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11 OUR CHILDREN’S EARTH and ECOLOGICAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION

12 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
13 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

14 OUR CHILDREN’S EARTH FOUNDATION, a
15 non-profit corporation, and ECOLOGICAL
16 RIGHTS FOUNDATION, a non-profit
17 corporation,

18 Plaintiffs,

19 v.

20 LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY,

21 Defendant.

Civil Case No.: 13-cv-00402-EDL

**SECOND AMENDED COMPLAINT
FOR DECLARATORY AND
INJUNCTIVE RELIEF**

**(Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. §§
1531 *et seq.*)**

22 Our Children’s Earth Foundation (“OCE”) and Ecological Rights Foundation (“ERF”)
23 (collectively “Plaintiffs”) allege as follows:

24 **INTRODUCTION**

25 1. Plaintiffs bring this action under the provisions of the Endangered Species Act (“ESA”)
26 that permit aggrieved parties to redress harms caused by violations of the ESA. *See* 16 U.S.C. § 1540(g).

27 2. Plaintiffs seek relief from conduct by the Leland Stanford Junior University (“Stanford”).

1 Stanford operates and maintains Searsville Dam and Searsville Reservoir and diverts water from San
2 Francisquito Creek watershed from water diversions located in the watershed. These operations are
3 perpetrating “take” within the meaning of ESA section 9, 16 U.S.C. § 1538, of three species listed as
4 protected under the ESA: Central California Coast steelhead (“CCC steelhead”), the California red-
5 legged frog, and San Francisco garter snake (collectively, "the Listed Species"). Stanford is perpetrating
6 this “take” without having obtained an Incidental Take Permit pursuant to ESA section 10, 16 U.S.C. §
7 1539. This constitutes a violation of ESA section 9, 16 U.S.C. § 1538.

8 JURISDICTION

9 3. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction over the ESA claims set forth in this Complaint
10 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. section 1331 (an action for declaratory, injunctive and other relief arising under
11 the Constitution and laws of the United States) because this case involves a civil action arising under the
12 laws of the United States, specifically 16 U.S.C. section 1540(g)(1), which authorizes citizens to bring
13 suit to enjoin any person that is in violation of the ESA or any regulation issued pursuant to the ESA.
14 Further, 16 U.S.C. section 1540(g)(1) also grants jurisdiction to this Court to hear this ESA citizen suit.

15 4. Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. section 1540(g)(2)(A)(i), Plaintiffs provided notice of Stanford’s
16 violation of the ESA, and of Plaintiffs’ intention to file suit against Stanford, to Stanford and to the
17 Secretary of Commerce on November 20, 2012. Additionally, Plaintiffs provided notice of Stanford’s
18 violation of the ESA, and of Plaintiffs’ intention to file suit against Stanford, to Stanford and the
19 Secretary of Interior on March 6, 2013. The allegations of ESA violation in this Complaint are timely
20 since they were filed after the expiration of this 60-day notice period.

21 5. Plaintiffs and their members are aggrieved by Stanford’s unlawful taking of the Listed
22 Species. Plaintiffs’ members visit the San Francisquito Creek watershed for wildlife viewing, scientific
23 observation, educational study, aesthetic enjoyment, spiritual contemplation, cultural fulfillment, and
24 recreation. Stanford’s unlawful taking of the Listed Species have caused and will in the future continue
25 to cause an impairment of the state of the ecosystem of the San Francisquito Creek watershed, and as a
26 result, Plaintiffs’ members’ use of the area is impaired and diminished. Stanford’s unlawful taking of the
27 Listed Species has led and will continue to lead to increased scarcity and diminished health of the Listed

1 Species in the San Francisquito watershed. As a result, Plaintiffs' members' enjoyment of those species
2 has been and is being impaired and diminished.

3 6. This Court has personal jurisdiction over Stanford. Stanford is a trust with corporate
4 powers under the laws of the State of California and a tax-exempt entity under section 501(c)(3) of the
5 Internal Revenue Code. Stanford is located in Stanford, California, in the county of Santa Clara.

