

**Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission
C/O Clerk of the Board
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24 January 2024

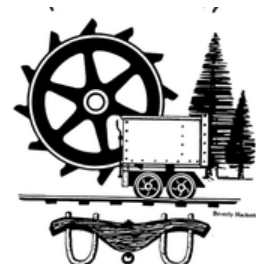
Nevada County Board of Supervisors
950 Maidu Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959

Honorable Chair and Board Members:

At Friday's meeting, the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission voted unanimously to recommend to the Board that the application for landmark designation of the Excelsior Ditch/Independence Trail be approved. The applicant is the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission. The property is owned by the State of California Department of Parks & Recreation, which has consented to the application. The landmark is to be designated as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 24-02, assuming the pending Church of the Mountains application is approved first.

The Excelsior Ditch was built between 1854 and 1859 by Chinese workers to bring high pressure water for hydraulic mining to western Nevada County from the South Yuba River. The Ditch operated until it was abandoned in 1961. The Ditch was instrumental in the development of gold mining and later farming and ranching in western Nevada county.

After the Excelsior Ditch was abandoned, John Olmsted and his nonprofit Sequoya Challenge converted part of the Ditch to the Independence Trail, the nation's first wheelchair accessible wilderness hiking trail. The Independence Trail opened in 1983. It takes advantage of the Excelsior Ditch's moderate gradient to allow disabled and non-disabled visitors to enjoy the outdoors and learn more about our common history while visiting South Yuba River State Park.



The research and documentation which accompanies the application has been reviewed by several Commissioners for historical accuracy. The application and supporting documentation is enclosed.

If you approve the application, please forward the resolution and accompanying documents to the County Recorder.

If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Yours truly,


Bernard Zimmerman, Chair

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Chuck Scimeca

