



Sierra Pacific Industries

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Mr. Lester Snow, Chairman
CalFed Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814

December 10, 1998

Dear Mr. Snow:

Your organization is currently engaged in a process to approve funds for habitat enhancement for the Spring Run Chinook salmon. One specific project being considered (Proposal 98-A-1004) would introduce this salmon (and other species of fish) into Butte Creek above the natural and manmade barriers presently in place. Our timberlands border Butte Creek from the forks of the Butte up through the community of Butte Meadows – a distance of about 14 miles – and we would be directly affected by this project.

At recent meetings, it has been reported that Sierra Pacific supports this proposed project and this letter is intended to clarify our position. We do not support funding for this endeavor, nor any other proposal to introduce onto our lands a species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that heretofore did not occur there. There is no historical evidence to show that the waters within our ownership along Butte Creek have ever supported runs of anadromous fish and, until there are substantial changes made to the ESA designed to protect our rights as private property owners, we will remain opposed to this project.

Sierra Pacific has a long history of cooperation with government agencies at all levels in habitat improvements for species listed under the ESA. However, we believe that our first priority should be for conservation efforts upon our lands where listed species presently occur. Projects such as the one proposed for Butte Creek do not meet this test and, additionally, have the potential to severely limit our continued ability to grow and harvest timber. As such, we cannot support them.

We ask that you consider these concerns as you analyze the merits of funding the Butte Creek project. Please feel free to contact either Tom Nelson or myself at this office (530.378.8000) if you have questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Dan Tomascheski
Vice President, Resources

Cc: Fred Davis, Butte County Board of Supervisors
Butte Creek Watershed Conservancy