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## Application

This page allows you to view this application as submitted by the applicant. The application shows the Funding program(s) applied for by the applicant, but does not show whether the proposal is eligible in those Funding program(s). Eligibility information is entered on the Eligibility tab after the proposal has been submitted and screened for eligibility.

**Pin No: 2154 - Hidden Falls Regional Park Trails and Open Space Expansion Project - ASSIGNED**

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### Application Overview

**RFP Title:** Recreational Trails and Greenways Grant Program**Submitting Organization:** Placer County**Submitting Organization:** Department of Public Works, Parks Division**Division:****Project Title:** Hidden Falls Regional Park Trails and Open Space Expansion Project

**Project Description:** This Project expands the capacity of the popular Hidden Falls Regional Park (HFRP) in the Sierra Foothills by providing a new trailhead to serve 30 mile of existing and 30 miles of new natural surface trails that allow non-motorized multi-use trail users to explore, exercise, and enjoy nature on 3,940 acres of preserved oak woodland between the communities of Auburn and Lincoln. The Project funded by this grant will construct a new trailhead staging area and connecting trails to the proposed 60 mile trail network. Specific Project features include a parking lot with a capacity for 54 cars and 20 horse trailers, entry drive improvements and stream crossings, turn around area, dirt trail and a pedestrian/equestrian bridge to complete connections to the larger trail network, restrooms, water well, water capture for re-use, helicopter landing zone and 12,000-gallon water tank with hydrant, equestrian amenities, information kiosk, entry kiosk, gates, wayfinding & interpretive signage.

### APPLICANT DETAILS

**Applicant Organization:** Placer County**Applicant Organization:** Department of Public Works, Parks Division**Division:****Applicant Address:** 11475 C Avenue , Auburn , CA - 95603

### PROJECT LOCATION

**Latitude :** 38.979670000 **Longitude:** -121.139790000**Watershed:** Racoon Creek**County:** Placer**Estimated Date of Completion:** 10/15/2022**Project Address (or nearest cross street):** 5345 Bell Road**Nearest City/Town:** Auburn**Cordinates** Proposed parking area at 5345 Bell Road

**Represent:**

**Coordinates** Google Earth

**Determined Using:**

**PROJECT BUDGET**

**Funds Requested(\$):** 3,027,090.00

**Other Sources of Funds(\$):** 934,200.00

**Funds(\$):**  
**Total Budget(\$):** 3,961,290.00

**Funding Program**

Proposition 68

**Applied**

Yes

Project Management Role	Title	First Name	Last Name	Phone	Fax	Email
<b>Project Director: Authorized Representative</b>	Director of Public Works	Ken	Grehm	530-745-7588	530-889-6809	kgrehm@placer.ca.gov
<b>Project Manager: Day to day contact</b>	Parks Administrator	Andy	Fisher	530-889-6819	530-889-6809	afisher@placer.ca.gov

**Applicant Information**

**Name:** Placer County  
**Division:** Department of Public Works, Parks Division  
**Address:** 11475 C Avenue Auburn, CA , 95603  
**Federal Tax ID:**

**Person Submitting Information**

**Submitter Name:** Andy Fisher  
**Submitter Phone:** 530-889-6819  
**Submitter Fax:** 530-889-6809  
**Submitter Email:** afisher@placer.ca.gov

**Legislative Information**

**Primary**

**Additional District(s)**

Senate District	01	01,
Assembly District	06	06,
US Congressional District	01	01,

Contacts	Name	Phone	Email
Placer County Parks Division	Andy Fisher	530-889-6819	afisher@placer.ca.gov
Placer County Parks Division	Lisa Carnahan	530-889-6837	lcarnaha@placer.ca.gov

Cooperating Entities	Role	Name	Phone	Email
Placer County Land Trust	Landowner / Manager of some trails expansion properties	Jeff Darlington	530-887-9222	jeffd@placerlandtrust.org

Pre Submission Attachment Title	Phase	Submission Period	Date & Time
<a href="#">Hidden Falls Regional Park Trails and Open Space Expansion Project - Community Engagement Summary</a>	PHASE1	PRE SUBMISSION	10/16/2019 4:11:40 PM
<a href="#">Hidden Falls Regional Park Trails and Open Space Expansion Project - Cost Estimate</a>	PHASE1	PRE SUBMISSION	10/15/2019 6:12:48 PM
<a href="#">Hidden Falls Regional Park Trails and Open Space Expansion Project - Location Map</a>	PHASE1	PRE SUBMISSION	10/15/2019 2:40:36 PM
<a href="#">Hidden Falls Regional Park Trails and Open Space Expansion Project - Project Site Plan</a>	PHASE1	PRE SUBMISSION	10/8/2019 6:02:40 PM
<a href="#">Map - Proposed Project relative to Hidden Falls Trails Expansion Project</a>	PHASE1	PRE SUBMISSION	10/15/2019 2:42:00 PM
<a href="#">Photo # 2 - Entrance area looking west</a>	PHASE1	PRE SUBMISSION	10/15/2019 2:45:05 PM
<a href="#">Photo #1 - Entrance area</a>	PHASE1	PRE SUBMISSION	10/15/2019 2:43:57 PM
<a href="#">Photo #3 - Parking Area</a>	PHASE1	PRE SUBMISSION	10/15/2019 2:45:31 PM
<a href="#">Project Proposal Form Signature Page</a>	PHASE1	PRE SUBMISSION	10/16/2019 4:10:33

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Post Submission Attachment Title	Phase	Date & Time Attached
<a href="#">3.1 Location Map</a>	PHASE1	9/25/2020 10:42:18 AM
<a href="#">3.2 Authorizing Resolution</a>	PHASE1	9/22/2020 2:21:08 PM
<a href="#">3.4 Environmental Compliance</a>	PHASE1	9/25/2020 10:44:05 AM
<a href="#">3.5 Project Timeline</a>	PHASE1	9/25/2020 10:45:32 AM
<a href="#">3.6 Assessor's Parcel Map</a>	PHASE1	9/16/2020 4:30:38 PM
<a href="#">3.7 Funding Plan</a>	PHASE1	9/25/2020 10:41:36 AM
<a href="#">3.8 Corps Consult Forms (Dev only)</a>	PHASE1	9/25/2020 10:47:02 AM
<a href="#">3.8 Local Corps Consult Forms - No Response (Dev only)</a>	PHASE1	9/25/2020 4:45:58 PM
<a href="#">3.9 Plant Palette (Dev only)</a>	PHASE1	9/25/2020 10:54:00 AM
<a href="#">310 Property Data (Dev only)</a>	PHASE1	9/14/2020 4:47:10 PM
<a href="#">311 Proof Ownership (Dev only)</a>	PHASE1	9/14/2020 4:48:05 PM
<a href="#">314 Project Permit Approval Status (Dev only)</a>	PHASE1	9/25/2020 10:44:31 AM

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Review Attachment Title	Phase	Submission Period	Date & Time
<b>No Review Attachments Available to Display</b>			

Post Award Attachment Title	Phase	Date & Time Attached
<b>No Post Award Attachments Available to Display</b>		

#### Questionnaire - Phase1

#### 4 *Eligibility, Statutory Requirements and Project Need (i=italics)*

## STEP 1: PROJECT PROPOSAL

### Project Summary

**Describe the discrete project including expected project deliverables and current site conditions.**

Answer: In response to high demand from trail users, Placer County is planning to expand the capacity of the popular Hidden Falls Regional Park (HFRP) trails network in the Sierra Foothills by providing new trailheads to serve 30 miles of existing and 30 miles of new natural surface trails that allow public access for non-motorized, multi-use trail users to explore, exercise, and enjoy nature on 3,940 acres of preserved oak woodland between the communities of Auburn and Lincoln.

