

^{Insects} Salamander sites sprayed for mosquitoes

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✓ APTOS — Two long-toed salamander habitats in Aptos were sprayed for mosquitoes last week after permission was granted by the state Department of Fish and Game and the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The two agencies "were willing to collaborate so we could preserve the habitat" of the endangered species and still spray against mosquitoes, said Vicki Kramer of the Santa Cruz County Mosquito and Vector Control

District.

Kramer said permission was granted to spray in Valencia Lagoon, off Bonita Drive near the freeway in Rio Del Mar, and at Seascape Pond, near San Andreas Road.

The mosquito district used a

RP-2-2445
bacteria spray and a growth inhibitor, but did not use an oil spray. There was concern that the oil spray, which suffocates small organisms such as developing mosquitoes, would also suffocate part of the

See SPRAY / back of section ▶

SPRAY

▶ From Page 1

salamanders' food supply. It would not harm the salamanders, Kramer said.

There was a high count of developing mosquitoes in Valencia Lagoon, Kramer said, and a smaller number at Seascape.

Although there was also a high count of mosquitoes at Ellicott Pond, near the KOA campground on San Andreas Road, Kramer said she didn't seek permission to spray there because she didn't think it would be granted.

"They (Fish and Game and the Fish and Wildlife Service) really want to leave it alone," Kramer said, because of an increase in salamander population there. "They don't even want people walking out there."

By the time meetings were held with Fish and Game and the federal officials, Kramer

said, some of the mosquitoes at Ellicott had grown beyond the point where a spray would be effective. Spraying is not effective against adult mosquitoes.

Because this is the first year the Mosquito Control District has operated, Kramer said, all the mosquito breeding places couldn't be located until the rains came.

Now that the spots have been identified, Kramer said, it will be easier to plan for future years. She said she will work with Fish and Game and the Fish and Wildlife Service on protocol for future sprayings in salamander habitats, and will seek permission to spray at Ellicott Pond next year.

The district, which covers Aptos, Watsonville and the surrounding area, was formed after numerous complaints about mosquitoes. Most of the district's spraying was early this month, in the sloughs around Watsonville.