

COVER SHEET

Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Authorization for Incidental Take and Implementation of the Stanford University Habitat Conservation Plan

NEPA Co-Lead Agencies: United States Fish and Wildlife Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – National Marine Fisheries Service

Type of Statement: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

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Abstract:

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) (also collectively known as the Services) have received applications from the Board of Trustees of Leland Stanford Junior University (Stanford) for permits under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA), to take certain federally protected species incidental to otherwise lawful activities. This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addresses the potential environmental consequences that may occur if the applications are approved. The USFWS and NMFS are co-lead agencies under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The Services received applications from Stanford for incidental take permits pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA. The incidental take permits (ITPs) would authorize incidental take of “Covered Species” on all of Stanford’s lands, although the species mainly occur in the undeveloped portions. The Covered Species are the California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*; CTS), California red-legged frog (*Rana aurora draytonii*), San Francisco garter snake (SFGS), western pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*), and steelhead (*Onchorhynchus mykiss*). As part of the ITP application process, Stanford prepared a habitat conservation plan (HCP) that specifies, among other things, (i) the impacts likely to result from the taking of the Covered Species and the measures Stanford will undertake to avoid, minimize, and mitigate such impacts, (ii) how the HCP would be funded, and (iii) alternatives to the proposed HCP. The proposed term of the permits is 50 years.

The Environmental Impact Statement examines the environmental effects of the Services' approval of the proposed permits (the Proposed Action), and the environmental effects of two alternatives to the Proposed Action, including the No Action Alternative and an HCP for CTS Only alternative.

The Proposed Action and alternatives would have no significant adverse effect on cultural resources, noise, hazardous materials/waste, public services, land use or socioeconomics. The Proposed Action and alternatives would have an unavoidable significant adverse effect on traffic because of existing conditions. Likewise, because of existing conditions, the Proposed Action and alternatives would have a significant unavoidable cumulative effect on traffic and on air quality (particulate emissions but not other pollutants).

Because of the comprehensive proposed Habitat Conservation Plan, the Proposed Action provides the greatest benefit to geology, water quality, and biology as compared to the No Action and HCP for CTS Only Alternatives. The Proposed Action is the preferred alternative.