

**Chi Council for the Clear Lake Hitch**  
**Minutes of January 30, 2008 meeting at Lake County Agricultural Center**

Submitted by Victoria Brandon, Chi Council secretary

Present: : Peter Windrem, Tom Smythe, Paul Kolb, Victoria Brandon

Windrem called the meeting to order at 3:40

The minutes of the November 28, 2007 meeting were accepted as presented.

Windrem relayed a question from Erica Lundquist, who has inquired if it would be appropriate to use the name "chi" in preference to "hitch" in the watershed assessment document she is currently preparing. Smythe: according to Hopkirk the native word "chi" referred to the splittail, and hitch were called something else. Consensus: no reason why Erica can't use chi in her paper but we're unlikely to change common usage. We should also ask the opinion of local tribes; Brandon will check with Irenia Quitiquit.

**Barrier removals:** there's lots of flow in the creeks after recent storms, but is gravel moving to fill in new weirs? Smythe: when last observed (two weeks ago) so much gravel had accumulated behind the Clover Creek notch removal will be needed in order to install flash boards after the hitch run. The protocol will be similar to that at the Kelsey Creek detention structure: the boards will be installed no earlier than two weeks after the run has ended, meaning a minimum of three weeks after it begins, to allow both adults and fry to descend to the lake.

Windrem: Kelsey looks good below the new Merritt Road bridge, but Middle Creek will be the big test: if the weirs function well there, they will be a model for streambed improvements elsewhere. Smythe: conditions are too muddy now to see what's going on beneath the surface; he expects the water will clear within a few days, but since another big storm is expected who knows? The flow will have to drop before the condition of the weirs can be determined, and they may still take a few years to reach equilibrium. The same is true of Clover Creek.

**2008 monitoring.** Windrem is mailing an information packet to past monitors. Query: should we try to schedule a field trip the first Saturday after the run starts, to guide monitors in techniques and help standardize observations? Consensus: a good idea, as long as it's made clear to all volunteers that attendance is entirely optional, and that their observations are valuable even if somewhat fragmentary.

**Water temperature measurements.** The Department of Water Resources has about 15 devices (“hoboes”) on hand, which Smythe intends to set out himself this Friday (Feb 1). A number of prime locations have been identified, including a few in the lake at the mouths of Adobe and Kelsey Creek. Reliable air temperature readings are widely available and we don’t have to duplicate this information.

Kolb asked when is earliest date that the run has been known to begin? Windrem: although scattered observations of variable trustworthiness have been reported, the earliest confirmed spawning run was February 4; most years it doesn’t start till March.

Kolb reports that he is trying to get a DFG scientific study permit to engage in captive breeding, without much response so far. Windrem suggests checking the DFG website for information, and sending a written request rather than phoning. Kolb hopes that the Chi Council will actively support the breeding project. Three fish (species undetermined) have survived from his attempts last year. He also wants to restrict fishing to tribal members, and thinks commercial fishing for threadfin shad would reduce their competition with chi.

Smythe relayed a request from Lundquist about the status of an upstream dam on Kelsey Creek; Windrem says that this dam, located on the Minkwitz property, has been removed.

Smythe announces that the Department of Water Resources intends to measure velocity at barriers during the run to see how fast the water has to be before it interferes with migration. Windrem recommends the old Quercus Bridge and the low water crossing at Bell Hill Road as ideal sites for those measurements.

Kolb suggests that the licensed commercial fisherman on Clear Lake probably takes some hitch inadvertently while netting blackfish, and would like to get his name and contact information. Smythe suggests contacting DFG since they, not the county, issue licenses. Commercial fishermen are required to document their catch, and document their by-catch before returning it to the water.

Windrem thinks the recent cold temperatures: must have caused another shad dieback since pelicans and grebes seem to have left the lake, and wonders if this increases predation pressure on hitch.

Next meeting 3:30PM on Wednesday February 27, at the Ag Center.