



WATER 4 FISH

Targeting California's Water Management

PO Box 5788
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June, 9, 2010

Mr. Donald R. Glaser
Regional Director
U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898

Dear Director Glaser:

I am writing you on behalf of the California salmon industry coalition of businesses and fishermen. We are seeking your assistance in the restoration of the fall run Central Valley salmon. The 2009 Water Bill mandated the two equal Delta goals of a more reliable water supply and protecting, restoring and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. We are working on the ecosystem part and are pleased the Bureau is supporting these activities.

As you know, the salmon fishing industry has been shut down for the past two years and is severely curtailed for the third. The cost of this shutdown has been \$1.4 billion annually with a job loss of 23,000. The near complete collapse of the fall run was the reason behind the shutdown. Our industry has been working with the fishery agencies to develop strategies for fall run recovery. You hold the key to one of the most important short term steps that can be taken.

The Mokelumne hatchery is the most modern salmon hatchery in the state. When it runs at full production it is unmatched in its efficient production of smolts and its contribution to the state's salmon fishery. Unfortunately, the Delta water operations have virtually shut the hatchery down. The problem occurs as the adult Mokelumne salmon are attempting to return to the Mokelumne River and the hatchery in the fall. The Mokelumne River has a relatively small watershed and contributes about 2 percent of total Delta inflow. During the upmigration period for the fall run, flows in the Mokelumne where it enters the Delta can be as low as 100 cfs in normal and below normal runoff years due to water contracts and agricultural water demands and preservation of the coldwater pool. At the same time the flow through the cross channel gates during the same

period can reach up to approximately 3,000 cfs, all of which flows through the Mokelumne (North and South Forks) as the conveyance channel to the South Delta. It is believed that the large component of Sacramento River water in the Mokelumne River at this location is an important contributor to straying of Mokelumne origin fall run salmon. If the salmon sense the smell, they will turn into the main stem Mokelumne. If they miss the smell they will go into the heavy flow and go through the cross channel gates. These fish are then strays and most of them end up at the Nimbus hatchery. In 2008 only 49 females found their way back to the Mokelumne hatchery virtually shutting it down. The hatchery needs 2,000 females to meet its full production and its mitigation requirements. In 2009 the problem continued and more Mokelumne fish ended up at Nimbus than Nimbus fish.

There are two potential solutions to the short term problem. The first is a pulse attraction flow down the Mokelumne when the adults are returning. East Bay MUD has been very cooperative with this problem and, at their expense, held water back the previous spring for a double pulse flow last fall. This helped but the hatchery still fell far short of its goals.

The other solution is to close the cross the cross channel gates during the pulse flow. We are requesting that you implement this policy this year in cooperation with DFG, East Bay MUD, NMFS and DWR. Fish and Game and the National Marine Fisheries Service have been helping us with this problem and have already signed off on this proposal.

We urge your full cooperation on this matter. It is one small step towards restoring the Delta ecosystem and can make a big difference in the turnaround of the fall run salmon returns. We would appreciate hearing back from you.

Yours Truly,



Richard Pool

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cc. John McCamman – DFG
Mark Cowan – DWR
Phil Isenberg – Delta Stewardship Council ✓
Howard Brown – NMFS
Richard Sykes - East Bay MUD
Salmon Industry Coalition