

PRESS RELEASE

**AMADOR WATER AGENCY AND PHAW INC. AGREE TO MOVE FORWARD
ON JACKSON CREEK WATERSHED MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION
PROGRAM**

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The Amador Water Agency (AWA) and Protect the Historic Amador Waterways Inc. (PHAW) announced today their successful resolution of a year-long collaborative process to resolve legal and policy differences over the Agency's decision to build the Amador Transmission Project and to install a small diameter pipeline in the Amador Canal. AWA and PHAW have finalized an agreement to fund, prepare and implement a watershed management and conservation program for the South Fork of Jackson Creek and New York Ranch Gulch, as well as other areas within the Jackson Creek Watershed. In exchange for certain funding commitments, PHAW has agreed to dismiss its litigation against AWA.

The overall goal of the "Jackson Creek Watershed Management and Conservation Plan" is to develop specific management and conservation strategies and projects that provide for the long term sustainability of the riparian and wetland resources and agricultural operations in the Jackson Creek Watershed that have the support of affected private landowners, local government, and both state and federal resource management agencies.

“It is our hope that by putting our collective energies into developing a watershed management and conservation program for sections of the Jackson Creek watershed, we can preserve the watershed for future generations to come,” stated Russell Evitt, a founding member of PHAW Inc. “It is certainly a laudable goal that we are more likely to attain by working together than by working at cross purposes.”

This collaborative effort will seek to attract public and private financial, technical, and legal support for the watershed management and conservation program. Through their agreement with PHAW Inc., AWA will provide seed money to initiate this effort.

“Presently, we are working cooperatively with the California Department of Fish and Game, Central Sierra Resource Conservation and Development, Inc., the Foothill Conservancy, and the Agency’s and PHAW’s consultants in developing a conservation and management plan for the New York Ranch Reservoir, and the area along New York Ranch Gulch,” acknowledged Jim Abercrombie, General Manager of the Amador Water Agency. “Through the Mokelumne/Amador/Calaveras Integrated Regional Water Management Plan process, the Agency and PHAW will also collaborate on environmental protection and enhancement projects. Additionally, the Agency will provide \$150,000 in settlement funds to be used for developing the watershed plan and conservation measures and projects in the Jackson Creek Watershed for landowners who provide matching funds.”

Amador Community Foundation has agreed in concept to administer the settlement funds from the Agency. The Foundation is working with the Agency and PHAW to formalize an agreement to guide allocation of the settlement funds in keeping with the goals of the Jackson Creek Watershed Management and Conservation Plan.

“The Foundation has proven to be an excellent facilitator of community goals,” said Stan Lukowicz, Amador Community Foundation President. “Both our expertise at grant administration, as well as our exclusive focus on Amador County have helped many local organizations achieve their goals. The Foundation’s Board believes this Jackson Creek

Watershed environmental enhancement project is another excellent way for us to serve the Amador County community.”

“While the settlement calls for funds to be deposited with the Foundation, grants cannot be made until the Plan is completed,” Abercrombie stated. That is expected to take about a year. The Foundation also has the option through the proposed administration agreement to secure independent technical analysis of the Plan, and to secure additional community guidance on grant application approaches.

“We recognize the importance of this settlement to Amador County and are glad we can be of service to facilitate the goals of all the involved parties for the betterment of such an important watershed area,” said Lukowicz.

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