SANTA CLARA VALLEY
**HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN/NATURAL COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN**
*Stakeholder Group Meeting | January 26, 2010 | Morgan Hill Community & Cultural Center*

IN ATTENDANCE:

Jack Bohan (General Public)
Kevin Bryant (California Native Plant Society)
David Collier (Sierra Club)
Wayne Costa (YCS Investments)
Craige Edgerton (General Public)
Justin Fields (Santa Clara County Cattlemen's Association)
Meg Giberson (Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District)
Jan Hintermeister (Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Commission)
Virginia Holtz (League of Women Voters)
Michelle Korpos (Home Builders Association of Northern California)
Don Long (Castro Valley Ranch)
Bob Power (Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society)
Kenn Reiller (Pajaro Watershed Council)
Pat Showalter (Santa Clara Valley Water District)
Jerry Smith (Science Advisor)
Carolyn Tognetti (Save Open Space Gilroy)

Jack Sutcliffe and Susan Minetta are excused from today's meeting.

## I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Joan Chaplick welcomed Stakeholders to the January 2010 meeting, invited a round of introductions, and announced a minor change to the afternoon's agenda. Following Ken's update on Plan schedule and budget, Troy Rahmig will review changes to the burrowing owl discussion, and Jack Barclay of Albion Environment will present on the population viability analysis that will be conducted for the owl. Second, Ken Schreiber and Pat Showalter will provide an update on the aquatic species conservation strategy and related impacts on the plan moving forward. Next, Troy and Dave Johnston from the Department of Fish and Game (DFG) will share recent findings related to hybridization of the California Tiger Salamander (CTS).

## II. UPDATE ON PLAN SCHEDULE AND BUDGET

Ken Schreiber provided an update on Plan schedule and budget. Scheduling issues related to release of the public draft Plan and incorporation of the Three Creeks HCP (3CHCP) will be discussed later in the meeting.

## III. DRAFT BURROWING OWL CONSERVATION STRATEGY

*Overview of Changes to Strategy*

Troy Rahmig provided an overview and update on activities related to the burrowing owl. The process to develop the burrowing owl strategy has been very iterative. The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Department of Fish and Game (DFG), ICF (technical consultant, formerly Jones & Stokes), the City of San Jose, Santa Clara County, the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD), and Jack Barclay (Albion Environmental) have met at least four times to focus on burrowing owl habitat. Based on where study area boundaries are drawn and where the owls exist in the South Bay, the group felt the need to step back and take a higher-level look at burrowing owl habitat protection.

Troy explained that, with all species and communities, we are trying to protect a declining resource. The burrowing owl is an extreme example of this. In the South Bay, it is becoming difficult to establish a base line for the burrowing owl, which makes it difficult to set planning goals. The South Bay has some reasonably sized populations, but they are either just outside of the Plan study area, or they are inside our study area and are most likely to be affected by operations not covered by the Plan.

For these reasons, we have expanded our study area for the burrowing owl. Most existing populations are north of Highway 237 or in other areas such as Moffett Airfield, San Jose Airport, and Fremont's Warm Springs District. The real conservation opportunities exist to the north, so we have expanded the area to capitalize on opportunities just north of the study area boundary. This way, the Habitat Plan can play a larger influence in what happens in this area and can begin to influence what happens in other jurisdictions in the South Bay. Originally, we excluded this area because it overlapped with the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project and the VHP does not include Bay/salt waster species.

One stakeholder asked what kind of landscape the owl occupies in these areas. Troy replied that they could occupy levees, though levees are not generally managed in a way that supports habitat. Landfills, especially closed or capped landfills, are under consideration as part of this study.

Based on what we know about how they use land in our study area and the new, expanded area, conservation goals for these areas will be very different for the species. We have divided the burrowing owl conservation areas into four regions based on existing conditions. Troy explained that different conservation goals and the relative aggressiveness of the conservation approach for each area were determined based on regional population differences. This is a way to divide our resources and justify focusing on a different part of the focus area.

The four burrowing owl conservation regions are:

- North San Jose/Baylands;
- South San Jose;
- Morgan Hill; and
- Gilroy.

Troy explained that after establishing the new burrowing owl conservation regions, the group held discussions and established different goals for each of the regions.

