

***Chi Council for the Clear Lake Hitch
7460 Kelsey Creek Drive
Kelseyville, CA 95451***

July 30, 2007

Mr. Richard Coel
Community Development Department
Planning Division
255 N. Forbes Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

Dear Mr. Coel:

The Chi Council is a Coordinated Resource Management and Planning Group (CRMP) that was formally established by Memorandum of Understanding on August 23, 2004, with the mission of studying, protecting, and restoring a viable population of *Lavinia exilicauda chi* (the Clear Lake Hitch) within a healthy watershed ecosystem. Details of the Council's goals, guidelines and organizational structure have been posted to our web address, www.lakelive.org/chicouncil.

We recently had occasion to examine the Notice of Preparation of the Environmental Impact Report on the proposed Cristallago project northwest of Lakeport, and noticed that the hitch is not mentioned among the potentially affected species. Since this endemic subspecies of the Sacramento hitch has been listed by the State of California as a Species of Special Concern, we want to take this opportunity to bring the omission to the attention of the consultants, Christopher A Joseph and Associates, and to request that they address possible hitch impacts during the course of their environmental studies.

This fish has historically been known to occur in both the Scotts Creek and Lyons Creek drainages during its annual spawning migration; the Chi Council has also confirmed observations of its presence in Lyons Creek in 2005, and in Scotts Creek in both 2005 and 2006. Loss of spawning habitat is believed to be a major contributory factor to the drastic population decline of this once-abundant species in recent years, and we are greatly concerned that degradation of either or both of these watercourses, during construction or subsequently, could further impede their reproduction. Therefore we request that professional monitoring take place during the 2008 spring spawning season, and that possible habitat impacts be addressed whether or not they are found.

If I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me at the address above, at chicouncil@lakelive.org, or at 279 4387.

Sincerely,

Peter Windrem
Chair, Chi Council for the Clearlake Hitch

