

**Community Needs Assessment
Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP)**

July 10, 2013

Prepared for Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and the Delta MERP Stakeholders

Prepared by California Department of Public Health

Table and Attachments

Table 1 – Needs assessment groups – Population served, Languages, Programs

Attachment A – Needs assessment meeting agenda

Attachment B – Needs assessment interview questions

Attachment C – Descriptions of needs assessment groups

1. Introduction

Many types of fish in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta that are caught for food or recreation contain elevated levels of mercury, a toxic chemical. The current fish consumption advisories for the Delta recommend no consumption of striped bass and sturgeon for women of childbearing age, and children, who are most sensitive to harm from exposure to mercury. Because activities to clean up mercury sources in the Delta will take many years, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Water Board) established the Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (Delta MERP) to reduce human exposure to mercury from the consumption fish in the Delta. The Water Board is currently developing a work plan that will describe the Delta MERP program activities and will begin implementing these activities in 2014. To ensure that the work plan includes perspectives from affected communities, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) initiated a needs assessment with community-based organizations and tribes who represent and work with Delta fishing populations. The goals of the needs assessment were to learn more about the fishing populations, the organizations that serve them, and identify activities for reducing mercury exposure among affected populations for possible inclusion into the Delta MERP work plan.

2. Needs Assessment Methods

To conduct the needs assessment, CDPH identified community-based organizations and tribes that serve populations who may be catching and eating fish from the Delta. In selecting needs assessment participants, we sought to include groups serving non-English speakers and diverse ethnic populations, including Southeast Asians and Latinos. We included groups that have worked with us on past fish contamination

projects, as well as those who were new to us. To identify new groups, we requested assistance from the Delta MERP work group members and also solicited suggestions from the groups we met with during the needs assessment meetings.

The needs assessment began with a brief introduction to the project by email or phone to prospective groups and was followed by an in-person or phone meeting. There were several groups we considered including but did not for a variety of reasons. Some groups could not be reached (i.e., they did not return emails or calls after several attempts), or we determined that they were not well suited for the project because the populations they represented did not fish or did not eat sport fish.

We developed a standard meeting agenda (Attachment A) and a list of questions that were asked during the meetings (Attachment B). The list of questions explored the goals of the organization, the population served, fishing activities in the Delta, awareness of advisories, past and current educational activities (fish related and non-fish related), suggestions for communication approaches, and interest in further participation in the Delta MERP.

From February 19th to May 1st, 2013, we met with eight community groups. Six of the eight meetings were conducted in person and two were conducted by phone. Detailed notes were taken at all eight meetings; in addition, we recorded five of the six in-person meetings to ensure that our notes were accurate and comprehensive. Once the initial draft of the meeting notes was complete, we asked each group to review them for accuracy. For some groups, we asked them to clarify certain points that were discussed at the meeting. We then made corrections or added new information to the notes, based on our communication with the groups after the initial meeting.

This report summarizes the information gathered through the eight needs assessments meetings and is organized into the following areas:

- Description of groups and populations served;
- Fishing activities and awareness of advisories;
- Past fish contamination activities;
- Barrier to successful educational activities;
- Educational approaches;
- Interest in future Delta MERP activities;
- Other observations;
- Recommendations.

3. Description of Groups and Populations Served

CDPH met with eight community groups: Asian Pacific Self Development and Residential Association (APSARA); Asian Resources; California Striped Bass Association (CSBA); California Valley Miwok Tribe; Lao Family Community Empowerment; Lao Khmu Association; Mechoopda Indian Tribe; and Southeast Asian

Assistance Center (SAAC). Seven of the eight of the groups provide social services in varying capacities that focus on addressing specific community needs. One group, CSBA, does not provide social services to their members. Rather, they work to preserve, conserve, and enhance striped bass while promoting fishing. As a part of this goal, they hold fishing derbies and activities for youth.

