

To: Ron Ott

From: Tom Cannon

Subject: Comments and Questions on DEFT Issues and Impacts Report - June 25, 1998 Draft

Summary Comments

- *The review teams underemphasized the potential benefits of the Common Program actions, particularly those of the ERPP. This tends to make Alt 1 and 2 look much worse than the Common Program alternative, when as a minimum they should have only minor effects.*
- *Alternatives cannot be worse than Common Programs. Actions from other components (e.g., storage and conveyance, etc.) must be fully mitigated.*
- *The review teams overemphasized impacts of Alt 2 and underemphasized benefits of Alt 2 features. This tends to make Alt 3 look much better than Alt 2.*

Sacramento Salmon

Common Programs

- The review team recognized benefits of new habitat, improved flows, and reduced diversion losses in Delta, but appeared to downplay the degree of these potential benefits.
- Did not mention benefits of reduced contaminants, changes in harvest strategies.

Alt 1

- Why no added benefits over Common Programs? Why wouldn't new screen on CCF intake be a substantial benefit? Don't studies indicate a large predation loss within the CCF?

New Storage

- Why negative effect of new storage? Shouldn't it be at least no effect or a slight positive? New storage will allow water to be diverted at times where there would be less impacts, plus water can be released to provide benefits to salmon. Groundwater storage in wet years will reduce demands from rivers and storage in dry years.

Alt 2

- The review team over-emphasized the effects of the Hood screen and ladder on straying and migration delays of adult salmon. There is no reason to believe an effective ladder system could not be designed,

constructed, and operated. Why would straying be any worse than with DCC? (I assume DCC will be closed in this alt; the model runs assume so even though nothing is specified.)

- What about benefit of closing DCC (keeps smolts in Sacramento R rather than in Central and Southern Delta)? This would be especially beneficial to winter run.
- The review team over-emphasized the extent and effects of lower flow below Hood in Sacramento River. These flow reductions would be small compared to the high existing tidal exchanges through the DCC. Net downstream transport should improve below the DCC with only a minor effect between the DCC and Hood. Flow would be similar if not higher than in 60's due to new water management schemes (e.g., winter run flows). Furthermore, tidal flows are large and net downstream flow is less of a concern (as long as it does not change much and remains positive).
- Entrainment losses at new screens should be much lower than "entrainment loss" to Delta through DCC. Furthermore, these fish would not be lost (unless mechanically damaged by screen or lost to high predation rates in front of screen). Screen should be constructed to eliminate damage and minimize predator habitat, otherwise why have one.
- How can these minor effects take away one-half of the large benefits of the Common Program?
- What about the added benefit of less Sacramento salmon getting into Central and Southern Delta? Plus Qwest in lower San Joaquin should be more positive than under existing conditions because the Hood water entering from the Mokelumne would reduce Sac water going upstream toward pumps around Sherman Island.
- What about the benefits of Old River setback levees and new fish screen and pump station at entrance to CCF?
- There are also potential benefits to new storage (see New Storage).

Alt 3

- Again, why no benefits over common program?
- DCC operation can be further reduced.
- (Same comment about below Hood flows above.)
- The review team concludes that the Hood screens impacts and lower flows below Hood are similar to impacts alleviated by removing diversions from CCF and Tracy - how can this be?
- What about benefits of alleviating all negative Qwest and other Central and South Delta flows? This should be better than Alt 2, which in turn should be better than Common Program only.
- Again, new storage could potentially add to these benefits.

San Joaquin Salmon

Common Programs

- Why only a +1; new habitat; would not the benefits of a new screen system at CCF/Tracy; new barriers; new spring flows be higher in this numeric scheme?

Alt 1

OK

New Storage

- Why no benefits and why negative? New storage will allow reducing diversions that would effect SJ salmon at key times of the year. (See comments above.)

Alt 2

OK

Alt 3

- What about the added benefits of new barriers and improved channel hydraulics and flow direction?

Delta Smelt

Common Program

- What about spring flow improvements?
- Improved channel hydraulics?
- Benefits of new tidal wetlands?
- Reducing contaminants?

Alt 1

- Why does benefit decline from Common Program in wet year? Do the Old River barrier, new fish screen, and south Delta channel improvements take away one-half the benefits of the Common Program? Can the Head-of-Old River Barrier be used to benefit SJ salmon without hurting delta smelt?

New Storage

- New storage should provide additional benefits by allowing diversion reductions at key times and in dry years.

Alt 2

- Why negative? Because of new conveyance? Are new barriers that much of a problem? Won't new conveyance reduce the extent of negative Qwest in lower San Joaquin?
- What about all the new habitat in the north Delta (Mokelumne channel setbacks and flooded islands)?

Alt 3

- What about all the new habitat in the north Delta (Mokelumne channel setbacks and flooded islands)?
- Otherwise I agree.

Striped Bass

Common Program

- The review team underestimated benefits of new habitat.
- What about benefits of new spring flows?

Alt 1

- What about potential benefits to Qwest from new storage.

Alt 2

- Why negative? Barriers only affect Old and Middle River flows negatively. What about Qwest benefits in lower San Joaquin? New fish screen at CCF?
- What about benefits of much new habitat in Central and northern Delta.?

Alt 3

- What about benefits of much new habitat in Central and northern Delta?