

**Chi Council for the Clear Lake Hitch**  
**Minutes of January 28, 2009 meeting at Lakeport Yacht Club**

Submitted by Victoria Brandon, Chi Council secretary

Present: Bill Rett, Judy Barnes, Pam Francis, April Hargis, Tom Smythe, Greg Dills, Lee Morgan, Greg Giusti, Jacob Katz, Victoria Brandon, Paula Britton, Dietrick McGinnis, Erik Ringelberg

Windrem introduced Katz, who is working on Species of Special Concern under Dr Peter Moyle, and will be focussing on Clear Lake for the next six weeks, synthesizing information from watershed groups, agencies, and others. He's interested in historical data on *all* the native fish in the lake; hitch are a primary concern but he's also concerned with the tule perch and prickly sculpin. All assistance in this endeavor will be very welcome.

Minutes of the November 19 meeting were accepted as presented, although Morgan noted that the current fiscal freeze has prevented the Forest Service from buying new hobos as had been expected.

McGinnis and Ringelberg presented a very brief recap of the Adaptive Management conference that had been held in the morning. They expressed appreciation for Chi Council work so far, and said that some results from the first round of Tribal Wildlife Grant scientific investigations could be expected this summer.

**Barrier removal projects.** Windrem has identified a barrier to migration on Seigler Canyon Creek. and passed around a photo. There have been *no* sightings in Seigler during the past five years though the run there used to be strong, and this barrier may explain why: the problem is a sewer line running across the creek immediately opposite Anderson Marsh, with concrete poured on top to protect it, resulting in a plunge pool below. This was put in in 1992 as a DFG project supervised by Rick Macedo (sic). Smythe: when CalTrans widened Highway 29 in 1993 they straightened out an oxbow at this location, which could have increased the problem. Smythe is watching the Middle Creek project closely: some good solid rain is needed to move enough gravel to fill in behind weirs. Fish passage is still very difficult, and it's amazing that any fish at all got through last year.

**Planning for the 2009 migration season.** Windrem is about to send a mailer with forms, maps, and other information out to all active volunteers. Several new monitors have been recruited who actually live at good observation points. We have to identify key locations and make sure that they're covered.

Middle Creek at Rancheria Bridge: Jennifer Strong will check this location, and Britton will also monitor there three times a week as part of the tribal project.  
Seigler Canyon Creek at the newly discovered barrier: Barnes & Rett will add this location to their list. McGinnis may move the project monitoring spot from behind Fosters Freeze to the barrier.

Adobe Creek. Francis does daily water quality monitoring on her property at Merritt Rd,

and can expand to Bell Hill and/or other locations. This will provide comparable data to downstream monitoring done as part of tribal project. Giusti: is there any way to determine the rate of incising on creeks? Smythe: not really. gravel mining used to be allowed in streams which in some areas has resulted in more than six foot downcutting.

Kelsey Creek at Veterans bridge: Windrem will cover.

Scotts Creek at Decker Bridge: Windrem has gotten access permission from the property owner, and will see if he will monitor. Dills: a major Scotts Creek debris jam was removed at Tule Lake several years ago, but this has made no practical difference since no fish have been seen in the creek at all since then. Chris Toohey has a bridge on Scotts, Windrem will ask to monitor. Dills: some neighbors of his do regular observations on Eickhoff.'

Clover Creek at Elk Mt Rd. Bob Geary used to monitor there regularly for Robinson, but he is no longer employed there. Smythe: Pitney Lane at Alley Creek is another good spot.

McGinnis: that's one of the project sampling points.

What are some other high priority sites? Cole Creek at bridge and at Green Acres (both covered). McGaugh Slough at Hill: Smythe will observe. McGinnis: there are project sampling points on Forbes, and along Soda Bay Rd on McGaugh, Manning, Adobe, Thompson, and Cole.

Giusti: Schindler Creek has been so extensively altered that it's no longer a natural stream at all and unlikely to support a spawning run. McGinnis: Elem wants some work done on at least one creek in their vicinity.

Hobos: Smythe has four, which he will set out as soon as there's some water in the creeks.

Windrem: we need a *professional* quality video of hitch actively spawning. Brandon: Smythe made a video two years ago, which she retrieves on her laptop and shows to McGinnis, Katz, and Giusti, who are all favorably impressed although Windrem continues to emphasize the word "professional."

Windrem is preparing an updated report, which will include graphs of rainfall correlated with spawning runs along with the information included previously.

Giusti is completing a white paper bibliography covering 251 referenced items dealing with Clear Lake and including some anecdotal information. He's trying to collate fragmentary data into a timeline on significant events and fish population trends. This will be available on line

Next meeting: 3:30PM on Wednesday 25, at the Ag Center.