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September 12, 2007

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Perazzo Meadows Purchase Draws Closer **Conservation groups planning restoration**

Negotiations to preserve one of the Sierra's largest intact meadows are nearing completion, but local conservation groups are still looking for money to complete the purchase.

The Perazzo Meadows acquisition would include 982 acres of land, including about two miles of the Little Truckee River, located off Highway 89 North and Jackson Meadows Road.

The Truckee Donner Land Trust, Truckee River Watershed Council, and the Sierraville District of Tahoe National Forest are working to acquire the Meadow from its current owners, Siller Brothers Inc., and restore the meadow and watershed.

“Right now we are at a stand-still; we are waiting to hear from the owners,” said Sara Taddo, the land conservation director for the land trust. “But we should be hearing back from them very soon.”

While the prospective buyers have secured \$2 million from Proposition 40 toward the purchase and restoration, an additional \$2 million from Proposition 50 fell through, forcing the environmental groups to look elsewhere for an additional \$2.5 million to complete the purchase, Taddo said.

About \$1.5 million of the secured \$2 million state grant funding will be allocated for the acquisition of the property, leaving \$500,000 to pay for restoration projects, said Executive Director Lisa Wallace of the Truckee River Watershed Council in a previous interview.

Perazzo is one of the largest intact meadow systems in Sierra Nevada, Wallace said.

Beth Christman, program manager for the watershed council, said the council is finishing up a watershed assessment, and expects results in the next two weeks.

Restoration, which would include re-routing a diverted part of Perazzo Stream back into its original channel, would begin next summer, she said.

“It was diverted into a straighter channel maybe in the early 1800s by a dairy, but you can still trace the old channel that will be more meandering and cause less erosion,” Christman said.

A part of the “Sierra checkerboard” of private and public lands, the privately owned meadow is surrounded by Forest Service Land, said Craig Wilson, district wildlife biologist for the Sierraville Ranger District.