

Chi Council for the Clear Lake Hitch
Minutes of May 28, 2008 meeting at Lake County Agricultural Center

Submitted by Victoria Brandon, Chi Council secretary

Present: Paula Britton, Lee Morgan, Victoria Brandon, Peter Windrem, Linda Juntunen, Jeff Lynch, Robert Geary, Tom Smythe

The minutes of the April 23 meeting were accepted as presented.

Recapping the 2008 hitch runs after additional observation reports have been included indicated no significant change in the pattern since the last meeting. Juntunen has talked to kids who had seen "little tiny fish" in Pool creek two weeks ago -- not hitch fry. Morgan: probably speckled dace, maybe sculpin. Brandon: Margaret Eutenier submitted several reports of fry in Kelsey Creek in April.

Smythe: has collected hoboies (all except the one in Kelsey which has disappeared, perhaps stolen, perhaps buried in gravel) and has plotted and graphed the readings from Adobe and Cole Creeks: in both cases the spawning runs coincide with approximately 10 -12° water temperature (Celsius). There isn't enough data to draw any conclusions, but this is a start.

Lynch: are there snails who feed on fry? Morgan: not that I know of. Lynch reports that Paul Kolb had brought an aquarium containing fry (which may or may not have been hitch: impossible to tell when fish are so small) to the Rancheria office, where a snail was observed feeding on one of them. Morgan: the fish was probably dead. Lynch: Robinson is trying to do scientific studies, not random experimentation, and have to keep the data clean if it is to be useful. Kolb has been requested to remove the tank.

Windrem: it is now obvious that the hitch population is not collapsing from one year to another, and there are still sufficient fish still to do a restoration project. We need hard data. Geary: the tribal grant will start in October. Windrem recommends that the tribe consult with Lisa Thompson, who had a great time here during the final spawning run. Not only will her professional advice and assistance be invaluable, she can help tie into other university resources. Lynch: tribe intends to hire a scientifically qualified person to manage the tagging program. They have tags for 1000 fish, and ideally would want to cover all the tributaries to Clear Lake though access to suitable sites might be a problem in some cases.

Streambed protection. Smythe: people drive up and down the banks of Middle creek, and also drive right over the new weirs, breaking them down. Juntunen reports similar behavior on Hendricks. What can we do to protect the streambeds? Windrem: maybe make a distinction between ATVs and full size vehicles, with barriers to exclude the latter? Smythe: it is illegal everywhere in the county to ride an OHV on private property without permission from the owner, but the sheriff doesn't respond to complaints fast enough to be effective. Britton: why not encourage people to take photographs of people driving in the creeks and put them into the paper? Windrem: we need comprehensive signage above all,

as part of a coordinated program of education and law enforcement. Brandon: maybe we could ask for a small grant from the Fish and Wildlife CAC for signage?

Barrier Removals, Smythe: there's no specific project this year. Consensus that mitigating the Main St bridge on Kelsey Creek should be top priority. Brandon: the F&W CAC has earmarked \$10,000 for this purpose but is going to remove the earmark because the funds seem so trivial compared to anticipated costs -- but that sum could provide seed money for a design project. Why not present a grant request at the CAC meeting on July 17. This committee was the source of funding for the current fish ladder that doesn't work. Windrem asks Smythe to contact Jon Ambrose asking for advice on connecting with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, although their funding is concentrated on salmonids and endangered species. Morgan: we need to involve minnow family experts. Smythe: need to start by developing a project to find out what kind of mitigation would work.

Next meeting: 3:30PM on Wednesday July 16, at the Ag Center. No meeting in June.