

Dear Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Vector Control Manager Ms. Zahiri, and County IPM Manager Mr. Duggal:

On behalf of SAVE THE FROGS! and our worldwide network of supporters, staff and volunteers, I am writing to submit an official comment related to the County's Integrated Mosquito and Vector Control Programs. SAVE THE FROGS! (www.savethefrogs.com) is the world's leading amphibian conservation organization. Our mission is to protect amphibian populations and to promote a society that respects and appreciates nature and wildlife. We work in California, across the USA, and around the world to prevent the extinction of amphibians, and to create a better planet for humans and wildlife. Since 2008, SAVE THE FROGS! scientists and volunteers have held over 2,000 educational events in 59 countries to educate people about the plight of frogs and teach them ways to protect amphibians.

SAVE THE FROGS! opposes the spraying of pesticides to combat mosquitoes in Santa Clara County as the project harms humans, wildlife, especially key mosquito predators, preventing a long-term solution to mosquito control.

Pesticides are intended to kill. The pesticide industry has a long history of selling chemicals that are eventually found out to be extremely harmful to humans and wildlife, and with the billions of dollars these companies have at their disposal, they have managed to lobby their way towards legality for chemicals that should be banned, and that in many other countries are banned. Many pesticides that are currently legal have large bodies of scientific information describing the sub-lethal harm they cause. There is no health organization in the world that suggests the inhalation of pesticides or the consumption of pesticides in food or water as part of a healthy lifestyle, and it is extremely evident that spraying pesticides in Santa Clara communities contaminates the air and water and puts humans and wildlife at direct risk of exposure to chemicals intended to kill.

Mosquito-borne illnesses are extremely rare in Santa Clara County and have been rare prior to the commencement of mosquito spraying. If Santa Clara County has noticed an increase in mosquitoes, it is likely due to the significant destruction of wetlands, which serve as homes to frogs, salamanders, bats, birds, fish and other wildlife species that love to eat mosquitoes. If the County wants fewer mosquitoes, it should focus on improving wildlife habitat. This will provide the County with healthy ecosystems that regulate themselves. The County can also put more effort into educating people about how to reduce man-made mosquito habitats such as old tires and pots that hold stagnant water.



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Amphibian populations have been declining worldwide at unprecedented rates, and nearly one-third of the world's amphibian species are threatened with extinction. Up to 200 species have completely disappeared since 1980, and this is NOT normal: amphibians naturally go extinct at a rate of only about one species every 500 years. Amphibian populations are faced with an array of environmental problems, including pollution, infectious diseases, habitat loss, invasive species, climate change, and over-harvesting for the pet and food trades. Unless we act quickly, amphibian species will continue to disappear, resulting in irreversible consequences to the planet's ecosystems and to humans. Frogs eat mosquitoes; provide us with medical advances; serve as food for birds, fish, mammals, and reptiles; and their tadpoles filter our drinking water. Plus, frogs look and sound cool, and kids love them -- so there are lots of reasons to protect California's remaining amphibian populations. And of course, there are many reasons to keep Santa Clara residents from being exposed to harmful pesticides funded and applied with their taxpayer dollars.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding amphibians or these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kerry Kriger".

Kerry Kriger, Ph.D.

22-August-2022