Five of the social service groups—APSARA, Asian Resources, Lao Family, Lao Khmu, and SAAC—help individuals who are new to the U.S. and who are limited-English speakers. This type of work requires the groups to have staff members that are culturally competent and speak a wide range of languages. These five groups focus on Southeast Asian immigrant populations, but also provide services to other racial and ethnic groups such as Latinos and Eastern Europeans. These groups also strive to increase understanding between immigrant populations and the community at large. A common thread between them was their desire to strengthen the communities they work with by empowering individuals and promoting a skilled work force. They provide employment preparation and job placement, as well as help people become more involved in their communities, for example, by encouraging parents to join and gain leadership positions in parent teacher associations. The groups also work with youth by partnering with high school and college-age students.

Table 1 provides additional information about each group including the populations served, the languages spoken by the staff, and major programs. More detailed descriptions of the eight groups can be found in Attachment C.

4. Fishing Activities and Advisory Awareness

We asked all groups about fishing activities in Delta. Seven of the eight groups reported that the populations they serve catch and eat fish from the Delta. The California Valley Miwok Tribe members do not fish in the Delta. However, they are closely connected to other Miwok Tribes in California, such as the Nashville El Dorado Miwok Tribe, whose members fish in the Delta. Four groups who serve Southeast Asian populations reported that Cambodians are avid fishermen in the Delta, including one group that thought 80% of Cambodians they served fished. Two groups noted that fishing is also popular among Hmong and Lao. Seven groups reported that their populations fish in other locations outside of the Delta; one group did not know did not know if their members fished in other locations.

In terms of awareness of advisories, four groups reported low awareness of the advisories among the populations they served. In addition, one group, Asian Resources, didn't know what the awareness level was among the population it serves but had not heard of the advisories until they met with us. Two of the remaining groups reported moderate awareness of the advisory. APSARA thought their population has "some" awareness but could use a refresher, and the Mechoopda Tribe thought awareness was "pretty good" among its members. CSBA reported that its members had high awareness.

5. Past Fish Contamination Activities

In the past ten years, five of the eight groups have worked on educational projects that address fish contamination issues. Two of the groups, Lao Family and the Mechoopda Tribe, were awarded small grants from CDPH under the Fish Mercury Project in 2007 to implement fish education projects. However, the staff who worked on those grants projects are no longer with these groups. Lao Khmu attended and hosted Fish Mercury Project stakeholder meetings and assisted CDPH in convening focus groups on fishing practices. They also received two Environmental Justice grants, in 2007 and 2009, from the California Environmental Protection Agency to implement fish education activities. APSARA helped San Joaquin County improve a Cambodian translation of a fish contamination warning sign in the Port of Stockton and conducted outreach activities around fish contamination in the Delta in 2006. SAAC worked with UC Davis between 2006 and 2008 to implement fish education activities as part of a fish consumption survey, and held community meetings and distributed translated educational materials about fish contamination.

CSBA also worked in past fish contamination activities in a limited capacity. CSBA participated in previous needs assessment meetings with CDPH in 2003-2004. More recently, CSBA invited CDPH to distribute educational materials at a youth fish derby at Contra Loma in 2007. For the two remaining groups, Miwok and Asian Resources, they have had no previous experience on fish contamination issues

6. Barriers to Successful Education Activities

We asked the groups to describe some of the challenges they face in carrying out successful education activities in their communities, including education activities around fish contamination. Some of the challenges they described include:

- Difficulties in explaining the abstract concepts of fish contamination and mercury. For example, one group reported that it is difficult to communicate the dangers of mercury because it cannot be seen or tasted. Also, there is no equivalent word for “mercury” in Hmong. These concepts are especially difficult for elders in the community to understand.
- Language barriers, i.e., translating printed materials and interpretation at meetings, which limits the amount of outreach that can be done.
- Lack of staff time, funding, and resources. Education projects are resource-intensive and, in general, cannot be done “on the side” without funding. These types of projects involve time-consuming tasks like community organizing and planning meeting logistics. Some resources are fundamental; one group noted that they lack physical space to have community meetings, as well as funds to rent off-site meeting space.

- Getting community members to participate. They may lack time or transportation to an activity, or have other priorities.