6 **VENUE**

7 7. Venue in the United States District for the Northern District of California is proper under
8 28 U.S.C. section 1391(b) because a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claims
9 in this case occurred in the Northern District of California, and a substantial part of the property that is
10 the subject of the action is situated in the Northern District of California.

11 **INTRADISTRICT ASSIGNMENT**

12 8. Intradistrict assignment of this matter to San Francisco Division of the Court is
13 appropriate pursuant to Civil Local Rule 3-2(e) because a substantial part of the events or omissions
14 giving rise to the claims in this case occurred in San Mateo County and a substantial part of the property
15 that is the subject of this action is situated in San Mateo County.

16 **THE PARTIES**

17 9. OCE is a non-profit corporation dedicated to protecting the environment, including the
18 San Francisco Bay Area. OCE's office is located in San Francisco, California. OCE promotes public
19 awareness of domestic and international environmental impacts through information dissemination,
20 education, and private enforcement of environmental protection statutes. OCE enforcement cases aim to
21 achieve public access to government information, ensure proper implementation of environmental
22 statutes and permitting, and enjoin illegal violations.

23 10. OCE has an active membership of people from all over the United States with a majority
24 of its members residing in San Francisco Bay Area. OCE members use San Francisquito Creek and San
25 Francisco Bay for recreation, wildlife observation and study (including observation of CCC steelhead,
26 the California red-legged frog, and San Francisco garter snake), aesthetic enjoyment, and spiritual
27 renewal. OCE members particularly enjoy as recreational, educational, and/or spiritual pursuits
28 observing, studying and contemplating the migration of anadromous fish in San Francisquito Creek in

1 San Francisco Bay, including CCC steelhead. These members' enjoyment of CCC steelhead on San
2 Francisquito Creek and San Francisco Bay is being substantially diminished by the dramatic decline in
3 the numbers and health of CCC steelhead on these waterways due to the adverse impacts of Searsville
4 Dam and Stanford's diversions of water from San Francisquito Creek watershed. These members
5 continue to hope for survival and recovery of CCC steelhead on these waterways. Additionally, these
6 members' enjoyment of observation of California red legged frogs, and San Francisco garter snakes in
7 the San Francisquito watershed is being substantially diminished by the decline in the numbers and
8 health of these species in the watershed due to the adverse impacts of Searsville Dam and Stanford's
9 diversions of water from the San Francisquito Creek watershed.

10 11. ERF is a non-profit, public benefit corporation, organized under the laws of the State of
11 California, devoted to furthering the rights of all people to a clean, healthful and biologically diverse
12 environment. To further its environmental advocacy goals, ERF actively seeks federal and state agency
13 implementation of state and federal water quality related laws, and as necessary, directly initiates
14 enforcement actions on behalf of itself and its members. ERF's members use San Francisquito Creek
15 and San Francisco Bay for recreation, wildlife observation and study (including observation of CCC
16 steelhead, the California red-legged frog, and San Francisco garter snake), aesthetic enjoyment, and
17 spiritual renewal. ERF members particularly enjoy as a recreational, educational, and/or spiritual pursuit
18 observing, studying and contemplating the migration of anadromous fish in San Francisquito Creek and
19 San Francisco Bay, including CCC steelhead. These members' enjoyment of CCC steelhead on San
20 Francisquito Creek and San Francisco Bay is being substantially diminished by the dramatic decline in
21 the numbers and health of CCC steelhead on these waterways due to the adverse impacts of Searsville
22 Dam and Stanford's diversions of water from the San Francisquito Creek watershed. These members
23 continue to hope for survival and recovery of CCC steelhead on these waterways. Additionally, these
24 members' enjoyment of observation of California red legged frogs, and San Francisco garter snakes in
25 San Francisquito watershed is being substantially diminished by the decline in the numbers and health of
26 these species in the watershed due to the adverse impacts of Searsville Dam and Stanford's diversions of
27 water from the San Francisquito Creek watershed.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Setting and Location of Searsville Dam and Searsville Reservoir