The Project funded by this grant will construct a new trailhead staging area and connecting trails to the proposed 60 mile trail network. Specific Project features include a parking lot with a capacity for 54 cars and 20 horse trailers, entry drive improvements and stream crossings, natural surface trail and a pedestrian/equestrian bridge to complete connections to the larger trail network, restrooms, potable water well, water capture for re-use, helicopter landing zone and 12,000-gallon water tank with hydrant for emergency response, turn-around capable of accommodating emergency response equipment, equestrian amenities, informational kiosk, entry kiosk, gates, and interpretive and wayfinding signage.

The 50-acre property identified for the new trailhead is located at 5345 Bell Road in Auburn, and consists of a 10-acre parcel with an existing single-family residence, and a 40-acre property which has been used for seasonal cattle grazing. The trailhead staging area is proposed for the 40-acre parcel. This property is approximately 2 miles northeast of the existing entrance to HFRP (7.3 miles by road) and will allow dispersed traffic and multiple entry points to the park and trail system from State Highways 49 and 193. Bell Road is a striped, two lane arterial roadway that leads directly from Highway 49 to the proposed parking area.

The need for the Project is derived from the intense demand for use of the existing trails and parking facilities within HFRP that were constructed and opened in phases between 2006 and 2013 through major funding by the Natural Resource Agency River Parkways Program. HFRP currently hosts approximately 50,000 visitors per year. Due to overcrowding on the weekends by up to 500 vehicles per day that were unable to find parking in 2014 and 2015, Placer County instituted an online reservation system to manage vehicle parking and enhance user experience on the weekends. The reservation system is limited to weekends, holidays and limited other high-use days. No reservation is required Mondays through Fridays, unless it falls on a holiday or

other high-use day. The reservation system has been successful in reducing the number of turned away vehicles, but has not diminished the demand for more access. The planned expansion will help meet the visitor demand through additional trailheads and trail mileage disbursed throughout more than double the current open space acreage.

Visitors to HFRP come from all areas of the greater Sacramento metropolitan region from Stockton through urban Sacramento, North Highlands, and north to the Marysville/Yuba City area. While HFRP does not lie within a disadvantaged community, the park and trail system provide a large scale natural recreation area within an hour's drive of most disadvantaged communities within the greater Sacramento metropolitan area. HFRP gives these users an opportunity to recreate, exercise, and enjoy nature in large-scale public open space within an hour's drive from their homes. User data indicates other visitors travel from areas including the San Francisco Bay region, Reno, Lake Tahoe, and communities in surrounding counties.

## **Project Questions**

**Applicants must answer the following questions, as applicable. If a question does not apply to the project, indicate "Not Applicable" with a brief explanation. Do not leave blank fields.**

### ***Eligibility, Statutory Requirements and Project Need***

#### **1 Explain how the project will provide recreational non-motorized infrastructure development and enhancements.**

Answer: This Project will directly meet the demand for outdoor non-motorized recreation by providing an additional public access point to the expanded Hidden Falls Regional Park (HFRP) trails network of 3,940 acres of open space and 60 miles of multi-use, non-motorized trails. This Project develops new public access infrastructure mid-way along the HFRP trails expansion area which will help meet the demand for additional parking and will disburse trail users and avoid overcrowding. Project enhancements including a new parking and staging area with restroom, well, wayfinding signage, interpretive displays, informational kiosk, equestrian amenities and emergency response facilities. Completion of this parking area will give the general public immediate access to a new portion of the HFRP trails expansion area with an existing trail system.

#### **2 Explain how the project will promote new or alternate access to parks, waterways, outdoor recreational pursuits, and forested or other natural environments.**

Answer: The existing HFRP provides a 30-mile trail network that includes 3 major bridges over Racoon Creek and Deadman Creek, and 13 trail bridges over small tributaries. The trail system is set in the oak woodland and mixed oak/conifer woodlands of the Sierra Foothills. This Project will expand public access to woodlands and waterways by providing access to an additional 30 miles of trails and bridges that will take users to the Bear River and scenic vistas with panoramic views of the Sierra snowcaps. The Project provides a new trailhead staging area for alternate access to the trails expansion area, which is being studied for interconnected access to approximately 3,940 acres. The new access point and trailhead parking area is situated mid-way throughout the expanded trail network system, and will provide a necessary alternative access point. Since the park hours are from dawn to dusk, and because the trails network area spans such a large area, parking areas need to be interspersed along the length of the new trail system to allow visitors to return to their cars prior to the trails expansion area closing in the evening. The new trailhead staging area will help meet the demand by providing another trail access point, thereby allowing more visitors to the park and trails expansion area while distributing users over a larger area. This will preserve the open space feel of the property, and allow visitors to reach alternate areas of the park over multiple visits from different entry points. The new parking area will also allow shuttling of vehicles to allow users to see more of the park without having to backtrack.

#### **3 Explain how the project will encourage health-related opportunities for Californians to reconnect with nature.**

Answer: As one of the largest municipal open space parks in the Sierra Foothills of Northern California, Hidden Falls Regional Park (HFRP) provides a unique four-season nature experience to the greater Sacramento metropolitan area in the same manner as many of the open space parks operated by the East Bay Regional Park District, Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority, and Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District serve the greater San Francisco Bay Area.

Since 2014, East Bay Regional Park District has partnered with local health care providers in their Stay Healthy In Nature Every day (SHINE) program. The SHINE program encourages doctors to prescribe outdoor activity for "preventative intervention for chronic illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity". In February 2018, the results of a study of the effectiveness of the program indicated an overall reduction in stress correlated to the number of park visits by the study group.

(<https://www.ebparks.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?blobid=32433>). What East Bay open space parks provide to Bay Area residents, HFRP and its expansion areas provide to residents of the greater Sacramento area in a proximity that is close enough for half day outings in a wide open nature preserve that includes drive time.

Placer County began its first ever comprehensive Park & Trail Master Plan in 2016. As part of the data gathering for the Master Plan, an online survey gathered over 3,000 responses to questions about recreational interests and priorities in Placer County. When asked why Placer County should provide parks, trails, beaches, and open space, the response with the strongest agreement out of 21 choices was to "improve physical health, fitness, and well-being" (entire survey results can be found at <http://placerparksplan.com/>). In addition to the formal survey results, a search of "Hidden Falls Regional Park Auburn" on YouTube will reveal several dozen video posts by families and friends happily experiencing the natural features of HFRP.