The new regions:

- allow the Habitat Plan to affect burrowing owl conservation at a scale that is biologically based;
- open up additional conservation opportunities both inside and outside of the original area; and
- create an environment where the Habitat Plan Implementing Entity can influence conservation decisions for the burrowing owl in the region, not just in the study area.

In summary, the conservation strategy does the following:

- sets population goals and land protection goals;
- outlines reserve land selection criteria for the burrowing owl;
- requires that if nesting habitat is protected and mitigation/conservation credit is earned, an acceptable amount of foraging habitat is available around that site to keep it viable as a nesting location; and
- describes how to measure burrowing owl habitat, both nesting and foraging.

Justin Fields asked Troy how "population" is defined in the case of burrowing owls. Troy shared that for these purposes, a population is any group of individuals that can interact (i.e. where individuals can move from a nest site in one place to a winter foraging habitat in another), or where we have the reasonable expectation that they would interact. One of the goals the group has stated is to establish a "stepping stone" whereby growing populations move into different areas.

Another stakeholder asked, how will the property owners in the new area be affected? Troy responded that property owners will have to go through their standard California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. Activities on properties outside the Plan study area boundary aren't covered activities under the Santa Clara Valley Plan. However, they may have mitigation opportunities on their property and mitigation opportunities linked to the Valley Habitat Plan. The primary benefit for the expanded area is to give us more opportunity for mitigation, specifically in landfills.

One stakeholder commented on the high cost of land in the new North San Jose/Baylands Region. We have to be very selective in how we expand the Reserve System into other areas. We can't sink the Plan because we are trying to purchase expensive land for foraging habitat. At the same time, there is a lot of land in that area that is sitting fallow but that may be used for foraging.

Ken shared that the County has formally requested that once a strategy is put into place, the Plan team will explore the option of some type of additional fee for burrowing owl habitat that is consumed. Ken doesn't know what this will be. It is true that this is very valuable land, and so simply passing the normal fee on this area is not a feasible way to address burrowing owl costs. From the standpoint of property owners that he has spoken with, they fear having to mitigate the owl on a project specific basis and want it covered in the Plan.

The chances of it becoming a listed endangered species in the next many years is very high, so having it covered in the Plan is high priority.

David Collier expressed the need to avoid situations where we are moving in a direction that is not at all feasible to implement.

Troy explained that in many ways, this approach to burrowing owl conservation is flexible and creative. With this species, we are considering purchasing land to manage as a preserve, but without placing an easement on the property. That way, if the land isn't paying out from a species standpoint, then down the line the Implementing Entity could sell the property, and use the funds to purchase land that is better habitat.

Ultimately, we will attempt this stepping stone approach, where we can then establish permanent reserves for permanent protection. At this point, this species demands that we break out of the boundary of the study area.

Troy explained that the most aggressive part of the strategy is focused in the north because that is where the owl is currently found. The strategy includes commitments such as an annual assessment of the breeding population in the County (and to continue this in perpetuity so we can have an ongoing account), coordinating survey protocols and methodologies, and developing an annual report regarding conservation efforts in all different areas, so we can see how decisions in one jurisdiction affect others.

Troy continued: In addition, we have discussed conducting a thorough assessment in this area of open space to determine viable habitat. Tiering off of that, there are many unrelated, patchwork conservation efforts, so we are assessing what these efforts are and the possibility of reinvigorating undermanaged mitigation sites. These are inexpensive opportunities that the Plan could fund to increase habitat value.

In Gilroy, the Plan will seek to ensure that owls have future habitat so their off-spring will come into the Plan study area. Currently the closest owls are a few owls nesting outside the Plan area in northern San Benito County. Management plans for Habitat Plan Reserve System lands in the Gilroy area should include explicit conservation strategies for burrowing owl habitat. Similar things would happen in the Morgan Hill region, but with a stronger focus on how to use agricultural lands to support a future burrowing owl population.

Troy noted that real successes are anticipated in the next 15 to 20 years in Morgan Hill; the next 30 years in Gilroy; 15 to 20 years in North San Jose. The conservation strategy is slim for the South San Jose region.

*Population Viability Analysis (PVA)*

Ken then introduced Jack Barclay with Albion Environmental. Jack is one of the leading burrowing owl experts in the western United States. He is part of the VHP team. Jack will be conducting a population viability analysis (PVA) to provide a greater understanding of the burrowing owl population in the South Bay and how we can more effectively establish goals for it, both here and elsewhere in the County. The analysis will provide a better

understanding of how many owls exist, the population needed for their survival, and where they should be located.

