “the proposed Federal action does not specifically provide any permits or funding for the development or other disturbances of the lands being exchanged, NMFS concurs that the proposed Victoria Drive – Grass Valley Creek Land Exchange Program is not likely to adversely affect listed salmonids, proposed threatened sturgeon, proposed or designated critical habitat or Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for Pacific salmon.” Therefore, BLM has made a determination that the proposed action would have an insignificant effect and is “not likely to adversely affect” California Central Valley steelhead or Central Valley fall-run chinook and their associated habitats.

Non-Federal Land

Acquisition of this non-Federal parcel creates a larger contiguous reserve of Federal lands to ensure the future conservation resident and anadromous fish habitat. The Northwest Forest Plan guidelines, Trinity River Restoration Program, and Grass Valley Creek Watershed Restoration exist to promote Special Status Species protection and conserve forest resources. This land exchange is beneficial for many species and complements the ongoing ecosystem conservation actions by Federal, state, and local organizations.

Unlike the subject Federal parcel, the EIS, (Pages 4-17 and 18, Impacts to Anadromous Salmonid Habitat) lists Grass Valley Creek tributaries below Buckhorn Dam as one of the key habitat areas for anadromous salmonids within the Redding Resource area.

FUELS MANAGEMENT AND FIRE SAFETY

Federal Land

If the proposed action is selected, BLM administrative costs on the Federal land are limited to exchange processing costs. Exchange processing costs for tasks such as preparing feasibility reports, appraisals, publishing public notices, and environmental assessments have been estimated to cost the BLM approximately \$23,000. The exchange proponent will pay slightly more than this amount (approximately \$24,000) in processing costs.

Approximately five miles of boundary which are subject to encroachment on the Federal land would be eliminated by the proposed action. A reduction in costs for fuel management such as brush mastication and overhead would be approximately \$161,250.00 for a five year period and more beyond that time period. Long term costs for other administrative expenses such as trash clean-up, rights-of-way management, law enforcement, trespass monitoring and trespass abatement would be eliminated.

Under the proposed action, Shasta County Department of Resource Management would analyze the development potential and would require a Wildland Fuel/Vegetation Management Plan and a plan for emergency evacuation routes as part of subdivision development.

Non-Federal Land

The proposed action would also allow a reduction of approximately four miles of boundary which are subject to encroachment on the non-Federal land. Land management practices on the non-Federal lands would conform to ongoing management practices on adjacent lands currently in Federal ownership. Per acre treatment costs for fuel management and other activities can be minimized through the economies created by larger parcel sizes and a uniform ownership pattern.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Federal Land

The Environmental Site Assessment dated February 28, 2005, concluded that disposal of the public lands would represent a low hazardous materials risk from recognized environmental conditions.

Non-Federal Land

The Environmental Site Assessment dated February 28, 2005, concluded that acquisition of the non-Federal land would represent a low hazardous materials risk from recognized environmental conditions.

RECREATION

Federal Land

Loss of approximately 215 acres of public land would result in a slightly negative impact to recreation in the area. However, the limited use that currently exists would shift to other nearby trails and open space. Swasey Drive for example, is located approximately one mile south of the parcel and offers BLM managed open space with trails for local public use. The West Side Trail is located within a subdivision less than one mile southeast of the parcel. There are several other recreational opportunities available to sustain the public use demand in the Redding area. The largest impact would be to the adjoining land owners that have become accustomed to using the public parcel as an extension to their own backyards.

The subject parcel is surrounded by private property, is used mostly by nearby residents and does not connect to any other federally managed land. The potential for attaching the subject trails to any existing or future trail system is unlikely due to the low probability of gaining trail easements across a large number of private parcels. Studies such as the Shasta-Trinity Trails Connection did not identify the parcel as a valuable link to recreational use for the Redding area.

The City of Redding and surrounding areas facilitate a wealth of scenic trail systems and recreation areas enjoyed by the local residents. Many subdivisions in the area have been successful in including trails into the development. As well, the exchange proponent could consider including trails into his plans for development.

In a letter dated January 11, 2005 in considering the development potential of the parcel, the Shasta County Department of Resource Management stated that “More information will be needed regarding the location and status of existing trails and recreational use. It may be necessary to incorporate some trails into the development plans for the site”. Therefore, under the proposed action, it is possible that the trails on the parcel may remain.

Non-Federal Land

The proposed action would allow a net increase in acreage that is suitable for recreation under Federal jurisdiction. Acquisition of the non-Federal parcel would contribute to Federal ownership of the majority of the watershed. With the change in watershed ownership from private to public, there is expected to be a substantial increase in public recreation in the area.

Recreation uses expected on the parcel would be hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, primitive camping, and vista points. Plans for recreation management within the watershed would be implemented to include potential development of a trail system, access points and vehicle parking. Federal management of recreation opportunities becomes far more effective with seamless management.

SCENIC QUALITY

Federal Land

The EIS (page 4-49, Impacts to Scenic Quality) predicted that “*The public lands identified for transfer surrounding the City of Redding would probably be developed eventually for uses which would create contrasts to their existing landscapes, resulting in degradation of scenic quality*”. The proposed action would facilitate a decrease in federally managed open space near the city of Redding.

However, the foreseeable development of the parcel would blend in with the surrounding development and the degradation of scenic quality on the ground would not be significant. In addition, the terrain and dense tree coverage make it difficult to distinguish public land from the majority of rural residential home lots. Therefore, views from distant hilltop homes would also not be significantly affected.

Non-Federal Land

The inclusion of the non-Federal parcel into Federal ownership would increase the scenic quality of the Redding Resource Area. Upon designation of the area as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, the Grass Valley Creek watershed public use would increase. The rating of the parcel would be expected to be rated as an “A” for its high scenic quality and high viewer sensitivity.

In addition, acquisition of the non-Federal parcel would assist in enhancing the quality of the Trinity River, a Wild and Scenic River. The Trinity River is classified as an “A” scenic quality rating, due to both high scenic quality and high viewer sensitivity.

SOILS (EROSION POTENTIAL)

Federal Land

Future subdivisions and/or developments would be subject to the California Environmental Quality Act and reviewed by Shasta County, the California Department of Fish and Game and California's Regional Water Quality Control Board as part of state and local permit requirements. Shasta County has an existing ordinance which places stringent requirements on any developments on slopes exceeding 30% and would require a plan for slope stability and erosion/ sediment control.

The areas that would likely be developed are dominated by slopes under 15%. The parcel has some of the lowest grade slopes within the Salt Creek watershed. Future development would likely occur within areas typified by these low slopes. These portions of the parcel, especially the south central, southeast and eastern parts, are better suited for developments than much of the existing developed land within the Salt Creek watershed. However, some road construction would require development(s) within localized steeper areas such as creek crossings.

Future developments would likely include between 10 and 60 rural residences and the necessary infrastructure to sustain that development, i.e. roads, sewage systems and utility lines. Development of the selected public land would also require 1 to 4 perpendicular crossings of the main stem and main tributaries of Salt Creek similar to two existing crossings on nearby Tilton Mine Road. The combined developments, i.e. structures and infra-structure would result in surface disturbance on up to 60 total acres.

There would likely be a small amount of short term turbidity above existing levels, i.e. the No Action alternative, in the main stem of Salt Creek and its tributaries during and immediately following construction activities. This likelihood would be highest during the winter and, to a far lesser degree, early spring due to the seasonal nature of the drainages.

Long term impacts would be dependent upon subsequent land use practices of the landowners, e.g. gardening or landscaping by homeowners, types of roads developed, etc. These land uses would contribute a minimal amount to long term turbidity within Salt Creek, i.e. proportional to the amount of residences constructed (10 to 60) in comparison to the 200-300 existing residences within the watershed. Existing developments have yet been identified as degrading water quality downstream within Salt Creek or the Sacramento River. The proposed action would likely have the same level of impact, i.e. insignificant.

Non-Federal Land

The parcel would be managed as part of the watershed rehabilitation efforts guided by the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Plan to avoid potential transport of sediment to the Trinity River by limiting soil erosion and preventing further degradation. BLM would implement forest management practices to limit the potential for catastrophic fire and subsequent erosion. For example, helicopter logging for forest thinning and timber stand improvement may be a technique employed.

BLM forest management practices would remove considerably less vegetative canopy than private commercial timber production. If BLM were to acquire the offered non-Federal lands, cumulative turbidity would be at or below existing levels in perpetuity based on any actions approved by BLM in the future.

Acquisition of the non-Federal parcel would facilitate management efforts that would not be possible in private ownership, such as tree planting and other stabilization needs. Although, watershed restoration efforts have been successful, acquisition of the subject parcel is essential for the long term success of the watershed.

With the entire watershed under Federal protection, stabilization efforts will be more effective, reducing sediment flow into Buckhorn Reservoir and Hamilton Ponds, thus, reducing dredging and sediment removal needs, and increasing the longevity of the sediment control system.

TERRESTRIAL SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Federal Land

There are no wildlife or plant Special Status Species that would be affected. The plant community present on the Federal parcel is locally and regionally abundant and if removed under the foreseeable development would not represent a significant loss.

The proposed action is consistent with the “Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl” (USDA/USDI, 1994) in respect to the Aquatic Conservation Strategy to protect riparian areas within the range of the northern spotted owl. The Federal land does not possess the habitat requirements for use by northern spotted owl or other old growth dependent species (Ibid; page B-11).

Non-Federal Land

Acquisition of this non-Federal parcel creates a larger contiguous reserve of Federal lands to ensure the future conservation of Special Status Species like northern spotted owl, bald eagle, Pacific fisher, foothill yellow-legged frog, terrestrial mollusks, and bat species, numerous plant species, and anadromous fish habitat. Terrestrial Special Status Species would be managed in accordance with appropriate regulations and statutory requirements.

This action is consistent with the “Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl” (USDA/USDI, 1994) in respect to the Aquatic Conservation Strategy to protect riparian areas within the range of the northern spotted owl. The non-Federal land does possess the habitat requirements for use by northern spotted owl or other old growth dependent species (Ibid; pages B-11 and C-44 through C-48).

