

## Attachment 6 Draft Summary of Policy Issues for Discussion

**Issue 1:** What is the appropriate role of hatcheries in the near-term restoration funding process?

**Background:** Hatchery production of salmon can have both beneficial and negative effects on overall salmon production. They can sustain a population through a period of extremely adverse environmental conditions or when numbers drop to very low levels such as the winter-run captive broodstock program. In many cases, they provide mitigation for loss of spawning habitat due to water development. However, hatchery management practices may also have a deleterious effect on wild salmon populations. Release of large numbers of smolts into a river could affect the migratory behavior of wild fry and smolts. The genetic integrity of the wild population can also be adversely impacted.

**Technical Team Recommendations:** Technical teams have recommended two general types of actions addressing hatcheries. The first type of action is generally designed to better assess and reduce conflicts between wild and hatchery stocks. Examples would include hatchery marking programs, assessment of the genetic integrity of stocks, and evaluation of hatchery management practices to decrease their impacts on wild stocks. These types of actions are clearly all consistent with the draft Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan who's implementation objective is to "Reduce the potentially adverse effects of stocking artificially produced fish throughout Central Valley rivers and streams in order to increase the survival of naturally produced fish and contribute to long-term restoration goals".

However, the second type of action recommended planning for increases in artificial propagation on at least two river systems. The San Joaquin technical team could not come to consensus on this type of actions and the American River technical team ranked increased production as a low priority. It is not clear if this type of action will ultimately be consistent with the ERPP's implementation objectives or overall approach. Several members of the Roundtable have also expressed concerns on a policy level with recommendations for increased hatchery production.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends that actions related to increased artificial production not be included in the upcoming request for proposals. Consideration of these should be deferred until after the ERPP has been issued and has undergone the 45 day review period.

**Issue 2:** Re-introduction of anadromous fish above existing reservoirs

**Background:** Prior to construction of major reservoirs, steelhead and salmon had access to many areas above the dam sites. The elimination of this habitat had the most impact on species or races such as steelhead and spring-run chinook salmon which need to over-summer in the rivers. It is not known if it would be feasible to restore access to the areas above the reservoirs through

construction and operation of trapping and trucking facilities or to what extent the upstream habitat could support the species.

**Technical Team Recommendation:** Two technical teams discussed the evaluation of the feasibility of re-introducing salmon or steelhead above existing reservoirs. The American River team recommended that this concept be evaluated in a study. The Sacramento River team could not come to consensus on a technical recommendation.

**Policy Issues:** There are numerous policy issues associated with these types of re-introductions given the status of the species and runs being considered.

**Recommendation:** A staff recommendation will be presented at the meeting.

### **Issue 3:** Potential for conflicts with channel meander projects

**Background:** The ERPP includes restoration of channel meander process on the Sacramento River. However, several issues will need to be resolved carefully as this effort proceeds. NCWA points out a number of issues in their memo to Lester Snow dated April 9 included as Attachment 7. NCWA, in their memo, suggests a phased approach to evaluate the potential conflicts with flood control, water diversions and fish screens, and flood protection efforts of adjacent landowners.

**Policy Issues:** Under what circumstances is it appropriate to proceed with acquisition of land along the Sacramento River and what conditions are appropriate to be included with acquisitions.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff will present a recommendation at the meeting.