

Gold Hill Ranch – Wakamatsu Colony Park Planning Project

Dear ARC Supporters:

As you know, the American River Conservancy (“ARC”) has an opportunity to acquire the 272 acre Gold Hill Ranch surrounding Gold Trail School for community park purposes. As part of its fundraising efforts, ARC is preparing a competitive grant to the Statewide Parks Grant Program. This grant could provide the balance of purchase funds needed to acquire the property as well as provide funding for some park improvements.

An example of park improvements might include: hiking trails, picnic areas, a parking lot, a history museum in the historic Graner-Veerkamp farmhouse, restoration of the wetland areas and information panels that interpret the extraordinary history found on this ranch.

The Gold Hill Ranch was settled by the Hill and Graner families in the early 1850’s. In July of 1869, the ranch became the site of Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm - the first Japanese colony in North America. The Gold Hill Ranch also contains the gravesite of Okei Ito, the first person of Japanese descent to be buried on American soil in 1871. The ranch was acquired by the Veerkamp family in 1874 and produced fruit and dairy products for the next 120 years.

The ranch also includes oak woodlands, springs, the headwaters of Granite and Shingle Creeks which flow to the South Fork of the American River and good agricultural soils. Since this would be a *community* park, we want to include all community members in the planning process and collect your good ideas of what the park should include.

We have attached a “Good Ideas Response Page” for you to record your ideas for park improvements. Please return your response page by email to ehrgott@arconservancy.org or by Fax to (530) 295-2193 by Wednesday, February 24th. An aerial photo showing the location of the major historic sites is provided as an electronic attachment.

You are also invited to attend an informal information meeting regarding this proposed park project on Wednesday night, February 24th between 7-8:30 p.m. at the Gold Trail School multi-purpose room.

For specific questions regarding the project you may telephone Alan Ehrgott or Elena DeLacy at the ARC office at (530) 295-2190 or email: ehrgott@arconservancy.org

The Gold Hill Ranch is Currently Private Property
Please Do Not Trespass

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Good Ideas Response Page

Please list the park improvements you and your family would like to see placed on the Gold Hill Ranch in the space provided below. If possible, please identify where on the ranch the improvement should be placed. An aerial image of the Gold Hill Ranch is attached for your reference.