TRAFFIC

Federal Land

If the County authorizes development of the parcel, traffic would slightly increase on Lower Springs Road, Victoria Drive, Swasey Drive, and Highway 299. It is not likely that Shasta County would authorize the construction of a subdivision which creates traffic that would exceed the capacity of the local road system. Long term traffic increases would be similar to levels experienced due to other nearby residential development.

Victoria Drive would likely be extended as part of subdivision development and would likely connect to Lower Springs Road. An additional connection further west on Lower Springs Road is also possible if easements are acquired across private property. Depending on new road layout and placement of traffic impediments, additional traffic flow can be concentrated on Victoria Drive or can be diverted to Lower Springs Road to evenly disburse traffic impact.

It is also possible to divert some of the existing traffic generated by residents on the far end of Victoria Drive to utilize Lower Springs Road as a connection to Highway 299, thereby relieving some of the traffic burden on Victoria Drive. Traffic volume would likely peak during a temporary period of new home construction. Traffic increases are not expected to have any significant impacts to safety or quality of life for residents of the area.

Non-Federal Land

There are no anticipated effects to traffic resulting from the proposed action.

WATER QUALITY

Federal Land

Overall water infiltration on the Federal parcel would likely decrease due to construction of roads, driveways, and homes. Water runoff would likely increase particularly during storm events and would be mitigated through the use of retention structures and other improvements where necessary. Water runoff amounts and patterns would be similar, although slightly less due to more favorable slopes, to that found on the adjacent developed parcels.

Septic use for homes developed on the parcel would likely require separate septic systems. Impacts to water quality from these changes are not expected to be significant. Depending on type of access roads, there is potential for a slight increase in erosion which could potentially add to a minor amount of turbidity in the surface water. However, road development would be subject to mitigation requirements to reduce the impact through County mandated best management practices. Additional impacts to water quality are not anticipated.

Non-Federal Land

Federal management activities such as mechanical or mulching/vegetative treatments for rehabilitation of the Grass Valley Creek watershed would likely enhance the long term effects to water quality of the non-Federal parcel.

WETLANDS/RIPARIAN ZONES

Federal Land

The size of the entire drainage into Basins A & B is estimated to be less than 10 acres on the Federal parcel and approximately 30 acres on the private parcel. If the proposed action is selected, the entire watershed would be in private ownership. Possibly two development sites on the Federal parcel could occur on the ridges that drain into the watershed.

Given this reasonable foreseeable development scenario, impacts that may occur include an increase in surface runoff and a potential for increased erosion which may shorten the lifespan of the Basin A. Future development would be subject to county regulations and would follow CEQA guidelines and therefore, watershed protection measures would likely minimize any input into Basin A. As discussed under the section Water Quality (above), additional retention ponds may be required. Additional impacts to wetlands and riparian are not anticipated.

Non-Federal Land

The long term effects to wetlands and riparian resulting from the proposed action are limited to improvements which can be made to the Grass Valley Creek from contiguous Federal ownership such as vegetative treatments.

WILDLIFE

Federal Land

Mixed Chaparral and Blue Oak-Foothill Pine habitats are typical habitats of California foothills. The foreseeable development would not affect the sustainability or persistence of wildlife species that are common to the existing habitat types.

Non-Federal Land

The additional acreage that would be assumed through the proposed action would increase contiguous federally managed open space for wildlife habitat. Wildlife would be managed in accordance with appropriate regulations and statutory requirements.

D. NO ACTION - ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

AIR QUALITY

Federal Land

No impacts would be expected on the Federal land under the no-action alternative.

Non-Federal Land

There may be a potential for short term fugitive dust resulting from road construction/maintenance or logging activities. Impacts are not anticipated to be significant.

COUNTY TAX BASE

Federal Land

Taxes are only paid on private lands. Therefore, if the Federal land were to remain in public ownership, BLM would continue to pay Shasta County Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) at 10 cents per acre (\$21.50 per year). There would not be an increase in tax payments to Shasta County as would be in the proposed action.

Non-Federal Land

If the non-Federal land remains in private ownership, taxes assessed as a recreation and commercial timber production zone would continue to be paid to Trinity County in the amount of approximately \$2117.42 annually. There would be no change in taxes for the non-Federal land due to the no-action alternative.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Federal Land

There is potential for minor impacts on historic ditches from recreational activities such as hiking and riding. Emergency fire suppression on the parcel risks damage to cultural resources due to heavy equipment usage. As with all federally protected cultural resources, there is always a potential for incidental artifact collecting from casual visitors. Natural processes would continue to obscure and/or erase some or, eventually, all traces of the historic features.

However, none of the recorded sites were deemed eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, i.e. the features do not merit protection under the National Historic Preservation Act. The features were determined to have only local significance due to their relatively poor integrity, lack of association with important persons, non-distinctive designs and widespread distribution of these types of features on public and private lands within western Shasta County. Therefore, no special management actions for protection of the sites would be implemented under this alternative.

Non-Federal Land

The anticipated land use of the parcel in private ownership would likely be commercial timber production which could potentially result in a negative impact on the Trinity River restoration. Improvement to tribal fisheries would be limited without restoration of the entire watershed including the private parcel.

EXISTING RIGHTS

Federal Land

The existing rights-of-way would remain on the parcel and managed in accordance with 43 CFR 2800, with administrative costs for processing renewals, assignments, monitoring and non-compliance actions. Other rights-of-way applications would only be considered if the proposal would not reduce the value of the parcel. Any future disposal action would be subject to the existing authorized rights-of-way on the parcel at the time.

Non-Federal Land

The authorized uses on the non-Federal land would remain unless removed by the private property owner.

FISHERIES

Federal Land

No active management for fishery protection is expected on the Federal parcel if it were to remain in Federal jurisdiction.

Non-Federal Land

Continued private ownership would complicate management of the watershed for the protection of salmonid habitat. Greater latitude is possible for forest management activities in private ownership than if governed by federal regulations.

Therefore, the consequences of surface disturbing actions on the parcel would be felt downstream, with sediment transportation into the Trinity River, possible smothering salmonid spawning habitat and complicating habitat restoration by the Trinity River Restoration Program and the efforts of many other agencies cooperating in the project.

FUELS MANAGEMENT AND FIRE SAFETY

Federal Land

Under the no action alternative, BLM would continue to be responsible for the administration of the public lands. The major concerns on the parcel would continue to be unauthorized encroachment, including dumping, and fire safety (fuels management).

Since the no action alternative does not envision expenditure of funds to improve the land's limited open space values (trail maintenance and improvement) the expenditures would mainly take the form of fuels management. Brush mastication would be the most likely form of fuels management on a parcel such as the Federal lands in this exchange proposal. Current costs for brush mastication, including overhead, average approximately \$750.00 per acre. Treatment of the entire acreage of the Federal parcel would cost approximately \$161,250.00 and would remain effective for about five years.

Non-Federal Land

Under the non-action alternative, the Federal government would continue to assume management responsibility of approximately four miles of public/private boundary which is subject to encroachments. To avoid the private land, BLM would not be able to treat BLM land along the property boundary and locate fuel breaks on adjacent ridges. It would be very difficult and unsafe to hold prescribed fires on mid-slope lines above the private land. Other treatment methods would also be difficult since this area contains very few roads and access is limited.

Any further development, i.e. cabins or structures, would create even greater issues regarding utilizing fire/fuels treatment and trespass management. Obtaining the private section of land within the Grass Valley Creek Watershed would greatly improve BLM's ability to manage a landscape level and long term fire and fuels management program. In order to increase management efficiency, posting boundaries between private and public ownership could be required.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Federal Land

There may be a potential for future dumping on the Federal parcel and it could require additional inspections for hazardous waste prior to any disposal action.

Non-Federal Land

No known hazardous material impact would be expected on the non-Federal land under the no-action alternative.

RECREATION

Federal Land

The trails on the Federal parcel have not been managed as a formal trail system. The BLM has identified trails elsewhere in Shasta County that are more suited to be effectively managed within Federal jurisdiction. The subject parcel is surrounded by private property, is used mostly by nearby residents, does not connect to any other federally managed land and is not identified as a valuable link to recreational use. No active management for recreation is anticipated on the Federal parcel if it were to remain in Federal ownership.

Some of the unauthorized trails have been developed in areas unsuited for trails and are on slopes and in drainages that lend themselves to soil erosion. If the lands were retained, maintenance or closure of some trails would be required.

Non-Federal Land

If the no action alternative is selected, 566 acres would not be included in the recreation opportunities within the Grass Valley Creek watershed.

SCENIC QUALITY

Federal Land

Under the no action alternative, scenic quality protection would not be prescribed and actions which would degrade scenic quality could occur. Continued development of the surrounding area would further contrast with the characteristic landscape and the scenic quality would continue to degrade irrespective of BLM actions.

Non-Federal Land

If the non-Federal land were to remain in private ownership the scenic quality of the watershed could be degraded if the parcel were to be logged or developed.

SOILS (EROSION POTENTIAL)

Federal Land

Trail use and proliferation would lead to minor increases in turbidity above existing levels. These increases would be most likely during the winter and early spring when flows in Salt Creek are relatively continuous. No increase in turbidity is expected in the balance of the year given the intermittent nature of the flows in Salt Creek within and adjoining the parcel.

Non-Federal Land

Erosion would continue to a small degree initially on the private land. However, this would change dramatically with the approval of any subsequent ground disturbing activity, i.e. most likely the private extraction of forest products. Even with the use of helicopter yarding techniques (pursuant to special timber harvest rules promulgated and overseen by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection), exposed soil would have a high probability of increasing turbidity within the main stem of Grass Valley Creek. The amount of exposed soil and erosion probability is higher as private land than with BLM activities due to BLM's sediment reducing management objectives.

There is also a likelihood of transport of increased loads of sediment into Buckhorn Reservoir due to its immediate proximity to the parcel. This would lessen the longevity of the Reservoir to an unknown degree due to the loss of some storage capacity. The transport of sediment from that portion of the parcel which drains below the Reservoir would hasten the filling of the Hamilton Ponds to an unknown degree.