7. Educational Approaches

The groups that participated in the needs assessment interviews represent diverse cultures with widely varying histories and experiences; as a result, their recommendations for educational approaches covered a range of activities. Despite their cultural differences, however, several common themes and methodologies emerged from our discussions.

a. Involvement of community leaders.

Seven groups serving ethnic communities believed that involving community leaders was vital to a successful program (CSBA was the one organization that did not mention community leaders). Depending upon the culture, leaders may be the Tribal Council, religious leaders, clan leaders, or the heads of community programs. The groups recommend identifying the right people within a community, building a relationship with them, and seeking their assistance in disseminating messages. The groups can be very helpful in involving community leaders because they are often respected leaders themselves or they have established relationships with community leaders.

b. Utilizing youth.

All of the organizations recommended utilizing youth for outreach activities in their community. They believed this to be effective because:

- Youth are often able to understand abstract, science-based information (such as bioaccumulation) better than elders.
- They are able to educate both their families and the larger community.
- They are fluent in English.

Seven of the groups described on-going youth-based programs, including youth leadership meetings and student conferences that could provide opportunities for implementing fish education activities. One of the groups remarked that involving youth also provides an opportunity to teach civic responsibility. Another group suggested utilizing college-aged young adults for educational outreach.

c. Successful outreach strategies.

Strategies for conducting outreach varied based on the structure of the group and culture. The groups generally agreed, however, that the message should be simple, accurate, positive, and not alarming. Educational materials were universally supported as well, with several groups emphasizing the importance of photos and visual images, and culturally-specific messages and representation (e.g. educational materials featuring individuals that represent their ethnicity). All of the organizations mentioned word of mouth as one way information is transmitted within their communities.

Different organizations, however, emphasized the importance of different aspects of effective communication:

- Both the Mechoopda Tribe and the Miwok Tribe advised that messages be information-based, but without telling people what to do.
- Three of the groups recommended hands-on learning approaches (e.g., cooking classes and workshops in the field).
- Three groups emphasized the importance of providing an explanation or justification for the information, especially if it contradicts one's past experiences or beliefs, e.g., why the advisories are important, how mercury gets in the fish, and why some fish have higher levels than other fish.

The best methods for delivering these messages also varied based on the group and culture.

- Five out of eight groups believed that integrating educational messages into their current programs was an effective approach. These current programs included social services (e.g., health navigation, citizenship), food/nutrition workshops, food giveaways, fishing derbies, fairs or events.
- Four groups utilized U.S. Postal Service mail, email, and newsletters to communicate important information to community members.
- Four groups recommended workshops, either for youth or the general community, as an effective method for education.
- Southeast Asian cultural events, such as New Year's festivals (e.g., the Stockton Hmong New Year Festival that is held in November) and the Asian Pacific Rim Festival in Sacramento in May were considered good opportunities for education.
- Other educational opportunities included youth social media, websites, fishing forums (e.g., www.usafishing.com), fishing periodicals or sections within newspapers (e.g., fish sniffer, fishing report in the San Francisco Chronicle), local ethnic radio (including PSAs) (e.g., for Hmong, KBIF 900 AM in Fresno and KJAY 1430 AM in Sacramento), ethnic TV programs (e.g., Crossings TV, a cable station that has programs for several ethnic groups), and media campaigns (e.g., "Soda Sucks" campaign on reducing sugar intake). The groups also mentioned specific types of educational materials that they thought were effective in their communities: brochures, posters, flyers, tip cards, and video tapes.

8. Interest in Future Delta MERP Activities

The needs assessment explored the groups' interest in future Delta MERP activities, including participation in training and a stakeholder group. Six out of eight groups stated they were interested in receiving training on fish contamination issues, and one group was "possibly" interested. The eighth group felt that training was not a cost effective use of Delta MERP resources unless it was combined with an outreach activity or educational intervention that would allow the trained staff to utilize the information acquired directly with community members; without the activity, the trained staff had

little opportunity to communicate fish contamination information to the populations the group served.

Two groups volunteered training topics and ideas that would be most helpful, including:

- How they can explain fish contamination to others;
- Help in understanding the seriousness of the issue;
- What type of fish is good or bad;
- Material that is fun and interactive.

