

DEPARTMENT: Board of Supervisors

BY: Lee Stetson
PHONE: 966-3222

RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign a letter supporting the Yosemite National Park (YNP) boundary line adjustment proposed by the Pacific Forest Trust. The Pacific Forest Trust has requested a letter of support from the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors supporting the boundary line adjustment. All purchases are from willing sellers and will be at fair market value. Most importantly, the boundary line adjustment will increase overall Park preservation and will reduce the threat of substantial development in a remote area of the County that is difficult to provide adequate services.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

The Board adopted Resolution 09-494 on October 13, 2009, approving a similar letter of support. This issue was not pursued by the legislature and there was no further action. Pacific Forest Trust is once again requesting the boundary line adjustment.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Do authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to sign the letter of support. Individual Board members may draft their own letters of support, which may not carry the same weight as a letter from the entire Board.

Financial Impact? () Yes (X) No	Current FY Cost: \$	Annual Recurring Cost: \$
Budgeted In Current FY? () Yes () No () Partially Funded		
Amount in Budget: \$ _____		List Attachments, number pages consecutively
Additional Funding Needed: \$ _____		Draft Letter
Source:		Pacific Forest Fact Sheet
Internal Transfer _____		_____
Unanticipated Revenue _____ 4/5's vote		_____
Transfer Between Funds _____ 4/5's vote		_____
Contingency _____ 4/5's vote		_____
() General () Other		_____

CLERK'S USE ONLY:

Res. No.: _____ Ord. No. _____
Vote - Ayes: _____ Noes: _____
Absent: _____
() Approved
() Minute Order Attached () No Action Necessary

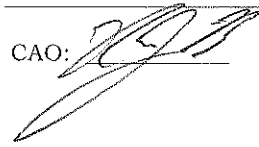
The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.

Date: _____
Attest: MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board
County of Mariposa, State of California

By: _____
Deputy

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER:

Requested Action Recommended
 No Opinion
Comments: _____

CAO: 

May 10, 2011

Megan Wargo
Klamath-Cascade Program Director
The Pacific Forest Trust
1001-A O'Reilly Avenue
San Francisco, California 94129

RE: Yosemite National Park Boundary Line Adjustment

Dear Megan:

The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors supports the Yosemite National Park (YNP) boundary line adjustment currently proposed by the Pacific Forest Trust. Several parcels owned by the Pacific Forest Trust in the Yosemite West area will be added to YNP along with one privately held tract adjacent to the current YNP boundaries. Including these parcels in the modified YNP boundaries will increase overall Park preservation and reduces the threat of substantial development in a remote area that is extremely difficult for the County to provide adequate services (snow removal, public safety, etc.). Transferring the parcel know as the "Donahoe" tract to the United States Forest Service will offer similar benefits to the YNP and the County as well.

Further, it is our understanding that all purchases will be from willing sellers and at a fair market value. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Sincerely,

JIM ALLEN
Chairman

JA/mbh

cc: Honorable Congress Member Jeff Denham
Honorable Senator Dianne Feinstein
Honorable Senator Barbara Boxer

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PACIFIC FOREST TRUST
Fact Sheet

**Yosemite National Park
Boundary Line Adjustment**

As the National Park Service gets ready to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Yosemite Grant from Congress in 2014, the Park faces new challenges as development encroaches from the western boundary of Yosemite. The Pacific Forest Trust has been working over 8 years collaboratively with the National Park Service to buffer the Park's western boundary through land protection. The Yosemite National Park Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA) will enable the Park Service to purchase additional private holdings from willing sellers and complete the original vision of John Muir.

The Pacific Forest Trust has protected an area that comprises nearly 1,000 acres of forests, meadows, rocky ridges, and streams on Yosemite National Park's (YNP) western boundary. These parcels were part of the original design of the national treasure envisioned by John Muir in 1906. Excluded due to political pressure at the time, they are at high risk of development now. The area's conservation has been a key goal of Park Superintendents and supporters.

In 2004, PFT had the opportunity to purchase and conserve these parcels to hold in trust until they could be conveyed to the park. PFT has held and managed these lands to restore historic species composition and fire-resilient conditions. Presently, PFT is working to transfer these lands—as well as other important, private tracts of land from willing sellers—to YNP through a legislative Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA). Acquisition of these vital lands would represent an important milestone in celebration of the Yosemite Grant's 150th anniversary in 2014.