A small but unknown potential exists for slope failure in heavy precipitation if too much vegetative cover is removed and/or soil is exposed via surface disturbing actions. This could lead to the transport to the Trinity River of tons of sediment for several years subsequent to the disturbance. This sediment would become part of the bed load of the River and become entrained within the existing substrate of gravels thereby filling interstitial spaces within the alluvium.

TERRESTRIAL SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Federal Land

No active management on the Federal land for terrestrial special status species is anticipated on the parcel if the no-action alternative is selected.

Non-Federal Land

If the no action alternative is selected a block of private land would reduce contiguous federally managed open space for terrestrial special status species including northern spotted owl, bald eagle, Pacific fisher, foothill yellow-legged frog, terrestrial mollusks, and bat species, numerous plant species, and anadromous fish habitat.

TRAFFIC

Federal Land

No impacts are expected on the Federal land under the no action alternative.

Non-Federal Land

No impacts are expected on the non-Federal land under the no action alternative

WATER QUALITY

Federal Land

Impacts to water quality are not anticipated. The area would remain mostly undisturbed.

Non-Federal Land

The long term effects to water quality resulting from the no action alternative are limited to the effects resulting from lack of seamless management and the potential timber harvest and road construction.

Timber harvest and road construction would be under a CDF approved harvest plan and ostensibly would meet with California State water quality standards. Vegetation treatments to decrease sedimentation and improve water quality would not be implemented.

WETLANDS/RIPARIAN ZONES

Federal Land

If the parcel were to remain in Federal ownership, there would be no additional protection or enhancement of the creeks, drainages, or the retention ponds. Although no impacts would be anticipated, the retention pond is an artificial feature the BLM would not maintain.

In time, the retention pond would fill in and top over or the dam would fail. Initial failure of this feature would increase sediment flows, however, would likely decrease as a new drainage feature develops, mimicking the natural flow and slope of the drainage. The drainage between Basin A and B is broad, the elevation contour decreases and vegetation characteristic of mesic conditions are present. These conditions are conducive for a flow that would spread out with decreased velocities. The wetland vegetation located in the overflow channel between the retention ponds would act as a sediment filter trapping sediment as water would continue to flow into Basin B.

Non-Federal Land

The long term effects to wetlands and riparian zones resulting from no action will limit the improvements which can be made to the Grass Valley Creek watershed due to the mixed ownership patterns.

WILDLIFE

Federal Land

Wildlife would be managed in accordance with appropriate regulations and statutory requirements.

Non-Federal Land

If the no action alternative is selected a block of private land would reduce contiguous federally managed open space for wildlife habitat.

E. SALE ALTERNATIVE - ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Federal Land

Considering the expected development potential of the parcel, the environmental consequences of the sales alternative would be the same as the proposed action. However, there may be a short term increase in tax revenue to Shasta County over the proposed action.

If the Federal land were disposed of via competitive sale, bidding would begin at the fair market value of \$900,000 or current fair market value at the time of sale. The tax assessment estimate would be based on 1% of the accepted high bid at the time of sale. It is impossible to predict the competitive sale price. However it is expected that the bid could exceed the current estimate of fair market value, although to an unknown degree. Therefore, it is expected that there would be an initial increase to annual payments to Shasta County from \$21.50 (\$.10 per acre) currently paid by BLM as Payment in Lieu of Taxes, to an amount exceeding the proposed alternative figure of approximately \$9,000 depending on the final bidding price.

However, the difference would likely be short term, i.e. last only until the land is fully developed. The long term impact to Shasta County would be identical to the proposed action alternative, i.e. it is very likely that tax assessments on the former public land would increase substantially subsequent to any approved subdivision of the subject land. Cumulative annual payments to Shasta County would vary from \$25,000 for 10 undeveloped lots to \$2,000,000+ if 60 lots were developed in keeping with recent nearby developments.

Non-Federal Land

The environmental consequences of the sales alternative for the non-Federal land would be the same as the no action alternative.

F. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts, as defined by Council of Environmental Quality regulations in 40 CFR 1508.7, are “the impacts on the environment which result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or persons undertakes such other actions.” The cumulative effects of the proposed exchange are described below.

Incremental effects of the proposed exchange: The adverse impacts of the proposed exchange identified in this tiered EA are primarily the result of the indirect impacts of privatization of public lands and their subsequent residential, industrial, and commercial development: increased noise, traffic, vehicle emissions, dust, soil erosion and runoff, loss of some open space and trails within the developing area, impacts to fish and wildlife habitat, impacts to 13 historic mining-related and prehistoric archaeological sites, reduction of scenic quality.

Effects are short term (construction related) and long term (present after development is complete). Both the short term and long term adverse effects are minor and are the normal result of converting undeveloped lands to more intensive uses. BLM assumes that potential adverse effects could be further reduced or eliminated in accordance with local development permit requirements.

Other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions: The proposed exchange is one in a series of potential acquisitions identified in the Redding RMP involving 5 counties and up to 160,000 acres which are intended to concentrate public land ownership in certain areas with natural resource, recreation or other values appropriate for Federal management. To achieve this objective of the RMP, up to 164,000 Federal lands may be transferred to other ownerships via exchange or sale. BLM generally acquires lands only from willing sellers, and must ensure that each acquisition or disposal is in the public interest. Lands determined through site specific analysis not to meet these standards, would be dropped from consideration.

Development in the Redding area is driven by community needs and market forces. Local county planning efforts will guide the extent to which the area is developed based on community needs and any new development on private lands is subject to local land use controls. BLM expects that growth in the community of Redding will continue to grow at an annual rate of approximately 3% during the foreseeable future and the need for residential development would not be altered by the selection of the proposed action or alternatives. Effects of this overall development are similar to the indirect effects of the proposed exchange, but on a much larger scale.

Effects of the proposed exchange when added to effects of other actions: The adverse effects of the proposed exchange would only slightly increase the cumulative adverse effects of overall development of the Redding area. Local planning officials have indicated that the Redding area has been expanding rapidly and development is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The west Redding area consists of approximately 13,000 acres of mostly private developable land.

Approximately 750 acres of developable BLM land have been patented during the past 10 years in this area. Approximately 500 acres of BLM lands (including land involved in this exchange) could be transferred to private ownership and developed within the next 10 years. It is expected that BLM lands will contribute a total of approximately 10% of the land base made available for residential purposes in west Redding.

Federal lands identified for disposal in the Redding area do not contain sensitive or significant resource values that would be more appropriate for Federal management. The lands are generally suitable for development. Effects similar to those identified for the proposed exchange are anticipated in connection with other BLM exchanges or sales under the RMP. BLM has initiated a number of other disposal actions in this area with similar indirect effects, including exchange of approximately 100 acres in connection with an existing sand and gravel operation.

With the implementation of a plan amendment to allow sales as a tool for disposal, there is greater flexibility to dispose of land in the Redding area through competitive sales. It is not anticipated that the overall effect on land use would be any different than under the RMP prior to the amendment, when the direction emphasized exchanges.

The public has raised the issue of loss of open space, hiking and biking trails, and similar recreational opportunities in connection with this exchange. However, BLM would actually acquire more acreage than it would dispose of if the RMP were fully implemented. The acquired lands are specifically intended for the purpose of enhancing existing natural resource values of Grass Valley Creek, Trinity River, and other key areas of public lands available to the Redding community. Thus, the proposed exchange would result in a cumulative increase in public open space lands and would have a beneficial impact on public recreation as well as fish, wildlife, scenic quality, and related natural resources in these areas.

The selected Federal parcel is well suited for development. If the no-action alternative is selected, less suitable lands may be developed instead.

CHAPTER 5 CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

A. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

In addition to the public involvement during the completion of the RMP, diligent effort has been implemented by the BLM to include public involvement during the evaluation of this exchange proposal. Several meetings were held to discuss the public interest beginning in early scoping of the exchange proposal. In response to public concern, comments to the exchange proposal continued to be accepted over a period of 16 months after the required 45 day comment period had ended. The BLM continued to keep an open forum for the purpose of allowing the public to thoroughly communicate all potential issues and reasonable alternatives.

Numerous methods were used to solicit public involvement and gather input concerning this exchange proposal, including notice of the exchange proposal in local newspapers and several public meetings held at different locations. The BLM engaged extensively in coordination with interested parties, local, county, state officials and the Northwest California Resource Advisory Council (RAC) to further refine issues and alternatives to this exchange. RAC meetings were held that allowed the opportunity for public input concerning the exchange. News releases and publications in the Federal register were submitted, announcing the RAC meetings and inviting the public to comment on the exchange.

The public was well informed of the exchange issues and was very cooperative in submitting feedback. Several articles and editorials were published in the local newspaper discussing perceived impacts from the proposed exchange. All comments received from the meetings and public notices have been analyzed and were considered during the evaluation of issues and alternatives for input into the Environmental Analysis. A meeting was held in March 2002, with the Shasta Community Services District (SCSD) and local residents interested in either retention or acquisition of the Federal parcel. The group was informed of the current exchange proposal and BLM's intent to further analyze the feasibility of the exchange.

Another meeting to gain public input concerning the exchange was conducted on October 3, 2003 with SCSD and local residents which also included the Greater Redding Trails and Bikeways Council, and a representative of the California Department of Fish and Game. The SCSD voiced their interest in submitting a proposal to acquire the Federal parcel in accordance with the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP). The BLM informed the group that the BLM was in the process of analyzing the feasibility of the exchange proposal and were committed to evaluate all reasonable alternatives during the exchange process.

During early scoping of the exchange proposal, BLM contacted several agencies, organizations, and individuals concerning the exchange. On June 29, 2004, BLM met at a Trails and Bikeways Council meeting to discuss the exchange and community concerns.

Public involvement was again pursued with the issuance of a Notice of Exchange Proposal that was published weekly for four consecutive weeks in the local newspapers. Public review and comments concerning the exchange were solicited for a 45 day period during the months of September and October 2004. Notices were also sent out to right-of-way holders, adjoining land owners, local interest groups, local government, government officials, Native American groups, and other interested parties. There were no grazing permittees to be notified.

Approximately 100 comments were received. The majority of comments were submitted by adjoining and nearby land owners. The primary concern noted was loss of open space and recreational use. Other concerns were cultural protection, fisheries protection, wildlife protection and issues related to development of the parcel.

