



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Mid-Pacific Regional Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898
JAN 31 2019



IN REPLY REFER TO:

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#2122

Mr. Barry A. Thom
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
West Coast Region
1201 NE Lloyd Boulevard, Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97232

Mr. Paul Souza
Regional Director
Pacific Southwest Region
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2800 Cottage Way, W2928
Sacramento, CA 95825

Subject: Transmittal of the Biological Assessment for the Reinitiation of Consultation on Coordinated Long-Term Operation of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project

Dear Messrs. Thom and Souza:

On August 2, 2016, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) jointly requested the Reinitiation of Consultation on Coordinated Long-Term Operation of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP). The reinitiation request was accepted by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on August 3, 2016, and the National Marine Fisheries Service on August 17, 2016. Since that time, Reclamation and DWR have been actively working with your agencies to address the conditions requiring reinitiation and have developed the enclosed biological assessment to support this consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The biological assessment documents the potential effects of the proposed action on federally listed endangered and threatened species that have the potential to occur in the action area, and critical habitat for these species. The biological assessment also fulfills consultation requirements for the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976.

Subsequent to the 2008 and 2009 biological opinions, we have all collectively, with the State of California and our stakeholders, invested heavily in the science associated with CVP and SWP operations. Reclamation and DWR propose to incorporate the best available science into the operation of our projects. This new science includes modernized monitoring and improved technical tools to estimate the effects on fish in real-time. Real-time information allows focusing restrictions to appropriate locations and timing to be protective of listed species. The proposed action identifies new ways of meeting the needs of listed species.

I appreciate your willingness to collaborate on this consultation, and the commitment and professionalism demonstrated by your staff during the development of the biological assessment. Reclamation looks forward to the opportunity for continued collaboration between our agencies on developing the forthcoming biological opinion(s), and we stand ready to assist. Please contact me with any questions, or Dr. David Mooney, Bay-Delta Office Area Manager, at dmmooney@usbr.gov or (916) 414-2400.

Sincerely,



Ernest A. Conant
Regional Director

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