

Apperson Quarry Update

SFPUC Offering Sunol Valley Mining Lease to De Silva - [Link to Apperson Quarry](#)

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission last month voted to enter into exclusive negotiations with Oliver de Silva, Inc., for the lease to mine gravel under Surface Mining Permit (SMP) 30 on 325 acres of public land along Alameda Creek in the Sunol Valley. De Silva also owns a lease to mine Apperson Ridge (SMP-17) east of the Sunol Valley and south of San Antonio Reservoir, on private land adjacent to SFPUC watershed land and Sunol Regional Park. The Apperson Quarry, a hard rock mine, would destroy 680 acres of prime wildlife habitat in the heart of the home range for the San Antonio tule elk herd and would impact numerous endangered species. See the [ACA web page on the Apperson Quarry](#).

SMP-30 is currently mined for sand and gravel by Cemex (formerly RMC Pacific Materials), which has a lease to mine to 140 feet. The SFPUC is offering de Silva a lease to expand mining operations at SMP-30 to a depth of at least 225 feet. More significantly, the SMP-30 lease would allow de Silva to build a conveyor belt from the Apperson Ridge Quarry to the Sunol Valley and use the SMP-30 site to process the rock and possibly dispose of spoils from the Apperson site.

Read the May 23 article in the East Bay Express:

[Mine, All Mine!: Eagles and elk be damned! Roadbuilder Ed DeSilva is now one step closer to opening a massive East Bay rock quarry.](#)

The SFPUC will conduct an environmental review of the SMP-30 project under the California Environmental Quality Act – it is not clear how much of the proposed activities at Apperson Ridge would be covered in this review. The Environmental Impact Report approved by Alameda County for Apperson Quarry is 23 years old and completely inadequate. Linking of the leases may re-open the environmental review for Apperson. The SFPUC intends to include some restoration projects for Alameda Creek in the SMP-30 lease; restoring portions of Alameda Creek in the Sunol Valley, installing a cut-off wall in the gravel pit to prevent water inflow from Alameda Creek, and helping to fund a fish passage project at the PG&E gas crossing in the Sunol Valley.

The SMP-30 lease may make the Apperson Quarry more financially viable for de Silva; it potentially could allow the SFPUC to impose additional conditions and mitigation measures. The ACA is currently evaluating the proposal and will come out with a position statement on the SMP-30 lease shortly.

Fish Screen Construction Begins in Lower Alameda Creek

The Alameda County Water District has begun installing a fish screen in lower Alameda Creek in the Flood Control Channel just downstream of the Mission Boulevard overpass, on the AWCD water supply diversion point near the mouth of Niles Canyon. The fish screen will eliminate the potential for out-migrating juvenile steelhead from being trapped and entrained in the diversion pipelines and adjacent groundwater recharge ponds at Quarry Lakes Regional Recreation Area. The fish screen project is partially funded by a \$1 million grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to improve steelhead migration in Alameda Creek.

Bay Area Stream Fishes Report Published

Robert Leidy of the EPA has published [Ecology, Assemblage Structure, Distribution and Status of Fishes in Streams Tributary to the San Francisco Estuary, California](#), a report on the composition of stream fish assemblages and environmental variables within twenty-three watersheds tributary

to the San Francisco Estuary, from 1993-1999. The current and historical distribution and abundance of native stream fishes in Alameda Creek figure prominently in the report.

Group Forms to Remove Searsville Dam from San Francisquito Creek

Beyond Searsville Dam is a newly formed alliance of individuals, community groups, resource agencies, and private companies advocating for investigating the restoration of threatened steelhead trout and free flowing San Francisquito Creek in Palo Alto, through the removal of Searsville Dam in a safe manner that is consistent with protecting creekside communities and watershed resources.

The group formed in response to growing public interest in the benefits of dam removal for ecosystem and steelhead restoration and the expressed need for an independent group to actively promote the investigation of removing Stanford University's obsolete Searsville Dam in coordination with other watershed stakeholders - and in a safe manner that is consistent with protecting creekside communities and watershed resources.

For additional information about the group and to support the effort, contact:

Matt Stoecker
Beyond Searsville Dam
3130 Alpine Road Suite 288-411
Portola Valley, CA 94028
Matt@StoeckerEcological.com

Lawsuit for Pesticide Impacts to Bay Area Endangered Species

The [Center for Biological Diversity](#) last month filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for violating the Endangered Species Act by registering and allowing the use of 46 toxic pesticides in habitats for nearly a dozen San Francisco Bay Area endangered species without determining whether the chemicals jeopardize their existence. The 11 Bay Area endangered species include the delta smelt, tidewater goby, California clapper rail, salt marsh harvest mouse, California tiger salamander, San Francisco garter snake, California freshwater shrimp, San Joaquin kit fox, Alameda whipsnake, valley elderberry longhorn beetle and bay checkerspot butterfly. Learn more about the lawsuit and pesticide impacts from the Center's [Bay Area pesticides web page](#).

Volunteer for the Golden Gate Endangered-Species Project

Help introduce Bay Area residents to our local endangered species! The Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) contains more federally threatened and endangered species than any other unit of the National Park System in the continental United States, yet most Bay Area residents are unaware of this. The Center for Biological Diversity will be assisting former Center staff attorney Brent Plater, who is launching an exciting project that will connect people with the endangered species of the San Francisco Bay Area.

The project is called the *2008 Golden Gate Endangered Species Big Year*. The goal is to introduce people to each and every one of the 34 federally listed threatened or endangered species found in the GGNRA, in Marin, San Francisco and San Mateo Counties. Listed species within the GGNRA include the [California red-legged frog](#), San Francisco garter snake, Coho salmon, steelhead trout, tidewater goby, northern spotted owl, California brown pelican, peregrine

falcon, marbled murrelet, western snowy plover, [mission blue butterfly](#), [San Bruno elfin butterfly](#), [bay checkerspot butterfly](#), California freshwater shrimp, and Presidio clarkia.

The gateway for the project will be a website where people can download a “checklist” of the species, learn about ethical wildlife watching, and sign up for guided trips to see the many species that call GGNRA home. People will be able to upload their sightings, compare them to other Big Year “competitors,” and even compare their list to those of a few celebrity participants.

The project needs your help - right now the most pressing need is help with publicity. The web content and most of the field trips are already prepared. Please contact Brent Plater at bplater@ggu.edu or (415) 572-6989 if you would like to become part of this exciting project.

Through this project, we hope to make people aware of the importance of the Endangered Species Act and the National Park’s urban park experiment, and to encourage people to be good neighbors to the incredible diversity of life in the GGNRA.