

RESULTS OF PRECONSTRUCTION SURVEY FOR CALIFORNIA RED-LEGGED FROG AT ARANA GULCH TRAIL PROJECT SITE

Introduction

As part of the Conditions of Approval by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for the placement of a new bridge over Hagemann Gulch in Santa Cruz, California, a preconstruction survey for California red-legged frog was required. Also a training for construction workers about this frog, which is listed by CDFW as a Special of Special Concern, was required. This report documents the results of these requirements.

Methods

On November 18, 2013, Dana Bland, wildlife biologist, conducted a preconstruction survey of the project area around Hagemann Gulch and Arana Gulch for California red-legged frogs. The biologist walked the areas scheduled for vegetation removal, and visually searched for frogs. The survey was conducted between 0900 and 1000 hours. The project work area is outside both creek channels, with most work occurring at top of bank, with the exception of removing one Eucalyptus tree located on the north embankment of Hagemann Gulch. Also on that morning, prior to any ground disturbance, Dana Bland presented a flyer to construction workers with photos and information about the frog life history, its protected status, and measures to implement if any are observed during the construction of the project.

Results

No California red-legged frogs or any other amphibians were observed during the preconstruction survey. There was no water in Hagemann Gulch, and the water in Arana Gulch was at or near low tide level. The north embankment of Hagemann Gulch is mostly covered in ivy, and the channel along this portion is a vertical drop of 8-10 feet from the embankment, and in some areas is reinforced with grout. Because of the steep drop, it was not possible to walk the creek channel, but it was visible from the embankment above, and was completely dry. Photos of the two creek areas are shown below.

No frogs were present during the preconstruction survey, and none are likely to be present in these creeks. The steep, confined channel of Hagemann Gulch likely flows swiftly after a heavy rain, and the vertical sides would make it very difficult for this frog to escape swift flows. Arana Gulch at the point of the trail crossing is tidally influenced, and likely too saline for this frog. There are no observation records of California red-legged frog in either creek system.



Hagemann Gulch channel below the new bridge for Arana Gulch Trail Project, November 18, 2013.



Arana Gulch channel upstream of the improved culvert crossing, November 18, 2013.