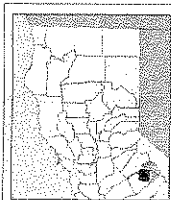
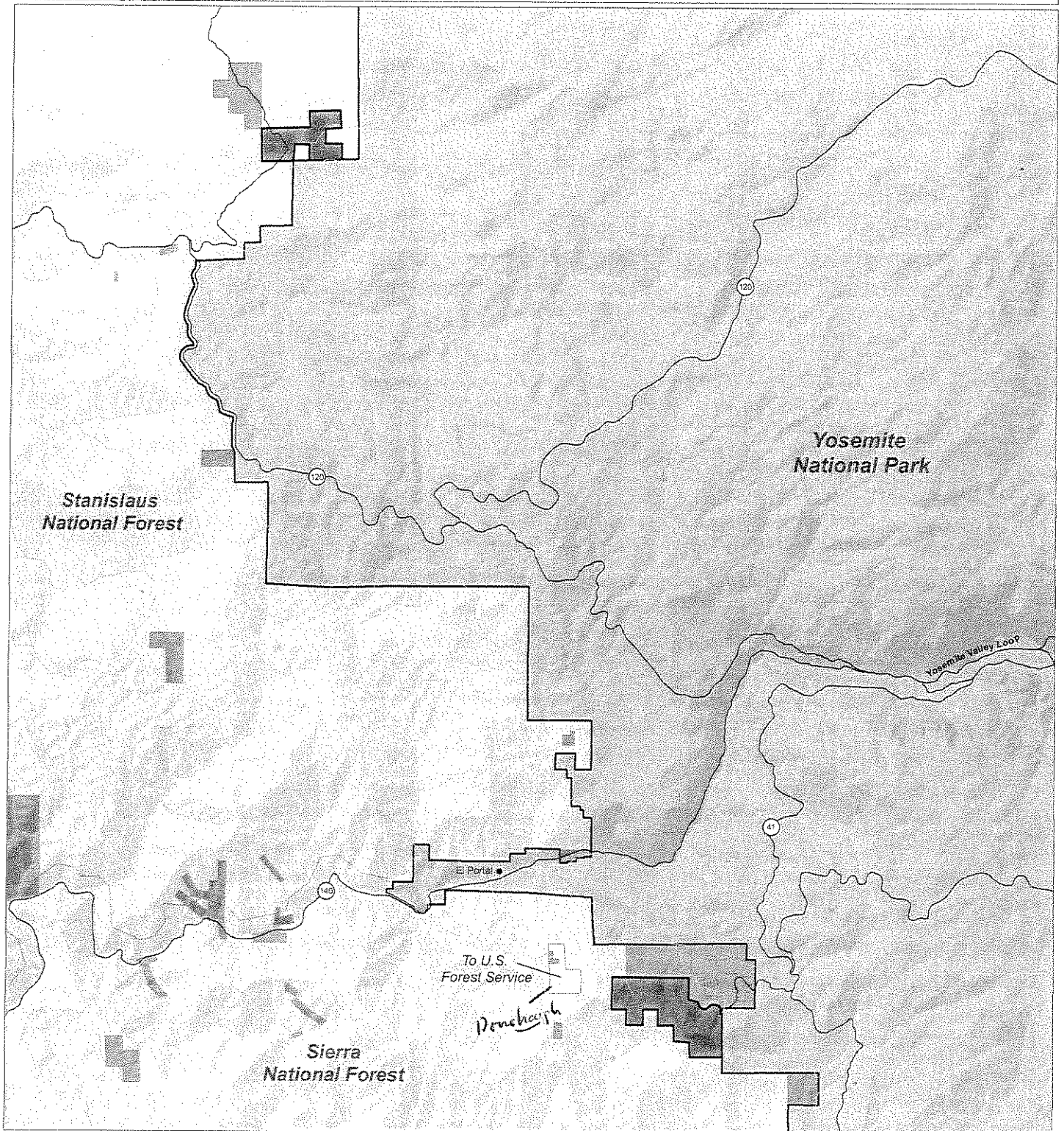
**Benefits of the Yosemite National Park
Boundary Line Adjustment**

- Protects the YNP from development along its vulnerable western border.
- Saves money for the surrounding counties where providing adequate services to potential development in remote areas is prohibitively expensive.
- Reduces the risk of fire incidence for the park, counties and the Forest Service.
- Enhances overall Yosemite National Park preservation by reducing fragmentation and opening up new areas for recreational access that are currently inaccessible.
- Conserves a set of diverse and critically important habitats, knitting them together in a continuous protected landscape surrounded by the YNP and Sierra National Forest.
- Preserves the headwaters of Indian and Zip creeks, which flow into the main stem and the south fork of the Merced River, a National Wild and Scenic River.
- Protects a suite of threatened and vulnerable wildlife including: Pacific fisher, Sierra red fox, Goshawk and Cooper's hawks, great Grey and long-eared owls, wolverines; and protects a variety of rare plant species including: Congdon's Woolly Sunflower, Congdon's Lewisia and the Yosemite Popcorn-Flower.
- Conserves a key winter and spring migratory corridor used by large predatory species.



