STANISLAUS COUNTY
FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMITTEE
3800 Cornucopia Way
Modesto, CA 95358
Phone: (209) 525-6750

MEETING MINUTES

Date: Thursday, July 23, 2026
Location: 3800 Cornucopia Way, Stanislaus Building, H-1, Modesto, CA 95358
Call to Order: 4:03 p.m. by Chair Michael Hart

1. Attendance & Introductions

Members Present: Tom Sexton (D1), Vernon Gladney (D1), Brian Mollard (D2), Bernard Aguilar (D2), Tim Fitzgerald (D3), Michael Hart (D4), Kenneth Meidl (D4), Philip McKay (D5), Kern Hunewill (D5)

State Fish & Wildlife Representative: Harley Radcliffe, Game Warden

Parks & Recreation Staff: Sena Tath, Secretary

Guests: Linda Weldman, Donna Burt, Megan Solimine

Excused: Jim Atherstone (D3)

2. Fisheries Report (Aguilar)

- River activity is slow; surveys completed and new ones planned.
- Spring-run salmon work underway; 2025 scale reading continues.
- Temperature monitoring ongoing on the Stanislaus River.
- Merced River trap caught 10 juvenile salmon in May.
- Funding for next year remains uncertain.
- Merced River restoration near Henderson Park continues with spawning-gravel additions.
- Stanislaus River: Tortuga (65% design) and Mohler Tract Restoration projects funded by Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA).
- Public meetings were recently held on these restoration projects.
- Downstream La Grange Phase 2 restoration work ongoing.

- Follow-up on flow/temperature questions.

3. 2025 Environmental Award (Hart)

- Donna Burt from the Stanislaus Wildlife Care Center was the recipient.
- Recognized for decades of service supporting wildlife rehabilitation.
- Center assists hundreds of animals each year: injured, orphaned, or displaced.
- Contributions include education, habitat restoration, statewide partnerships, and volunteer leadership.
- Accept trapped injured wildlife except domestic animals (cats, dogs, livestock).
- Fox admissions are common; many juveniles are currently receiving care.
- Certificate presented and committee photos taken.

4. Enforcement Report (Radcliffe)

- Major deer-poaching case closed using DNA evidence; two repeat offenders were arrested in late May.
- Citations issued: 35 by Warden Weaver since May; 58 by Radcliffe this year.
- Lower fishing activity observed, resulting in fewer violations.
- Another deer-poaching case successfully traced from physical evidence to arrest.
- District Attorney Aurora Maddox acknowledged for strong support of wildlife crime prosecution.

5. Woodward Reservoir Fish Habitat Project Update (McKay)

- Two meetings were held with SSJID (April 13 and 23).
- Materials must meet drinking-water standards; documentation submitted.
- Indemnification agreement is expected in late July or early August.
- County Counsel will coordinate next steps.
- Boat quarantine due to mussel concerns remains a barrier; potential use of Sheriff's Department boats discussed.

6. Wood Ducks Update (McKay)

- 30 nesting boxes total; 6 relocated, 24 remain at Woodward Reservoir.
- No eggs present this season despite nesting activity.
- Possible causes: red squirrels, human presence, stray cats.
- Recommended actions include relocating boxes, adding trail cameras, and possibly integrating MJC project sites.

7. Guest Presentation (Solimine)

- MJC seeks opportunities for student involvement in field studies, habitat assessment, and wood duck monitoring.
- Discussion included potential funding for nest boxes, cameras, and supplies.
- Clarification required on whether County or MJC handles equipment purchasing.

8. Committee Logo Change (Hart)

- Updated logo reviewed; includes wood duck, trout, valley oak leaves, and revised text layout.
- Logo approved unanimously.
- Staff will update committee documents and materials.
- Discussion held regarding future use on merchandise; no action taken.

9. Quail Guzzler Update (McKay)

- Proposal to install additional guzzlers on County property continues.
- State can supply tanks; committee responsible for installation materials.
- Concrete pads deemed too costly; alternative corrugated metal collection panels proposed.
- Future steps: site visit after fire-season reopening and updated cost estimate.

10. Approval of Minutes from April 23, 2026 Meeting (Hart)

- Minutes approved unanimously with no corrections.

11. Treasurer's Report (Hunewill)

- Current balance: approximately $56,000
- No recent expenditures.

12. Correspondence Report (Atherstone)

- No report provided due to absence.

13. Other Business (Hart)

- Kids' Fishing Event is scheduled for November 14.
- Last year's event was highly successful with strong turnout.
- Proposal to reduce trout orders from 250 to 200.
- Additional volunteers needed for fish cleaning; workload was too heavy for two people last year.

- Plan to add a fourth fishing platform to improve safety and participant flow.
- Request for more Fish & Wildlife personnel to assist as volunteers.

14. Adjournment (Hart)

- A motion to adjourn was approved and the meeting ended at 5:03 p.m.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for **October 22, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.** located at 3800 Cornucopia Way, Stanislaus Building, H-1, Modesto, CA 95358.

Agendas can also be found online at Stanislaus County Fish and Wildlife Committee, subject to staff's ability to post prior to the meeting. Materials related to an item on this agenda submitted to the Commission after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection during normal business hours at the main office of the Department of Parks and Recreation, 3800 Cornucopia Way, Suite D, Modesto, CA 95358.

Prepared by: Sena Tath, Secretary