HFRP is open year round for non-motorized hiking, running, bicycling, and horseback riding. Located on 1,200 acres of blue oak woodlands and cascading creeks, HFRP features an existing network of 30 miles of natural surface trails with a single developed parking area for cars and horse trailers. The Project provides a new parking area for alternate access to the trails expansion area, which, when combined with the existing HFRP, will provide the public with approximately 3,940 acres and 60 miles of trails to reconnect with nature.

**4 Explain how the project builds on regional and interconnected trail networks to provide new or improved access to parks, waterways, outdoor recreation, forested and other natural environments.**

Answer: The new public access and parking area will open up a mid-point connection to both the existing 1,182-acre Hidden Falls Regional Park and the 2,758-acre expansion area which leads all the way up to the Bear River at the Nevada County Line. This parking area will facilitate year-round expanded access to the new areas with 60 miles of natural-surface trails. Today, the 2,758-acre expansion property is only accessible to the public on a limited basis by docent led tours by the Placer Land Trust. This Project will provide daily public access to the expansion parcels. It is anticipated that the existing online reservation system will need to be implemented at the new trailhead staging area on weekends and holidays in order to manage overcrowding. However, reservations are available to all visitors without discrimination on a first come first serve basis and are issued in a manner to maximize the availability of parking without exceeding capacity and avoid the need to turn away vehicles. This is a particularly important service to visitors driving from further reaches of the region. Currently, reservations are not issued during most mid-week days when natural visitation does not exceed capacity.

The draft Placer County Park & Trail Master Plan recognizes the work of the Bear Yuba Land Trust in acquiring and preserving open space in Nevada and Yuba Counties with a vision to one day complete trail access between HFRP and the Spenceville Wildlife Area 12 miles to the northwest of HFRP near Beal Air Force Base in Yuba County.

The natural communities of HFRP and its expansion properties include oak and mixed oak woodlands, conifer forests on north facing slopes, savanna grasslands, over 5 miles of frontage along Raccoon Creek and the Bear River. The Project will allow for additional public access of these beautiful open space areas.

**5 How will the project provide recreational non-motorized infrastructure and trails that lead to safer interconnectivity among parks, waterways, and natural areas?**

Answer: The new trailhead staging area that will be constructed through this grant provides direct access from Bell Road, an arterial roadway in North Auburn, to the trail system that will ultimately connect with HFRP and result in a 60-mile trails network. Driveway access to the new parking area will be designed by a registered civil engineer and reviewed and approved through the County's Development Review Committee for standard safety geometry and sight distances. The parking lot will be designed for ADA accessibility both into the parking stalls and from the stalls into the park's trail system and will provide services including restrooms and drinking fountain. Placer County budgets for staff and ranger service on an ongoing basis to maintain the trails and parking areas to a safe standard and to assist users with issues they may encounter while recreating.

**6 Explain how the project connects to needs identified in an existing and approved local, or regional trails plan.**

Answer: Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program(Placer Legacy) - Placer Legacy was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2000 as a program to support the Open Space element of the Placer County General Plan. Placer Legacy includes the following statement of recreational need and goals:

"Placer County has a large amount of public recreation for its population size. Principal recreational opportunities are those afforded by public lands in the Sierra Nevada and by the relatively high concentration

of developed park amenities available in the cities. However with the exception of the American River Canyon and the Folsom Lake area, recreational amenities in the lower Sierra and Foothill area are limited, creating a geographic gap.

Currently lacking is low intensity or passive recreation (e.g. hiking, biking, equestrian) with appropriate support facilities (e.g. access, parking, picnic grounds, rest rooms, and interpretive materials) oriented toward natural open space resources and a broad range of users, including residents, school children, and visitors.

- The Placer Legacy Program will enhance recreational opportunities in the County by improving public trail access, including the construction of staging areas and parking lots, as well as the purchase of public access easements on private land to provide connections to public land and city trail networks.
- The Placer Legacy Program will also provide regional recreational facilities in the foothill region, supplementing the recreation opportunities provided on public lands to the east, and municipal park facilities in urbanized areas. South Placer residents would be served by one or more large regional parks (300 acres or greater) in a rural setting with a variety of passive recreation opportunities. Such a park may be connected with larger areas of protected land, providing additional wildlife habitat value.
- Throughout Placer County, across private and public lands, the Placer Legacy Program will work to strategically improve and provide access to an interconnected, regional system of trails and parks."

Development of HFRP and the expansion properties is a direct result of the needs and goals outlined in the Placer Legacy Program.

Placer County Parks & Trails Master Plan (PCPTMP) – Begun in 2016, the PCPTMP has engaged the public with over 50 public meetings, focus groups, and a 3,000 response online survey.

The draft PCPTMP, which includes trail plans of existing and planned off-street routes that will form a countywide system of trails connecting all areas of Placer County and neighboring jurisdictions. The plan identifies HFRP and the expansion properties as a hub that will one day provide trail connectivity between Nevada County to the North, and El Dorado County to the South; as well as along the Raccoon Creek watershed corridor to Sutter and Sacramento Counties to the West.

From the 2016 PCPTMP surveys, when asked what the respondent's highest trail priorities were, top answers included "Provide new multi-use trails in parts of the county that are lacking trails", and "Connect existing multi-use trails together". When asked about priorities for open space, top answers included "Acquire more natural areas/open space" and "Provide more trails and recreation access in open space areas". The draft PCPTMP and full survey results may now be viewed at [Placerparksplan.com](http://Placerparksplan.com).

Placer County Regional Bikeway Plan (PCRBP) – The 2018 PCRBP, published by the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency, provides an on-street bike and pedestrian blueprint that will work in conjunction with the PCPTMP's off-street trails. The PCRBP includes planned bike routes along arterial roads to provide alternative transportation access along arterial roadways to HFRP from the communities of Auburn, Newcastle, Penryn, Lincoln, and Sheridan.

**7 If the project is serving a disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged community, identify which type of community.**

Answer: I

Answer: The Project would not serve a disadvantaged community under the Definition of Appendix P of the grant guidelines.

**8 If the project is serving a disadvantaged or severely disadvantaged community, explain how the project is serving the community and list the direct benefits provided. (see definition of Serving a Disadvantaged or Severely Disadvantaged Community in Appendix P).**

Answer: The Project would not serve a disadvantaged community under the Definition of Appendix P of the grant guidelines.

**9 If the project is not serving a disadvantaged community, describe how the 20 percent match requirement will be met.**

Answer: The 20 percent match requirement will be funded through a combination of Placer County development impact fees and Placer County General Funds.

Placer County will be providing a match of approximately 23.6%.



