Community Outreach on Fish Contamination at Lake Nacimiento

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Delta Mercury Exposure Reduction Program
Community Stakeholder Group Meeting
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Background

- Located downstream from two abandoned mercury mines (Klau and Buena Vista Mines)
- 1868-1970: mines operated and produced 6.4 million tons of elemental mercury
- 1990s
  - High mercury found in soil, sediments, water
  - High mercury found fish in Lake Nacimiento
  - Fish consumption advisory issued
- 2006: listed as a Superfund site
Activities at Lake Nacimiento

- Popular area for recreation: boating, fishing, water skiing, camping, vacation homes
Klau/Buena Vista Mine Superfund site

- US Environmental Protection Agency
  - Lead agency for assessing contamination and cleaning up site

- California Department of Public Health
  - Conducts a Public Health Assessment
  - Evaluate potential health impacts from site
  - Make recommendations and implement activities for reducing health impacts
  - Exposure to mercury from consumption of contaminate fish continues to be a health concern
Initial community outreach activities

- Outreach focused on lake residents and nearby populations
  - neighborhood associations
  - marinas
  - boating clubs
  - local agencies
  - elected officials
- Mostly English speakers and a few Spanish speakers
Initial community outreach activities

- Educational activities
  - Developed and posted signs
  - Developed and distributed educational materials
  - PSAs on Spanish radio
  - Training for community health workers (San Luis Obispo County)
Southeast Asian Fishermen

- Primarily Hmong, but also Lao, fished at Lake Naci
- Traveled from Central Valley
- Fished at night
- Liked to catch white bass
Current outreach activities

- Designed and tested new sign
- Supported community groups/Hmong youth to develop a video
- Hmong media
Next steps

- Signs are being posted now
- Exploring additional outreach activities (e.g., distribution of the video, media, training for community health workers)
Questions?