

**September 5, 2003**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

*Northstar-at-Tahoe* — Directors of the Placer County Water Agency on Thursday (Sept. 4) voted to provide, in partnership with Pacific Gas & Electric Company, a surplus Snowcat for use by the Tahoe Nordic Search & Rescue Team.

The water agency board meets in eastern Placer County at least once each year and the board's action came during an afternoon meeting hosted by the Northstar Community Services District.

Tahoe Nordic Search & Rescue representatives Larry Sevison, Steve Twome and Scoop Remenih attended the meeting to brief the PCWA board on the all-volunteer search and rescue team.

Sevison said the 90s model Snowcat would add greatly to the efficiency of the rescue team for a quicker response in saving lives of people lost, stranded or injured in the Sierra. Currently the Search and Rescue team relies on members' Snowcat machines, which are antiquated and date back to the 60s and 70s.

The Snowcat would come from the PCWA Power System Project, which recently upgraded its over-the-snow equipment. PCWA's Power System project is headquartered in Foresthill and includes five hydroelectric power plants on the Middle Fork American and Rubicon rivers of Placer County. The Agency sells its hydroelectric energy to PG&E, which in turn funds the Power System operations and equipment replacement such as the Snowcat.

Directors voted to declare the Snowcat as surplus equipment and authorized General Manager David Breninger complete the transfer in conjunction with PG&E as soon as details can be completed.

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In other business relating to eastern Placer County, directors:

- accepted the gift of a historic photo collection of the 1963-67 construction of the Middle Fork American River Project from former County Supervisor and PCWA Director William S. "Bill" Briner of Tahoe City.

- heard a briefing from Paul Rouser, general manager of the Northstar Community Services District, which provides public services to the greater Northstar community, including the ski complex, golf course and 1400 residences.

- heard a presentation from Roger Lessman of East-West Partners on the firm's real estate developments and land development plans in the Truckee-Martis Valley area, including the new village at Northstar.

- heard an update from Lisa Wallace, executive director of the Truckee River Watershed Council, a group that works to protect, enhance and support the Truckee River Watershed. Wallace thanked PCWA for its annual support of Truckee River Day, which is planned this year on Oct. 19.

- heard a report from PCWA Director of Planning Services Mal Toy on the water agency's financial assistance program, which provides planning and capital improvement grants to local water purveyors. Local agencies may file applications until Mar. 31; grants are usually awarded by the board in June.

- toured a parcel off Schaeffer Camp Road that is being considered as a location for a water utility service center to be used by PCWA's Service Zone 4 in Martis Valley.

In business relating to western Placer County, directors met in the morning at the PCWA Business Center in Auburn. The Board approved a mitigated negative declaration for acquisition of property on Ophir Road for the Auburn Ravine tunnel pump station upgrade project. Directors determined the project would not adversely impact wildlife and authorized filing a notice of determination and certificate of fee exemption as well.

The next regular meeting of the PCWA Board of Directors will be held at 3 p.m. on Sept. 18 in the Placer County Board of Supervisors chambers, 175 Fulweiler Avenue, in Auburn. PCWA board meetings are open to the public.