Five out of eight groups were interested in participating in a stakeholder group. For the remaining three groups, one group was not interested (but was willing to explore whether someone else in their group was interested), another group stated that they needed to gain approval from their director before being able to participate, and the third group stated that they were uncertain of their ability to participate due to time constraints.

Groups that expressed interest in participating in a stakeholder group provided some suggestions for having well-attended meetings:

- provide stipends for groups that attend;
- rotate meeting location (one group would have difficulty attending a meeting outside of Stockton);
- include people who organize community events because they can outreach to community members.

9. Other Observations

CDPH received a wide range of responses to the question of whether fish contamination issues were a priority for the groups. Two groups stated that fish contamination was an important issue for them. For one group, this issue had been a priority but was not currently. Five of the eight groups said they did not know or they did not respond directly to the question. CDPH believes that responses to this question may have been influenced by uncertainty around funding and resources (e.g. resources for doing fish work would increase its priority compared to other issues) or groups not wanting to disappoint us.

Six groups offered to help disseminate educational materials or information about the Delta MERP to community members and partner organizations. Dissemination could occur through email communication or by making written materials available to their clients at their offices.

10. Recommendations

We have developed a list of recommendations based on the needs assessment and our past experience that would enhance the success of the Delta MERP.

- a. Continue outreach to community groups. While the needs assessment provided insights from eight community groups, additional outreach to community groups is needed to expand the number and diversity of groups involved in the Delta MERP. For example, we recommend reaching out to specific ethnic groups that were not well-represented in the needs assessment, such as groups serving Latinos and African Americans.
- b. Expand outreach to other types of organizations. We recommend identifying and meeting with organizations or agencies who may serve as potential collaborators for the Delta MERP such as county health departments, religious leaders, nutrition education programs, health care providers, and storm water/pollution prevention programs. A thorough needs assessment would benefit from including these types of organizations but was beyond the scope of this effort.
- c. Develop educational programs utilizing youth. All groups recommended including educational programs that involve youth. Further information is needed to determine how such programs could be implemented. As a first step, we recommend further discussion with the groups about how fish contamination issues could be integrated into their ongoing youth programs.
- d. Include a stakeholder group and training activities in Delta MERP. Most groups expressed interest in joining a stakeholder group and/or participating in training as a way to be involved in the Delta MERP. The stakeholder group could provide a forum to solicit input from community groups about effective educational approaches. Both the stakeholder group and training activities could help to build local knowledge and capacity to address fish contamination issues.
- e. Involve community groups in other activities. While participation in a stakeholder group and training activities (mentioned above) are two ways community groups can be involved in the project, there are other ways the groups can enhance the program. For example, they can support the development of educational materials by providing field testing/evaluation and translation assistance. They may be able to conduct an educational activity such as a workshop or community event. Also, because the groups are seen as community leaders and are trusted sources of information, their support will greatly enhance the program's importance and legitimacy within these communities.
- f. Provide funding to support community group involvement. The work that community groups are currently engaged in provides many opportunities for conducting education on fish contamination. However, educational projects take significant resources to be conducted effectively and many of the groups face fiscal challenges. While we did not ask groups directly about the need for funding to participate, the lack of funding was cited as a general barrier to future

participation in the program. We recommend providing stipends and grants for groups to attend stakeholder meetings, review materials, provide translation, and conduct educational activities.

- g. Further exploration of specific education activities. The groups made many specific recommendations about ways that educational messages can be delivered in their communities. While not all of these can be implemented, these recommendations should be further evaluated and considered, taking into account the program goals and budget.

