

EDITORIAL

January 29, 2009

Incomplete Wildlife List

San Francisco, owner of 30,000 acres in the Sunol area, is in the process of developing a 30-year Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for the area. The HCP will guide operations and maintenance at Calaveras and San Antonio Reservoirs and a diversion dam at the Little Yosemite falls in Alameda Creek. Environmentalists are playing an active role, pushing for enlargement of the lists of wildlife and habitat that should be protected.

As proposed, the HCP lists five federally listed endangered species: steelhead trout, callippe butterfly, Alameda whipsnake, California red-legged frog and California tiger salamander. Environmentalists want the list to include wildlife that isn't officially considered endangered, but deserves special protection — golden and bald eagles, peregrine falcons, rainbow trout and others. In addition, a representative of the California Native Plant Society has called for the listing of endangered native plants, of which there are 24 in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties (with only 5 listed).

This is a beautiful wilderness that SF owns. With the 30-year HCP, here's an opportunity to advance projects such as steelhead recovery, while also maintaining the general health of the area's wildlife and habitat. However, the wildlife and habitat that need to be protected must first be identified. As the environmentalists point out, names are missing.