



Jared Blumenfeld
Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Department of Toxic Substances Control

Meredith Williams, Ph.D., Director
700 Heinz Avenue
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Gavin Newsom
Governor

April 29, 2021

Greg Haet, P.E.
EH&S Associate Director, Environmental Protection
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APPROVAL OF STEGE MARSH CALIFORNIA RIDGWAY'S RAIL 2020 VIABILITY STUDY RESULTS FOR UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY, RICHMOND FIELD STATION SITE, RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA (Site Code 201605)

Dear Mr. Haet:

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) received the Stege Marsh California Ridgeway's Rail 2020 Viability Study Results (Report) for the University of California Berkeley, Richmond Field Station Site located at 1301 South 46th Street, Richmond California. The Report, dated December 7, 2020 was prepared by BioMaAs and Avocet Research Associates on behalf of the University of California. Surveys were conducted using U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service protocols to conduct a population survey of the Ridgeway's rail within the West Stege Marsh, an approximately 9-acre tidal wetland located at the southern boundary of the Richmond Field Station Site. The results of the study indicate that two breeding pair territories exist within the marsh and juvenile birds were observed within one of the territories. The Report concludes that the Ridgeway's rail densities in the marsh are within the same range as other San Francisco Bay marshes. DTSC's Human and Ecological Risk Office, Ecological Risk Assessment Section (HERO-ERAS), Geological Services Branch and program staff reviewed the report and have no comments; therefore, the Report is approved. Enclosed is HERO-ERAS's memorandum.

Greg Haet
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If you have any questions, please contact Lynn Nakashima at Lynn.Nakashima@dtsc.ca.gov. After May 3, 2021, please contact John Karachewski at John.Karachewski@dtsc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Lynn Nakashima

Lynn Nakashima
Project Manager
Site Mitigation and Restoration Program
Department of Toxic Substances Control

Enclosure: HERO-ERAS Memorandum

cc: (via email)

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Lynn Nakashima
Senior Environmental Scientist
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Berkeley, California 94710

FROM: J. Michael Eichelberger, Ph.D. *J. Michael Eichelberger*
Staff Toxicologist
Ecological Risk Assessment Section (ERAS)
Human and Ecological Risk Office (HERO)
Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)
8800 Cal Center Drive
Sacramento, California 95826

DATE: 23 February 2021

SUBJECT: ERAS REVIEW: STEGE MARSH CALIFORNIA RIDGWAY'S RAIL
2020 VIABILITY STUDY RESULTS [WEST STEGE MARSH] FOR
[UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA] UC BERKELEY

Project: DTSC201605-00 Activity: 11018 MPC: TECHMemo

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED:

ERAS reviewed the "Stege Marsh California Ridgway's Rail 2020 Viability Study Results [West Stege Marsh; "Site"] for [University of California] UC Berkeley". The report, dated 7 December 2020, was prepared by BioMaAS and Avocet Research Associates for the University of California, Berkeley. ERAS received the report for review via an EnviroStor request dated 22 January 2021.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

West Stege Marsh is an approximately 9-acre tidal wetland on the southern boundary of the University of California at Berkeley Field Station in Richmond California. Prior Site

investigation showed contamination of the marsh released from former industrial activities on land associated with the Field Station. Remediation was performed on approximately 5 acres of the marsh and restored to functional wetland and ecotone during 2002 to 2004. Restoration of the marsh has been determined important in supporting Ridgway's Rail (*Rallus obsoletus obsoletus*), a federal and state endangered species. Several federal, state and local agencies including United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Bay Conservation Development Commission (BCDC) and Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) have interest in restoration of the marsh. Evaluation of the marsh continues and as a part of that evaluation, these agencies requested a viability study of the Ridgway's rail in West Stege Marsh.

SCOPE OF THE REVIEW:

ERAS reviewed the report for content related to the population survey of the Ridgway's rail (*Rallus obsoletus obsoletus*). Minor editorial, stylistic, and/or grammatical issues are not noted.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Surveys were conducted using USFWS protocol. Results indicate two breeding pair territories within the marsh. Juvenile birds were observed within one of the territories. The number of Ridgway's rail detections in prior years were much lower than the 65 detections in 2020, but the report states this may be a function of differences in the prior years approved protocol methods which were not as efficient at detecting the birds than methods of the current approved 2020 protocol. The report concludes that Ridgway's rail densities in the marsh are within the range of densities within San Francisco Bay marshes. The major threat to the rail appears to be predators, in particular feral cats.

ERAS believes the report indicates the marsh is currently capable of supporting breeding Ridgway's rail and the habitat is contributing to support the population of the species in San Francisco Bay. Marsh restoration appears to be functioning as planned and providing suitable habitat for the rail.

Conclusion:


Marsh restoration appears to have successfully provided suitable habitat for the Ridgway's rail.

Reviewed by: Edward A. Fendick, Ph.D.,
Staff Toxicologist
HERO-ERAS Cal Center



Lynn Nakashima
23 February 2021
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Concurrence:


Brian Faulkner, Ph.D.
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HERO-ERAS Cal Center