

## ALAMEDA CREEK WATERSHED UPDATES

### Creek Alliance Announces Apperson Quarry Conservation Plan

In May, the Alameda Creek Alliance and the Center for Biological Diversity announced a historic conservation agreement signed for the Apperson Ridge and Sunol Valley quarries. The agreement signed in December 2008 with Oliver de Silva, Inc. will dramatically change the Apperson Quarry project, provide substantial mitigations for wildlife, protect and enhance endangered species habitat, provide millions of dollars for fish-passage projects and restoration of Alameda Creek, secure habitat enhancements for tule elk, and address greenhouse gas emissions.

The conservation agreement proposes changes to both quarry operations that, if approved by regulators, would dramatically reduce impacts on biological resources at Apperson Ridge. **Operations at Apperson Ridge would be deferred until 2030 or until the quarrying stops at the Sunol Quarry site - whichever comes later.** Processing plants to produce asphalt and concrete would be moved from Apperson Ridge to the Sunol Quarry site, which is already impacted by quarrying and doesn't contain habitat for special-status species. Material from Apperson Ridge would be transported for processing using a conveyor system rather than the approved haul road, reducing grading, traffic, and noise disturbance associated with the access road.

The major mitigations in the agreement are:

- Replacement of habitat lost due to the quarry's footprint and infrastructure through purchase and/or permanent protection of similar habitats on private land, at a replacement ratio of 3:1 and with a minimum parcel or parcels consisting of 600 acres protected;
- Robust mitigation for any loss of breeding habitat for several focal species at a 4:1 replacement ratio;
- Initiating an "incidental take" permit process, using a federal habitat conservation plan with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Adoption of a comprehensive tule elk mitigation and monitoring plan, including \$250,000 of initial funding and up to \$250,000 annually when mining begins at Apperson Ridge to help establish a tule elk reserve in northern California and for enhancement and protection of elk habitat;
- Up to \$3 million in funding for several major fish-passage projects to help restore steelhead trout to Alameda Creek;
- Re-vegetation of stream banks and restoration of more natural stream function to enhance habitat quality adjacent to the Sunol Quarry;
- Financial support for a Sunol Valley Restoration Plan to stabilize and restore the Sunol Valley reach of Alameda Creek;
- Reduction of the greenhouse gas emissions of the Apperson Quarry project and purchase of approved offsets for 100 percent of emissions; and
- Funding to conservation groups for efforts to protect wildlife and wild areas in the greater San Francisco Bay Area.

Read more about the agreement and the conservation plans on the [ACA web page](#).

Read the [East Bay Express](#) and [Livermore Independent](#) articles about the conservation plan.

### Irvington Tunnel Project Environmental Review Begins

A Draft Environmental Impact Report for the proposed New Irvington Tunnel Project in Sunol has been released by the SFPUC.

The Draft EIR and information about the project can be found [here](#).

The SFPUC will hold an open house and Draft EIR hearing on June 24 beginning at 6 pm - at the Fremont Main Library, Fukaya Room B, 2400 Stevenson Blvd., in Fremont, CA

Public comments on the Draft EIR will be accepted until July 16. Written comments should be addressed to Bill Wycko, Environmental Review Officer, San Francisco Planning Department, 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, CA 94103 or provided via fax to 415-558-6409, or by email to [steve.smith@sfgov.org](mailto:steve.smith@sfgov.org).

### **New Power Lines Proposed Through Livermore and Sunol**

The Transmission Agency of Northern California (TANC), a joint powers agency, is proposing to build and upgrade about 600 miles of power transmission lines, substations and related facilities, including a section that runs through Livermore and Sunol.

While the concept of this effort is admirable (power generated from wind, water, etc.) the proposed route may impacts over 50 parcels of land already under conservation or agricultural easements through the south Livermore valley alone. The transmission lines are proposed adjacent to already existing PG&E transmission towers.

Public comment will be accepted until July 30. The Tri-Valley Conservancy has information about the project, project documents and maps. For more information about the TANC Transmission Project visit the Tri-Valley Conservancy [web site](#).

### **STATEWIDE SALMON NEWS**

[\*\*Salmon Salvation: Will a new political order be enough to finally bring the dams down?\*\*](#)  
High Country News - May 4

[\*\*Bill reviving the San Joaquin River gets an OK\*\*](#)  
San Francisco Chronicle – May 8

[\*\*Delta Showdown: State seeks reversal of federal decision protecting Delta smelt\*\*](#)  
Sacramento News and Review

[\*\*Judge Wanger Issues Injunction Against Federal Delta Smelt Plan\*\*](#)  
Bay Area Indy Media – June 1

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **June 6 - San Francisco - Paddle to the Sea Grand Finale**

Paddle to the Sea is a three week festival celebrating the Tuolumne River as it courses from Yosemite to the Golden Gate. The Tuolumne River Trust is making this epic journey from the Sierra to the Sea to introduce people to this incredible river, celebrate its 25th anniversary as a Wild & Scenic River, and build support for better stewardship of the River for fish, wildlife and recreation.

Sea kayakers will finish the trip in the San Francisco Bay on June 5th and 6th. Tuolumne River Trust is throwing a huge party to welcome the paddlers to the Golden Gate! The Grand Finale event is June 6, from 12:00-4:00 pm at Aquatic Park in San Francisco.

It features a lunchtime barbeque, family fun, free kayak rides and more. Live music from Captain Mike and the Sea Weeds. The event is [at Larkin and Beach Streets in downtown San Francisco](#) and admission is free.

Get more info on the event at the [Tuolumne River Trust web page](#).

### **June 20-21 – Oakland - Salmon Aid Festival**

A two-day **free** festival of music, food and culture celebrating west coast wild salmon, June 20-21 at Jack London Square in Oakland. Noon to 7 pm both days.

Organized by the largest ever coalition of West Coast salmon advocates (including commercial, recreational and tribal fishermen, conservation organizations, chefs, restaurants, scientists, and many others), Salmon Aid will raise awareness of the plight of west coast salmon populations, the rivers and streams they spawn in, and the many coastal and inland communities that rely on salmon for their livelihoods and survival.

The festival will feature educational booths, activities and foods highlighting the natural history of salmon, as well as the history, culture and traditions of salmon towns and the peoples connected through our west coast salmon heritage.

There will be two days of salmon barbeques, live music (20 bands on 2 stages), a gourmet food court and beer garden, and information booths by salmon protection organizations, including the Alameda Creek Alliance.

**The ACA will need volunteers to help staff our information table and also volunteers to help with the set up and running of the Salmon Aid event. Please contact me ASAP if you are interested.**

Don't forget to drop by the Alameda Creek Alliance booth at the Festival.

Get all the info on the Festival at [www.salmonaid.org](http://www.salmonaid.org)

### **OTHER ITEMS**

#### ***Car-Free Exploration of the Bay Area***

Bay Nature magazine is updating its popular [TRANSIT TO TRAILS map](#), originally published in 2001. This revised guide to car-free exploration of Bay Area parks and trails will be inserted in the April-June 2009 issue of Bay Nature and also offered as a stand-alone publication. By presenting possibilities for public transit access to open space, TRANSIT TO TRAILS offers nature lovers in the Bay Area a concrete way to reduce their carbon footprint while visiting some of their favorite places.