

CENTRAL VALLEY REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD WORKSHOP FOR THE CLEAR LAKE NUTRIENT TMDL CONTROL PROGRAM

**Summary of Presentation by Peter Windrem, President of the
CHI COUNCIL FOR THE CLEAR LAKE HITCH
Lakeport, California on July 18, 2018**

1. CHI COUNCIL FOR THE CLEAR LAKE HITCH

The Chi Council is a Coordinated Resource Management and Planning group under the auspices of the Lake County Resource Conservation District. The Council is comprised of local, state and Federal governmental agencies, Native American tribes, local organizations and interested citizens dedicated to the preservation of the native fish known as the Clear Lake hitch. Chi is a Native American name for the hitch.

2. THE CLEAR LAKE HITCH -- A THREATENED SPECIES

The Clear Lake hitch lives its adult life in schools in the open water of Clear Lake. Females grow up to 13 inches in length. In the springtime, they ascend the tributaries to Clear Lake to spawn. Within approximately two weeks, juveniles hatch, grow slightly, and then descend the streams to the wetlands that surround the shores of the lake. The wetlands act as a nursery where the juveniles are protected against predators until they reach approximately two inches in length. They then join the adults in the open water of the lake. Over the past several decades, the hitch population has declined dramatically, in part because of the loss of wetland habitat. The California Fish and Game Commission now lists the Clear Lake hitch as a Threatened Species.

3. MIDDLE CREEK WETLAND RESTORATION PROJECT IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE HITCH

According to Dr. Peter Moyle, Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the Department of Wildlife, Fish and Conservation Biology, at the University of California, Davis, restoration of the Clear Lake wetlands is critical to increase the juvenile survival rate of hitch. Of highest priority is the restoration of the Middle Creek wetlands.

4. REDUCTION OF EROSION UPSTREAM OF THE WETLANDS IS ALSO ESSENTIAL

As repeatedly stated by others, restoration of the Middle Creek wetlands is essential to catch the sediments that presently flow from the Scotts Creek and Middle Creek watersheds directly into Clear Lake. Attached to these comments are maps of those two watersheds. In the long run, the quantity of sediments coming from those watersheds must be reduced to protect the viability of the wetlands. To identify the sources of those sediments, surveys and monitoring must be done.

5. FUNDING IS NEEDED BOTH FOR WETLANDS RESTORATION AND SEDIMENTATION REDUCTION

We ask that you provide funding, and support for funding, by other State and Federal agencies and the U.S. Congress to complete the Middle Creek wetlands restoration project and to achieve sedimentation reduction from the tributaries to those wetlands. The County of Lake cannot fulfill these obligations alone. Your affirmative action is required, too. Please be part of the solution to the funding issues that accompany these projects.

For more information on the Clear Lake hitch, go to www.lakelive.info/chicouncil

Plate 2. Scotts Creek Watershed Streams and Stream Gage

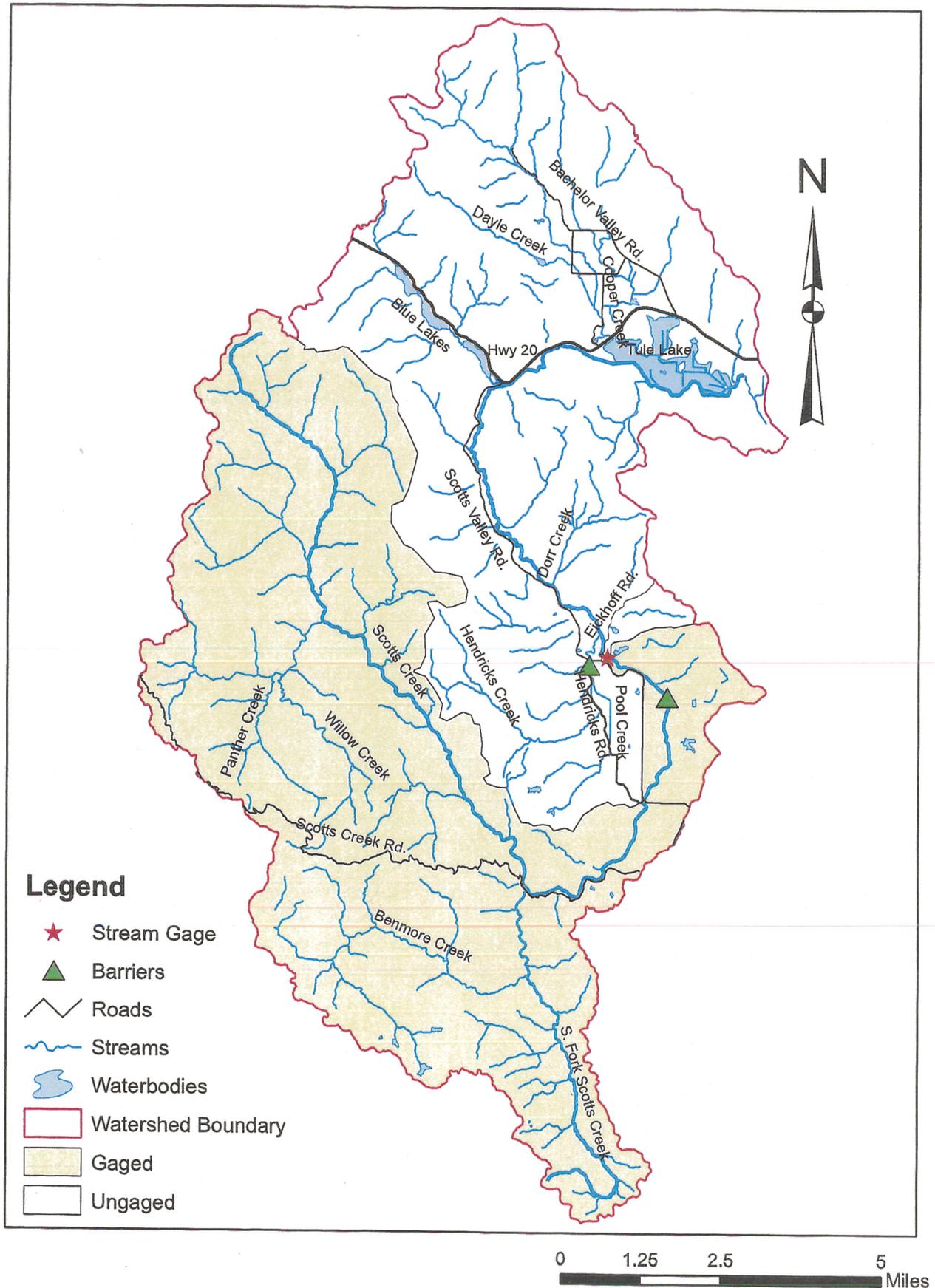


Plate 3. Middle Creek Watershed Streams and Stream Gage

