Leanne R. Stanley
1415 Villa Drive
Los Altos , CA 94024
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e-mail
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Field Supervisor, Sacramento Fish and Wildlife,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way Suite W2605
Sacramento, CA 95825

Attention: Harry Mc Quillen, Conservation Program Coordinator

January 26, 2006

RE: California Red-Legged Frog Habitat

Property owner: Paloma Road, Paloma California
Property Tax Information: Location PCL4 of ROS 19-111 In 28, 33 TR5R11
ASMT Number: 016-004-53-000
Number of Acres: 72.70 (Taxed under the Williamson Act formula)
Owners Name: Leanne R. Stanley: 1415 Villa Drive Los Altos, CA 94024
Ellen F. Schou: 3636 Veazey Street NW, Washington D.C. 20008

On January 23, 2006, our long time tenant, Richard J. Fischer sent my sister and me an article that appeared in the Calaveras Enterprise on 1-20-2006. Richard stated the following information could affect our Paloma Road, Paloma, Calaveras County property. I have attached Mr.Fischer's letter and a newspaper article he passed on to us.

After reading the Calaveras Enterprise's article I understand I am among a group of land owners who do not reside in Calaveras County. Many like me were not notified of this habitat designation proposal. I agree with the landowner Betty Galli's recommendation, mentioned in the Enterprise article, that the Fish and Wildlife Service postpone the deadline for comments, because not all property owners were notified.

Neither my sister nor I received any information on the Red Legged Frog Habitat designation proposal. Yes, only during a year of heavy of rains, a small pond forms on our Paloma Road property. Typically, by early June the pond is bone dry. In the 68 years I have visited this property I have never seen any type of frog in this pond. During the past springs as youngsters visiting our grandmother, my sister and I loved splashing around in what we called "Mema's Pond". During the long hot Paloma's summer days we'd wished the pond still had water to cool off in.

As the Coordinator of Conservation for the USFWS and the other coordinators mentioned in the Enterprise article you owe us the courtesy to give us more details on Red Legged Frog Habitat project. How is this going to affect our property? Will our tenant, Mr. Fischer, be able to run his cattle on our 72 plus acres? Will we lose our rights to improve/build on our property in the future? What other restrictions will be put in place if this habitat is established? There are many more questions we need answered before this proposal is approved by the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors.

Sincerely,

c.c. Ellen F. Schou
Richard J. Fischer
Calaveras County Board of Supervisors

RJF Ranch

Richard J. and Patricia J. Fischer
121 RJF Ranch Road Mokelumne Hill, CA 95245
Telephone:(209)286-1432 email: rjfranch@sbcglobal.net

15, 2006

Ms. Leanne Stanley
1415 Villa Drive
Los Altos, CA 94024

Dear Ms. Stanley,

Here is an article from the Friday, April 14 Calaveras Enterprise. We hadn't responded to your request for information because we had none until now! My personal feeling is that the wonderful letter you wrote had something to do with this resolution.

We've had lots of rain this winter/spring. The grass is beautiful and the cows are happy. (When the cows are happy, we are too!)

I hope you had a wonderful Easter.

Sincerely,

Dick and Pat Fischer

Calaveras left off red-legged frog habitat

Calaveras County will not be part of the critical habitat set aside for the threatened red-legged frog. That was part of a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service rule announced Thursday to help cattle ranchers preserve the frog on 1 million acres of rangeland.

Encouragement of frog-compatible ranching may be the most far-reaching element of the service's designation of 450,288 acres for critical habitat.

Sensible ranching operations are much more conducive to protecting the amphibian than is high-density urban development, Wildlife officials said.

The rule includes special protections for ranchers who help the frog thrive on their land.

Farm bureau, ranchers happy about red-legged frog decision

County does not get critical habitat designation

By John Hall

Although experts say it has areas that are ideal for California red-legged frogs, no part of Calaveras County will be designated as "critical habitat" for the creatures.

"I think it was a good thing for the frogs," Valley Springs rancher Ron Randall said. "If you don't impact everybody by stepping on their private property rights with critical habitat designations, people will be more willing to cooperate in protecting the (endangered species)."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service last week published its final critical habitat rule for the frogs. The final rule eliminated Calaveras County from inclusion in the 450,288 acres in 20 California counties designated as critical habitat for the amphibians. More than 4,400 acres near Valley Springs had been among nearly 738,000 acres in 23 counties proposed by the wildlife service for the designation in November, 2005. The frogs are listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

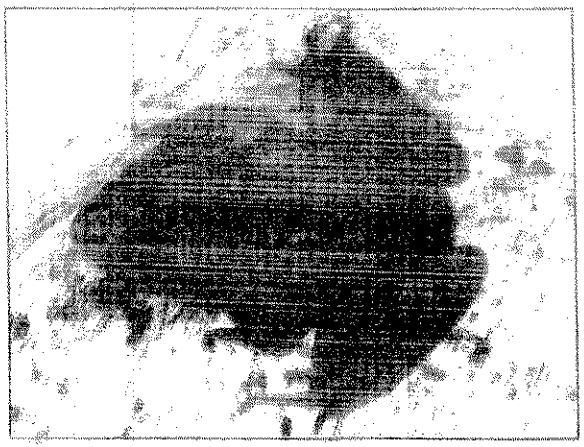
"We're glad they left (Calaveras County) out," Calaveras County Farm Bureau Executive Director Lorey Oliver said.