**10 Describe how the public will benefit from the project.**

Answer: The Project provides a new general public access, including a new trailhead staging area with amenities as described in the project description, to 3,940 acres of natural open space with 60 miles of natural surface trails. Along with the health benefits associated with outdoor activity, nature education opportunities for visitors will be abundant. Along with the interpretive signage which will be located within the new parking area as well as the trail system, Science, Art and Nature Education classes will continue to occur and expand within the park and trail expansion areas. The quiet, non-urban setting of the park and trail expansion areas will provide a unique area for people to rejuvenate and gain an appreciation for nature. Without the project, access to these beautiful areas will be limited to infrequent, docent-led tours only, as they are currently. The proposed project will open up access of these expanded oak woodland areas and creeks to the general public.

**11 Explain how the project addresses a critical statewide need.**

Answer: As one of the largest municipal open space parks in the Sierra Foothills of Northern California, HFRP provides a unique four-season outdoor recreational experience to people in the region, as well as to the state. HFRP routinely has people visit from the Bay Area or farther. People have even visited HFRP from other states as well as other countries. There are very few opportunities for people to enjoy such a large, blue oak woodland area with associated multi-use trail system. This Project provides that opportunity by creating a new and needed public access point into the expanded trail area and provides the necessary parking, restroom and amenities for the public. As stated earlier, weekend visitor desire for use of the park has surpassed the capacity of the current parking area on Mears Place. Additionally, because of the large size of the trails expansion area, and the need for visitors to return to their cars before the park closes for the evening, a new parking area is needed mid-way along the area's length. The proposed new parking is a necessity in order to allow the general public access to the new areas of the trails expansion area.

Many people within the more urban areas of California lack access to large, oak woodland areas where they can hike, ride bicycles or horseback ride to improve both their physical and emotional health. This Project would provide people living within disadvantaged communities within the greater Sacramento and North Highlands areas access to this outdoor, multi-use trails experience within an hour of their homes. The Project offers a new access point for the general public to the Hidden Falls trails expansion area, where, without this Project, only a very limited number of people will be able to enjoy the area through docent-led tours. This Project addresses a critical statewide need by providing access to new trails, stunning vista points, and helping Californians connect to the natural beauty of the Foothills.

In addition to the outdoor recreational benefits to Californians, this new access point to the HFRP expanded trails system will be a benefit to the economy. People often come to HFRP from Sacramento and the Bay Area, which helps restaurants, stores and other retail establishments in the area and along the traveled route.

**12 How will the project provide workforce education and training, contractor, and job opportunities for disadvantaged communities? If not practicable, explain why.**

Answer: Placer County worked closely with the Placer Center of the California Conservation Corps (CCC) in the development of the existing HFRP. The CCC provides work/training to young people from diverse backgrounds. The Placer Center in Christian Valley is located approximately 6-miles from the proposed staging area that is the subject of this Grant application. It is anticipated that the CCC will assist with constructing trail features and fencing on this Project.

Although the Public Contract process (bidding) does not guarantee job opportunities for disadvantaged communities, County Purchasing Policies do provide some vendor preference for Minority Business Enterprises/Women's Business Enterprises in the solicitation process.

Additionally, individuals from disadvantaged communities may work in construction and operational trades (e.g. earthwork, carpentry, landscaping) which will be required to complete this project.

**13 Describe how the following is included in the project design; if not feasible, explain why:**

**a. Efficient use and conservation of water supplies.**

**b. Use of recycled water.**

**c. Stormwater capture to reduce stormwater runoff, reduce water pollution and/or recharge groundwater supplies.**

**d. Provision of safe and reliable drinking water supplies to park and open-space visitors.**

Answer: a. The Project's landscaping plans will be designed in accordance with the low impact development (LID) standards of the Placer County Landscape Design Guidelines and under the Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO) adopted by the County. These water efficient landscaping requirements emphasize the

use of drought tolerant plants and water efficiency.

The restroom on site will be plumbed with water-conserving toilets and sinks which will comply with the most recent Building Code Requirements. Landscaping, in terms of trees, flowers and shrubs for merely aesthetic purposes is limited in this project. Native shade trees are proposed for the new parking area to reduce the Heat Island Effect. Trees that meet Placer County's WELO will be utilized within the parking area, and drip irrigation will be used.

b. Due to the rural nature of this project site and limited use of water needed for landscaping, recycled water is not proposed. The restrooms onsite will be connected to a leachfield. With the use of native, drought-resistant trees in the parking area and lack of ornamental landscaping, recycled water is not proposed.

c. This 50-acre project site has the onsite capability to capture, treat and eliminate stormwater runoff from the site. Only approximately 5 acres of the 50-acre site will be paved. The rest of the site will remain in its current state, which consists of a mixture of grasses, oak woodland and ponds. LID measures will be utilized in the construction of this parking and access area and could include some areas of pervious pavement. Stormwater from the parking area would be captured in a grassy swale and treated prior to its release into the onsite surrounding area.

d. The project includes the construction of a well which will meet public well standards. The well will be required to be permitted through the Placer County Environmental Health Department, and as such, will require annual water quality testing in order to provide safe and reliable drinking water for visitors.

**14 What will happen to the project if grant funding is not awarded (e.g., loss of matching funds, impacts on overall project vision, project momentum, timing difficulties, etc.)?**

Answer: Acquisition of the connecting Hidden Falls Regional Park trails expansion parcels over 13 years prepared the County to develop public access on these lands. Momentum has been building over this period to open these areas to the general public. The recreation community is aware of this potential benefit, and there is a strong demand for more trails, as identified by surveys in the Draft Countywide Park and Trail Masterplan, as well as feedback from Municipal Advisory Councils and user groups throughout the county. This Project is a key piece to open the mid reach of the trail network. If grant funding is not awarded for this Project, this mid-way access point in the trail system will not be constructed at this time, and public access to this portion of the trails expansion area will be unavailable to the general public until such time as future grant funding is made available.

***Innovative Transportation Projects for Disadvantaged Youth (if applicable)***

**15 Describe how the project provides new and expanded outdoor experiences for disadvantaged youth?**

Answer: The Project would provide the general public with a new parking and access point to the trails expansion area. This area is currently only partially available for docent-led tours. The staging area will facilitate year-round expanded access to new areas, which disadvantaged youth are able to enjoy. Clubs, Schools, Faith, and Service organizations can freely choose to visit the site and provide outdoor experiences to children associated with their programs.

**16 Explain how the project is innovative in providing services to disadvantaged youth?**

Answer: This project will provide disadvantaged youth new opportunities to enjoy a unique open space area, studded with blue oak woodland areas, streams and riparian areas, and where they can explore the integral multi-use trail system. The interpretive displays along the trail system will help disadvantaged youth connect with the natural beauty and cultural history within the area.

This project directly provides that opportunity to explore a unique, Sierra Nevada Foothills open space park and trail system by creating a new public access point into the trail area and providing the necessary parking, restroom and amenities for the public. HFRP is on a variety of websites as an outstanding area to visit for viewing waterfalls and because of the natural beauty of the open space area. We have many visitors from outlying areas of the greater Sacramento metropolitan region from Stockton through urban Sacramento, North Highlands, and north to the Marysville/Yuba City area, areas serving disadvantaged communities. HFRP gives these users an opportunity to recreate, exercise, and enjoy nature in large-scale public open space within an hour's drive from their home. The new access point and parking area will increase the capacity of people allowed within the park and trail expansion area and will give people in these communities greater ability to enjoy these areas.