Jack began his presentation with one question: how many burrowing owls do we need to preserve so we have burrowing owls in the future? In order for owls to persist in the future, there must be enough so the probability that they don't go extinct is reasonably low.

David Collier added that he believes this question should be considered both for our study area and on a more global basis, so the owl does not become a listed species. Jack shared that he has addressed this on a regional level.

Jack explained that while it is possible to make a simple guess about how many owls are needed to ensure their survival, this would not represent a very rigorous methodology. Population viability analysis (PVA), on the other hand, is used to arrive at an analytically informed estimate. This is a tool that is widely used and has been applied to answer similar questions for a number of species, including spotted owls, grizzlies in Yellowstone Park, and wolves. Results are often used to inform management decisions. The Department of Fish and Game requested that the VHP include a PVA for the owl and that work will be undertaken shortly.

More specifically, PVA is the use of quantitative methods to predict the likely future status of a population or group of populations of conservation concern. There are three popular kinds of PVA:

1) Count-Based. This involves counting individuals for a number of years, looking at gross numbers over time and variations over time, and predicting into the future what the likely status of that population is based on a time series of counts and variations in those counts.

2) Demographic Stochastic. This approach relies on demographic rates (birth and death rates, incorporating immigration and migration). Stochastic means subject to fluctuations in the environment that are not always predictable. Bonanzas and catastrophes are often driven by environmental stochasticity. Take birth rates and death rates as the example here, with environmental factors contributing to their variation over time, and frequencies in fluctuation due to these different environmental influences.

3) Spatially Explicit. This is the most complicated approach. It focuses on subpopulations and requires demographic data for subpopulations, with which you quantify demographic changes between populations. Often, we do not have the kind of data to support this complex approach. A spatially explicit PVA should not be conducted if the data required is not available.

Fitting the right approach to the data available is very important. Most often, simple count data is available. Usually, the minimum count data required is ten years for a study area, but in this case we do not have count data. Nor do we do have the demographic data for the subpopulations in the South Valley required to conduct a spatially explicit PVA.

This leaves us with the demographic stochastic approach, which is the approach we will use to conduct this PVA for the burrowing owl. This approach quantitatively projects population change into the future using:

- population numbers;
- birth rates and their variation;
- death rates and their variation; and
- immigration and emigration.

This demographic stochastic PVA predicts the likelihood of persistence of a population or likelihood that a population will fall below an established quasi-extinction threshold. This is used to determine how often your population may fall below this threshold. The tool we will use to conduct the PVA is called Vortex.

Jack explained that demographic data is usually very hard to come by for species, but counts for burrowing owl birth rates and survival rates in the region are available. Annual adult and juvenile survival rates were recorded from 1996 to 2007 for owls at the San Jose Airport. Jack shared a graphic to demonstrate the contraction of populations over time (1997 and today). Burrowing owl populations are most abundant around San Jose and decline moving south.

The PVA will be used to project into the future the size of the population that is likely to persist, given demographics of populations at the San Jose Airport. The PVA does not provide a discrete answer, but it does enable a more informed decision about how many of a species to conserve. A population goal will be established based on this information.

If we are to maintain the population of owls, we need to track its numbers. Jack recommended an annual, count-based PVA over the life of the Plan to track the regional burrowing owl population. This is important to Plan implementation, and is especially useful for those tasked with making biological findings.

One recommendation is that certain management actions should begin once the population moves below the quasi-extinction threshold. However, we can't answer how much this will cost until we establish how much habitat the Plan will conserve.

Jack Bohan asked if tracking the population in this case would require counting or banding. Jack Barclay shared that this effort would include counting annually. There is a population that is banded at the San Jose Airport and will continue to be. However, banding is expensive and is worth the effort in only particular cases. The band recovery rate for burrowing owls is two percent, so you don't get much data based on encounters with banded birds.

In response to a stakeholder comment, Ken stated that while the variation of the species' populations is fundamental, trying to understand why it is so variable is a very expensive endeavor that's been done in other places. So many factors contribute to this variation. For Plan purposes, he does not think it is worth the effort to understand this interesting variation.