16. Searsville Dam is located on Stanford property in San Francisco Bay Area. Searsville Dam impounds water from Corte Madera Creek (part of San Francisquito Creek watershed), forming a reservoir known as Searsville Reservoir. Tributaries in the upper watershed that feed into Searsville Reservoir include Alambique Creek, Dennis Martin Creek, Sausal Creek, Westridge Creek, and Corte Madera Creek. Searsville Dam and Searsville Reservoir are located in San Mateo County. San Francisquito Creek originates approximately ¼ mile downstream of the outlet of Searsville Dam, on Corte Madera Creek, from where it eventually flows to San Francisco Bay. San Francisquito Creek drains a total watershed area of 47.5 square miles and is the largest stream on the western margin of San Francisco Bay. San Francisquito Creek provides important local habitat for CCC steelhead.

17. Searsville Dam, a 65-foot tall and 275 feet wide concrete block dam, was built between 1888 and 1892 by the Spring Valley Water Company for the intended purpose of providing drinking water to San Francisco Peninsula. However, that intended purpose was never realized because the water is non-potable. Stanford took over the operation of the dam in the early 1900s. Currently, Stanford uses the water stored behind the dam as a water source for irrigation of a golf course, athletic fields, and campus landscaping and as backup for fire protection. The dam serves no other functions, i.e., the dam does not provide drinking water, flood control, or hydropower.

Precarious Status of CCC Steelhead

18. NMFS listed CCC steelhead as a protected threatened species under the ESA on August 18, 1997. 62 Fed. Reg. 43,937. NMFS reaffirmed this ESA listing on January 5, 2006. 71 Fed. Reg. 834. NFMS has designated critical habitat for CCC steelhead to include approximately 1,465 miles of stream habitat in central coastal California and an additional 386 square miles of estuarine habitat in San Pablo and San Francisco Bays. 70 Fed. Reg. 52,488 (Sept. 2, 2005). The San Francisquito Creek watershed – which includes water impounded by Searsville Dam (Corte Madera Creek, Alambique Creek, Martin Creek, and Sausal Creek) and water that originates at Searsville Dam (Corte Madera Creek) – is within this critical habitat designation.

1 19. NMFS has designated critical habitat for the CCC steelhead to include all accessible
2 reaches of rivers (including estuarine areas and tributaries) between Cape Blanco, Oregon, and Punta
3 Gorda, California. 64 Fed. Reg. 24,049 (May 5, 1999); 50 C.F.R. § 226.210(b).

4 20. FWS has similarly listed San Francisco garter snake as endangered and California red
5 legged frog as threatened.

6 **Degraded Condition of San Francisquito Creek**

7 21. CCC steelhead's fresh water habitat needs include: (1) cool water temperatures for
8 successful embryo incubation and for optimum health and survival of juvenile and adult fish; (2) high
9 dissolved oxygen content in the waters the fish inhabit; (3) suitable gravel substrate for successful
10 spawning; (4) presence of large woody debris anchored in the fish's river habitat to provide cool deep
11 water pools with reduced flow velocities that provide spawning habitat and refuge from predators; (5)
12 sustained and sufficient flow to allow unimpeded migratory passage of adult and juvenile fish; and (6)
13 consistent inundation of areas utilized for spawning (to ensure that placed fish egg clusters or "redds"
14 remain inundated until eggs hatch). The San Francisquito Creek watershed areas utilized by CCC
15 steelhead are degraded such that these waters are impaired at providing these habitat attributes for CCC
16 steelhead.

17 22. The primary cause of degraded habitat conditions in San Francisquito Creek watershed is
18 the presence of Searsville Dam and Stanford's excessive diversion of water from the San Francisquito
19 watershed. Such water diversions have reduced flows in San Francisquito Creek dramatically. In
20 addition, San Francisquito Creek has substantially less riparian vegetation than existed historically—in
21 part due to loss of natural flow conditions needed to support such vegetation. This loss of flow and loss
22 of riparian vegetation has seriously degraded the water quality and habitat value of the creek. With less
23 flow, the creek is shallower, meaning it is more prone to being heated by solar radiation. Loss of riparian
24 vegetation that shades the creek and thus reduces solar radiation has exacerbated the heating of the
25 creek. Warmer water temperatures in the creek reduce dissolved oxygen levels as cold water inherently
26 has greater capacity for retaining dissolved oxygen.