Table 1. Needs Assessment Groups -- Population served, Languages, Programs

Organization (Location)	Primary population served	Language services provided for	Major programs
Asian Pacific Self Development & Residential Association (APSARA) (Stockton)	Cambodians in Stockton, including 208 families who live in a residential complex in Stockton.	Cambodian (Khmer), English, Spanish, and Lao	low-cost housing, health education, maternal and child health, mental health.
Asian Resources (Sacramento)	Low-income and limited English speaking youth, immigrants, refugees, and re-entry populations in Sacramento.	Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Russian, Hmong, Thai, Ukranian, Lao, Mien	English as a Second Language (ESL), citizenship, employment and job training, youth (leadership), Building Healthy Communities (CA Endowment program to promote a healthier community).
California Striped Bass Association, West Delta Chapter (Antioch)	Anglers, particularly striped bass anglers, who are interested in protecting the striped bass fishery.	English	Enhancement of striped bass fishery, fish/watershed conservation, youth fish derby.
California Valley Miwok Tribe (Stockton)	Members of CA Valley Miwok Tribe and other Miwok Tribes and the general community.	English	Protecting tribal sovereignty and inherent rights; community support including meals, job assistance, veteran assistance
Lao Family Community Empowerment, Inc. (Stockton)	Southeast Asian and Spanish-speaking immigrants and refugees in San Joaquin, Sacramento, and 6 other counties.	Cambodian and Spanish	First 5 program that cover nutrition and early childhood education; assist and empower parents to advocate for children; Green Means Go (nutrition and health education); mental health; health insurance program.
Lao Khmu Association, Inc. (Stockton)	Southeast Asians in San Joaquin County.	Lao, Khmu, Hmong, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Chinese, Spanish, Ukranian, Belarussian, Russian, Middle Eastern	Case management of CalWORKS recipients (welfare program); employment and job training assistance; food giveaways; assistance with phone, internet, and cable bills; refugee aid; citizenship and green card assistance; heat energy assistance program.
Mechoopda Indian Tribe (Chico)	Members of the Mechoopda Tribe and some other community members.	English, Spanish	Tribal governance, coordination with medical clinics for services, elder issues.
Southeast Asian Assistance Center (Sacramento)	Refugees, immigrants, asylees, elderly, and families in Sacramento County.	Bosnian, Cambodian, Chinese, Hmong, Lao, Mien, Russian, Spanish, Ukrainian and Vietnamese.	Health navigation program, mental health services, interpretation/translation for Sacramento County.

Attachment A – Needs Assessment Meeting Agenda Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP)

Date:

Organization:

Attendees:

A. Overview

1. Appreciation for meeting
2. Meeting goals
 - a. Explain new project (Delta MERP)
 - b. Conduct a needs assessment to learn about viewpoint/needs related to fish contamination
3. Needs Assessment will help guide how the Delta MERP continues to develop
4. Needs/additions to the agenda?

B. Background

1. Past activities
 - a. Fish Mercury Project (05-08)
2. Revised advisory for Delta and anadromous fish; forthcoming statewide reservoir advisory
3. Mercury still a problem but more scientific support for health benefits

C. Delta MERP

1. A six-year project of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
2. Aims to reduce exposures to mercury from Delta fish
3. Funded by wastewater dischargers, State and federal agencies with jurisdiction over waterways, and farmers and land managers in the Delta
4. Timeline

D. Needs Assessment

1. What is a needs assessment
2. Needs Assessment Goals
 - a. To better understand the cultural diversity, needs and strengths/assets of the Delta fishing populations
 - b. To identify local leaders, organizations, and resources
 - c. To learn about what tools and outreach work best in the Delta
 - d. To explore ways to collaborate with groups here
3. Approach and Process
 - a. We'll be meeting with 8-10 groups to do needs assessments
 - b. Present findings to Delta MERP work group for consideration in development of Delta MERP work plan
4. Needs Assessment Questions

Attachment B – Needs Assessment Interview Questions
Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Project
2-5-13

Organization/Population Served

1. What are the main goals of your organization?
2. What populations do you serve?
3. Do the populations you serve include non-English speakers?
 - 3a. If so, what languages do they speak?
 - 3b. What percentage of your clients/community do not speak English
 - 3c. How do you meet the language needs of your non-English speaking population?

Fishing Activities

4. Do the populations you serve catch and eat fish from the Delta? About what percentage of your population eats Delta fish?
5. Do the populations you serve catch and eat fish from other areas in California?
 - 5a. [If Yes] What are the most common places they fish?