Bob Power expressed appreciation for the efforts of the working group to move away from the traditional approach to species conservation with respect to the burrowing owl. He noted that the Hopi referred to burrowing owls as spirit warriors.

Jack's work will begin in the next two to three weeks. Completing the PVA will take some time and will not provide a discrete answer. However, it will provide the information needed to make a more informed decision. There will come a time during the analysis when the technical team will have to determine which probability of persistence will be acceptable.

## IV. UPDATE ON RESOLUTION OF AQUATIC SPECIES AND IMPACTS ON PLAN/SCHEDULE

Ken noted that the theme for the meeting is how to address creatures that are extremely difficult to deal with. The burrowing owl is right up there on the top of the list. Two subspecies of steelhead trout are also providing significant challenge over the course of this process. Within the study area, we are dealing with Central Coast and South Central Coast Steelhead. In the context of the plan, he explained that these two subpopulations have also been discussed in the context of North County and South County. He also noted that while Pacific Lamprey are not often talked about, they are in the mix of species to address here. However, the vast majority of discussion is related to steelhead.

North County includes the Coyote, Guadalupe and Stevens Creek watersheds. South County includes the Pajaro Watershed which is primarily Llagas, Uvas and Pacheco creeks. He shared that the steelhead situation on Llagas is very bad and that improving the situation there is not very feasible. Llagas stream edges and banks have been divided into many, many small parcels, which means that accomplishing gains requires working with many landowners and very expensive land.

Ken explained that when the second administrative draft of the Plan was released in June 2009, it included a placeholder for the Three Creeks Habitat Conservation Plan (3CHCP), which was intended to address North County aquatic species. For South County, a very good, expensive, and thorough conservation strategy was developed. This included the Pacheco Creek Feasibility Study, the Uvas Dam flow modifications, and many other measures to improve streams and reduce siltation. DFG and FWS did not accept the South County strategy and dropped Pacheco completely, but added steelhead passage over Uvas Dam.

The focus in North County has been to bring 3CHCP to a conclusion. The focus for South County is less clear, but the real effort has been to figure out the issue of steelhead passage at Uvas Dam, which is a major physical challenge. Solutions explored have included "trap and truck" and volitional passage, or building a passageway where fish can swim up and swim down. Constructing a passageway is a very expensive endeavor, especially given that Uvas requires a long flume. Pat Showalter estimated a cost of between $30 and $120 million. The basic design for fish passage at Uvas is a canal around the whole reservoir and a system that will funnel fish upstream of the canal and down the ladder at various reservoir levels.

Kenn Reiller noted that Uvas Dam was built in 1958 when no one lived downstream. Today, it leaks significantly and the area has grown in population. He questioned consideration of implementing expensive passages of abstract or experimental design when there are dam safety issues that need to be addressed.

Ken shared that the three Wildlife Agencies advised us in November and provided a December 1, 2009 letter in which they recommended removing all fish species from the Valley Habitat Plan, and processing both North and South County strategies as a plan amendment later on. According to Ken, David Zippin concurred that they should be removed. These recommendations are all based on timing. The Liaison Group met in December and had vigorous discussion. Supervisor Don Gage said he wanted to be part of a process that would resolve the issues, and would support removal of fish from the plan if issues could not be resolved. FWS said the issues would take six months to resolve. This all took place as we moved toward the time scheduled for release of the public draft. However, the fish issues need to be resolved before a public draft VHP can be produced. There has been much concern that if we get this close to completion and have to put release of the public draft on hold for six or more months, then staff resources would be shifted to other areas and momentum and staffing would be lost. As FWS has largely focused their resources on this plan, other counties are becoming anxious to receive support from FWS.

Pat Showalter provided further explanation of the issue. There has been a marathon of meetings related to this issue, and several more are planned. She then provided a bit of background on the issues related to Uvas Creek and some of the factors that have made completing the 3CHCP a challenge.

Pat explained that Uvas and Llagas are very different from a hydrologic standpoint, which is one of the reasons why Uvas is better for fish than Llagas. The Llagas watershed simply does not yield as much water- it has less rainfall. Uvas is not as permeable as Llagas so water stays in stream longer. These rainfall distribution and permeability differences are not due to human intervention.

