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Solar Power Funding for Malakoff Awaits Governor's Signature

Nevada City, CA -- After five years of advocacy, the State Budget bill now on Governor Brown's desk includes a line item dear to the Yuba watershed community: \$700,000 to fully fund a solar power system at Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park.

"Now is the time for the Yuba community to speak up: call, fax or email the Governor today and let him know that you support funding for a solar power project at Malakoff," said Caleb Dardick, SYRCL's Executive Director.

SYRCL has provided a quick link with instructions on how to email the Governor and a sample letter at: yubariver.org/solar-for-malakoff.

"When we first set out to save the state parks from closure in 2011, we learned that Malakoff, which is off the grid, annually used over \$70,000 worth of diesel fuel at the park. We were told that one way to help the parks was to cut operating costs. Replacing polluting diesel with solar power seemed like a 'no-brainer!'" continued Dardick. "I especially want to commend Supervisor Hank Weston for never losing sight of this vision."

Supervisor Weston was one of the first to identify solar as a solution for Malakoff. Weston has been steadfast in his efforts to keep this project high on Nevada County's list of legislative priorities at the State Capitol along with securing funds to restore and reopen the Bridgeport Covered Bridge.

In a letter urging the Governor to support SB 826 sent last week, Chairman Dan Miller wrote, "A solar project at Malakoff State Park, with its history of human-caused environmental destruction, could serve as a state and national for a model of a green and more economically efficient rural State park, and leave a legacy of sustainability." Nevada City sent a similar letter of support as well.

As the epicenter for hydraulic mining during the Gold Rush, SYRCL has long advocated in support of Malakoff since the park is a stark reminder of the devastating impacts of large-scale mining on the Yuba River environment. When the State moved to close Malakoff in 2011 (along with the South Yuba River State Park), SYRCL led the effort to find stop-gap funding to keep the park open. Later, SYRCL secured additional funds to conduct an environmental study of installing a comprehensive solar power system at the park. Both grants were provided by the California State Parks Foundation.