- 17 **Describe how this project might be used as a model or easily transfer to other communities and/or organizations or explain the unique conditions in the community that make this project a good fit.**
- Answer: Hidden Falls Regional Park (HFRP) and the expansion properties are a result of the forward thinking of the Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program (Placer Legacy) that was adopted by the Placer County Board of Supervisors in 2000. Placer Legacy is a program to offset the impacts of new development by acquiring and preserving open space. Since its inception, Placer Legacy has permanently protected over 9,000 acres of open space, through an investment of over \$20Million in leveraged local funds, that has increased the quality of life in Placer County, preserved important historic resources, protected scenic landscapes and habitats, and provided opportunity for the public to access and experience large open spaces on foot, bicycle, and horse. The 1,182-acre HFRP is already one of the largest municipal open space park in the Northern California Sierra foothills. This Project will more than double the size of this preserved area for increased public access and enjoyment of nature. The connected 3,940 acre open space park spans an area of the foothills ranging in elevation from 500' to 1,800' which gives visitors an opportunity to experience diverse habitats ranging from the valley oak riparian zones in the west to ridgelines with snowcap vistas in the east. Placer Legacy and its crown jewel, Hidden Falls Regional Park, should be a model to any Sierra jurisdictions that aspire to improve the quality of life of their residents and visitors through preservation of open space for public enjoyment.
- This Project is an important piece of that open space woodland preserve and public recreation vision, and is a good fit for the identity of Placer County that prides itself on its world famous endurance runs, national forests and Lake Tahoe Beaches. Through providing a new access point and parking area, this Project provides a significant addition to the region's trail network public capacity, but unlike some of the more remote trails in the national forest and Auburn State Recreation Area, HFRP trails are inviting for families of various ages and abilities including frequent visitation by multiple generations of a family.

### ***Statutory and Program Priorities***

- 18 **What is the status of Applicant's consultation with the California Conservation Corps or a certified community conservation corps about the project?**
- Answer: Placer County worked closely with the Placer Center of the CCC in the development of the existing HFRP. The Placer Center in Christian Valley is located approximately 6-miles from the proposed staging area that is the subject of this Grant application. The CCC work included construction of two observation decks, 6 trail bridges, 5,000 feet of perimeter fencing, and approximately 120 acres of shaded fuel breaks. The CCC is familiar with the property, and Placer County will continue to engage the CCC in the expanded development of the HFRP trails network, including trail features and fencing on this Project.
- 19 **How does the project leverage private, federal or local funding?**
- Answer: Both Placer County General Funds and Development Fees would be used to fund the cost of the Project. As shown in the Cost Estimate, Placer County would provide approximately 23.6% matching funds towards the Project. Construction of this mid-way parking and trailhead area for the Hidden Falls Regional Park Trails Expansion would provide an additional access point for the existing park area, and would aid with leveraging funding for the two bridges which are necessary to connect this portion of the trail system to the existing park.
- 20 **Describe any water efficiencies, stormwater capture for infiltration or reuse, or carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas emissions reduction features included in the project design. If not feasible, explain why.**
- Answer: The restroom planned for the Project will adhere to the most recent Building Code requirements, which call for water-conserving sinks and toilets. The landscaping design includes the use of native trees to provide shade cover for the parking lot and reduce the Heat Island effect. Because the trees would be intended for this climate, they would utilize less water than other ornamental trees, and upon maturation, would likely require little to no water. A drip irrigation system is planned for the trees, further saving unnecessary overspray.
- Given the size, topography and rural character of property, stormwater collected on impervious surfaces will be held on site and naturally reintroduced to the earth. Stormwater from the parking area will be captured and treated in a bioswale onsite and then will naturally infiltrate into the soil.
- 33% of the project area will be dedicated as a protected woodland, ensuring continued sequestration of carbon in the onsite trees.
- 21 **What solutions to prevent displacement are included in the project?**

Answer: Residential displacement potential – The project area is located in an area of low density farm zoning so the Project will have a negligible impact on the potential for low income residential development. There is an existing single-family residence on the 10-acre portion of the property. The resident has expressed the desire to continue living on the property, and the County has included continued occupation of the home in the Project planning. At such time as the current resident moves, the County intends to have a caretaker reside at the house, so no displacement of the current residence will occur. The Project will not result in a change to the rural, large-acre character of the surrounding area.

Agricultural displacement potential - Prior to acquisition for regional park purposes, the historic use of the HFRP and many of the expansion properties was cattle grazing. In some locations within the trails expansion area, including the Project site, grazing continues today, and agricultural use will remain an important conservation element and management tool for all of the properties in the future.

As such, Parks Division staff is working with the office of the Placer County Agricultural Commissioner to establish a working group of ranching professionals to help develop policies and practices to support successful integration of public trail users with cattle operations. The outcome of this working group may result in limitations of certain uses during calving season such as allowance of dogs during discreet times. Staff has also visited open space preserves in the East Bay Counties to observe and learn from the experiences of the open space agencies that have been mixing cattle and trail use for many years. What we have learned is that, if properly managed, the mixed use can present a quality opportunity for agricultural education and the allowance of the public to view cattle operations up close has been well received and helped the public to gain an appreciation for animal husbandry and where their food comes from.

The 50-acre Project parcel with a purchase and sale agreement in place has accommodated occasional cattle grazing over time. While development of the property for a trailhead and parking area would not preclude grazing outside of the parking area, it is unlikely that the remaining portion of the property would be used for regular cattle grazing. However, the current cattle grazer (the neighbor) has a grazing lease with the larger Placer Land Trust (PLT) owned properties adjacent to the Project site. PLT has publicly expressed their intent to continue grazing on the properties, so there would be no displacement of existing agricultural uses. Additionally, the County regularly uses goats and sheep to manage fuel loads within HFRP and other areas of the County. In order to maintain the vegetation outside of the parking area, it is likely that the County will utilize goats and sheep as a part of the land management plan. Therefore, agriculture will not be displaced.

Wildlife displacement potential - The open space parcels and Project site are already fenced, and the additional fencing proposed with the Project would not displace any wildlife. Fencing throughout HFRP and the expansion parcels is predominantly constructed of barbless, 4-strand field fencing to allow wildlife passage without injury. Approximately 33% of the 50-acre Project parcel contains blue oak woodland and will be purchased with Tree Mitigation Funds and those portions of the property will set aside in perpetuity for no development. With the exception of the entrance driveway and parking area, and the small developed areas around the existing home site, the remainder of the 50-acre property will remain undeveloped. Therefore, the native animals that travel through the property will not be displaced.

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## 22 What features included in the design are intended to maximize safe and equitable access to the project?

