

Yuba IRWMP - SMART-01

Project Short Form¹

Please fill out the following information to the best of your ability/knowledge. Once the project has been received and a preliminary review completed, the project team will work with you to develop additional information.

Project Sponsor Contact Information

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Lead Agency/Organization | Excelsior Foundation |
| Name of Primary Contact(s) | Brian Bisnett |
| Mailing Address | 16046 Bear Court, Grass Valley, CA 95949 |
| Email Address | brian@bisnettdesign.com |
| Phone (###) ###-#### | (530) 277-9733 |
| Project Partners/Collaborators | South Yuba River Citizen's League, Bear Yuba Land Trust, California Department of Fish and Wildlife |

General Project Information

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|--|---|
| Project Title | Blue Point Conservation Acquisition |
| Project Total Budget, based on current knowledge | \$4,200,000 |
| Project Funding Match, if any | \$2,450,000 |
| Total Project Funding Request | \$1,750,000 |
| Can a detailed cost estimate be provided upon request? | yes |
| Project Location (map if available) | See attached |
| City/Community | Smartsville |
| Watershed/subwatershed | Lower Yuba River |
| Groundwater Basin | |
| Project Type (highlight in gray all that apply) | Conceptual Feasibility Study Study/Assessment Planning Engineering/Design Permitting CEQA/NEPA Facility Construction Restoration Monitoring Best Management Practices Acquisition Demonstration/Pilot Project |

¹ Completed Project Short Forms should be sent via email to Katie Burdick at admin@burdico.net and Elizabeth Herrera at Elizabeth.herrera@fishsciences.net

Project Description

Write a narrative briefly describing the project components and/or characteristics (maximum of 300 words).

The project involves acquisition of the 505-acre Blue Point property, a historic hydraulic mine site extending from the community of Smartsville to the lower Yuba River. The property is rich in natural resources, with a variety of habitats including extensive wetlands, oak woodlands and riparian habitats. The property is also rich in cultural resources, occupying the site of the gold-rush era town of Sucker Flat and eight separate hydraulic mine claims, with well-preserved features including tunnels, stone walls, and an extensive network of ditches. The property is topographically unique, with escarpments cut by the water cannons towering 300 feet above the valley floor, and cliffs of deposited and eroded gravels similarly towering 150 feet above the river. The property is geologically unique, occupying the bed of the Pliocene Yuba River, with formations of basaltic bedrock overlain with deep depositions of placer gravels. The property lies between the community of Smartsville and the lower Yuba River, providing the only access available to this reach of the river. The property is also contiguous to the Yuba Narrows and Black Swan Ranches, owned by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and would provide access through the community of Smartsville to the recreational opportunities of that 700-acre open space holding. The property has been appraised at \$4,200,00, and the property owner has agreed to discount the purchase price to \$3,500,000. The Department is the anticipated partner in the acquisition of the property, providing \$1,750,00 in matching funds through the Wildlife Conservation Board and taking fee title to the property. Alternatively, the property can be purchased sequentially, with the Excelsior Foundation taking title to 50% of the property through IRWMP funding, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife purchasing the remainder of the property when the WCB funding is made available.

I. Project Rationale/Issues Statement

Briefly describe the need for the project and the desired outcomes/deliverables (maximum of 200 words).

The property consists of twelve separate parcels, is zoned with a minimum parcel size of five acres, and so is at risk of fragmentation, development, and irrevocable damage to its natural and cultural resources. The property has the potential to be of significant economic benefit to the community of Smartsville, providing access to the lower Yuba River and to a total of over 1200 acres of publicly accessible open space. The project has the potential to be of significant environmental benefit to the entire region, by permanently protecting the property's oak woodland, wetland and riparian habitats. The desired outcome is the acquisition of this unique property for benefit of the public in perpetuity.