27 23. As discussed below, Stanford's operation and maintenance of Searsville Dam and
28 Searsville Reservoir and related water diversions are leading causes of the decline in the CCC steelhead

1 population in San Francisquito Creek watershed and are leading contributory causes to the degraded
2 habitat conditions in San Francisquito Creek. These degraded conditions are also diminishing the
3 habitat value of San Francisquito Creek watershed for California red-legged frog and San Francisco
4 garter snake.

5 VIOLATIONS OF THE ESA

6 24. Stanford's operation and maintenance of Searsville Dam, Searsville Reservoir, and its
7 water diversions in the San Francisquito Creek watershed, is harassing, wounding, killing, trapping,
8 capturing, and most certainly harming CCC steelhead both by killing and/or injuring individuals of this
9 species and by causing significant habitat modification or degradation to its habitat that significantly
10 impairs the fish's behavioral patterns, including spawning, rearing, migrating, feeding, and sheltering—
11 and thus has caused substantial decline in the CCC steelhead population in San Francisquito Creek and
12 its tributaries. Stanford is further harming and taking other ESA listed species as described below.

13 25. Stanford's operation and maintenance of Searsville Dam, Searsville Reservoir and related
14 water diversions is taking CCC steelhead in the following ways:

15 26. One, Searsville Dam completely blocks access to CCC steelhead's historic habitat in the
16 tributaries to San Francisquito Creek located above the dam and thereby substantially diminishes the
17 habitat available to the species. Reducing the species' available habitat reduces the species' abundance
18 by limiting area for spawning, rearing, and refuge from predators. In addition, this reduction of habitat
19 abundance crowds the remaining CCC steelhead population into a smaller area, reducing its health and
20 increasing mortality in this population due to reduced feeding opportunity and increased competition
21 with other fish species. This taking activity is perpetual, i.e., has happened on every day that CCC
22 steelhead have been an ESA-listed species (Searsville Dam has been operated and maintained every day
23 during this time period) and will continue every day in the future until CCC steelhead passage past the
24 present location of Searsville Dam is achieved.

25 27. Two, by blocking and diverting the natural flow of San Francisquito Creek and tributaries
26 to the Creek, Searsville Dam, Searsville Reservoir and related water diversions are substantially
27 adversely affecting the CCC steelhead critical habitat in San Francisquito Creek below Searsville Dam.
28 This flow diversion substantially reduces the flow of San Francisquito Creek and Corte Madera Creek

1 below historic levels. Stanford's diversion of stream flows from Corte Madera and San Francisquito
2 Creek is the single leading cause of this diminished flow level. Stanford's diversion of these flows
3 leaves substantially less aquatic area in Corte Madera and San Francisquito Creeks and by thereby
4 diminishing the area utilized by CCC steelhead for spawning, rearing, feeding, and refuge from
5 predators is causing a decline in CCC steelhead population--and thus perpetuating take of the species.

6 28. Stanford's diversion of flows into Searsville Reservoir and from the San Francisquito
7 Creek watershed further dewater areas of Corte Madera and San Francisquito Creek, causing direct
8 mortality to stranded adult and juvenile CCC steelhead and to CCC steelhead redds.

9 29. Stanford's diversion of flows from the San Francisquito Creek watershed further causes
10 an increase in temperature in San Francisquito Creek downstream of Searsville Dam. This increase in
11 temperature impedes CCC steelhead spawning as temperatures in the creek are occasionally elevated to
12 levels lethal to CCC steelhead embryos and to levels that harm the health of juvenile and adult CCC
13 steelhead--which need cool water temperatures to thrive.