Answer: Equitable Access - The reservation system the County has implemented for the existing parking area on Mears Place has led to equal access for everyone. The existing parking area serving HFRP has a capacity of 101 cars and 12 horse trailers. In 2014 and 2015, as news of the beauty and quality trails at HFRP spread, park rangers were required to turn away up to 500 vehicles per day on weekends and holidays after the parking lot filled to capacity in the early hours of the morning. If visitors did not arrive by at least 9:00 a.m., they most often did not get a parking spot. This demand and overcrowding of existing facilities necessitated the implementation of a reservation system on weekends and holidays that requires visitors to obtain an online reservation prior to making the trip to the park. The reservation system has succeeded in managing vehicles entering the park, eliminated the need to turn away visitors, and has improved the visitor experience, but has not diminished the demand for park access. The system issues approximately 14,000 vehicle reservations each year for weekend and holiday use. No reservations are needed on weekdays when natural visitation does not normally exceed the capacity of the parking area.

Account profiles from the reservation system indicate that approximately 25% of visitors using HFRP on weekends and holidays come from zip codes comprising disadvantaged areas of the greater Sacramento region. Approximately 63% of weekend visitors to HFRP come from outside of Placer County. After attempting

to implement a no-cost reservation system and discovering that only 17% of people making reservations actually arrived at the park, in October of 2017, the County began charging \$8/full day and \$4/part day reservation fee. To date, staff has heard very few concerns about this cost, and the park remains heavily used. There is no cost to any visitors during weekdays when natural visitation does not exceed parking capacity.

This reservation system has allowed people driving from afar to have equal access to the park, and manages the parking lot so that it is safe and efficient. The County has received feedback from many visitors that the reservation system has given them relief in the knowledge that they have a guaranteed parking spot whenever they arrive. The proposed new parking area will be managed with the same reservation system on the weekends so that the parking demand is well managed. As with the existing parking lot on Mears Place, there will be no charge for visiting the trails expansion area from this new access point during the week.

Safe Access – The new trailhead staging area will be located along a striped arterial roadway with three access points to Highway 49 in North Auburn. The entry, parking area, and amenities will be designed to Placer County roadway design standards by a registered professional engineer and reviewed by the Placer County Community Development Resource Agency.

### ***Project Readiness***

#### **23 If the requested funds are insufficient to cover all project costs, what is the funding gap and how will it be bridged?**

Answer: The cost estimate provided with this submittal is based on actual costs for development of the existing parking lot, trails, and amenities at HFRP, so the estimate is anticipated to be reliable given the similarities in location and features planned for the new trailhead staging area and amenities associated with this Project. Staff has identified reliable local funding sources to provide the 20% match requirement of this grant, and a commitment of those funds would be made at the time an authorizing resolution of the Board of Supervisors is approved for the final application. Per the Cost Estimate attached to this grant request, the County is planning to provide a 23.6% match. If costs increase beyond the estimate and contingency, staff would look to make up the shortfall from a combination of additional development fees and new grant opportunities.

#### **24 On a scale of 1-10, how ready is the project for implementation?**

Answer: 9.000

Answer: By the time the funds are awarded, the project should be ready to implement. The County is in the last stages of preparing a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for the entire Hidden Falls Regional Park Trails Expansion Project, of which this project is a component. The SEIR is expected to be out for public review at the end of October 2019, and to the Board of Supervisors in Spring 2020. At the same time, the property acquisition will be ready to close escrow for fee title transfer to Placer County. Upon award of grant funding, the permits would be obtained and the project's construction documents would be prepared for bidding purposes. Construction would be anticipated for Summer 2022.

#### **25 Describe the status of the following items, including anticipated timing for completion of each:**

**a. Preliminary design.**

**b. Environmental documentation (CEQA) (see definition in Appendix P).**

**c. Necessary permits and long-term operation and maintenance commitments/ agreements.**

**d. Willing seller (for acquisition proposals, e.g., purchase agreement, option, discussions, etc.)**

**e. Other funding sources needed to complete the project.**

Answer: a. Preliminary design has been completed (See attached site plan). Septic testing has been completed and a suitable site for the septic system has been identified.

b. The Draft Subsequent EIR is due to be released at the end of October for its 45-day review period. The Final SEIR will be subsequently prepared and released for public review, followed by the public hearing at the Board of Supervisors. There is not a firm date for the Board Hearing at this time, but it is anticipated to be in Spring 2020.

c. Concurrent with certification of the Subsequent EIR for the Project, Placer County will issue a Conditional Use Permit. For the proposed trailhead project, once the bid documents are prepared, the County will be able to apply for the necessary agency permits. Anticipated permits include US Army Corps 404 permit (with SHPO and USFWS consultation), CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Streambed Alteration Agreement, SWQCB Conditioned Water Quality Certification and NPDES compliance, County grading, building, septic, and public well permit.

For operation of the well for public use, the County will be issued a Transient Non-Community Domestic Water Supply Permit. In each case, the Placer County Parks Division has applied for and received these same permits for the existing development of HFRP.

The Project property for the new trailhead staging area will be County-owned. Placer County will work in tandem with the Placer Land Trust (PLT), who owns the adjacent lands, and where the County has trail easements. The parking lot connector trail will link up to the existing multi-use trail system on the Placer Land Trust lands. The County helped purchase the connecting parcels owned by PLT, and with the aid of funds, was granted trail easement rights over the parcels for public use. These parcels are shown on the attached map Exhibit, and show the whole vision and interconnectivity between within the expanded Hidden Falls Regional Park trails network. Placer County and PLT are working together to complete a maintenance and operations plan to designate the division of responsibilities and expectations for land management, public access accommodation, and adherence to the conservation values on the expansion area parcels with PLT ownership interest. The management plan will be in place prior to opening of the new trailhead staging area.

Placer County is experienced in the cost and requirements of long term management of HFRP and is prepared to expand its service to the expansion properties upon successful completion of the Project. The property will be managed by County staff and rangers. Majority funding for ongoing maintenance is derived from Placer County General Funds with an existing annual budget of approximately \$350,000. About \$50,000 is derived from reservation fees and is used to administer the reservation program and ranger service. County Parks staff will work through the normal budget process to secure additional funding for ongoing maintenance as additional areas of the park are opened to the public.

d.N/A – This is a grant request for development project. As an aside, the County has entered into a Purchase and Sale Agreement with the project property's current land owner.

e. The 20% match will be provided through the County's General Fund and Placer County development fees. The development fees are available for allocation by the Board of Supervisors from their respective trust accounts. County Parks staff will work with the CEO's office and Board of Supervisors to allocate the required General Funds and development fees to the Project account concurrently with the award of the grant. The fiscal impact statement accompanying the resolution of authorization to apply for grant funds will contain an acknowledgement by the Board of Supervisors of the necessary matching funds that will be required if successful. The County is proposing a 23.6% match for this Project.