Following the comment period, the RAC held an open meeting in Ukiah, CA. A small group of concerned Redding residents approached the RAC to voice their concerns of the Salmon Creek Resources Exchange in Redding. The RAC agreed to review the exchange program including the current proposal at the next meeting in Redding.

The RAC held another meeting in Redding on February 1 and 2, 2005. The Salmon Creek Resources Exchange was included in the agenda for public discussion. The committee opened the opportunity for public comments concerning the proposal. Approximately 30 individuals concerned about the proposed exchange attended the meeting. Many shared their views both for and against the proposal. Those opposed to the exchange voiced their opinions about the loss of local open space presently enjoyed by the nearby residents, fear of potential development, and concerns about riparian habitat.

Advocates of the exchange pointed to the growth in Shasta County and their belief that subdivision development could reduce the chance of wildland fires. Trinity County Resource Conservation District Director spoke in favor of the exchange as it related to improving restoration efforts on the Trinity River. The RAC took no formal position on the exchange proposal, but did endorse the BLM Redding Field Office's land tenure program as defined in the RMP. RAC members encouraged the BLM to work with land exchange interests to determine ways to protect the Salt Creek corridor within the Federal parcel.

In response to public concern, BLM met with California Department of Fish and Game, Shasta County Planning Department and the exchange proponent on March 8, 2005, to discuss protection of Salt Creek. All agreed to include a stream corridor covenant to protect against development.

On April 5, 2005, the BLM presented information on the status of the subject exchange to the Shasta County Board of Supervisors (BOS). The meeting was open to the public and the public was allowed an opportunity to comment on the exchange. Three local land owners spoke in opposition of the exchange and requested support from the BOS. The BOS took no position for or against the exchange.

The RAC held another open forum in Redding on May 2005, and further discuss issues concerning the exchange. Approximately five individuals (mostly adjoining land owners) reiterated their opposition to disposing of the Federal parcel. Another individual spoke in support of the exchange. The RAC took no formal position on the exchange, but asked BLM to continue considering all alternatives to the exchange.

BLM State Director Mike Pool met with the same group to discuss their continued opposition of the exchange on February 3, 2006.

The RAC held an open meeting on February 16, 2006 in Weaverville, CA and allowed comments concerning the exchange. Two of the adjoining land owners reiterated their concern as discussed in previous meetings. Another individual spoke in support of the exchange.

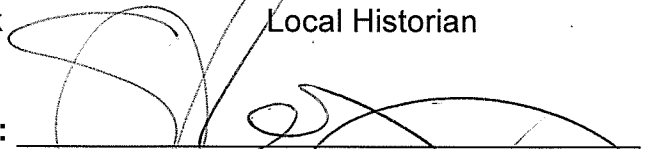
BLM State Director Mike Pool attended a field tour of the Federal parcel on February 17, 2006. The tour allowed the state director to become familiar with the Federal parcel. Approximately 15 adjoining and other nearby land owners with both opposition and support of the exchange attended the tour.

B. PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED

Steven W. Anderson	BLM Redding, Field Manager
Francis Berg	BLM Redding, Assistant Field Manager
Joe Molter	BLM Redding, Botanist
Eric Ritter	BLM Redding, Archaeologist
Ron Roger	BLM Redding, Geologist
Irvin Fernandez	BLM Redding, Wildlife Biologist
Gary Diridoni	BLM Redding, Wildlife Biologist
John Borgic	BLM Redding, Forester
Walter Herzog	BLM Redding, Fire Management Officer
Glen Miller	BLM Redding, Environmental Coordinator
Bill Kuntz	BLM Redding, Outdoor Recreation Specialist
Karl Stein	BLM WO, Fisheries Biologist
Jeff Fontana	BLM, Public Affairs Specialist
Howard Stark	BLM CA, Chief of Lands
Jack Mills	BLM CA, Environmental Coordinator
Dianna Storey	BLM CA, Land Law Examiner
Kathy Gary	BLM CA, Land Law Examiner
Lenore Thomas	BLM CA, Hazardous Materials Coordinator
Erica Niebauer	Department of Interior, Solicitor
David Meurer	Congressman Herger's Office, Representative
Stacey Lybeck	Senator Boxer's Office, Representative
Don Klusman, Chairman	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Stan Leach	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Don Klusman	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Ruth Shriber	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Charlene Wardlow	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Ryan Henson	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Diane Beck	Northern California Resource Advisory Council

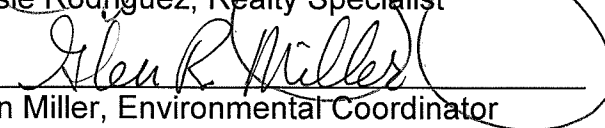
Michael Kelley	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Bill Radtkey	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Eugene Parham	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Philip Moyer	Northern California Resource Advisory Council
Ted Foster	Private Appraiser
Brad Hinkle	Shasta County Assessors Office, City Appraiser
Jim Forseland	Shasta County Assessors Office, City Appraiser
Diana Zack	Shasta County Assessors Office, City Appraiser
California Office of Historic Preservation	
Leon Benner	Redding Rancheria
Loretta and Matthew Root	Toyon Wintu Tribe-El-Pom, Keswick Rancheria
Carol Sinclair	Toyon Wintu Tribe-El-Pom, Keswick Rancheria
Robert B. Burns	Wintu Education and Cultural Council
Gary Rickard	Wintu Tribe & Toyon-Wintu Center
Caleen Sisk-Franco	Winimem Wintu
John W. Hayward	Nor-Rel-Muk Nation
Irwin Fust	Shasta County Supervisor
Mark Cibula	Shasta County Supervisor
Russ Mull	Shasta County Planning Department
Bill Walker	Shasta County Planning Department
J.R. Kaufman	Shasta Community Services District
Brian Swagerty	Shasta Community Services District
James Diehl	CA Dept. of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire Marshal
Tax Collector	Shasta County
Tax Collector	Trinity County
Howard Brown	NOAA Fisheries
Mike Tucker	NOAA Fisheries
Jack Williamson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Fisheries Biologist
Jen Ballard	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, Fisheries Biologist
Randy Benthin	CA Dept. & Fish and Game, Fisheries Biologist
Steve Baumgartner	CA Dept. & Fish and Game, Fisheries Biologist
Eda Eggeman	CA Dept. & Fish and Game, Natural Resources
Bob Williams	CA Dept. & Fish and Game, Natural Resources
Joe Rice	Owner, Salmon Creek Resources
Brent Owen	Business Owner, Owen Construction
Kim Hawkins	Assistant, Owen Construction
Don Weidlein	Victoria Project Fire Safety Committee
Susan Weale	Shasta Coalition for the Preservation of Public Land
Lang Dayton	Trails & Bikeways Council of Greater Redding
Minnie Sagar	Trails & Bikeways Council of Greater Redding
Randall Hauser	Shasta Resources Council
Chuck Hornbeck	Local Historian

