

# PG&E turning thousands of acres over to public agencies

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

More than 1,500 acres of mountain land in Nevada and Placer counties will be handed over to public agencies as part of Pacific Gas and Electric Co. bankruptcy proceedings begun in 2004.

A part of that total – 64 acres – will go to the Auburn Recreation and Parks District for a new community park. The University of California Center for Forestry, based at UC Berkeley, will take over the remainder: 1,484 acres near Lake Spaulding in Nevada County.

The UC center will also take title to 3,100 acres in Shasta County's Pit River watershed. An adjacent 5,200 acres will go to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, along with 1,800 acres in Shasta County's Tunnel Reservoir area.

The actions, which are preliminary, were approved Nov. 16 by the Pacific Forest and Watershed Lands Stewardship Council, a nonprofit created to conserve 140,000 acres of PG&E watershed lands as part of the utility's bankruptcy settlement. The process of distributing those lands is about halfway complete.

The transfers, totaling more than 11,000 acres, come at no cost to the recipients. But they must commit to manage the land for public benefits such as recreation, water quality, wildlife habitat and research.

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