



Trinity River Restoration Program

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APR 25 2013

Mr. David Murillo
Regional Director, Mid-Pacific Region
Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

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

Subject: Request for Support of Klamath Basin Fall Flows Augmentation

Dear Messrs. Murillo and Lohofener:

The purpose of this letter is to request your support for augmenting flows in the Lower Klamath River again this year, if necessary to prevent a fish die-off as occurred in September 2002. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service report indicated that at least 34,000 adult fall Chinook salmon died over a two-week period that year in the Lower Klamath River, attributed to heavy infections of two fish pathogens, ich and columnaris. High fish densities due to the relatively large run size (approximately 170,000), low flows and relatively high water temperatures were identified as contributing factors to the rapid spread of disease. The majority of the fish that perished were of Trinity River origin.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council has estimated a 2013 Klamath River fall Chinook salmon ocean abundance of nearly 727,600 with an estimated in-river run-size projection of 272,000 adults (160 percent of the 2002 run size). The Trinity Management Council (TMC) is again concerned that the large run-size projection, coupled with the low flows that are expected to occur in the late summer and early fall, could result in river conditions similar to those experienced in 2002.

Last year the TMC requested that the Department of the Interior take action as well, after which we assigned our respective staffs to refine monitoring and response measures (both preventative

Trinity Management Council

Brian Person, Chair, Bureau of Reclamation – Ann Garrett, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration-Fisheries
Sharon Heywood, USDA Forest Service - Mike Orcutt, Hoopa Valley Tribe - Dave Hillemeier, Yurok Tribe –
Curtis Milliron, California Department of Fish and Game - Roger Jaegel, Trinity County
Nancy Finley, US Fish & Wildlife Service – Robin Schrock, Executive Director

and emergency) based primarily on Lower Klamath River flow rates, incidence and severity of diseased fish, and observed fish density. Ultimately, the Bureau of Reclamation responded by releasing 39,000 acre-feet of water from Trinity Reservoir to augment flows in the Lower Klamath River during August and September of 2012. There were no significant fish losses.

At its April 3, 2013, meeting, the TMC unanimously approved a motion recommending that the Department of the Interior ensure that water be made available, if necessary, from the Klamath and/or Trinity Basins. The TMC earlier asserted that any water released from the Trinity River Division for Lower Klamath River augmentation should be considered as separate from, and in addition to, flows provided for in the 2000 Record of Decision for the Trinity Mainstem Restoration.

We greatly appreciate your support of the Trinity River Restoration Program and request your prompt attention to this matter. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me at 530-275-1554 or by email at BPerson@usbr.gov.

Sincerely,

Brian Person
Chair, Trinity Management Council

cc: Mr. Pete Lucero
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cc: Continued from previous page.

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