

DRAFT EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant Application

Mohawk Mine Reclamation

Spring Creek, East of Frenchman Reservoir, Plumas County, California

1. **Applicant Eligibility** - Feather River Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our IRS Determination Letter is attached.
2. **Previously Awarded Cleanup Grants** - Feather River Land Trust has not previously been a recipient of EPA Cleanup Grant funds, and the proposed site(s) has not received funding from a previously awarded EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grant.
3. **Expenditure of Existing Multipurpose Grant Funds** - Feather River Land Trust does not have an open EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant.
4. **Site Ownership** - Feather River Land Trust is the fee simple owner of the Spring Creek Ranch / the Site.
5. **Basic Site Information:**
 - a. Name: Mohawk Mine at Spring Creek Ranch (AKA Chilcoot-El Dorado-Mohawk Mine).
 - b. Address: The intersection of Frenchman Eastshore Road and Plumas National Forest Road 24N88 in Chilcoot, CA 96105
6. **Status and History of Contamination at the Site:**
 - a. The site is contaminated by hazardous substances generated by pass hardrock mining that could contaminate onsite streams that lead directly into Frenchman Reservoir and the California State Water Project. No evidence of petroleum contamination has been identified.
 - b. The site has predominantly been used for cattle grazing/ranching, with some timber production and mining. The property is currently recovering from a wildland fire.
 - c. The Site was originally developed for copper mining beginning in 1905, and active mining operations lasted until 1915. The Mohawk Mine and its waste rock sit directly uphill from Spring Creek, a tributary to the Middle Fork Feather River and California State Water Project. The primary commodity from the mine was copper with gold, silver, lead, and molybdenite of secondary or tertiary importance. The Last Chance Sawmill opened on the Site in 1918 and operated until 1927.

A Phase I ESA identified a Recognized Environmental Condition of the possibility of acid mine drainage (AMD) with suspected concomitant metal contamination. A Targeted Brownfield Assessment Phase II ESA included soil, sediment and surface water sampling. Testing of the mine waste piles documented the potential of AMD resulting in the leaching of high levels of copper that exceeded

the soluble threshold limit concentration (STLC); soil samples were classified as Group B mining waste per California Code of Regulations, Title 27, Section 22480. Soils had metal contamination, with concentrations of antimony, arsenic, cadmium, cobalt, copper, iron, lead, manganese, molybdenum, selenium, silver, thallium, uranium, vanadium, and zinc exceeding at least one applicable screening level (SL). Sediments had concentrations of arsenic, copper, and vanadium in exceeding at least one applicable SL. Surface water samples had concentrations of boron, iron, and mercury exceeding at least one applicable SL.

7. Brownfield Site Definition

- a. The Site is not listed or proposed for listing on the National Priorities List
- b. The Site is not subject to unilateral administrative orders, court orders, administrative orders on consent, or judicial consent decrees issued to or entered into by parties under CERCLA
- c. The Site is not subject to the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the U.S. government

8. Environmental Assessment Required for Cleanup Grant Applications – A Phase I ESA was completed by Shelton Douthitt Consulting, LLC in 2021. A Phase II Site Assessment was completed in July 2024 by Toeroek Associates, Inc. and Tetra Tech, Inc.

9. Enforcement or Other Actions - There are no known ongoing or anticipated environmental enforcement or other actions related to the site for which Brownfields Grant funding is sought.

10. Sites Requiring a Property-Specific Determination – As a Mine-Scarred Lands (hard-rock mine waste pile), the site does not require a Property-Specific Determination.

11. Threshold Criteria Related to CERCLA/Petroleum Liability – Feather River Land Trust meets the requirements of a Bona Fide Prospective Purchaser.

- a. **Information on Property Acquisition** - Feather River Land Trust (FRLT) acquired the property in fee simple in a negotiated purchase from a private owner (the David and Fern Guidici Trust dated June 1, 2012) on June 15, 2021. FRLT has no familial, contractual, corporate, or financial relationships or affiliations with the previous owners or other potentially responsible parties.

b. Pre-Purchase Inquiry:

- i. A Phase I ESA was conducted on the property, in accordance with: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process (E1527-13), ASTM Standard Guide for Vapor Encroachment Screening on Property Involved in Real Estate Transactions (E2600-10), and ASTM Standard Guide for Identifying and Complying with Continuing Obligations (E2790-11). The Phase I is dated June 10, 2021. It was prepared for Feather River Land Trust.

- ii. The Phase I was conducted by an Environmental Professional meeting the definition in § 312.10 of 40 CFR 312 and includes a declaration of these qualifications in the written report.
 - iii. The Phase I was conducted within 30 days prior to the purchase.
- c. **Timing and/or Contribution Toward Hazardous Substances Disposal** - All unearthing of hazardous substances at the site occurred before FRLT acquired the property. FRLT did not cause or contribute to any release of hazardous substances at the site. FRLT has not, at any time, arranged for the disposal of hazardous substances at the site or transported hazardous substances to the site.
- d. **Post-Acquisition Uses** - The property has been vacant since acquisition.
- e. **Continuing Obligations** – Feather River Land Trust has regularly patrolled the property since taking ownership. In addition, we removed fire rings and installed physical barriers in the previous location of the sawmill, as it was evident the public was trespassing and camping in this location. There are not currently institutional controls, cleanup efforts, information requests or requirements for notices with which to comply.

12. Community Notification – FRLT published a public notice on October 28, 2024 on it's website and through the local online news outline (Plumas News) that it intends on applying for funding from the EPA's Brownfield Clean-up Grant program. A public meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2024. Results of this meeting will be provided once the meeting has concluded.

13. Contractors and Named Subrecipients – Not applicable. (FRLT has not selected a contractor or subrecipient.)

Narrative Information Sheet (3-page max)

1. **Applicant Identification:** Feather River Land Trust, PO Box 1826, Quincy, CA 95971
2. **Website URL** – frlt.org
3. **Funding Requested:**
 - a. Grant Type: Single Site Cleanup
 - b. Federal Funds Requested: \$1,800,000
4. **Location:** The site is in unincorporated Plumas County, California. It is located approximately five miles north of the town of Chilcoot, CA and is surrounded by Plumas National Forest lands.
5. **Property Information** – the site is known as Spring Creek Ranch. It has no specific street address. It is located at the intersection of Frenchman Eastshore Road and Plumas National Forest Road 24N88 in Chilcoot, CA 96105. (Map attached)
6. **Contacts:**
 - a. **Project Director:** Shelton Douthit, Conservation Director, 951-692-1600, sdouthit@frlt.org, c/o Feather River Land Trust, PO Box 1826, Quincy, CA 95971
 - b. **Chief Executive:** Corey Pargee, Executive Director, 530-283-5758, cpargee@frlt.org, c/o Feather River Land Trust, PO Box 1826, Quincy, CA 95971
7. **Population** – The site is in unincorporated Plumas County, CA. The closest town is Chilcoot-Vinton, with a 2020 CDP population of 446.
8. **Other Factors:**

Applicable Other Factor	Narrative Page #
Community population is 15,000 or less	
The proposed brownfield site is impacted by mine-scarred land.	
The proposed site is adjacent to a body of water.	
The proposed project will improve local climate adaptation/mitigation capacity and resilience to protect residents and community investments.	

9. **Releasing Copies of Applications** – Not applicable

Narrative Information Sheet (Map)

