
State Water Resources Control Board

June 16, 2015

Mr. David Murillo
Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

Dear Mr. Murillo:

SACRAMENTO RIVER TEMPERATURE OPERATIONS TO PROTECT FISH AND WILDLIFE

This is a follow up to my May 29, 2015 letter in which I temporarily suspended my provisional approval of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) draft temperature management plan for the Sacramento River to protect fish and wildlife. Since that time, State Water Board staff has been working with staff from Reclamation, the Department of Water Resources (DWR), and the fisheries agencies to develop a new plan of operations to protect winter-run Chinook salmon for the remainder of this season. Reclamation and the fisheries agencies have reached agreement on the basic elements of a revised plan for Sacramento River temperature operations for the remainder of the year.

Until Reclamation submits, and I approve, a revised plan, my provisional approval of the temperature management plan remains suspended. In the interim, and consistent with the agreed upon outlines of a revised plan, Keswick releases should optimize temperatures for winter-run Chinook salmon using real-time decision-making. Specifically, Reclamation shall maintain Keswick Reservoir base releases of 7,250 cfs, and target 57°F at Clear Creek, not to exceed 58°F, until further notice. Reclamation shall also convene real time meetings if it appears that projected temperatures will exceed 58 degrees, or as needed, but at least weekly, with the fisheries agencies, DWR, and State Water Board staff to determine what actions are most advisable to maintain temperature control and conserve cold water resources in Shasta Reservoir for temperature control this season. Reclamation shall also conduct all necessary monitoring and reporting requested by the State Water Board and fisheries agencies to inform real-time decisions.

I recognize that changes in Shasta operations from what Reclamation proposed in its earlier temperature management plan will affect system-wide Central Valley Project and State Water Project operations and water supplies. I encourage Reclamation and DWR to work with State Water Board staff and the potentially affected parties to both minimize and equitably distribute the water supply effects of the adjusted operations, and to ensure that health and safety needs are met.

The State Water Board will hold a workshop on June 24 for Reclamation and others to provide information on Shasta temperature operations and the associated water supply effects of these operations.

If you have any questions, please contact Les Grober of my staff at (916) 341-5428.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY C. TRGOVCICH FOR

Thomas Howard
Executive Director