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**Perry Beck**

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JAN 07 2010

TOWN OF LOOMIS

**From:** Irene Smith [n8rlvr2009@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 07, 2010 10:54 AM  
**To:** pbeck  
**Subject:** Fwd: Montserrat  
**Attachments:** LEARNING LANDSCAPES OUTLINE.doc

Forwarded is a copy of the email letter from Jeff Darlington. Also, attached is a copy of my proposal in Word form. Hopefully, you can now read it and distribute to the Council.

Thanks,

Irene

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Jeff Darlington** <jeffd@placerlandtrust.org>  
**Date:** Wed, Dec 16, 2009 at 2:42 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Montserrat  
**To:** Irene Smith <n8rlvr2009@gmail.com>

Hi Irene,

Thanks again for the tour.

I did speak with Pat Shea, and he informed me that anyone purchasing the lots would be subject to a \$15,000 fee plus \$6,600 annually to support management and monitoring of what's already been preserved on the property. He said Wildlife Heritage Foundation has easements covering about 50% of the property – obviously not including the homesite areas. If you want to follow up with him on their interest and role in this property, here is his number: (916) 434-2759.

PLT's interest at this point can be in the form of this quote from me:

"In keeping with our MOU with the Town of Loomis and our mission to work with willing landowners and conservation partners to permanently preserve natural and agricultural lands in Placer County, PLT supports the protection of large properties in the Loomis Basin like the Montserrat property, which support local wildlife and offer recreational and educational opportunities and multiple public benefits. PLT is willing to be a part of any discussion regarding the protection of this property, at the discretion of the landowner."

1/7/2010

Hope that helps. I will be out the rest of the month on family leave, returning the first or second week of January.

Thanks!

Jeff

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**From:** Irene Smith [mailto:n8rivr2009@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 14, 2009 12:22 PM  
**To:** [jeffd@placerlandtrust.org](mailto:jeffd@placerlandtrust.org)  
**Subject:** Montserrat

Hi Jeff,

Thanks for meeting with us recently to walk the property in Montserrat and hear our proposal.

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Committee (PROSC) of Loomis is going to agendaize this conceptual proposal at their next meeting for discussion. I will tell them of our meeting and conversation and the interest you expressed of a possible acquisition if there is a "willing seller". I would really like to have something to present them in the way of a letter from you reiterating your words of support. Is it possible to get this from you?

Also, did you meet with Pat Shea of Wildlife Heritage Foundation and were you able to discuss this? I'd really like some feedback from you, if possible.

I have been talking with the bank who owns the property and they have listed it with a real estate broker. They are definitely a "willing seller" and have set the price at \$7 million for 50 lots, including the spec home, however, they have some legal issues to work out. I will be talking with the broker soon as well as other potential partners. It would be very helpful to "get the ball rolling" by indicating that PLT may have some interest in helping to protect this beautiful land with its educational opportunities in South Placer County before the opportunity is lost. Time is of the essence.

Thank you, Jeff.

1/7/2010

Irene and Roger Smith

## “BOOM TIME FOR OPEN SPACE”

This is the title that appeared on a report produced by KQED regarding the opportunities to conserve open space in these challenging times.

It's struck me that, though these are times of great obstacles, there will probably never again be such a time of opportunity!

The Open Space Committee was formed to seek out opportunities within our borders and approach “willing owners” to see if they would be interested in either selling their land for conservation purposes, or put a conservation “easement” on it, which would protect the land in perpetuity, while providing the landowner favorable tax incentives.

Today, large developable properties are not immune to foreclosures and there is reason to be excited about the possibility to protect some of the last open, unimproved lands within our borders before they are developed! I'd like to share with you one prospective opportunity.

The development known as Sierra de Montserrat contains the largest piece of land ever purchased and prepared for development in Loomis - 320 acres. “Montserrat” contains 62 lots, averaging 5 acres each with approximately 80 acres of protected wetlands. The development also has 45 acres of vineyards spread throughout sections of it's land.

Montserrat was recently taken back by the lender in a foreclosure action. The lender now owns 50 lots of the original 62 and they have hired a real estate broker to sell their interest in these lots. Their preference is to sell all 50 lots as a whole, however, if not sold this way, they will consider selling smaller sections of land, given that certain legal obstacles be surmounted with California Department of Real Estate.

I am proposing the conservation of 11 lots, or approximately 50 acres, adjacent to Franklin Elementary School, which abuts Montserrat at the eastern (Laird Road) end of the development. The location of the school next to this awesomely beautiful, natural area provides endless educational opportunities such as hands-on nature and environmental studies as well as historical and cultural studies. The School affords access and facilities such as parking, restrooms, and staging areas. In addition, an area this size provides rich opportunities for an interpretative trail system and could open up new, safe areas to walk a dog, ride a horse, exercise and enjoy the solitude and beauty of rural Loomis.

I have recently met with Executive Director Jeff Darlington of the Placer Land Trust regarding the property in question and he has expressed interest in a possible partnership to acquire the property if there is a “willing seller”. Most of Placer Land Trust's purchases have thus far been in northern Placer County, however, he is aware that southern Placer County still offers some opportunities during this unique time of bargain basement pricing. We know that their IS, in fact, a “willing seller”.

Potential partners for this acquisition are Placer Land Trust, the Town of Loomis, Franklin School, Loomis Basin Horseman's Association, PCWA (there are active and historic water canals running through the property), Placer Legacy and Wildlife Heritage Foundation.

There is a lot of work to do to form this partnership and raise the necessary funding to make a purchase this size. I am urging you to ask the Town Council to support this proposal in concept and make it a high priority on your list of opportunities for creating open space in Loomis.

We have been given a second chance to save some of the lands previously exploited by developers when the real estate market was hot. This time, like everything, will pass.

If there ever was an opportune time for PROSC and the Town Council to save open space and keep Loomis rural, it is NOW!