The county Farm Bureau is joining other groups to try to get the critical habitat designation, which identifies particular geographic areas with features essential to the conservation of a particular threatened or endangered species, taken out of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The Fish and Wildlife Service currently is required by law to designate critical habitat for every species listed under the ESA.

"The designation affects property values and is harmful to landowners," Oliver said, "and it is harmful to threatened species by not focusing on them where they are located. The critical habitat designation hurts property values and provides no additional protection to identified species."

Although there is no designated critical habitat in the county, "the frog is still protected under the ESA," Oliver noted.

Landowners still must consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service and provide appropriate mitigation if actions they propose will harm the frog or its environment.



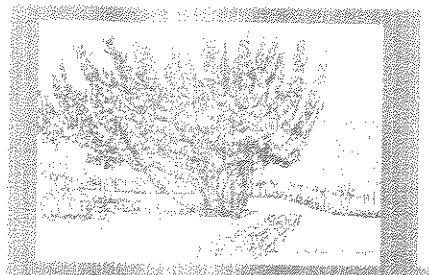
The California red-legged frog is still protected in Calaveras County, even without a critical habitat designation.

Enterprise file photo

"If the Endangered Species Act can be amended to be a little more landowner friendly, I think it would be more helpful in recovering some of these species," Randall said.

The fundamental ban on harming the species is provided by the fact it is a listed species under the ESA, rather than by designation of critical habitat, according to a Fish and Wildlife Service news release.

The rule also has a provision that makes it easier for ranchers to maintain man-made stock ponds and includes special protections for ranchers who help the frog thrive on their lands.



1415 VILLA DRIVE . LOS ALTOS . CA 94024

LEANNE AND GEORGE STANLEY

Susan Moore: Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825

October 16, 2008

RE: California Red-Legged Frog Habitat
Property owner: Paloma Road Paloma, California
Property Tax Information: Location PCL4 of ROS 19-19111 In 28, 33 TR5R11
ASMT Number: 016-004-53-000
Number of Acres: 72.70 (Taxed under the Williamson Act Formula)
Leased to: Mr. Richard J. Fischer
Owners Name: Leanne R. Stanley
Ellen F. Schou

On October 4, 2008 I received a letter from our tenant Mr. Richard J. Fischer. His letter began, "Hello Leanne, Well, here we go again". Richard detailed information that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will revisit the designated critical habitat of the California red-legged frog in Calaveras County. This is the second time in two years our tenant, Mr. Fischer, has done the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's job. Neither my sister nor I reside in Calaveras County. If it had not been for our tenant, Mr. Fischer, we would not have known about this possible designation change.

Your agency must have access to all Calaveras County's property owners. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has not properly notified my sister nor me of any major proposals that would dramatically affect our ranch land property use. I would like to point out that on January 26, 2006 I sent a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife's Sacramento Office. In this letter I stated my objections to the 2006 habitat designation proposal. I have attached this 2006 letter, along with Mr. Fischer's correspondences. I have also attached several articles that appeared in Calaveras County newspapers dated January 20,2006, April 14, 2006 and one on April 14, 2006 that appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle. In Mr. Fischer's April 15, 2008 letter he sent the final status report that the red-legged frog habitat was set aside. To date the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has never sent us any information on this 2008 designation proposal or the 2006 decision from the county . We thank Mr. Fischer and his wife Pat for their diligence to keep Ellen and me informed of potential changes on our Paloma Road property.

In the latter part of the 1800's our great grandfather, George Washington Folsom homesteaded this property. In the early 1920 our grandfather and grandmother, William and Birdie Folsom Sowden purchased this piece of land along with 700 acres from my grandmother's parents. The family home they built has since burn down. Mr.Fischer's cattle graze the grasses, as other cattle have grazed for well over 120 years. During the period of heavy rains, a small pond does form on our Paloma Road property. Typically, by early June the pond is bone dry. In the past 70 plus years my sister and I have visited this property we have never seen any type of frogs in this pond. As I stated in my January 26, 2006 letter, I believe our property should be excluded from this designated habitat proposal.

If the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is exempt from notifying land owners, such as me, of potential land use changes I would appreciate this information. If indeed this is true, I will then contact my Representatives in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. for further action.

Leanne R. Stanley
1415 Villa Drive
Los Altos, CA 94024

c.c. Ellen F. Schou, Richard and Pat Fischer, Calaveras County Board of Supervisors