

California Advisory Committee on Salmon and Steelhead Trout

June 1, 2016



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Charlton H. Bonham, Director
 California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 1416 Ninth St., 12th Floor
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Director Bonham:

The California Advisory Committee on Salmon and Steelhead Trout (CACST) requests that you support the proposal for the Department of Interior to bring in a high level “fixer” to address numerous problems with the structure and implementation of Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP). The concept is described in the attached **“Proposal to Address Refinements of the Trinity River Restoration Program.”** The TRRP Fixer proposal was developed jointly by the Hoopa Valley and Yurok Tribes in their respective capacity as co-managers of Klamath-Trinity basin fishery resources.

The Trinity River Restoration Program is not meeting restoration goals established by the program. Furthermore, two top program managers recently accepted positions outside the TRRP and a third has retired, leaving only an interim manager lead the program.

The Trinity Management Council’s 2004 Sub-committee Report identified key problems that have still not been remedied, including TRRP staff and participants’ incomplete understanding of the TRRP’s strategy and objectives, lack of collaborative science in technical workgroups, lack of shared or consistent vision, management that is not fulfilling the multi-agency plan for TRRP implementation, and delays in scientific and rehabilitation implementation (TMC 2004). Four years later, the Situation Assessment (CDR Associates 2008) documented a similar situation with little improvement, citing structural, procedural, and values-related challenges. Most of the recommendations in the Sub-committee and CDR reports have not been implemented.

Adaptive Environmental Assessment Management (AEAM), a scientific management process, is still not occurring and objective technical leadership remains lacking. Program participants regularly quarrel at unnecessarily long public meetings. The public has lost patience with the

program and public criticism of the program is mounting. Based on the limited progress incorporating recommendations from the Sub-committee and CDR reports, yet another program review with recommendations likely won't solve the problem, The TRRP Fixer proposal recognizes this and proposes a significant difference from previous efforts in that the Fixer would be integrally involved in helping implement the recommended changes, then providing subsequent follow-up efforts to help address future challenges and assist with transfer of vision/refinements to new management position staff. Close to \$200 million has been spent on the program since 2000 with uncertain improvements in fishery habitat benefits.

In summary, we continue to support the Trinity River Restoration Record of Decision (ROD), and urge you to support the TRRP Fixer concept so that this important fishery restoration program can put into place the building blocks for recovery of this historically, economically, and culturally important river as intended by the ROD. The Trinity River is much too important to let this \$15 million/year program disappear because of poor implementation of the ROD.

We thank you for your consideration of these points and look forward to hearing back from you on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Walter Duffy, Ph.D.
Chair, CACSST

CC: Congressman Jarred Huffman
Senator Mike McGuire, Chair Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture
Sally Jewell, Interior Secretary
Michael Conner, Deputy Interior Secretary
Esteban Lopez, Commissioner of Reclamation
Dan Ashe, Director U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Attachment: Proposal to Address Refinements of the Trinity River Restoration Program
(1/14/16)