**26 List all entities with jurisdiction over the project and the status of notifications, agreements, meetings, etc.**

Answer: Subsequent to awarding of grant funds, the County will pursue the required permits to begin the construction process. The California Regional Water Quality Control Board will govern the Section 401 permit for the wetland crossings. We will also need to confer with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on the Section 1600 permit, and the US Army Corps of Engineers on a Section 404 permit. The State Water Resources Control Board Storm Water Pollution Prevention Permit Notice of Intent will be prepared by Placer County and the chosen contractor. Additionally, a permit will be required by Placer County Environmental Health Department for both the onsite septic system and the public well. All of Hidden Falls Regional Park and the expansion areas will be included under the laws of Placer County Code Section 12.24 as designated public recreation areas and will be further regulated by a Placer County Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

***Organizational Capacity***

**27 Describe applicant's experience in completing similar projects.**

Answer: Placer County has a demonstrated ability to complete Projects of this scale and complexity. In particular, the same project management staff that was involved in the development of the existing HFRP facilities will be closely involved in the development of this Project. The Placer County Parks Division employs two full time planners/project managers who will be available to manage this Project along with the help of qualified consultant engineers, surveyors, landscape architects, and construction managers. Placer County maintains service agreements with qualified professional service consultants for projects such as this one. The existing HFRP facility development involved the use of over 20 federal, state, and local funding sources, a full environmental impact report, and 20 separate permits. Current Placer County Parks staff has the expertise to take this project through similar funding, development, and permitting to a successful completion.

**28 Describe applicant's fiscal capacity to carry out the proposed project on a reimbursement basis.**

Answer: During the original development of HFRP, Placer County received over \$2.6 Million in reimbursable grants. Placer County was able to carry out the project over a period of multiple years prior to reimbursement without any cash flow issues. Throughout Placer County's entire agency, tens of millions of dollars in grant funding is outstanding on a reimbursable basis at any given time. Placer County would be prepared to carry out this project on a reimbursable basis over the performance period of the grant. The Board of Supervisors is accustomed to authorizing grant applications with reimbursable revenue sources.

**29 Describe applicant's plan for long-term operations and maintenance of the project (see Appendix I for requirements).**

Answer: The Placer County Board of Supervisors currently allocates approximately \$350,000 per year to operate and maintain the existing HFRP, including regular cleaning and maintenance of the parking area and restrooms, trail maintenance, ranger patrol, parking assistance, and vegetation management including annual goat grazing to maintain established shaded fuel breaks. Upon opening of new areas to the public, Staff would work through the normal budget process to allocate funding for expanded maintenance and operations in proportion to the size and scope of new operations.

Following close of escrow for the Project parcels, Placer County would own the parcels in fee simple and would be in a position to unilaterally commit to the site control and land tenure requirements of this grant program including the recording of a deed restriction. As owner of the Project property, purchased for the purpose of public trailhead access and preservation, Placer County would be prepared to operate and maintain the property for its intended purpose for a minimum of 25 years.

**30 What is the source of funds for ongoing operations and maintenance?**

Answer: The primary source of operations and maintenance funding for HFRP is the Placer County General Fund. The ongoing operations and maintenance funds for this Project will similarly come from the Placer County General Fund. The current reservation system generates approximately \$50,000 per year and is used to offset the cost of system implementation. If employed at the new trailhead staging area, reservation funds would be similarly used to support the reservation system.

**31 Describe applicant's experience in managing other grant funded projects.**

Answer: Staff assigned to this Project have successfully completed grant contracts for funding through the River Parkway Program (Natural Resources Agency), Riparian & Riverine Program (State Parks), Recreational Trails Program (State Parks), Sierra Nevada Conservancy (various programs), California Conservation Corps (labor matching grants), and Housing Related Parks Program (Dept. of Housing and Community Development).

While these grant programs have led to the successful development of HFRP and many other recreational park and trail projects throughout Placer County, they have also made for learning experiences. For example, in the case of HFRP, two years after closeout of a River Parkways grant contract, staff was focused on alleviation of acute overcrowding of the HFRP parking lot with as many as 500 cars per day being turned away. This created traffic jams on local roads and serious concerns of neighbors and visitors. In response, an online reservation was implemented, but staff failed to communicate this new management strategy to the funding partners that made HFRP a reality. Months later, we learned that staff of the Natural Resources Bonds and Grants Division found out about the new reservation system when they visited HFRP for a hike and were caught off guard by having never heard of the new system from County staff. While we were able to write and explain the necessity and non-discriminatory nature of the reservation system after the fact, this was a good reminder that our funding partners have a responsibility to ensure the proper use of their funds long after the ribbon cutting and need to be consulted on proposed changes in management and use that could affect the goals and policies of grant programs.

***Collaboration***

**32 Describe partnerships with other entities and their corresponding roles in the project.**

Answer: The County has been working with the Placer Land Trust since 2003 on the purchase of the linking parcels between the existing HFRP and the Bear River, with the intent of creating a 60-mile, interconnected trail system for public use. This Project would create an important access point for the public in the middle of the trail expansion area. The connecting trail from the proposed parking area will tie into the existing trails on the adjacent Placer Land Trust-owned parcels and will allow the public immediate access to new areas of the overall HFRP trails expansion area.



Placer County owns non-motorized trail easements throughout the Placer Land Trust owned properties and will be working in tandem with Placer Land Trust in perpetuity to maintain these open space areas. The two entities will be working together to provide a safe and enjoyable public access, parking and trail system, while ensuring that operations and maintenance follow the land management protocols established for each of the properties.

**33 Describe past, current and future community involvement (neighbor/user groups, etc.), outreach, partnerships, and support for the project.**

Answer: Placer County has partnered with the non-profit Placer Land Trust (PLT) in the purchase of four of the open space expansion parcels totaling 2,487 acres. For these purchases, Placer County has been a funding partner and holds trail easements within the parcels while PLT retains land ownership or conservation easements. Placer County is working with PLT to finalize management agreements that will codify respective responsibilities once the public is allowed on the parcels while preserving all of the recreational, agricultural, and open space goals of the properties

The Project has garnered considerable community involvement through both the CEQA process and through the Parks and Trails Master Plan being prepared by the County. Input from both the online survey, with over 3,000 responses, conducted for the Master Plan, and from countywide focus groups highlighted the public's desire for more publically accessible trails, and parking areas to serve the trails.

Two groups have formed in response to this Project. One group is named Placer Trails and is made up of a collaboration of 5 local trail user groups representing hikers, equestrians, and mountain bike riders. Placer Trails has collected over 1,000 signatures in support of the HFRP Trails and Open Space Expansion Project and recently staffed a booth at the Gold Country Fair in Auburn for 3 days to help educate the public about the Project and other trail projects within Placer County.

The second group is named Protect Rural Placer (PRP). As suggested by their name, the group seeks to protect rural areas of Placer County from threats to agriculture and rural lifestyle. While the Project was born of the Placer Legacy Open Space and Agricultural Conservation Program that shares many common goals, PRP members living near the expansion area have expressed concern over potential traffic and wildfire impacts as well as the effects of public access on ongoing cattle grazing operations. Placer County staff has listened carefully to their concerns and are addressing them through the environmental review process.

