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FEATURED

Potential location for water center

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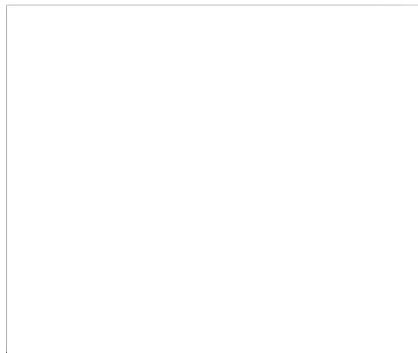
Yuba Water Agency staff meet with representatives from DLR Group to discuss plans for a new Watershed Experience Center at Hammon Grove Park in Yuba County on June 18.

Courtesy photo

The Yuba Water Agency recently identified a location along the Yuba River where its Watershed Experience Center could potentially be located.

The location proposed for the water education center is at Hammon Grove Park just a few miles out of Marysville, which is currently owned by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Agency leaders voted to move forward with preliminary environmental work to determine the feasibility of the site.

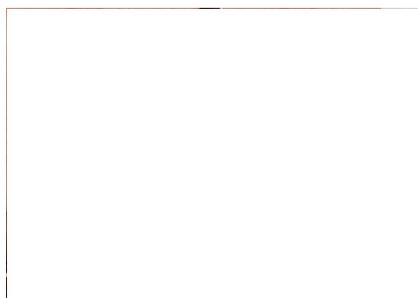
"This is a great location with incredible river access and some of the best viewing for salmon spawning in this region," said Yuba Water Agency Vice Chairman Brent Hastey in a press release. "If this works out, it will allow us to keep costs down and put as much investment as possible into the facility, which I truly believe will be a game-changer for Yuba County."



Hammon Grove Park is located on Highway 20, east of Marysville Road, and is adjacent to Sycamore Ranch, a county camping facility.

If the study determines the site is a good location for the facility, the agency would consider entering into a lease agreement with the federal bureau, while also pursuing a land transfer, which can take years to execute.

The initial environmental studies are estimated to cost less than \$50,000.



The agency hired the DLR Group in April to conduct the master planning process for the project, which is currently underway but has been slowed due to the ongoing pandemic. The \$449,320 contract will result in a clear picture of what the facility will eventually become, inside and out, including an actionable plan to jump-start the building process, renderings of the future facility, an online interactive tool and virtual reality experience, according to The Appeal archives.

As part of the agency's plan, they are also in the process of implementing a related water education curriculum development project for area schools. Over the summer, 45 participating teachers received special training about the Yuba River watershed and how to create lessons that meet Next Generation Science Standards.

The teachers then worked in small groups to develop lessons that will be taught in their classes over the next few months. Those participating will make adjustments to the lesson plans accordingly before submitting the curriculum to the Yuba County school districts for widespread implementation.

The project is a collaboration between Yuba Water Agency, five participating school districts, the Yuba County Office of Education, Yuba Community College District, South Yuba River Citizens League and the Yuba River Endowment.

"As an educational member of this powerful and impressive collaborative, it is clear that no one is as smart as all of us," said Yuba County Superintendent of Schools Francisco Reveles in a press release. "Indeed, our efforts have underscored an implicit spirit and belief that Yuba County deserves nothing but the best. From my perspective, this is exactly how I have come to view and respect all our partners represented by this collaborative."