Also, the health of fish species between the North County and the South County is very different. The sub-species of steelhead that lives in South County has declined significantly. It once occupied streams throughout the Pajaro and the Salinas Basins (inland group) as well as the coastal streams (coastal group) in the area. Currently there are sustainable populations in Uvas and a stream in the Salinas Basin. Our population in Uvas Creek is one of the healthiest remaining populations of the inland group. The sub-species that inhabits North County streams is generally in much better shape.

Steelhead were listed in 1996. It takes quite a while to develop a recovery plan, and NMFS is in the process of doing this for these fish. In the process of developing the recovery plan, the concepts about what actions would benefit the species most have changed. This is why the requirements for their protection have changed. This timing is unfortunate, because we have put a lot of effort into developing a strategy without the benefit of having access to the recovery plan. Now the plan has to be adjusted based on the recovery planning efforts.

In the North County, there are four outstanding issues:

- Reoperation of Upper Penitencia Creek. This creek has the best sustainable population in the Coyote Watershed. It has been the source of a great deal of discussion. The Water District uses Upper Penitencia as a recharge facility recharging with water from South Bay Aqueduct and other sources. This means we discharge water into creek, which means impacts to creek and the involvement of the regulatory agencies.
- Misunderstanding in Coyote Creek regarding Fisheries and Aquatic Habitat Collaborative Effort FAHCE issues with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).
- Monitoring.
- Flood control language related to Santa Clara Valley Water District (SVWD) projects in North and South County.

In South County the primary issue has been passage over Uvas. The Water District has been working to understand what the agencies' expectations are and what it needs to do accomplish this. The ultimate biological goal here is increasing the number of fish and creating population redundancy. The District's covered activities associated with Uvas and Chesbro dams include conducting routine and corrective dam maintenance. These include a number of big jobs that will require de-watering. Secondly, because there is the potential for earthquakes, seismic safety retrofits are also an important covered activity.

Pat distributed the draft schedule for processing the 3CHCP. A summary of 3CHCP was sent to the agencies on Jan 15th. After receiving agency comments, the District will be able to provide the summary to the Valley process for incorporation into the program. According to the draft schedule, the SCVWD will provide an administrative draft of the 3CHCP to the agencies on April 19, 2010, and agencies will provide final comments on June 7, 2010. Pat was hopeful that the District would be able to produce a final draft of the plan and the public review draft of the EIR/EIS by the end of the calendar year.

Kenn commented on the importance of understanding what fish passage really means, and the need to propose addressing passage via the capital projects that are required to improve safety. The outlet works does not work for fish passage, so modifying this does not solve the passage problem.

Pat explained that, on average, every dam has been de-watered every seven years. We believe that we can reasonably improve this and average de-watering each reservoir only once every 15 years. This is what we have proposed for coverage; we think we can do a better job than the historical average.

Pat then spoke to the implications for the District of pulling South County fish from the Valley Plan. If fish are excluded now due to schedule issues, the District will need to seek HCP or Section 10 coverage in another process. The District needs HCP coverage for operation of Uvas and Chesbro as well as routine and corrective Maintenance for Uvas and Chesbro. Fish coverage for North County streams will be included in the 3CHCP.

The second plan for the South County was estimated to cost approximately $80 million. The value for the steelhead permit for some jurisdictions is quite small. Very few local communities need this permit from FWS. The standard operating procedure for local jurisdictions is to avoid the need for a permit.

The North County issue is that permits will be issued under the Three Creeks document and the Valley HCP for same things. The challenge is to make sure these two documents are in total agreement. The solution is to have 3CHCP has an appendix to the HCP, which is a major problem with respect to timing.

Pat explained that the agencies do realize that the passage over dams is expensive. But for Uvas they find it is very important and are discussing the possibility of taking cost away from other elements of the conservation strategy to put towards fish passage. For example, monitoring funds could be used towards funding part of "trap and truck", which could also have a monitoring component.

One stakeholder asked, at this point, what is the probability that fish will fall out of the Plan? Pat responded that the fish falling out is very, very real. The SCVWD needs permits for fish for many covered activities. Even if fish are dropped from the Valley Plan, the District is committed to moving forward to get the needed incidental take coverage for fish through the 3CHCP and other efforts.

## V. CALIFORNIA TIGER SALAMANDER HYBRIDIZATION AND CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Troy and Dave Johnston of DFG provided information related to the hybridization of California tiger salamander (CTS), which is native and covered in the Plan, and the barred salamander, a non-native species. The information provided is based on data that is new as of the past few years. This information is primarily from UC Davis.

