



CALIFORNIA TROUT

October 12, 2005

Sharon Stohrer
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 14th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Comment to the Notice of Preparation for Upper North Fork Feather River (FERC #2105) Water Quality Certification EIR

California Trout (CalTrout) would like to express support for the State Water Resources Control Board's (Water Board) actions to find solutions to restoration of cold water to the North Fork Feather River canyon. CalTrout is a member of the Rock Creek Cresta (FERC #1962) Ecological Resources Committee that is tasked identifying temperature control measures in the North Fork Feather River. We think this analysis needs to take into account the entire North Fork Feather River system including Lake Almanor.

CalTrout's mission is to protect and restore trout and steelhead and their waters throughout California. Founded in 1970, CalTrout is a statewide conservation organization supported by recreational anglers and other citizens concerned about the health of California's rivers. CalTrout has approximately 6,500 individual members, and fifty affiliate local angling clubs representing approximately another 10,000 persons.

The North Fork Feather historically supported a trophy trout fishery which was recognized in national publications and drew anglers from all over the United States. Indeed, the California state record for resident rainbow trout, a 21-pound whopper, was caught in the Feather River in 1926. Trout, steelhead and salmon historically thrived in the North Fork Feather River taking advantage of abundant cool water originating from the headwaters.

Hydroelectric development brought dramatic changes in flow and temperature causing severe decline to the once renown fishery with major losses in recreational use and economic benefits to local communities. Degraded water quality conditions for cold water species in the NF Feather River is directly related to hydropower operations. The social and economic values of the resources of the North Fork Feather River, and Lake Almanor, warrant the greatest of efforts to restore this once great river system. We believe reasonable temperature control alternatives exist which that will accomplish this goal.

CalTrout supports the work the board is doing and their adherence to the 20 degree C temperature standard established by the Water Board under the State and Federal law and required as part of the Sacramento River Basin Plan. CalTrout looks forward to the objective review of temperature alternatives as part of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review of all reasonable temperature control measures for the NF Feather River as part of the FERC Project #2105. We are concerned about the potential effect temperature control alternatives may have on the Lake Almanor fishery. We understand the CEQA review will assess potential impacts of temperature control measures on the Lake Almanor fishery.

In summary, we support for the State water Resources Control Boards actions on the North Fork Feather River in Plumas and Butte County. Flow restoration and adherence to the 20 degree Centigrade temperature standard will provide significant benefits in restoration of these socially and economically valuable resources.

Sincerely,

Curtis Knight
California Trout
Area Conservation Manager

CC:

Jim Canaday, State Water Resources Control Board

From: "Curtis Knight" <caknight@jps.net>
To: "sharon stohrer (WRCB)" <sstohrer@waterboards.ca.gov>
Date: 10/12/05 3:48PM
Subject: 2105 NOP letter

Sharon,

Please find attached CalTrout comments on Notice of Preparation for water quality certification for 2105. Hard copy in the mail.

A similar letter expressing support will be sent to Chair of Water Board next week.

Thanks for all the good work in the Feather.

Curtis

Curtis Knight

CALIFORNIA TROUT

Northeast Area Manager

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CC: "Jim Canaday" <jcanaday@waterrights.swrcb.ca.gov>