

**Chi Council for the Clear Lake Hitch**  
**Minutes of the November 28, 2018 meeting at the Lake County Ag Center**

Submitted by Victoria Brandon, Chi Council secretary

**Present:** Peter Windrem, Victoria Brandon, Marina Deligiannis, Christina Harrison, Terry Knight, Carolyn Ruttan, Dean Rogers, Wilda Shock

The minutes of the October 31 2018 meeting were approved as presented.

**Blue Ribbon Committee.** A meeting (open to the public), which will include a visit to the Middle Creek wetland restoration site, has been scheduled for December 20: ample local publicity has been promised.

**Clear Lake Environmental Research Center (CLERC).** Ruttan: this nonprofit was founded in 2014 by Will Evans and Carolyn Ruttan with the objective of establishing a permanent research facility on the lake. They have since changed direction: instead of waiting for scientists who want to work here to arrive with their own funding, they are going to start by becoming an accredited environmental research laboratory, with the capacity to include both organic chemical and microbiology analysis. There are 90 public water purveyors in the county (16 of them drawing from the lake), and all need regular testing.

In the meantime, CLERC wants to help with hitch observations, and has set up a form on their website to report fish sightings online via computer or smart phone: visit <https://www.clerc.co/fish-observation-report.html> to check it out.

Knight: people don't know what hitch look like. We should get some models to place at key locations (eg Chamber, museum) and some pictures to put at launch ramps. The Fish & Wildlife Advisory Committee might be able to provide funding.

### **Tribal Activities**

- Rogers: still taking care of several aquaria, with the oldest fish dating from the 2012 season. Robinson has no big grants in the works for 2019. They have already received a USFW grant to update the Hitch Adaptive Management Plan and clean debris out of Robinson Creek. The tribal environmental office was robbed nearly a year ago and a lot of gear such as water meters and vehicles stolen; they have only recently gotten insurance payment and are now starting to replace the lost equipment.
- Harrison: Habematolel is working on Ranch Fire recovery, getting trained in hazardous material removal, and working as cultural monitors in the burned area. The tribe is conducting an ongoing native plant restoration project on Middle Creek.

**Department of Water Resources** (Deligiannis). Highlands Springs is a top priority: DWR is creating trail maps that indicate which trails are accessible at what times of year, and working with the Department of Boating and Waterways to get launch facilities out there. They are waiting for the first official flush to begin stormwater sampling at specified sites on many Clear Lake tributaries. DWR reps attended a recent hitch meeting with USGS and CDFW and tribes.

**Middle Creek Restoration Coalition** (Windrem). The group is lobbying Congressman Garamendi's office to influence the Army Corps to prioritize the project. The Corps had assumed that the project was dead and needs to hear otherwise.

**Lake County RCD report** (Brandon).

- Baseline monitoring for the Eightmile Valley erosion control project on Scotts Creek will take place this winter
- Mendocino Complex erosion mitigation work is underway, with funding from the Water Board. It would be helpful to publicize the various methods and criteria for selecting them, to benefit landowners who want to undertake this work themselves.

**USGS.** Fred Feyrer is organizing a native fish workshop in the spring for the California-Nevada chapter of the American Fisheries Society. The event would include a few hours of presentations and time in the field checking out the lake and its tributaries -- and if we're lucky a chance to observe the hitch run. Chi Council will participate.

**2019 monitoring season.** We will link to the CLERC website and encourage monitors to submit reports electronically. Knight: if there's another dry winter and the hitch are unable to move up into the creeks perhaps Ben Ewing could monitor the mouths to see if they are congregating there, and for how long.

**Next meeting:** 3:30PM Wednesday January 23, 2019, at the Ag Center.