14 30. Stanford's diversion of flows from the San Francisquito Creek watershed further harms
15 the riparian vegetation of San Francisquito Creek by decreasing the creek flow that would naturally feed
16 such riparian vegetation. This in turn harms CCC steelhead by reducing the vegetative shade canopy
17 over San Francisquito Creek that would help to naturally keep water temperatures in the creek down and
18 by reducing the supply of large woody debris that provides important spawning and rearing habitat for
19 CCC steelhead. Woody debris fallen into the creek naturally creates cool deepwater pools of diminished
20 flow velocity--conditions valuable for CCC steelhead spawning, rearing, and refuge behaviors.

21 31. By diminishing the aquatic area of San Francisquito Creek due to its water diversions
22 from the San Francisquito Creek watershed, Stanford is further causing harm to and take of California
23 red legged frogs and San Francisco garter snakes which need a substantial aquatic area as part of their
24 life cycle functioning. The diminished water area caused by Stanford's water diversions have shrunk the
25 area usable by these ESA protected species for feeding, breeding, and refuge behaviors.

26 32. This taking activity is perpetual, i.e., has happened on every day that CCC steelhead,
27 California red legged frogs, and San Francisco garter snakes have been ESA-listed species (Searsville
28 Dam and Searsville Reservoir have been operated and maintained every day during this time period) and

1 will continue every day in the future until Stanford no longer diverts a significant quantity of flow from
2 the San Francisquito Creek watershed.

3 33. Three, Searsville Dam takes CCC steelhead and adversely modifies CCC steelhead
4 critical habitat by trapping and blocking the downstream migration of natural river gravel and large
5 woody debris which play a critical role in providing suitable spawning and rearing habitat for CCC
6 steelhead. This taking activity is perpetual, i.e., has happened on every day that CCC steelhead have
7 been an ESA-listed species and will continue every day in the future until Stanford implements a means
8 to augment gravel and large woody debris downstream in San Francisquito Creek.

9 34. Four, Searsville Dam creates poor water quality conditions in Searsville Reservoir by
10 creating a large pool of stagnant water that collects nutrients and is excessively warmed by solar
11 radiation. Searsville Reservoir experiences eutrophic conditions, i.e., has low dissolved oxygen levels,
12 warm water temperatures, high nutrient levels, and excessive algae blooms. Stanford harms the water
13 quality of San Francisquito Creek when Stanford releases water from Searsville Reservoir to San
14 Francisquito Creek, as it occasionally does during high flow conditions. By lowering the oxygen levels,
15 increasing the water temperature, and increasing the nutrient levels in San Francisquito Creek,
16 Stanford's releases of water from Searsville Reservoir harm CCC steelhead which need high dissolved
17 oxygen levels, cold water, and lower nutrient levels in the waters they inhabit to survive and thrive.
18 This taking activity has happened on every day that Stanford releases water from Searsville Reservoir to
19 San Francisquito Creek (which Stanford does several times every year). Harm and take from such water
20 releases from Searsville Reservoir will continue on each day in the future that Stanford continues these
21 releases.

22 35. Five, Searsville Reservoir creates artificial habitat where non-native and other species of
23 fish that are predators of CCC steelhead thrive. Stanford has no fish screen on the diversion point that it
24 uses to convey water from Searsville Reservoir into San Francisquito Creek. Accordingly, when
25 Stanford has released water from Searsville Reservoir via this diversion conveyance that lacks a screen
26 into San Francisquito Creek, Stanford has released predators into San Francisquito Creek that prey upon
27 and thus take CCC steelhead. Stanford is aware of the days on which it has released water via this
28 diversion conveyance from Searsville Reservoir to San Francisquito Creek, which generally are days of

1 significant rainfall. Harm and take from such water releases from Searsville Reservoir will continue on
2 each day in the future that Stanford continues these releases without installing an effective fish screen.