The use of the barred salamander as fishing bait led to its inadvertent release. Most documented releases occurred in the Salinas Valley.

This has become an issue because, in a situation where you have predation, the barred salamander will likely win out. The barred salamander is bigger than the CTS. It also breeds earlier than the native species, in the first heavy rains. Since the barred salamander and hybrids breed earlier, they rely more on perennial waters. In contrast, the CTS uses primarily seasonal ponds and water sources. This all means that the barred salamander can out compete the CTS.

The hybrids have a greater vigor. They are showing a higher survival rate than both the barred salamander and the CTS. Over a period of time, the region could have more hybrids than native species. Researchers are uncertain of the timeframe within which further hybridization would occur.

From our point of view, the goal is to recover the CTS, but not there are hybrids and barred salamanders in the mix.

One stakeholder asked about the regulatory implications in this situation. Troy reported that the FWS policy is that, even at low levels of hybridization, the barred salamander will still be protected under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as if they were native species. If it can be determined that hybrids have characteristics that may compromise recovery goals for native species, then FWS may do something. However, for now there is not enough information.

For the habitat plan, we are taking a fairly conservative approach. Continuing to fund research to understand this issue better is included in the Plan. If we can get to a point where we can correlate the presence of non-allele genes and behavior, then we may make some management-related decisions about how to treat these species and their hybrids.

Dave Johnston noted the need to set a threshold to distinguish unacceptable levels of non-native salamanders, and to do so collaboratively, in order to protect the CTS. He suggested that this is necessary to write a conservation plan, even if it is weak. Ken asked if there a basis for doing so. Dave stated that, no, there is not. FGD suggested setting a genetic threshold for salamanders that are clearly non-native and then using this threshold as a basis for extermination.

Two thresholds are important: 1) a threshold to determine what constitutes a CTS to the point it can be credited towards the conservation strategy; and 2) a threshold that establishes at which point we destroy them rather than nurture them. Troy noted that a reasonable approach would be to establish a threshold related to conservation of the CTS and adjust it later when the science catches up.

Ken expressed that with burrowing owl we are looking at a very defined and confined conservation area. However, the CTS occurs in many locations, and we would expect that this will be a much broader issue throughout the state.

Carolyn Tognetti returned to the issue of steelhead, noting that South County steelhead conservation measures in the plan are totaled at $81 million. Ken confirmed that the $81 million are the measures that would be taken out of the Plan if the species is dropped.

Dave Johnston shared that the DFG recommends removal of fish from the Plan because it affects the timeline of the HCP. In order to finish the Plan, the Water District needs to finish the 3CHCP. The Valley Plan was originally supposed to be in public draft stage in December, and now that has shifted to January. Now, the 3CHCP will not be done until April. Therefore, DFG's recommendation is not just a question of what the conservation strategies are. The agency disagrees with fish conservation strategies for South County, but this is just one issue.

Ken shared that there is a commitment from the wildlife agencies to continue to work on permits for steelhead. There are other ways of obtaining permits for stream-related work, but there is no way except via the HCP to obtain federal permits for Uvas and Chesbro Reservoir operations. Three Creeks was triggered by a 1993 lawsuit against the Water District for operation of dams on Coyote and Stevens Creek and Guadalupe River. That resulted in the illegal take of steelhead. Rather than go to court, the Water District and plaintiffs worked out a settlement agreement in the early 2000's. This is what led to what

became known as the Three Creeks HCP. Without the federal permit, it is not possible to implement the settlement agreement.

If fish move out of the HCP, it would still be possible to retain Water District covered activities and FWS coverage for non-fish. Whether these activities would be retained for FGD permits is unclear. This is doubtful.

## VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

The decision of whether or not to remove fish from the HCP will be made in approximately one month. A large amount of content for the next liaison group meeting will come out of a meeting to occur before the February 18th Liaison Group meeting, which will go a long way toward determining whether or not fish be kept in. Next month, there will be much more to report to Stakeholders in terms of where this process is going.

The Liaison Group meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 18th at 4 pm at the Water District. The next Stakeholder meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 23rd from 4pm to 6:30pm at the Morgan Hill Community Center.