Advisory Awareness/Communication Networks/Priorities

6. Do you think the populations you serve have any knowledge of advisories on eating fish, including fish they catch themselves and fish they buy in stores? Are they aware of the advisories for the Delta? [Would you say their level of awareness is low, medium, or high?]
7. Are you aware of any formal or informal communication networks for fishermen in your area? [These could be forums, physical posting boards, fishing shops, etc.]
8. Among all the priorities you have, where does fish contamination fit in?

Past Fish Activities

9. Has your organization been involved in any activities around fish contamination (currently or in the past)? These activities include answering questions about fish contamination, distributing educational materials, or helping to post advisory signs.
 - 9a. [If Yes] Please describe. [If you have distributed educational materials (brochures, etc.), what were these?]

Educational Approaches

10. In your current projects and activities, what tools or approaches have you found to be the most effective in doing outreach to your clients?
11. Do you have programs that aim to educate, or change habits and behaviors?
12. Would you use these same tools, approaches, and activities when communicating about fish contamination issues, or would you recommend other techniques? For example, how would you encourage your community to eat less fish, eat different kinds of fish, or fish in different places?
 - 12a. [If 3 or more activities are mentioned] Which of these activities do you think are the highest priority and should be done first?
13. What do you think are some barriers to the success of these activities and what would you suggest to address the barriers?
14. Are there activities you think the Water Board or CDPH, as state agencies, should be doing to communicate fish contamination issues?
 - 14a. [if 3 or more activities are mentioned] Which of these activities do you think are the highest priority and should be done first?
15. Would you and your staff be interested in training, workshops, educational materials, or other assistance so that you can provide information about fish contamination issues to your community?
 - 15a. [If Yes] What kinds of training, tools, or other assistance would be most helpful?

Stakeholder Group/Other Ways To Be Involved

16. Would you be interested in participating in a Stakeholder Advisory Group or as an informal advisor to help plan and implement the Delta Mercury Reduction Program?
 - 16a. [If No] Why not? Are there specific barriers to your participation on this project?
17. Are there other ways your organization would be interested in participating or contributing to this project?
 - 17a. [If Yes] How would you like to be involved?

Other Contacts/Other Information

18. Can you recommend other community leaders and community-based organizations or networks who would be interested in this project?

19. Is there other information you would like to share with us or is there anything we've missed?

NOTES FOR US: FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

Attachment C – Descriptions of Needs Assessment Groups Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program (MERP)

Asian Pacific Self Development and Residential Association (APSARA)

Stockton

<http://apsaraonline.org/>

Asian Pacific Self Development and Residential Association (APSARA), established in 1989, provides affordable housing and social services to residents of Park Village and the surrounding community. Park Village is an apartment complex in Stockton that houses 200 Cambodian and Hmong refugee families and is owned by the residents with support from APSARA and a non-profit housing developer, Rural California Housing Corporation (RCHC). APSARA helps the residents on decisions about the management of the Park Village complex. APSARA's social service programs include nutrition education, mental health, immigration/legal issues, and youth leadership.

Asian Resources

Sacramento

<http://www.asianresources.org/>

Asian Resources is a non-profit, community-based organization established in 1980. The organization is dedicated to providing social services needed in the community. In particular, Asian Resources is committed to serving and responding to the needs of the limited English and low-income communities in Sacramento. Services focus on promoting a skilled workforce through employment preparation, skills acquisition, career guidance, and job placement. Asian Resources also provides youth and senior programs, health education, and ESL and citizenship classes. Since 2009, Asian Resources has served as the host agency for Building Healthy Communities in South Sacramento. BHC is a ten-year program, supported by the California Endowment, to create healthier places to live in 14 sites in California.