3 36. Searsville Reservoir also creates artificial habitat for bullfrog, which prey upon the ESA
4 listed California red legged frog, and for crayfish, which also prey upon downstream ESA listed species.
5 During high flow conditions, bullfrog and crayfish are released from Searsville Reservoir into San
6 Francisquito Creek--thus perpetuating take of ESA listed species inhabiting San Francisquito Creek.

7 37. Six, Stanford has had periodic projects to dredge Searsville Reservoir, channel areas or
8 causeway areas immediately up gradient of the Reservoir in the past and is planning additional such
9 projects in the future. These dredging projects have had various adverse impacts on CCC steelhead and
10 other ESA Listed Species. The dredging projects have increased the release of sediments downstream
11 into San Francisquito Creek. This increased sediment load increases water column turbidity, which
12 diminishes the value of the Creek as habitat for steelhead. Turbid water reduces the ability of steelhead
13 to feed on drifting insects. Sand and silt sediments in the streambed provide unstable habitats and fill
14 crevices and gravels and cobbles, thereby reducing insect and steelhead abundance and reducing
15 steelhead growth. This added loading of sediments has also tended to bury steelhead eggs and interfered
16 with spawning success.

17 38. In operating and maintaining Searsville Dam and Searsville Reservoir as it currently
18 does, Stanford is perpetuating adverse modification of the NMFS-designated critical habitat for CCC
19 steelhead and important habitat for California red legged frog and San Francisco garter snake. Searsville
20 Dam, Searsville Reservoir and Stanford's water diversions as currently operated and maintained render
21 San Francisquito Creek and its tributaries far less suitable habitat for these CCC steelhead, California
22 red legged frog and San Francisco garter snake on a daily basis for the variety of reasons set out above.

23 39. For Stanford's operation and maintenance of Searsville Dam, Searsville Reservoir, and
24 its water diversions in the San Francisquito Creek watershed to be legal under the ESA, Stanford was
25 required to consult with NMFS and obtain an ITP under ESA section 10. 16 U.S.C. § 1539. Stanford has
26 not obtained such a permit. As such, Stanford is in violation of ESA section 9 for taking species via its
27 maintenance and operation of Searsville Dam, Searsville Reservoir and its water diversions in all of the
28 manners explained above. Stanford is in further violation of ESA section 10 for failure to seek an ITP.

FIRST CLAIM FOR RELIEF

Violation of the ESA
16 U.S.C. § 1538(a)(1)(B)

**Request for Declaratory Relief and Injunction to Enjoin Stanford
from Taking ESA Listed Species**

40. Plaintiffs reassert and reallege paragraphs 1 through 36 above.

41. ESA section 9(a)(1)(B) prohibits any person from taking certain species listed as threatened under the ESA, including CCC steelhead and the California red-legged frog and species listed as endangered such as San Francisco garter snake.

42. As discussed above, Stanford’s operation and maintenance of Searsville Dam, Searsville Reservoir, and its water diversions in San Francisquito Creek watershed, is harassing, wounding, killing, trapping, capturing, and harming CCC steelhead both by killing and/or injuring individuals of this species and by causing significant habitat modification or degradation to its habitat that significantly impairs the fish's behavioral patterns, including spawning, rearing, migrating, feeding, and sheltering—and thus has caused substantial decline in the CCC steelhead population in San Francisquito Creek and its tributaries. Stanford is further harming and taking California red-legged frog and San Francisco garter snake.

43. Stanford has perpetrated such take without obtaining an ITP in violation of ESA section 9(a)(1)(B), 16 U.S.C. § 1538(a)(1)(B). Stanford is in further violation of ESA section 10 for failure to seek an ITP.

REMEDY

44. Plaintiffs have no plain, speedy, and adequate remedy, in the ordinary course of law, other than the relief sought in this Complaint, because there is no other mechanism for compelling Stanford to take the action necessary under the ESA.

PRAAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiffs seek the following relief:

1. A declaratory judgment establishing that Stanford is in violation of ESA section 9 by perpetrating “take” without obtaining an ITP.

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on May 20, 2013, the foregoing document was served on all parties or their counsel of record through the CM/ECF system.

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s/ Michael A. Costa