

Cachuma Project Water Rights Hearing

October 2003

Panel II

Presenter:

C.Charles Evans

Director – Goleta Water District and
Cachuma Conservation Release Board

Development of MOU's, Fish Studies, Fish Management Plan

- 1990 – SWRCB requested recommendations for operational changes to Cachuma Project
 - Management actions for maintenance of public trust resources
 - Information on conditions and needs of fishery
- 1993 Program of cooperative fisheries investigations on lower river initiated
 - Participants included Reclamation, local water agencies, County, State and Federal resource agencies, environmental interests groups, and local landowners

Development of MOU's, Fish Studies, Fish Management Plan

- 1993 First Fisheries MOU signed by all parties
 - Outlined program of investigation
 - Established two committees
 - Consensus Committee (Reclamation Chair)
 - Technical Advisory Committee (DFG Chair)
- TAC consisted of technical experts to oversee biological and hydrological studies
 - Fish distribution and abundance, water quality, hydrology, and habitat characteristics
- Section 5 of WR 94-5 indicated that to maintain fish below Bradbury and accommodate 94-5 studies, Reclamation was directed to make releases in accordance with MOU and any extension or modification

Development of MOU's, Fish Studies, Fish Management Plan

- 1993 MOU extended in 1994, 1995, 1996
 - Biology Subcommittee, chaired by Reclamation, established in 1996 to synthesize information collected from 1993 to 1997 and provide direction to project biologist
 - Fishery Water Account of 2000 af/year established
- 1997 NMFS listed Southern Steelhead as Endangered
- March 1998 SYRTAC completed Fisheries Management Report
 - Includes 26 potential management alternatives
 - Established technical workgroups
 - Work products became LOWER SYR FISH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Development of MOU's, Fish Studies, Fish Management Plan

- Section 7 consultation between Reclamation and NMFS
 - NMFS issued Biological Opinion in September 2000
 - FMP evaluated to be consistent with Terms and Conditions in the BO
 - New Fisheries MOU approved December 2000 which included Adaptive Management Committee
- Focus of 2000 MOU is to carry out provisions of BO and FMP

Development of MOU's, Fish Studies, Fish Management Plan

- California Department of Fish and Game has been a major partner in the fisheries program
 - Written testimony includes all participants
 - Chuck Raysbrook is a member of Consensus Committee
 - Mary Larson is member of the Adaptive Management Committee

Development of MOU's, Fish Studies, Fish Management Plan

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been a major participant from the beginning of the process
 - Carl Benz is a member of the Consensus Committee
 - Bridget Fahey is a member of the Adaptive Management Committee
- NMFS has participated throughout the years
 - Matt McGoogan is a member of the Adaptive Management Committee

Development of MOU's, Fish Studies, Fish Management Plan

- Funding provided by Member Units
 - Costs to date are nearly \$5 Million
 - Costs do not include project water for Fishery Releases and Reclamation staff time

Conclusion

- Effective cooperative fisheries program undertaken since 1993
- All Resource Agencies and Cachuma Member Units have contributed to the understanding of conditions and habitats of the lower Santa Ynez River
- These actions have contributed to providing a reasonable balance between allocation of SYR water between public trust resources and consumptive uses, and carried out terms of the BO

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