
State Water Resources Control Board

NOTICE OF PUBLIC LISTENING SESSIONS ON THE CLEAR LAKE HITCH

State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board or Board) staff will hold two (2) public listening sessions to discuss the emergency situation impacting the Clear Lake hitch and potential near and long-term solutions:

Thursday, January 19, 2023

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. PST

Remote Participation

Join Zoom Meeting: bit.ly/CLH_Jan19

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. PST

Remote Participation

Join Zoom Meeting: bit.ly/CLH_Feb1

FORMAT

The listening sessions will include presentations from State Water Board staff and opportunities for public input and discussion.

BACKGROUND

The Clear Lake hitch is a large minnow found only in Clear Lake and its tributaries. Historically, the hitch likely numbered in the millions, but recent surveys indicate a significant decline, and in 2014, California designated the hitch as a threatened species.

The hitch has strong cultural significance for several indigenous Pomo tribes of the Clear Lake region that rely on the hitch (or “chi”) for spiritual purposes and traditions and as a primary food source. The hitch is also of great importance to the lake’s ecosystem, a significant source of food for other fish, birds, and wildlife.

Adult hitch migrate upstream in tributaries of Clear Lake each spring to spawn before returning to the lake. Juvenile hitch hatch in the tributaries and move to the lake as well.

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

While the hitch's decline can be linked to a variety of factors including habitat loss, passage barriers, poor water quality, and invasive species, the most immediate threat to their survival is little to no water flowing in Kelsey, Adobe, Manning, Cole, and Middle Creeks during the upcoming spawning and rearing season (February through May).

The State Water Board is looking for ways to protect the Clear Lake hitch now and in the long term, including local voluntary actions to keep water in the creeks this year, obtaining data to better understand the problem and potential solutions, collaboration to fund effective solutions and spread important messages, enforcement to ensure all diversions in the area are legal, and regulations if voluntary actions aren't successful.

PARTICIPATION INFORMATION

To participate in the listening sessions, please use the following information:

Thursday, January 19, 2023 (1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. PST)

Zoom Link: bit.ly/CLH_Jan19

Phone: 669-444-9171

Meeting ID: 913 5194 9078

Passcode: 046844

Wednesday, February 1, 2023 (6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. PST)

Zoom Link: bit.ly/CLH_Feb1

Phone: 669-900-9128

Meeting ID: 926 4553 6143

Passcode: 103695

The listening sessions will be recorded. The recordings will be posted on the Clear Lake webpage. If you have any questions regarding how to participate in the listening sessions, please email ClearLakeHitch@waterboards.ca.gov.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please visit the Board's [Clear Lake Hitch webpage](https://waterboards.ca.gov/clear-lake-hitch) (waterboards.ca.gov/clear-lake-hitch) for continued updates on potential Board actions. This website will be updated with related documents and information as available.

HOW TO RECEIVE UPDATES

If you would like to receive email updates about this issue, please sign up for the Board's "Clear Lake Hitch" email list at the bottom of the [Clear Lake Hitch webpage](https://waterboards.ca.gov/clear-lake-hitch).

QUESTIONS

Please email questions to ClearLakeHitch@waterboards.ca.gov.