PREPARED BY: _____


Susie Rodriguez, Realty Specialist

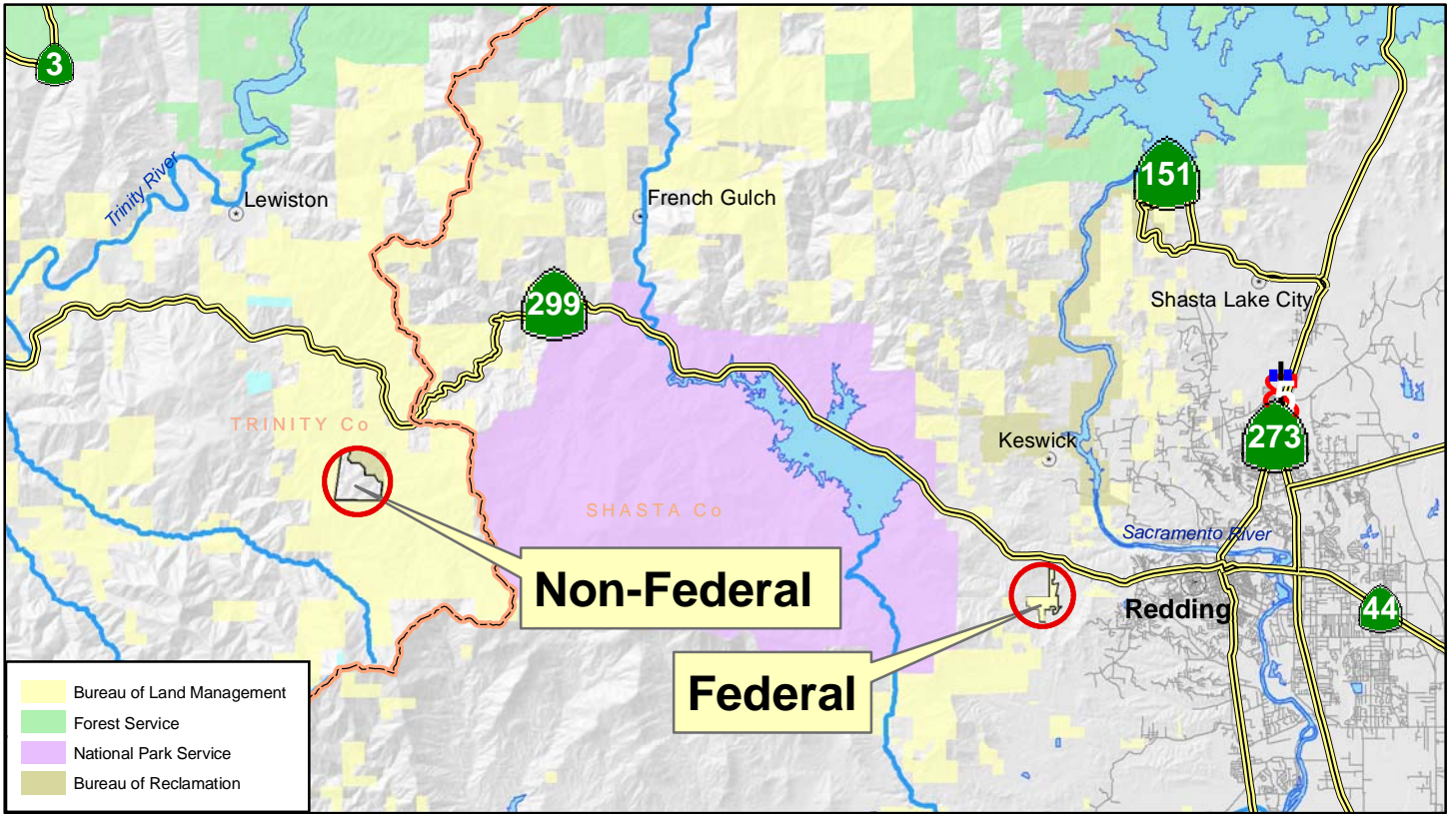
4/26/06
Date

REVIEWED BY: _____


Glen Miller, Environmental Coordinator

4/26/2006
Date

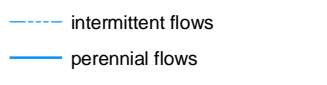
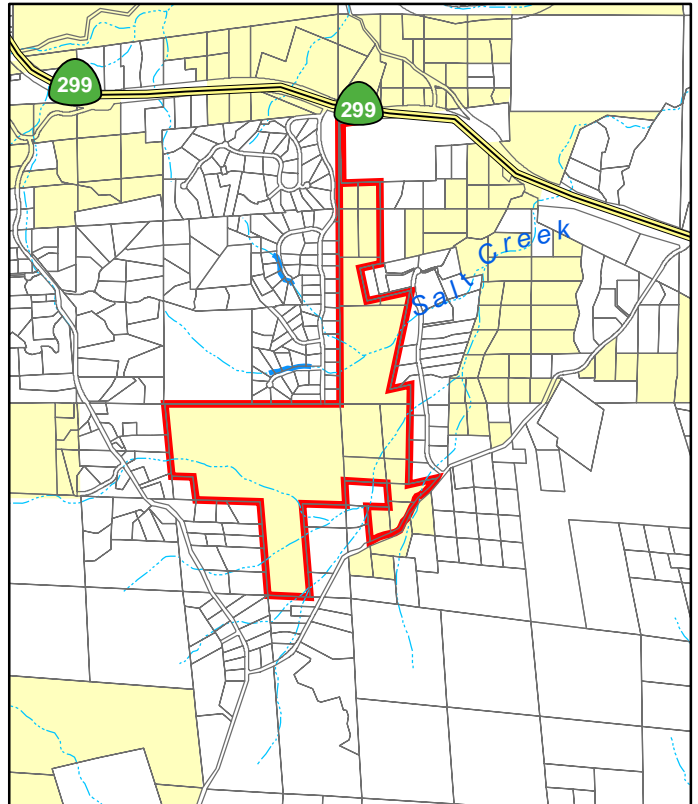
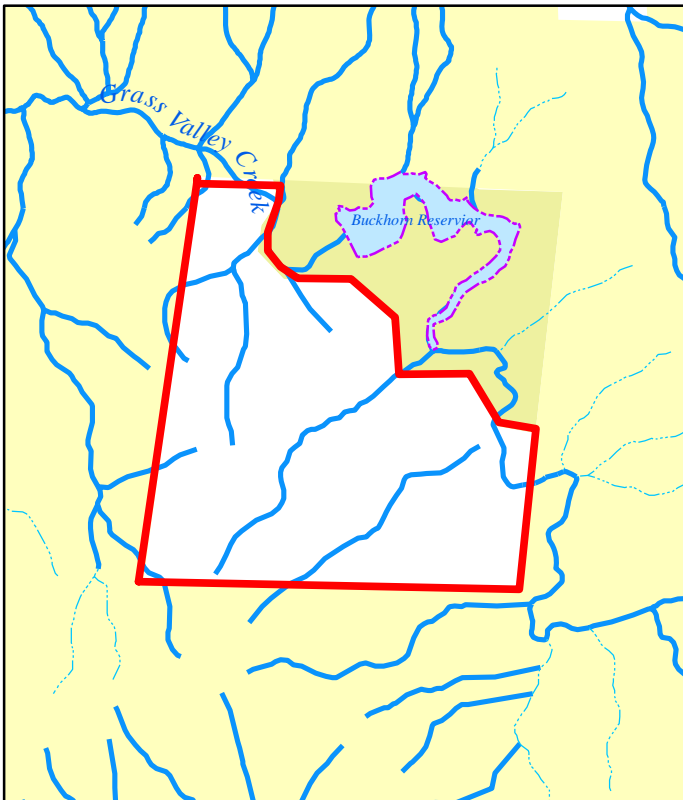
Salmon Creek Resources Exchange



Non-Federal Parcel

1

Federal Parcel



U.S.D.I. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Redding Field Office
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/DECISION RECORD

NAME of PROJECT: Salmon Creek Resources Land Exchange
(Environmental Assessment CA-360-RE-2004-15)

A. FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Environmental impacts associated with the proposed action and alternatives have been assessed by an interdisciplinary team and described in Environmental Assessment (EA) CA-360-RE-2004-15. The context of the EA analysis was determined to be at a local and regional scale in the areas of Shasta and Trinity Counties. BLM determined that the effects of the action are not applicable on a national scale since no nationally significant values were involved.

In making this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), the following criteria have been considered, in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), 40 C.F.R. 1508.27:

1. Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse. A significant effect may exist even if the Federal agency believes that on balance the effect will be beneficial.

Beneficial Effects: BLM would acquire approximately 351 more acres than it would dispose of for public open space and recreational use. The acquired parcel is specifically intended for the purpose of enhancing existing natural resource values of Grass Valley Creek, Trinity River, and other key areas of public lands available to the Redding community. The proposed exchange would result in a cumulative increase in public open space lands and would have a beneficial impact on public recreation as well as fish, wildlife, scenic quality, and related natural resources in these areas. Although impacts of the exchange are beneficial and important to public recreational use, the amount of acreage involved is small.

Adverse Effects: A group consisting of mostly adjacent land owners has raised issues of loss of open space, hiking and biking trails, and similar recreational opportunities in connection with this exchange. The adverse impacts of the proposed exchange identified in the EA are primarily the result of the indirect impacts of privatization of the Federal parcel and its possible residential development: increased noise, traffic, vehicle emissions, dust, soil erosion and runoff, loss of some open space and trails within the developing area, impacts to fish and wildlife habitat, impacts to 13 historic mining-related and prehistoric archaeological sites, reduction of scenic quality.

The beneficial and adverse effects are short term (construction related) and long term (present after development is complete). Beneficial effects are primarily long-term resulting from the improved management of Grass Valley Creek watershed. Both the short term and long term adverse effects are minor and are the result of converting undeveloped lands to more intensive uses. Indirect effects of development are

speculative since no development plans has been approved; however, a preliminary plan describing the potential development of the parcel was submitted to the Shasta County Planning Department for review. The county has indicated that there would be limitations to the density of development of the parcel, if approved for development.

2. The degree to which the proposed action affects public health and safety.

If developed, actions to reduce biomass and increase fire ingress/egress would reduce fire risk to adjoining residents.

3. Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.

The characteristics of both parcels involved in the exchange are not unique to historic or cultural resources of their area. The Federal parcel is not in proximity to park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, or ecologically critical areas. The proposed action is important for rehabilitation of the Grass Valley Creek watershed and to enhance resources of the Trinity River, a wild and scenic river. The restoration and enhancement of the resources is a continued effort of a larger project and the land to be acquired as a stand alone parcel, although important, is not a significant factor.

4. The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial.

Interest in the exchange has remained localized both for and against the exchange. The degree to which the exchange would affect the quality of the human environment is not controversial.

5. The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risk.

Effects are well understood and do not involve any unique or unknown risks.

6. The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration.

The proposed action implements decisions made in the 1993 RMP and is not precedent setting.

7. Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts. Significance exists if it is reasonable to anticipate a cumulatively significant impact on the environment. Significance cannot be avoided by terming an action temporary or by breaking it down into small component parts.

Cumulative impacts of the proposed action are not significant and are not related to any other action with significant cumulative impacts.

8. The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources.

There are no significant scientific, cultural or historical resources affected by the proposed action. BLM evaluated 13 historic and prehistoric sites on the Federal lands in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act. No sites were determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The California State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with the BLM determination.

9. The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

BLM has determined (through consultation with NOAA Fisheries), that the proposed exchange may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, listed species or their habitat.

10. Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

The proposed action does not threaten a violation of Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

Based on the findings discussed above, I conclude that the approved action is not a major Federal action and will result in no significant impacts to the environment. Preparation of an environmental impact statement to further analyze possible impacts is not required pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

B. DECISION RECORD

1. DECISION

It is my decision to approve the proposed action as described in EA CA-360-RE-2004-15. This exchange will be completed under authority of Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976, as amended, 43 U.S.C. 1716.

By this decision, a simultaneous land exchange will be completed, in escrow, between the United States and Salmon Creek Resources Inc., a California corporation (exchange proponent):

The United States will convey, by government patent, 215.85 acres of Federal surface, including the subsurface (mineral rights) estate to Salmon Creek Resources, Inc. (SCR), subject to the reservation, prior existing rights, and covenant shown on attached Exhibit A.

The Federal land is located in a rural residential area west of Redding, Shasta County, California, south of California Highway 299.

In exchange, SCR will convey, by grant deed, 566 acres of surface, including the subsurface (mineral rights) estate and timber, to the United States of America, and its assigns, together with an easement for ingress and egress, subject to the outstanding prior existing rights shown on attached Exhibit B.

The non-Federal land is located adjacent to Buckhorn Reservoir, between Weaverville and Redding, in Trinity County, California.

Shasta County will be alerted by BLM to all archaeological sites present on the Federal parcel to assist in guiding development to avoid cultural resources.

In the absence of any protests, the decision to exchange the Federal lands for the non-Federal lands will become the final determination of the Department of the Interior.

Legal Descriptions

Legal descriptions for the Federal and non-Federal lands are attached hereto and made apart hereof as Exhibits A and B, and are depicted on Maps attached to the environmental assessment prepared for this exchange.

2. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

(a) Sale of Federal Land

In response to public comments, disposal of the Federal parcel by sale was considered as an alternative to the exchange. Under this alternative, the Federal lands would be sold pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of October 21, 1976 (FLPMA). This would be accomplished by competitive sale. Under this alternative, acquisition of the non-Federal lands is not proposed.

Disposal of the Federal parcel by sale would require seeking other revenue for acquisition of the Grass Valley Creek parcel. The Grass Valley Creek watershed does not meet the criteria of a federally designated area for acquisition as described in FLTFA 203.3(2). Therefore, funds from FLTFA would not be available for acquisition of the Grass Valley Creek parcel.

Acquisition of the non-Federal Grass Valley Creek parcel could theoretically be accomplished by Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) appropriations. However, this likelihood is remote because of the small total amount of available LWCF funds and competition from numerous projects that already enjoy specific Federal designations.

Therefore, Federal funding for the purchase of the Grass Valley Creek parcel is extremely unlikely. Availability of funds through any funding method would be unpredictable and likely face intense competition. The present owner of the non-Federal land is unlikely to remain a willing seller for an indefinite period

Disposal of the Federal parcel through sale would assist in reducing the scattered land base as addressed in the RMP. However, the Grass Valley Creek parcel would be acquired sooner by the Proposed Action than with the Sale Alternative. In fact, there is a risk that the Grass Valley Creek parcel may never be acquired under the Sale Alternative. This alternative does not fully meet the identified purpose and need, and was not selected as the preferred alternative.

(b) No Action

The proposed exchange would not be processed. The Federal land would remain available for disposal consistent with the RMP. No active management of resources other than for fuels management would be anticipated by BLM. The non-Federal land would not be acquired through the proposed exchange.

The No Action alternative is evaluated consistent with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements to provide a comparison with the proposal. No action would fail to achieve the purpose and need of the exchange proposal to: “transform the scattered land base of the Redding Resource Area into consolidated resource management units...consolidating land ownership in the Grass Valley Creek watershed area while also disposing of lands identified in the RMP ...identified as being isolated, difficult to manage, or having low resource values...” (EA page 4-5).

(c) Alternatives considered but dismissed from detailed analysis

BLM considered initially, but dismissed from detailed analysis, six additional alternatives:

- 1) United States Easements. This alternative was dismissed because it would not achieve the proposal’s purpose and need.
- 2) Disposal of Easement to local agencies. This alternative was dismissed because it would not achieve the proposal’s purpose and need.

3) Disposal to local agencies via Recreation and Public Purposes Act. This alternative was dismissed because it would not conform to BLM manual 2740.

4) Disposal to a local agency via exchange or sale. This alternative was dismissed because it does not assure that any of the proposal's benefits would be achieved and involves significantly greater risks and uncertainties.

5) Retention of the Federal lands. This alternative was eliminated because it would not achieve the proposal's purpose or need.

6) Modify the Existing Exchange. This alternative could not be negotiated and was dismissed because of the uncertainties with the future potential transactions involved and the likelihood that modification of the existing exchange could not be completed in a timely manner.

3. MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

My decision to approve the exchange is based on the following management considerations.

(a) The proposed exchange is in conformance with the 1993 Redding RMP

The exchange conforms to the RMP, approved in July 1993 and as amended, on August 4, 2005. The RMP describes the goal of the land tenure program as "to transform the scattered land base of the Redding Resource Area [Field Office] into consolidated resource management units to meet the needs of the public land users. This goal will be pursued primarily through exchange opportunities (RMP Record of Decision, page 17)".

Federal Land: The Federal parcel was analyzed as part of the Shasta Management Area in the RMP's Environmental Impact Statement. The Federal land is part of the scattered land base addressed in the RMP and has been identified as available for disposal. Based on the allocations and guidance in the RMP, the subject Federal parcel is suitable for consideration of exchange.

Land use allocations for the subject Federal lands are described in the RMP on page 45, II.F.5p, "Transfer via R&PP, or exchange, to the State of California, County of Shasta, City of Redding, community service districts or any other qualified organization administrative responsibility of any portion of 6,000 acres of public land to meet local community services needs. Within two years from approval of the Final RMP, the organizations mentioned above will be given an opportunity to submit R&PP applications for specific parcels prior to the land being offered for exchange. Offer for exchange to any party after two years from approval of the final RMP."

The Shasta County General Plan identifies the land as Suburban Residential and will most probably be developed for residential use.

Non-Federal Land: The non-Federal parcel involved in this exchange was analyzed as part of the Grass Valley Creek Watershed within the Trinity Management Area of the RMP Environmental Impact Statement. The resource condition objective of that watershed is to: *“Reduce the sediment load entering the Trinity River via Grass Valley Creek for the improvement of anadromous fisheries (RMP Record of Decision, page 39)”*. Land use allocations for the subject non-Federal land are described in the RMP on page 40, II.D.9 *“Acquire available unimproved lands within the watershed via appropriate funding, exchange or donation....”*

(b) The proposed exchange is consistent with other agency plans and programs

The proposed exchange allowing acquisition of the non-Federal parcel would be in support of the Trinity River Basin Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1984 and the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Management Plan dated March 1995. The proposal is also consistent with county planning and zoning.

(c) The proposed exchange is the most appropriate means available for accomplishing BLM’s management objectives

The sale alternative provides only for disposal and would not assure that the benefits would be derived from acquisition of non-Federal lands within Grass Valley Creek watershed. The No Action Alternative would not accomplish any of the benefits of the proposed exchange and would not achieve the proposal’s purpose and need.

The alternative of disposal to a Community Facilities District (CFD) via sale or exchange (submitted after the public comment period had ended) promises the benefits of the proposed action. However, the alternative was eliminated from detailed analysis because it does not assure that any of those benefits would be achieved and involves significantly greater risks and uncertainties than the proposed action. Moreover, BLM policy requires that if the parcel is sold, it would be offered competitively. There is no assurance that the CFD’s bid would prevail.

Most importantly, BLM would have to terminate the pending exchange proposal with Salmon Creek Resources leaving BLM without an available means to acquire the offered non-Federal land. The CFD proposal offers no assurance of exchanging other land with significant resource importance to the BLM and could take many years to process. In addition, a district has not been established, there is no assurance that voters will approve an increase in taxes needed to finance the acquisition, and the interested parties could lose interest.

(d) Intended future use of the Federal land

The intended and most likely future use of the Federal land after it is transferred to the exchange proponent is residential development, and that use will not conflict with any established Federal management objectives.

No Federal lands, or Indian Trust lands are adjacent to the Federal land to be conveyed. The Federal parcel to be conveyed is surrounded by privately owned residential homes.

(e) The proposed exchange is in the public interest

The public interest will be well served by the exchange of Federal land for non-Federal land. Full consideration has been given to the opportunity to achieve better management of Federal lands, to meet the needs of State and local residents and their economies, and to secure important objectives, pursuant to the criteria outlined in 43 C.F.R. 2200.0-6(b).

Based on the following analysis, I find that the resource values and the public objectives that the Federal lands or interests to be conveyed may serve if retained in Federal ownership are not more than the resource values or interests of the non-Federal lands and the public objectives they could serve if acquired:

(1) The Federal land, if retained, does not provide more opportunity to achieve better management efficiency of Federal lands or secure important public objectives involving natural resources than the non-Federal lands, if acquired.

On the contrary, the land to be acquired accomplishes the RMP objective to consolidate public land holdings. The Federal land is encumbered with numerous rights-of-way authorized for power and water lines and roads that serve the surrounding residential area, whereas the land to be acquired is not encumbered to such a degree. Other than rights of way management, no other active or special management prescriptions are anticipated for the Federal land, i.e., resource management programs for air quality, fisheries, soils, plant, wildlife, and water quality. Also, there would be no additional protection or enhancement of the creeks, drainages, or the retention ponds on the Federal land.

Wildlife that may be found on the land includes approximately 25 different species. There is no wildlife or plant Special Status Species (terrestrial) that would be affected; the plant community is locally and regionally abundant. None of the recorded archaeological sites were deemed eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, i.e. the features do not merit protection under the National Historic Preservation Act. Natural processes would continue to obscure and/or erase some or, eventually, all traces of the historic features.

In contrast, acquisition of the non-Federal land will result in achieving important public objectives, including rehabilitation and protection of sensitive watersheds, reduction of sediment load into the Trinity River, and restoration of significant fisheries and wildlife pursuant to the Trinity River Basin Fish and Wildlife Act of 1984, as amended.

The Act provides for several initiatives in support of restoration of fish and wildlife populations in the Trinity River Basin, including erosion control. To achieve long-term goals, a Task Force¹ was formed to develop a basin-wide management program.

¹ Composed of the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Trinity County Resource Conservation District, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and several private land owners.

One of the initiatives established by the Task Force is the acquisition and restoration of critically eroding land within the GVC Watershed Area.

The GVC Watershed Plan, cooperatively developed by the Task Force, identifies a restoration strategy to reduce sedimentation and erosion within the watershed. As part of the Task Force, BLM plays a key role in the acquisition of lands. In 1993, utilizing Bureau of Reclamation funds, BLM acquired 16,636± acres at a cost of \$9,100,000 for the purpose of reducing sediment loads and improving water quality in support of restoration efforts.

Support for the acquisition of the Grass Valley parcel is consistent with the history of community and agencies support for implementation of long-term watershed rehabilitation efforts. Trinity County and Shasta County along with state and Federal agencies acknowledge the importance of the acquisition of the non-Federal parcel. Acquisition of the private inholding contributes to seamless management for restoration of a valuable public resource that would otherwise not be possible in private ownership. As discussed in the environmental assessment, exchange is the only feasible means of acquiring the parcel.

(2) The Federal land, if retained, does not provide more opportunity to protect sensitive watersheds and restoration of anadromous fisheries habitat than the non-Federal land, if acquired.

The Federal land does not contain significant anadromous fisheries and watershed values. More detail on the fishery values is provided in paragraph (4) below.

Approximately 1.28 miles of Salt Creek, a seasonal intermittent stream, and its tributaries flow through portions of the Federal land. Fisheries Special Status Species have been noted to appear downstream from the Federal parcel; however, existing stream improvements downstream from the Federal lands limit the value of Salt Creek as anadromous fishery habitat.

