

**Chi Council for the Clear Lake Hitch**  
**Minutes of November 19, 2008 meeting at Lake County Agricultural Center**

Submitted by Victoria Brandon, Chi Council secretary

Present: Paula Britton, Greg Dills, Victoria Brandon, Peter Windrem, Pam Francis

The minutes of the October 22 meeting were accepted as corrected.

**Activities since the last meeting:** after conferring with Irenia Quitiquit, Brandon sent out an announcement of the January 28, 2009 Adaptive Management strategy session at Robinson out to the Chi Council email list. With plenty of advance notice, we're hoping for strong participation from the scientific community this time. Participants should RSVP directly to Irenia.

**Kelsey Creek Watershed Assessment.** Windrem has been reviewing the administrative draft, a fine piece of work, with especially wonderful maps prepared by Dills. He plans to add additional maps showing patches of invasive weeds. Windrem: the old rock and concrete dam four miles above Main St mentioned on p14 has been removed. Identification of "hitch" and "chi" is inaccurate: hitch = hitch, chi = splittail. It's unfortunate (and has caused much confusion) that the word "chi" was added to the taxonomic name for hitch, *Lavinia exilicauda chi*. Francis: Cobb Water District manager Robert Stark has promised materials on the upper portions of the watershed, which will be added to the assessment. In the meantime, Tom Smythe has processed the macroinvertebrate data on file, which suggests that conditions in the creek are improving. Comments have started coming in, but additional comments and (especially!) suggested projects are needed.

**Planning for next season.** Francis: Lee Morgan says the USFS will lend Hobos again, and is now ordering some new units since the batteries are dead on most of the old ones. The county still has five Hobos of its own. It would be easiest to put them out at this season, when the creekbeds are dry, Windrem, Dills, and Smythe will get together to set them out soon.

Francis: there are several open seats on the USFS Resource Advisory Council (RAC), with space available for a tribal representative and someone in the timber harvest business. The RAC has \$460,000 to distribute (part of the \$700 billion financial bailout package): some will go to schools, some to roads, but some will be spent on projects that directly benefit USFS. Local possibilities are rain gauges in the Mendocino NF, where none currently exist, and/or a fish ladder on Middle Creek, which would directly benefit the hitch. Applications are submitted on a competitive basis, and decided by the RAC board. Dills: has an incomplete weir project on the Eel River that has been turned down in the past. The RCD would be the best entity to front a fish ladder application, but forming partnerships is a key to success. Francis is in contact with USFS District Ranger (Covelo and Upper Lake) Lee Johnson.

Windrem will mail out an informational packet to past volunteers again this year; Brandon

will send him the revised observation sheet for inclusion.

**Other topics.** Britton: what is the status of the tribes in Chi Council? All participants are stakeholders by definition. Examination of the 2004 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) reveals that a number of signators are no longer participants, or no longer represent the groups on whose behalf they signed. Consensus that the MOA should be circulated among stakeholders, revised if necessary, and new signatures gathered. The January 28 conference will be ideal for this purpose, with lots of people in attendance and plenty of advance publicity. Ideally, we should have the January Chi Council meeting at the same location (Robinson Conference Center), starting immediately after lunch instead of the usual 3:30PM. Britton will check room availability and confirm.

Britton: the tribes are revising their grant applications for better coordination. Volunteer training sessions will be needed, and perhaps these can be opened to others. A single part time coordinator will be hired to supervise the efforts of the three tribes and volunteers. They hope to go to the annual US Fish and Wildlife conference to present the project. Windrem:: assistance from Dr. Lisa Thompson will be invaluable to these studies.

**Next meeting:** January 28, 2008, probably at Robinson (to be confirmed). The annual Watershed Year in Review has been tentatively scheduled for January 14 (also to be confirmed) at the Odd Fellows hall in Upper Lake if possible.