

## ***The Alameda County Voluntary Local Program: Providing a Permitting Solution to Address State Listed Species for Voluntary Conservation Projects***

The Alameda County Resource Conservation District and the California Department of Fish and Game (Department) worked collaboratively to develop the Alameda County Voluntary Local Program (VLP). The VLP provides a permitting solution for projects that have impacts to species and/or their habitat listed by the Department under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). The CESA listing of the California tiger salamander and the Alameda whipsnake hindered the ACRCDC and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) ability to work with landowners and land managers to implement voluntary restoration and conservation projects that have the potential for take.

The VLP provides coverage for take of the state listed Alameda whipsnake and California tiger salamander for projects that are implemented through this Program. Landowners and land managers in Alameda County that participate in agricultural activities are eligible for the Program.

### **What is the Alameda County Voluntary Local Program?**

- A **voluntary program** that recognizes the unique and important role that private and public landowners in California play in wildlife and habitat enhancement.
- A Program under DFG regulations for implementation of the California Endangered Species Act
- Provides authorization for take of California tiger salamanders and Alameda whipsnake that is incidental to routine and ongoing agricultural activities provided that take occurs during the implementation of management practices
- The types of practices that can be included under the program include voluntary restoration projects such as pond restorations, livestock water developments, stream restoration projects, and pipeline installation (see below for a list of the management practices included in the Program)
- This Program does not necessarily satisfy any other legal requirements for projects if they are subject to Fish and Game Code Section 1602 and require a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement.

### **What activities are covered under the VLP?**

The following Management Practices are included in the Program. All projects that are implemented under this program must have a habitat and wildlife component and must contribute to the voluntary enhancement and maintenance of habitat for endangered and threatened species.

- Pond Restoration Activities
  - Control predator species
  - Establish native vegetation
  - Structural components repair
  - Obstruction removal
  - Pond desiltation

- Stream Restoration Activities
  - Native riparian habitat restoration
  - In-stream channel stabilization
  - Obstruction removal
- Livestock and Wildlife Water Distribution
  - Spring development
  - Off stream water facilities
  - Pipeline installation
- Erosion Control
  - Access road improvements
  - Vegetation establishment
  - Water control structures

**For more information on the Voluntary Local Program for Alameda County please contact the Program Administrator, Leslie Koenig at 925-371-0154 ext 115.**