



United States Department of the Interior

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Fish and Wildlife Enhancement
Sacramento Field Office
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November 25, 1992
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Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Bureau of Reclamation, Sacramento, California
Attn: Planning Division (Carol Sakamoto)

From: Field Supervisor, Fish and Wildlife Enhancement
Sacramento Field Office, Sacramento, California (FWE)

Subject: USBR - Red Bluff Diversion Dam Fish Passage Study; Comments on a Draft Environmental Assessment for the Pilot Pumping Plant on the Sacramento River Near Red Bluff Diversion Dam

Thank you for providing us with the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Pilot Pumping Plant. We appreciate your effort in addressing our September 4, 1992 comments on an earlier draft EA, and are most pleased with the coordination during the planning of this project.

The following items should be addressed in the final version:

1. A more detailed figure should be included which illustrates the major components of the plant (i.e., the trashrack, pumps, evaluation facility, bypass tie-in), the configuration and extent of any temporary sheetpiling needed to isolate a portion of the river during construction, and any permanent sheetpiling needed to sustain sweeping flows. The figure should also include the location of the screened intakes to the existing pumps referred to on page 19, paragraph 3, and the right-bank fish ladder.
2. We assume that the temporary sheet piling is positioned as far away from the ladder and at as acute an angle as possible, and that a double-walled upstream face is essential for construction purposes. However, the upstream end of the cofferdam is likely to interfere somewhat with the discharge plume from the west-bank fish ladder. Based on recent plan drawings for placement of the temporary sheet piling (enclosed), if Gate 11 is operated as usual with 1,000 to 2,000 cfs releases, then the 368 cfs discharge out of the west-bank ladder will be obscured, making it difficult for adult salmonids to find the entrance.

A partial remedy which may make the ladder more attractive to adult salmonids is to reduce or eliminate completely flows from Gate 11, and possibly alter flows in other gates. We recently requested operational flexibility to redirect flows from Gate 11 to other gates in order to minimize impacts during the construction period. Rich Kristoff (USBR-Willows) has informally concurred with this operation. The construction schedule should give priority to completing the in-river civil works so that the cofferdam can be removed as

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soon as possible. The EA should include a ~~brief mention of operational~~ flexibility of the gates and those aspects of construction scheduling which will minimize impacts to upstream passage.

3. The text (page 20, top of page) states that the Bureau of Reclamation is committed to minimizing salmon mortality "...to the extent practicable...." by correcting design or operational problems. Similar language should be included at the top of the Environmental Commitment List (Appendix A).

4. In the summary of benefits (page 17, Table 6), the assumed periods of increased gates-up operation for both the no-action and preferred alternatives should be explicitly stated. We understand this new gates-up period is expected to extend from mid-September to mid-May.

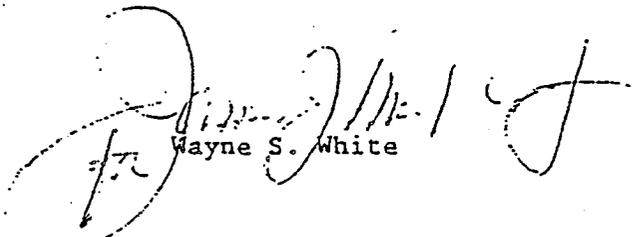
5. The summary should state the importance of pilot facility evaluations towards the implementation of a long-term solution, as a full-scale pumping plant is one of several alternatives under consideration. Similarly, the text should be slightly modified as follows to reflect this purpose:

Page 20, paragraph 2: Change "...evaluation of this type of facility as a long-term solution...." to read, "evaluation of the potential for a larger facility of this type as a long-term solution, such as described in the Red Bluff Diversion Dam Fish Passage Program Appraisal Report."

Page 20, paragraph 3: Change "...the project might enter a second phase in which it would be used as a long-term, non-experimental conveyance facility." to read, "...the project might enter a second phase in which it would be used as a conveyance facility to provide interim benefits to fish and water users, until the preferred long-term solution is constructed."

Thank you again for inviting our continued participation in the planning of this project, and for your attention to our concerns. We look forward to working with you towards a timely completion of construction and initiation of the biological and physical evaluations of the pilot plant in the near future.

Our response has been coordinated with the Fish and Wildlife Service's Northern Central Valley Fishery Resource Office in Red Bluff. If you have any questions, please contact Steve Schoenberg or Tom Richardson in Sacramento at (916) 978-4613 or Jim Smith in Red Bluff at (916) 527-3043.



Wayne S. White

cc: ARD, FWE, Portland, OR
Project Leader, NCVFRO, Red Bluff, CA
NMFS, Santa Rosa
USBR, Willows (Attn: Richard Kristoff)

CDFG - Inland Fisheries Division, Sacramento (Attn: Tim Farley)
CDFG - Region 1, Redding (Attn: John Hayes)
CDFG - Region 1, Red Bluff (Attn: Randy Benthin)
USBR, Denver, CO (Attn: Charles Liston)