***Additional Project Characteristics***

**34 Describe community stewardship opportunities provided by this project.**

Answer: The expansion of HFRP will provide increased opportunity for community stewardship and volunteer efforts that are already robust at the existing park. 2,487 acres of the expansion area is owned by the private non-profit Placer Land Trust (PLT). As a non-profit public benefit corporation, PLT has the mission to provide, and continue to provide: land management, education, and volunteer work parties within its properties. Placer County will continue to partner with PLT, and other public and private organizations including REI, Inc., the local Ward of the LDS Church, Folsom Auburn Trail Riders Action Coalition, Meadow Vista Trails Association, Loomis Basin Horsemen's Association, and Gold Country Trails. In demonstration of the community care and sentiment for Hidden Falls, as many as 500 volunteers per day have participated in volunteer work days at Hidden Falls Regional Park that were variously sponsored by REI and the LDS Church. County staff coordinates closely with these entities to organize volunteer work days for trail maintenance and improvements. Placer County is beginning a pilot program with William Jessup University to bring classrooms out to tour open space property for astronomy and nature education. It is anticipated that this pilot program will expand into a more comprehensive partnership with higher education institutions to increase environmental education and stewardship to HFRP and other open spaces in Placer County.

**35 Describe any ADA access and improvements to the project (see definition in Appendix P).**

Answer: The existing HFRP was designed for ADA compliance in areas associated with the parking area, and that project constructed a ¼ mile ADA trail near the parking and picnic areas. However, the topography that leads from the parking area to the interior of the park, is too steep to allow a larger meaningful ADA trail. The new trailhead staging area provided by this grant will be constructed at a location with gentler slopes leading from the parking lot to the trail network and will allow a longer, gentler trail to allow users of various physical conditions easier access to the interior of the park and to features of interest such as vista points and creeks. An ADA assessment will be done for the trails leading into the park from the new parking area. Where ADA



accessibility standards are achievable, they will be implemented, and where not achievable, trails will be constructed to allow the greatest accessibility to the largest physical diversity of users. The new parking lot and all its amenities will be designed to meet or exceed ADA standards including: parking stall configuration, paths of travel, restrooms, drinking fountain, benches, and picnic tables.

**36 Explain how the project incorporates climate adaptation strategies to help protect against climate impacts.**

Answer: Hidden Falls Regional Park and its expansion properties were acquired in order to implement the Open Space element of the Placer County General Plan which calls for the robust preservation of large scale open space to offset the impacts of new residential and commercial development. The 3,940 acres of mixed oak woodland will be preserved against further development in perpetuity for its natural value in carbon sequestration and filtration of sediments and other contaminants through its network of grass lands and wetland areas.

Within the trailhead staging area constructed as part of this Project, native shade trees (15 gallon or less) will be planted strategically to reduce the heat island effect of the parking surface. A combination of permeable paving and bio filtration will be used to filter and reintroduce ground water and direct filtered stormwater runoff to an existing pond on site for reuse in stock watering, emergency fire suppression and support of aquatic species. Additionally, the oak woodland portion of the property (which is contiguous with the adjacent oak woodland habitat on the Placer Land Trust owned property) will be set aside in perpetuity as a no-development zone, thereby providing additional carbon sequestration in the area.

**37 Explain how the project addresses economic, environmental, social, community need, improved physical and mental health or provides benefits not previously discussed.**

Answer: The Project provides an essential piece of the Hidden Falls Regional Park Trail Expansion vision; a vision which has been shaped by the desires of Placer County residents. The need for additional parking areas and access to trail networks has repeatedly been voiced by different user groups within the County. The concentration of visitors in just one area of the park and trail expansion area is not healthy for the natural environment. By spacing visitors out, their open space experiences are enhanced, and the the natural resources and beauty within the open space areas are preserved for future generations.

Outdoor recreation boosts both the local and statewide economy. People come to visit HFRP from distant areas, which in turns spurs the restaurant, bike rental, and other business economies. HFRP and its expansion areas provide no cost and low cost outdoor recreation opportunity for the greater Sacramento area and beyond.

Throughout Placer County, whether through the voice of the online Parks and Trails Master Plan survey, or through the input of the Municipal Advisory Councils or user groups, the community need for trails has heard by Placer County Parks. This Project addresses that expressed need by providing a crucial new access point and parking area for the expanded trail network.

The Project will provide direct access to the HFRP expanded trail system, which provides a safe place for multi-generational families to enjoy each other's company in the beautiful open space areas. While improving their physical and emotional health, visitors can learn about and appreciate the natural wonders of this unique, blue oak woodland area.

**38 Describe any other project characteristics not previously discussed that would contribute to the evaluation of the project proposal.**

Answer: Hidden Falls Regional Park (HFRP) and its expansion areas provide an outdoor recreational and nature experience to disadvantaged communities that cannot be provided within most urbanized disadvantaged communities due to the required land size. This Project will provide a much-needed parking area which will offer new areas of trails for hikers, bicyclists and equestrians. While not within one mile of a disadvantaged community, HFRP and its trails expansion area offers 4-season, non-discriminatory access to large scale natural outdoor recreation within one hour's drive from all disadvantaged areas of the greater Sacramento metropolitan area. Additionally, the Auburn Greens residential area within North Auburn would benefit from this new access point to the expanded trails system.

The existing parking area serving HFRP has a capacity of 100 cars and 12 horse trailers. In 2014 and 2015, as news of the beauty and quality trails at HFRP spread, park rangers were required to turn away up to 500 vehicles per day on weekends and holidays after the parking lot filled to capacity. This demand and overcrowding of existing facilities necessitated the implementation of a reservation system on weekends and holidays that requires visitors to obtain an online reservation prior to making the trip to the park. The

reservation system has succeeded in managing vehicles entering the park, eliminated the need to turn away visitors, and has improved the visitor experience, but has not diminished the demand for park access. The system issues approximately 14,000 vehicle reservations each year for weekend and holiday use. No reservations are needed on weekdays when natural visitation does not normally exceed the capacity of the parking area. With an average of 2.3 occupants per vehicle, and including weekday attendance, HFRP has an estimated annual attendance of about 50,000 hikers, bikers, and equestrians. Given the turn away rate before the reservation system, the unrestricted demand for park use would be over 100,000 people per year. Account profiles from the reservation system indicate that approximately 25% of visitors using HFRP on weekends and holidays come from zip codes comprising disadvantaged areas of the greater Sacramento region. Approximately 55% of visitors to HFRP come from outside of Placer County.

Since 2000, Placer County and its partner organizations have invested over \$15,000,000 in acquisition and development of HFRP and its expansion areas. The 3,940 acre connected open space complex involved 11 separate property acquisitions, in fee ownership or conservation easement. This Project will be a major step toward the opening of the entire property for public enjoyment.

### Certification And Submission Statement

**Please read before signing and submitting application.**

I certify under penalty of perjury:

- The information entered on behalf of Applicant Organization is true and complete to the best of my knowledge;
- I am an employee of or a consultant for the Applicant Organization authorized to submit the application on behalf of the Applicant Organization; and
- I understand that any false, incomplete or incorrect statements may result in the disqualification of this application.

By signing this application, I waive any and all rights to privacy and confidentiality of the proposal on behalf of the applicant, to the extent provided in this RFP.

**Submission By:** AFisher

**Submitter Initials:** af

**Submission Date:** 10/16/2019 4:25:32 PM