

# California Tiger Salamander Workshop 2009 - Daniel Russell USFWS Presentation

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

## California Tiger Salamander Workshop – Elkhorn Slough




photo by Gerald & Burr Condit

Endangered Species Program, April 2009

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## Overview of Current Listing Status


- > **3 Listed Entities (Distinct Population Segments):**
  - Santa Barbara DPS** – listed as Endangered, September 2000
  - Sonoma DPS** – listed as Endangered, July 2002
  - Central DPS** – listed as Threatened, August 2004

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## Critical Habitat Designations

- > Final CH Designations for Central DPS (Sept., '05, ~200k acres) and Santa Barbara DPS (Nov., '04, ~11k acres)
- > Sonoma DPS CH: Dec., '05, ~17k acres. DOI in Settlement Discussions




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## Status of Further Listing Actions

- > **5 – Year Reviews and Recovery Plans:**
  - Both are currently in “draft” stage, but are not at the top of priority list



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## How Does ESA Protect Salamanders?

- > **Section 9 of the Act makes it unlawful for any person subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. to “take” listed wildlife**
- > **Take is defined as “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct”**
- > **Technically, this prohibition applies whether take is intentional or not**

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## How Does ESA Protect Salamanders?

- > **Section 7 of the Act requires all other Federal agencies to consult with the FWS regarding listed species**
- > **7(a)(1) says that agencies will utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of listed species**
- > **7(a)(2) says agencies shall insure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat**

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### When Bad Things (Take of Species) Happen...

Human projects will continue to overlap with listed species, and will often be likely to result in take. To avoid violating section 9, take must be "permitted" (provided there's no Jeopardy determination)


- If project is not tied to Federal action, permitting is through a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). Take must be minimized and mitigated.
- If project has Federal nexus, agency must consult with FWS. Take is exempted from section 9, provided agency implements FWS measures to minimize take.

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### Take of California Tiger Salamanders

- **Take of CTS is typically based on habitat loss**
- **Individuals are "taken" as a result of ground disturbance or removal of habitat (breeding ponds, aestivation areas)**



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### Minimizing Take

- **If habitat loss from project is unavoidable, there's really no way to minimize the loss of those individuals taken**
- **The ESA's implementing regulations and consultation handbook discuss minimizing the "effect of the take on the species"**
- **Conservation banking provides a means to minimize the effect on the species when take is from habitat loss**

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### What Are Conservation Banks?

- **Banks are generally large parcels of land supporting listed species, have conservation easements and FWS-approved management plans, and have non-wasting endowments to fund management activities in perpetuity**
- **They also have Service Areas, geographic boundaries within which they can provide compensation for impacts**

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### How They Work - Simplified!

- **The amount of habitat loss resulting in take is determined for each project**
- **Project proponents then work with the FWS to determine the appropriate amount of bank "credits" needed to offset impacts**
- **Credits are purchased, resulting in habitat supporting CTS being protected and managed in perpetuity**

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### Bank Service Areas

- **Service areas are based on biology / ecology of species**
- **Developed such that compensation is for impacts within same ecoregion or species range**

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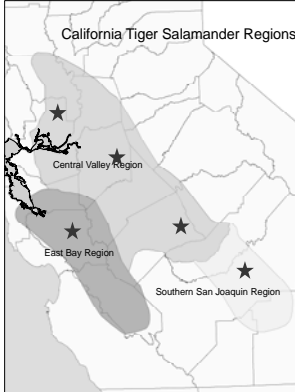
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**Three "ecoregions" within the Central DPS**

- Central Valley
- East Bay
- Southern San Joaquin

With some modification, these are CTS conservation bank service areas



California Tiger Salamander Regions

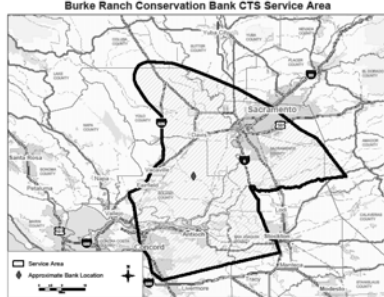
Central Valley Region

East Bay Region

Southern San Joaquin Region

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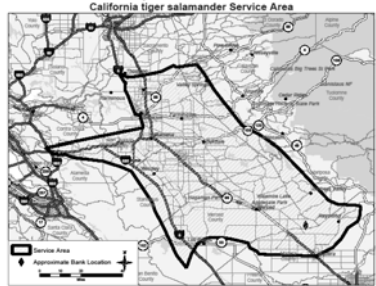
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Burke Ranch Conservation Bank CTS Service Area

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Drayer Conservation Bank  
California tiger salamander Service Area

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Sand Creek Conservation Bank CTS Service Area

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Ohlone Conservation Bank California Tiger Salamander Service Area

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### Lands Currently Protected in CTS Banks

- 19 FWS-approved conservation banks throughout the Central (12) and Sonoma (7) DPS regions
- 6076 acres of CTS habitat protected and managed in perpetuity (295 ac. in Sonoma, 5781 ac. in Central)



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## Questions?

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