In contrast, acquisition of the non-Federal land will result in elimination of a private inholding lying in the center of approximately 16,000 acres of federally managed open space within the Grass Valley Creek (GVC) Watershed, and provide increased opportunities to achieve the resource condition objective of reducing the sediment load entering the Trinity River via Grass Valley Creek on the surrounding Federal lands to improve anadromous fisheries.

The GVC Watershed Area is a management unit identified with critical or significant resource needs since surface management of that watershed is of critical importance to the protection and restoration of anadromous salmonid habitat in the Trinity River.

The subject non-Federal parcel contains approximately 3.11 miles of perennial streams which includes Grass Valley Creek and tributaries.

Approximately 99% of the parcel is comprised of highly erodible decomposing granite derived from granitic bedrock, and the hazard of water erosion is very severe within this parcel. Grass Valley Creek, a year-round creek that flows through portions of the non-Federal parcel, is a major tributary of the Trinity River.

The parcel is zoned for timber production. Historically, the parcel and the surrounding area have been heavily logged and timber production has facilitated increased sedimentation into the Trinity River.

If the parcel were to remain in private ownership, the anticipated land use would be commercial timber production which could potentially result in a negative impact on Trinity River restoration. Timber values have increased and logging methods that would allow a harvest under existing California forest practice laws increases the likelihood that the parcel would be logged at some time.

(3) The Federal land, if retained, does not provide more opportunity for cost effectiveness and efficiency of BLM management than the non-Federal land, if acquired.

The Federal parcel lies behind residential homes and backyard fences that abut the public land; the parcel is surrounded by private land and is isolated from larger blocks of BLM-administered lands. If the Federal parcel were retained in Federal ownership, the BLM would continue to be responsible for administration of the Federal parcel until it can be disposed of.

Over the last several years, the parcel has been used primarily by adjacent landowners and a trail has been created by unregulated off highway vehicle (OHV) use. The parcel is closed to OHV use. The unauthorized trail has become popular with the nearby residents and local trail enthusiasts for mostly walking, jogging and mountain biking.

Major management concerns would continue to be dumping, unauthorized encroachment, additional inspections for hazardous waste, and fire safety (fuels management). Some household dumpsites are located in areas accessible to adjoining land owners, but due to limited administrative access those areas are too difficult to clean up. Numerous complaints of noise, shooting, and trash have been reported by adjoining neighbors.

Expenditures would mainly take the form of fuels management (brush mastication would be the most likely form of fuels management). Current costs for brush mastication, including overhead, average approximately \$750.00 per acre. Treatment of the entire acreage of the Federal parcel would cost approximately \$161,250 and would remain effective for about five years.

In addition to fuels management costs, other administrative expenses such as trash clean-up, rights of way management, law enforcement, trespass monitoring and abatement, would be required. Administrative costs for Federal management vary significantly depending on the parcel. Parcels that are isolated from other Federal land and located in an urban interface, such as the Federal exchange parcel, often have the highest per acre administrative costs. Overall, the Federal parcel is currently very difficult, expensive, and time consuming to manage.

In contrast, acquisition of the non-Federal land will result in consolidation of the Federal and non-Federal land into their respective surrounding areas for more cost effective and efficient management.

Lands within the watershed are actively managed to protect the integrity of the watershed as a means to conserve salmonoid spawning habitat in the Trinity River. The principal future use of the non-Federal lands would be the continuance of area restoration as described in the GVC Watershed Management Plan. Stabilization efforts would be a high priority under Federal ownership. The primary goal of the restoration project is to reduce erosion and sedimentation.

The non-Federal parcel will be managed in concert with the surrounding Federal land to limit erosion and the potential transport of sediment to the Trinity River, Buckhorn Reservoir and Hamilton Ponds. Acquisition of the non-Federal parcel will further extend the long term use and reduce the associated maintenance costs of Buckhorn Reservoir and Hamilton Ponds. Fiscal BLM costs for managing the non-Federal land would be minimal and offset by grants from other funding sources.

(4) The Federal land, if retained, does not provide more opportunity to increase reserves of Federal land for conservation of fisheries and wildlife and plant species than the non-Federal land, if acquired.

Salt Creek has been determined not to be a key habitat for anadromous salmonids. The existing habitat and environmental conditions for Central Valley steelhead and Central Valley fall-run-Chinook are not considered high quality by BLM and the California Department of Fish and Game due to limiting conditions of the water quality, habitat access, habitat elements, channel conditions, and flow conditions in the seasonally intermittent creek. Existing conditions limit winter and spring upstream and downstream fish migration. The culvert under Highway 299 is a partial barrier to fish migration. If this passage were improved, the limiting conditions of the habitat within the Federal land would still limit the value of spawning of salmonid species

In contrast, acquisition of the non-Federal land will be beneficial for many species and complements the ongoing ecosystem conservation actions by Federal, State, and local organizations. Acquisition of the private inholding will result in:

(a) A larger contiguous reserve of Federal lands for future conservation of resident and anadromous fish habitat. The Northwest Forest Plan guidelines, Trinity River Restoration Program, and Grass Valley Creek Watershed Restoration exist to promote Special Status Species protection and conserve forest resources;

(b) A larger contiguous reserve of Federal lands for future conservation of Special Status Species like northern spotted owl, bald eagle, Pacific fisher, foothill yellow-legged frog, terrestrial mollusks, and bat species, numerous plant species, and anadromous fish habitat. Terrestrial Special Status species would be managed in accordance with appropriate regulations and statutory requirements. The non-Federal land does possess the habitat requirements for use by northern spotted owl and other old growth dependent species.

(5) The Federal land, if retained, does not provide more opportunity to increase public access for enhancement of public recreation than the non-Federal land, if acquired.

Some of the unauthorized trails on the Federal land have been developed in areas unsuited for trails and are on slopes and in drainages that are prone to soil erosion. If the lands were retained, maintenance or closure of some trails would be required.

The BLM has identified trails that are qualified to be effectively managed within Federal jurisdiction. The Federal parcel is surrounded by private property, and the 3.1 miles of informal trails on the Federal land are detached from any other Federal land and does not connect to other federally-managed land or formal trail system. On the contrary, the trails lead directly to private backyards for exclusive access to Federal lands.

The Federal land is not identified as a valuable link to recreational use. Maintaining Federal ownership of the parcel for a recreational purpose would only serve a small group of the public. However, this decision does not preclude subsequent acquisition of the Federal parcel from the proponent by interested members of the community or any local agency for the purpose of maintaining open space.

In contrast, acquisition of the non-Federal land will eliminate a private inholding and consolidate the non-Federal parcel into Federal ownership and improve public access to public lands.

There could be a net increase in acreage that is suitable for recreation under Federal jurisdiction. With the change in watershed ownership from private to public, there is expected to be a substantial increase in public recreation in the area.

The area is highly suited for a variety of recreational uses such as hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, primitive camping, and vista points. Plans for recreation management within the watershed include potential development of a trail system, access points and vehicle parking.

(6) The Federal land, if retained, does not provide more opportunity to increase scenic quality than the non-Federal lands, if acquired.

The Federal land is considered as lower scenic quality, not a significant landscape to the area's population and is rated as a "C" scenic quality rating. The Federal land blends in with the surrounding residential development and the terrain and dense tree coverage make it difficult to distinguish the Federal land from the majority of rural residential home lots.

In contrast, the inclusion of the non-Federal land into Federal ownership will increase the scenic quality of the Redding Resource Area.

Upon designation of the area as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, the Grass Valley Creek Watershed public use would increase. The parcel would be expected to be rated as an "A" for its high scenic quality and high viewer sensitivity.

Acquisition of the non-Federal parcel would assist in enhancing the quality of the Trinity River, a Wild and Scenic River. The Trinity River is classified as an "A" scenic quality rating, due to both high scenic quality and high viewer sensitivity.

The land exchange will result in improved fisheries restoration and wildlife habitat, watershed rehabilitation and protection, management efficiencies through consolidation of Federal ownership, and greater public access and use for recreation opportunities and scenic values, while eliminating from Federal management an isolated parcel with lesser public values.

4. COORDINATION WITH STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Pursuant to Section 707 of Public Law 103-433 of October 1994, the State Lands Commission (SLC) of the State of California was notified of the potential availability of lands for exchange where no specific project plans, agreements or other commitments existed. The SLC did not indicate any interest in pursuing a land exchange involving the Federal land. The Counties of Shasta and Trinity have been informed regarding the proposed land exchange and have remained neutral.

The proposed exchange allowing acquisition of the non-Federal parcel would be in support of the Trinity River Basin Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1984 and the Grass Valley Creek Watershed Management Plan dated March 1995.

5. APPRAISAL AND EQUAL VALUE REQUIREMENTS

Appraisal: The Federal and non-Federal lands have been appraised and reviewed in accordance with the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.

(a) The Federal surface and subsurface interests have been appraised at \$900,000. The appraisal update was prepared by contract appraiser Ted D. Foster, MAI, of Ted D. Foster & Associates. The effective date of valuation is January 5, 2006; the appraisal was reviewed and approved on February 24, 2006, by the Department of the Interior (DOI), Office of Appraisal Services Directorate (OASD), Pacific Region review appraiser James H. Shaw.

(b) The non-Federal surface and subsurface interests have been appraised at \$763,000 (includes \$310,000 of legally harvestable timber). The appraisal update was prepared by contract appraiser Ted D. Foster, MAI, of Ted D. Foster & Associates. The effective date of valuation is January 5, 2006; the appraisal was reviewed and approved on February 23, 2006, by the Department of the Interior (DOI), Office of Appraisal Services Directorate (OASD) review appraiser James H. Shaw.

Equalization of values: The Federal interests exceed the value of the non-Federal interests by \$137,000. This value difference represents approximately 15% of the value of the Federal interests. Prior to close of escrow, the exchange proponent will make a cash equalization payment to the United States for the above difference to equalize values between the Federal and non-Federal interests.