California Striped Bass Association, West Delta Chapter

Antioch

<http://www.striper-csba.com/>

The California Striped Bass Association (CSBA) originated with a chapter in Stockton 1974 and remains the oldest fresh-water fishing club in the state. The CSBA is a non-profit organization that works to preserve, conserve and enhance striped bass while promoting recreational sport fishing, environmental awareness and good fellowship. CSBA is one of the largest and most active fishing clubs in California's Central Valley. In addition to the original Stockton chapter, other chapters have been established in Modesto, West Delta, Isleton, Sacramento, Fresno, Colusa, and Ukiah. CSBA also works with other fishing groups on legislative matters affecting the fishery and water quality problems. The organization works with the California Department of Fish and Game and state legislators making its ideas, views, and suggestions known.

California Valley Miwok Tribe

Stockton

<http://www.californiavalleymiwoktribe-nsn.gov/>

<http://californiavalleymiwoktribe.us/>

The California Valley Miwok Tribe is a federally-recognized tribe of Miwok people in San Joaquin County and Calaveras County, California. They were previously known as the Sheep Ranch Rancheria or the Sheep Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indian of California. The California Valley Miwok are Sierra Miwok, a landless tribe that ranges across 10 counties. The California Valley Miwok Tribe is governed by a Tribal Council and is one of 16 Miwok tribes in California.

Lao Family Community Empowerment

Stockton

<http://lfcempowerment.org/Home/tabid/160/Default.aspx>

Lao Family serves an eight-county region of Northern California through offices in Sacramento and Stockton. Lao Family provides direct service and advocacy programs to support individuals and families, and also provides community engagement and outreach services on behalf of other agencies wanting to reach the Southeast Asian community. Lao Family was founded in 1984 as Lao Family Community of Stockton to serve the thousands of Hmong refugees arriving in the area following the Vietnam War. In the early years, Lao Family provided critical services for newcomers – English-language education and employment programs, housing assistance and health outreach, mental health services and acculturation training. Today, the organization focuses on their priority service areas - education, health, and mental health.

Lao Khmu Association

Stockton

<http://www.laokhmu.org/>

The mission of Lao Khmu Association (LKA) is to enhance the quality of life of the Southeast Asian community in San Joaquin County, assisting them to overcome social and economic problems and to become independent, self-sufficient, and effective participants in society. LKA has been serving the community as a non-profit organization since 1983. It grew from a volunteer-based association of Lao and Khmu residents in Stockton to a center for all Southeast Asians in the community. LKA's Refugee Resource Center (RRC) serves as a hub for assistance to Southeast Asian refugee families by providing translation, mediation, and advocacy between the community and service providers that included social/human services organizations, health agencies, law enforcement, legal services, the justice system, and others. LKA also manages the collaborative Center for Employment Opportunity which provides employment assistance to CalWORKS participants.

Mechoopda Indian Tribe

Chico

<http://www.mechoopda-nsn.gov/history/>

The Mechoopda Indian Tribe of Chico Rancheria is a federally-recognized California Indian Tribe. The governing body of the Mechoopda Tribe is the Tribal Council, comprised of seven members elected by the General Membership. The mission of the Tribal Council is the “protection, health and welfare of all persons, including, but not limited to, the preservation of education, economic and employment opportunities, and the preservation of culture and natural resources of the Mechoopda Indian Tribe”. To this end, the Tribe is supported by a number of departments, committees and the Northern Valley Indian Health Consortium (a health clinic). The Mechoopda Tribe serves the Mechoopda membership and other Native Americans living in the area with higher education, youth diversion, childcare, rental assistance, housing rehabilitation, and down-payment assistance programs.

Southeast Asian Assistance Center

Sacramento, CA

<http://www.saacenter.org/>

The mission of the Southeast Asian Assistance Center (SAAC) is to provide comprehensive, effective high-quality interpretation and services to limited-English speaking refugees and immigrants; to increase understanding between refugee populations and the community at large; and to develop the knowledge and skills necessary for refugees to achieve successful and healthy adjustment to their new life in the U.S. SAAC was founded in 1979 at the Bethany Presbyterian Church as the Indochinese Assistance Center, to provide mental health and cultural adjustment services to refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. The agency incorporated in 1991 as Southeast Asian Assistance Center. Services were later expanded to include the Russian/Ukrainian and Bosnian refugee communities.