

HIDDEN FALLS REGIONAL PARK FUEL LOAD REDUCTION AND RELATED FIRE SAFE ACTIVITIES

Project Summary

Hidden Falls Regional Park, located in the Sierra Nevada Foothills between Auburn and Lincoln, is the cornerstone property of the Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program consisting of 1181 acres of blue oak woodland, riparian habitat, and historic ranch land preserved in perpetuity for the purpose of passive recreation, natural preservation, and nature education. To date, over \$6 million in state, local, and private funding has been invested in the acquisition, planning, and development of Hidden Falls Regional Park

The easternmost 221 acres of this property was opened to the public on October 30, 2006 with seven miles of multiple-use trails for walking, running, horseback riding, and mountain biking. Development of the remaining 961 acre portion of the park for public use is currently in the planning stage. The park has two significant creeks, Coon Creek and Deadman Creek, traversing the property for approximately 3 miles.

This request includes: 1) creation of shaded fuel breaks covering 94 acres of brush, annual grassland, and timberland; 2) clearing a 15' wide, 8 mile access perimeter around the property (14 acres); 3) mowing 10 acres of grasslands to create defensible space around the parking and staging areas, and 4) the purchase of an All-Terrain Mower for creation of and the on-going maintenance of the shaded fuel breaks and grasslands.

The shaded fuel breaks will range from 200' wide to 300' wide depending upon degree of slopes and will entail a combination of thinning of the forest canopy by removal of trees so that no more than 40-60% of ground is covered by their canopy, trimming ladder fuels from the ground to a height of between 6' to 10', and removing the under story vegetation. Twigs and branches will be chipped and the chips will be broadcast onto the ground to act as a soil stabilization measure, as well as weed inhibitor. Approximately 40 acres of the fuel breaks identified in the Plan consist of grasslands on slopes with grades up to 35%, therefore, the Parks Division is requesting SNC grant funds to purchase an All Terrain Mower at a cost of \$40,000. The All Terrain Mower permits mowing on slopes up to 34 degrees that are not accessible with conventional mowers.

Vegetation management and fuel load reduction will protect the Deadman Creek and Coon Creek watersheds. This project will also significantly reduce the risk of wildfire, protect neighboring communities, wildlife habitat, natural resources and an archaeological site. The overall result of funding for this project will be 108 acres of fuel break, a reduction of risk of wildfire, and protection of the working landscapes, water and air quality.

Total project cost is \$768,859. There have been several partnerships formed that will provide services valued at \$251,000. Total funding requested from Sierra Nevada Conservancy is \$517,859.