

October 27, 2005 update

1) Sign up for Alameda Creek Fish Rescue this Winter

If you want to participate in steelhead trout rescues this winter at the BART drop structure (including removing them from the water, handling, transporting, or re-releasing), you need to be on the permit from CA Fish and Game. **Send me an e-mail with your name, address, phone number, and CA driver's license number for the permit.** If you sent me information last year, you will automatically be on the permit. The Alameda County Flood Control District and East Bay Regional Park District will coordinate all fish rescues.

2) The environmental review process begins this month for two major SFPUC projects in the Alameda Creek watershed that will have a huge impact on steelhead restoration in Alameda Creek.

The first project will replace Calaveras Dam: the ACA is insisting that this major infrastructure project include adequate water releases from the reservoir to restore steelhead trout below the dam and removal of the Alameda Diversion Dam, which diverts upper Alameda Creek flows into Calaveras. As the currently proposed project is lacking these restoration actions, the ACA is opposing this project at this time.

The second project is the removal of Niles and Sunol Dams from Niles Canyon. These removals, in concert with other fish passage projects in the lower creek already funded or in the planning stages, will help steelhead trout and salmon migration up Alameda Creek to Sunol Wilderness. The ACA supports this project. The only concern is the whether the extent of the proposed partial removal of Sunol Dam will be adequate to ensure fish passage in the long term.

Please come to the public hearings or submit written or e-mail comments on the projects. Information about the hearings and comment periods is below.

Calaveras Dam Replacement

The San Francisco Planning Department is preparing an environmental impact report (EIR) for the SFPUC Calaveras Dam Replacement Project. The purpose of the EIR is to provide information about potentially significant environmental effects of the proposed project, to identify possible ways to minimize those potentially significant effects, and to describe and evaluate feasible alternatives to the proposed project.

The ACA has the following problems with the project:

- *The dam replacement project is proposed and described purely as an engineering project, without a restoration component. The existing dam is operated in violation of state environmental laws and the rebuilt dam will continue to impact migratory and resident fish downstream of the dam. The SFPUC cannot undertake a major infrastructure project like this without including restoration measures.*
- *The project needs to include minimum water releases from Calaveras adequate to support all native fish downstream, including steelhead trout. The 6,300 acre-feet of water mentioned in the project description is misleading and was intended for enhancing limited habitat for resident trout, not for migratory fish. The actual amount of water SFPUC would release would be much lower, as the proposed project would allow natural stream flow to meet most of this flow requirement.*
- *The project needs to include removal or re-operation of the Alameda Diversion Dam, which diverts most of the flows of upper Alameda Creek and blocks fish migration.*
- *The project needs comprehensive surveys for endangered and threatened species around the construction sites. Numerous listed species, such as red-legged and yellow-legged frog, tiger salamander, and Alameda whipsnake live around the reservoir.*

- *The proposed construction roads and borrow and disposal areas for dirt fill need to avoid habitat for listed and sensitive species.*
- *The project must include facilities and hardware that allows for stream restoration downstream, including release of the full range of needed stream flows and downstream transport of spawning gravels; adequate fish screens should also be installed at water intakes to protect reservoir fish.*

The SF Planning Department will hold two **Public Scoping Meetings** on the project in November in Fremont and San Francisco, to receive public comments on the scope and content of the project's environmental impact analysis and information to be contained in the EIR.

Calaveras Dam Project Scoping Meetings

Fremont

Monday, November 14, 2005, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Fremont Main Library
2400 Stevenson Boulevard (near Fremont BART station)

San Francisco

Tuesday, November 15, 2005, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
San Francisco State University
425 Market Street, Room 301 (near Embarcadero BART station)

Written comments will also be accepted at these meetings and until the close of business on November 30, 2005. Written comments should be sent to the San Francisco Planning Department, Attn: Paul Maltzer, Environmental Review Officer, Calaveras EIR, 30 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 4150, San Francisco, CA 94103, or provided via email to diana.sokolove@sfgov.org.

The SFPUC's information about the Calaveras Dam replacement can be found at:
http://sfwater.org/detail.cfm/MSC_ID/60/MTO_ID/NULL/MC_ID/7/C_ID/2703/holdSession/1

Sunol and Niles Dam Removal

A Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) has been prepared for the Sunol and Niles Dam Removal Project, and is now available for public review.

Information on the project and the DEIR can be found at:
http://sfwater.org/detail.cfm/MSC_ID/60/MTO_ID/NULL/MC_ID/7/C_ID/2701/holdSession/1

There will be two public hearings on the DEIR in San Francisco and Fremont. Public comments will be accepted from October 24 until December 7.

Public Hearings:

Wednesday, November 30, 2005, 6:30 pm Fremont Main Public Library, Fukaya Room 2400 Stevenson Blvd, Fremont, California

Thursday, December 1, 2005, 1:30 p.m. or later San Francisco City Hall, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 400

Submit written comments to:

Attn: Paul Maltzer

Environmental Review Officer, Sunol/Niles Dam Removal Project

San Francisco Planning Department
30 Van Ness Avenue, 4th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103

E-mail:

Attn: Diana Sokolove, Niles and Sunol Dam Removal Project DEIR Diana.sokolove@sfgov.org

If you have any questions about the environmental review of the proposed project, please call Diana Sokolove at 415-558-5971.

If you have questions about the proposed project, please contact Betsy Lauppe Rhodes at 415-554-3240, blauppe@sfwater.org.

Revised Water System Program Description

The SFPUC has revised their Regional Water System Improvement Program, the multi-billion dollar multi-year program to rebuild the SFPUC water system. This program includes the Calaveras Dam rebuild and other water system infrastructure projects in the Sunol Valley. **The SFPUC Commission will conduct a public hearing on the revised WSIP as part of their regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, November 29, 2005.**

For information about the revised WSIP visit

http://sfwater.org/detail.cfm/MC_ID/7/MS_C_ID/6/MTO_ID/39/C_ID/2699.