The land values were thoroughly analyzed in terms of minimizing the amount of land needed for equalization. Reducing acreage to minimize cash equalization also was considered. However, reducing the acreage would create additional fragments of land that would be inconsistent with the management goal of eliminating the scattered land base. In addition, reducing acreage would limit the marketability of the parcels due to factors such as access and development potential.

Funds from the equalization payment will be deposited into an account established under the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act (FLTFA). Those funds will be made available to various Federal agencies for acquisition of lands within federally designated areas as defined by FLTFA.

6. IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The decision to complete the land exchange will occur following the completion of a 45-day protest period which begins upon publication of a Notice of Availability of the Decision and resolution of any protests which may be made on the decision.

7. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND PARTIES CONSULTED

BLM has made extensive efforts to involve the public in reaching this decision. Numerous methods were used to solicit public involvement and gather input concerning this exchange proposal, including notice of the exchange proposal in local newspapers and several public meetings held at different locations. The BLM engaged extensively in coordination with interested parties, local, county, state officials and the Northwest California Resource Advisory Council (RAC) to further refine issues and alternatives to this exchange.

RAC meetings were held that allowed the opportunity for public input concerning the exchange. News releases and publications in the Federal Register were submitted, announcing the RAC meetings and inviting the public to comment on the exchange. After listening to testimony by those supporting and opposing the exchange and a field tour of the area, the RAC voted unanimously to support the BLM land tenure adjustment program as outlined in the RMP.

Public involvement began during analysis of the 1993 Redding Resource Management Plan (RMP). The public was well informed on the RMP's goal of consolidating BLM's land base into larger management units by disposing of identified parcels within urban expansion.

In September/October 2004 a Notice of Exchange Proposal (NOEP) was published once a week for four consecutive weeks in local newspapers of general circulation to advise the public of the proposed exchange. Public review and comments were solicited for a 45-day period. Copies of the NOEP were sent to right-of-way holders, adjoining land owners, local interest groups, local government, government officials, Native American groups, and other interested parties. There were no grazing permittees to be notified. In response to the NOEP, approximately 100 comments were received. The majority of comments were submitted by adjoining and nearby land owners.

The primary concern noted was loss of open space, loss of trail use, and recreational use. Other concerns identified are issues related to development of the parcel, such as protection of fish habitat, cultural resources and fire hazards. None of the identified issues were concluded to be a significant negative affect of the proposed action taking into account the expected development of the parcel.

The public has been well informed on the exchange issues and were very cooperative in submitting feedback. Several articles and editorials were published in the local newspaper on perceived impacts from the proposed exchange. The outreach discovered a very high support for the acquisition of the non-Federal parcel, but some opposition was brought up concerning disposal of the Federal parcel.

In addition to the public involvement during analysis of the RMP, public involvement also occurred during the evaluation of this exchange proposal beyond requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. Several meetings were held during the early scoping period of the exchange proposal to discuss the public interest.

Comments on the exchange proposal continued to be accepted over a period of 16 months after the required 45-day comment period had ended. The BLM continued to keep an open forum for the purpose of allowing the public to thoroughly communicate all potential issues and reasonable alternatives. Multiple letters from Shasta Resources Council, Shasta Coalition for the Preservation of Public Land, and others, concerning issues and alternatives to the exchange, were received beyond the comment period.

All comments received from the meetings and public notices have been analyzed and were considered during the evaluation of issues and alternatives for input into the Environmental Analysis.

APPROVED BY: *S. W. Anderson* *26 April 06*
Steven W. Anderson Date
Field Manager
USDI Bureau of Land Management
Redding Field Office
355 Hemsted Dr.
Redding, CA 96002

**Exhibit A
(Federal Land)
CACA 43098-FD
Salmon Creek Resources Land Exchange
Redding Field Office, California**

1. Description of the Federal Land:

County	Legal Description	Acres
Shasta	T. 31 N., R. 5 W., M.D.M., Sec. 5, lot 17, lot 18, lot 19, lot 21, lot 22, lot 49, lot 50; Sec. 6, lot 8, lot 9, lot 10, lot 17, lot 18, lot 19, lot 20, lot 22, lot 26; T. 32 N., R. 5 W., M.D.M., Sec. 32, lot 155, lot 173, lot 174, lot 175, lot 176, lot 227, lot 228, lot 229	215.85

2. Reservations and outstanding rights to be conveyed:

Conveyance of the Federal land will occur by issuing one patent from the United States to the exchange proponent, Salmon Creek Resources, Inc., a California corporation, for the surface and mineral estates in Shasta County, California. The patent will contain the following reservation to the United States:

EXCEPTING AND RESERVING TO THE UNITED STATES a right-of-way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States. Act of August 30, 1890, 43 U.S.C. 945

THE PATENT WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING PRIOR EXISTING RIGHTS:

a. Those rights for water facility purposes granted to E. C. Tuthill, his successors or assigns, under right-of-way Serial No. CACA 26163, pursuant to the Act of October 21, 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1761, as to portions of said lots 17 and 18 of sec. 5, and lot 8 of sec. 6, T.31N., R.5W., M.D.M.

b. Those rights for cable line purposes granted to Marks Cablevision, its successors or assigns, under right-of-way Serial No. CACA 26643, pursuant to the Act of October 21, 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1761, as to portions of said lots 18 and 19 of sec. 5, and lot 8 of sec. 6, T.31N., R.5W., M.D.M.

c. Those rights for power line purposes granted to Pacific Gas and Electric Company, its successors or assigns, under right-of-way Serial No. CAS 3948, pursuant to the Act of October 21, 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1761, as to portions of said lots 18 and 19 sec. 5, T.31N., R.5W., M.D.M.

d. Those rights for road purposes granted to Dixie Lazzari and Gilbert R. Lazzari, their successors or assigns, under right-of-way Serial No. CACA 20167, pursuant to the Act of October 21, 1976, 43 U.S.C.1761, as to portions of said lot 49 of sec. 5, T.31N., R.5W., M.D.M.

e. Those rights for power line purposes granted to Pacific Gas and Electric Company, its successors or assigns, under right-of-way Serial No. CAS 039795, pursuant to the Act of October 21, 1976, 43 U.S.C.1761, as to portions of said lot 49 of sec 5, T.31N., R.5W., M.D.M.

f. Those rights for road purposes granted to Ronald L. Clark, his successors or assigns, under right-of-way Serial No. CACA 38458, pursuant to the Act of October 21, 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1761, as to portions of said lot 155 of sec. 32, T.32N., R.5W., M.D.M.

g. Those rights for water facility/pipeline purposes granted to Shasta Community Services District, its successors or assigns, under right-of-way Serial No. CACA 00588, pursuant to the Act of October 21, 1976, 43 U.S.C. 1761, as to portions of said lots 173 and 174 of sec. 32, T.32N., R.5W., M.D.M.

THE PATENT WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING RESTRICTION:

The patentee, or its successors in interest, shall be subject to the following restriction, which constitutes a covenant running with the land; that the following lands will not be used in any manner which would disturb the soils or alter riparian habitat within 50 feet of the top of each bank or 25 feet from the outside edge of the riparian vegetation dripline of the upper and lower forks of Salt Creek, whichever is greater: lots 8,17,18,19 and 22 of sec 6, lots 17, 18, and 19 of sec 5, T.31N., R.5W., lot 227 of sec. 32, T.32N., R.5W., M.D.M.

Permanent structures may be constructed to allow crossing of the upper and lower forks of Salt Creek, but must be free span bridges, bottomless arched culverts, or standard culverts at gradient such that water flow is not impaired and upstream or downstream passage of fish is assured at all times.

Bottoms of temporary and permanent culverts shall be placed such that the lower 25% of the diameter of the culvert is below grade of the stream channel to allow the formation over time of a more natural stream bottom.

Exceptions to this covenant may only be granted through written approval of the California Department of Fish and Game.

3. *The BLM will not provide any form of title insurance associated with the conveyance.*

**Exhibit B
(Non-Federal Land)
CACA 43098-PT
Salmon Creek Resources Land Exchange
Redding Field Office, California**

1. Description of the Non-Federal Land:

County	Legal Description	Acres
Trinity	T. 32 N., R. 8 W., M.D.M Sec. 22, See attached Exhibit B-1	566.00

2. Reservations and outstanding rights to be conveyed. Conveyance of the non-Federal land will occur by one grant deed (in the form acceptable to the United States) issued by Salmon Creek Resources, Inc., a California corporation, for the above described land to the United States of America, and its assigns. The deed will be subject to:

- a. Any facts, rights, interests or claims which are not shown by the public records but which could be ascertained by an inspection of the land or which may be asserted by persons in possession thereof.
- b. Easements, liens, or encumbrances, or claims thereof, which are not shown by the public records.
- c. Discrepancies, conflicts in boundary lines, shortage in area, encroachments, or any other facts which a correct survey would disclose and which are not shown by the public records.
- d. Water rights, Claims or Title to water, whether or not excepted by the public records.

3. An American Land Title Association (ALTA) 09/28/91 proforma policy of title insurance has been issued by First American Title Insurance Company, covering the above described non-Federal interests.

Exhibit B-1

ALL OF SECTION 22, TOWNSHIP 32 NORTH, RANGE 8 WEST, M.D.B. & M.,
ACCORDING TO THE OFFICIAL PLAT THEREOF.

EXCEPTING THEREFROM ALL THAT PORTION THEREOF AS DESCRIBED IN
THAT CERTAIN DECLARATION OF TAKING RECORDED JANUARY 29, 1988 IN
BOOK 273 OF OFFICIAL RECORDS, PAGE 218, TRINITY COUNTY RECORDS.

TOGETHER WITH AN EASEMENT FOR INGRESS AND EGRESS ACROSS THE
GRASS VALLEY CREEK DEBRIS DAM ACCESS ROAD AND ALONG A ROAD WITH
A LOW WATER CROSSING TO BE CONSTRUCTED AS RESERVED IN THE
DECLARATION OF TAKING, RECORDED JANUARY 29, 1988 IN BOOK 273 OF
OFFICIAL RECORDS, PAGE 218, TRINITY COUNTY RECORDS.

APN: 015-230-41 and 015-230-43

1993 Redding RMP Implementation - Shasta & Trinity Counties