Yosemite National Park

Location Map for Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA) Areas

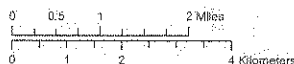


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|--------------------------|---|
| Other PFT owned Property | Current Park Boundary |
| Proposed BLA Area | Proposed Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA) |
| Other Private | Road |
| County | Watercourse |

Note: Ownership of private inholdings within the Proposed Boundary Line Adjustment Area will not be affected in any way, and would only become part of Yosemite National Park upon voluntary sale by the landowners.



Map Date: February 3, 2011
 Created with ESRI ArcMap 9.3
 Projection: Teale Albers
 Datum: NAD 1927

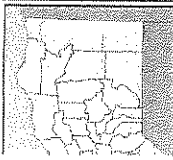
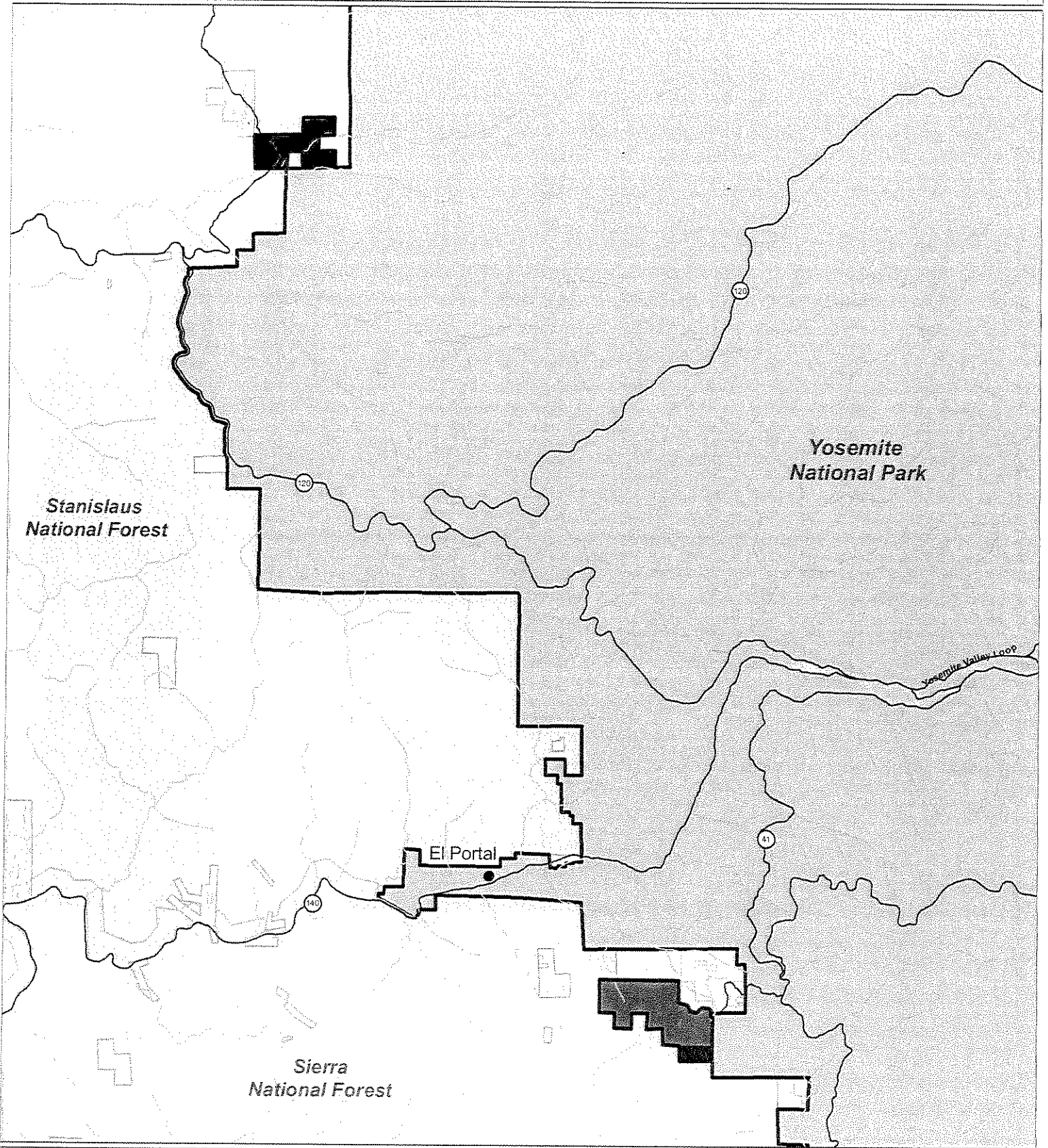


