



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Northern Region
601 Locust Street
Redding, CA 96001
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



May 11, 2022

Eileen Sobeck
Executive Director
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 25th Floor
Sacramento, CA 94814
eileen.sobeck@waterboards.ca.gov

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR 72 HOUR PULSE FLOWS IN SPRING 2022 TO
AIDE ADULT SPRING-RUN CHINOOK MIGRATION IN LOWER
MILL CREEK, TEHAMA COUNTY**

Dear Director Sobeck:

On September 22, 2021, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted emergency regulations for Curtailment of Diversions on Mill and Deer Creeks Due to Insufficient Flow for Specific Fisheries (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 23, §§ 876.5–879). The emergency regulations were approved by the Office of Administrative Law and went into effect upon filing with the Secretary of State on October 4, 2021. Pursuant to section 876.5, subdivision (c)(2)(C)(ii) of the emergency regulations, from April 1 through June 15, pulse flows may be required in Mill Creek when adult Central Valley spring-run Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) (spring-run) are observed between Ward Dam and the Sacramento River. Pulse flows under subdivision (c)(2)(C)(ii) shall be 100 cubic feet per second (cfs) or full flows without diversions, whichever is less.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) is monitoring the 2022 adult migration of spring-run in lower Mill Creek using video camera systems at Ward Dam located at river mile 2.8. Spring-run video data review began on February 20, 2022 and data has been reviewed through May 1, 2022. During this period a preliminary count of 209 spring-run have entered Mill Creek and passed Ward Dam. Based on this monitoring, Department staff have determined that spring-run are present in lower Mill Creek and that the adult migration is underway.


To date, flows in impaired reaches of lower Mill Creek have provided for adult spring-run passage due to precipitation events in the month of April. However, due to record-low precipitation during January through March of 2022, current dry conditions, and agricultural diversions, flows in lower Mill Creek are predicted to drop below 100 cfs at a time when spring-run would typically be entering Mill Creek. In order to improve passage conditions and encourage adult spring-run to enter and quickly migrate through lower Mill Creek, the Department is requesting the scheduling of two 72-hour pulse flow events to begin and end at the following dates and times: May 26 at 1:00

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pm through May 29 at 12:00 pm; and June 12 at 1:00 pm through June 15 at 12:00 pm. The increased instream flows will also improve conditions for juvenile salmonids leaving Mill Creek.

If you have any questions regarding this letter or our request, please contact Environmental Program Manager Jason Roberts at (530) 526-2168 or jason.roberts@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Tina Bartlett, Regional Manager
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