PACIFIC FOREST TRUST

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Yosemite National Park

Location Map for Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA) Areas



- Ransome - PFT to sell to NP (727 acres)
- Sparling - PFT to donate to NP (80 acres)
- Ackerson - Ware Holdings to sell to PFT (415 acres)

- Current Park Boundary
- Proposed Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA)
- Road
- Watercourse



Map Date: February 3, 2011
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Projection: Teale Albers
Datum: NAD 1927



PACIFIC

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As the National Park Service gets ready to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Yosemite Grant from Congress in 2014, the Park faces new challenges as development encroaches from the western border of Yosemite. Over eight years, the Pacific Forest Trust has been working collaboratively with the National Park Service to buffer the Park's western boundary through land protection. The lands sought for protection were part of John Muir's original proposal for Yosemite National Park in 1906, but were excluded from the Park's boundaries due to political pressure at the time. The Yosemite Boundary Line Adjustment will enable the Park Service to purchase private tracts of land from willing sellers to decrease the development threat along the western border, enhance wildlife habitat, scenic vistas and recreational opportunities, and complete the original vision of John Muir.

Property Size: 80 Acres

County: Mariposa

Willing Donor: The Pacific Forest Trust

Location: T3S, R20E, S35 Mariposa County. Three miles west of Chinquapin and Highway 41, 13 miles southwest of Yosemite Valley.

Elevation: 5,600–6,200 Feet

Structures: The property is the site of the original homestead for the historic O'Conner Ranch and includes the following historic structures: the main house with a deck, a barn, four single room cabins, and a stone root cellar.

Conservation Values

There are several springs on the property and a creek that drain into the Wild and Scenic South Fork of the Merced River, a roadless watershed to the south. Through a restoration timber harvest in 2006, the Pacific Forest Trust was able to restore a 3-acre wet meadow on the property, enhancing its habitat value and its potential as hunting grounds for large raptors. Its forests and meadows provide habitat for a suite of threatened and vulnerable wildlife species including: Pacific fisher, Goshawk, and Cooper's hawk and also serve as a key winter and spring migratory corridor for larger predatory species.





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Property Size: 726.5 Acres

County: Mariposa

Willing Seller: The Pacific Forest Trust

Location: T3S, R20E, Mariposa County. Two miles west of Chinquapin and Highway 41, 11.5 miles southwest of Yosemite Valley.

Elevation: 4,900–6,300 Feet

Structures: Ransome house (two-story cabin), Tea House, Tie Cabin (workshop built from salvaged railroad ties)

Conservation Values

Lying along Henness Ridge, a landmark that is visible from the main entry road to Yosemite Valley, the Ransome Ranch is one of the largest private inholdings within the public land along Yosemite's western border. The property is within the historic sugar pine belt and still contains some large diameter sugar pine trees. Four unnamed Class II streams flow through the property and eventually feed into the Wild and Scenic South Fork of the Merced River, a roadless watershed two miles south. Its forests and meadows provide habitat for a suite of threatened and vulnerable wildlife species including: Pacific fisher, Goshawk, and Cooper's hawk and also serve as a key winter and spring migratory corridor for larger predatory species. The property is bounded by the former Yosemite Rail Road grade, an unimproved dirt road that provides hiking and cross-country skiing opportunities.





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Property Size: 415 Acres

County: Tuolumne

Willing Seller: Ware Holdings

Location: T1S, R19E S23 & 24. The property is on the access road to Hetch Hetchy; just minutes from the Big Oak Flat entrance to Yosemite National Park.

Elevation: 4,600 Feet

Structures: Historic homestead and barn

Conservation Values

Protection of Ackerson Meadow has been among the highest acquisition priorities of Yosemite National Park since 1985. The property is bisected by Ackerson Creek, which flows out of the Yosemite Wilderness, through the property and quickly joins the Wild and Scenic South Fork of the Tuolumne River. Ackerson Meadow is one of only a

few mid-elevation meadows left in the Sierra Nevada and provides critical habitat to a number of species. Ackerson Meadow has been studied by numerous ecologists over the last 30 years and is renowned for its ecological significance including: very high wildflower and grass diversity, western pond turtles, Willow flycatchers and Grasshopper sparrows. Most notably, Ackerson Meadow is known in the Sierra to provide habitat for the largest density of Great Grey Owls, North America's largest owl and a State-endangered raptor. Acquisition of the Ackerson Meadow property by the Park would establish public access, educational and recreational opportunities on a property that has already been identified as an "important birding spot" in a number of travel guides, including the Lonely Planet Guide to Yosemite National Park.

