

The advisory group provides "advice, information, and recommendations to the Administrator and the Director—

(1) On the implementation of this title [the Act] and the amendments made by this title;

(2) On commonly accepted quiet aircraft technology for use in commercial air tour operations over a national park or tribal lands, which will receive preferential treatment in a given air tour management plan;

(3) On other measures that might be taken to accommodate the interests of visitors to national parks; and

(4) At the request of the Administrator and the Director, safety, environmental, and other issues related to commercial air tour operations over a national park or tribal lands."

Members of the advisory group may be allowed certain travel expenses as authorized by section 5703 of title 5, United States Code, for intermittent Government service.

An initial assignment was made to the group of seven members representing aviation, environmental and Native American cultural interests: Chip Dennerlein and Charles Maynard (environmental), Andy Cebula and Joe Corrao (aviation) and Germaine White (Native American). (See 66 FR 32974; June 19, 2001.) At the first meeting of the NPOAG, on August 28, 2001, the group decided that the addition of three new members would achieve a better balance of interests representing the group. The additional members would represent fixed wing air tour operators, environmental interests and Native American cultural interests.

By **Federal Register** notice of September 25, 2001, the FAA and NPS invited members of the public from the desired areas and interested in serving on the advisory group, to contact either the FAA or NPS contact person. Five persons expressed an interest in serving on the NPOAG in addition to the original names submitted earlier when the group was formed. The FAA and NPS have selected three persons to serve as additional members of the NPOAG: Alan Stephens will represent aviation interests, in particular those of fixed-wing operators; Richard Deertrack will represent Native American interests; and Susan Gunn will represent environmental interests. There are now a total of 10 members of the NPOAG.

The next meeting of the NPOAG is being planned for late 2001.

Issued in Washington, DC, on October 24, 2001.

**Louis C. Cusimano,**

*Acting Director, Flight Standards Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Reclamation

#### Lower Santa Ynez River Fish Management Plan and Cachuma Project Biological Opinion, Santa Barbara County, CA

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Reclamation, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement/report (EIS/R).

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board (COMB) will prepare a joint EIS/R on the management actions and projects included in the: (1) Lower Santa Ynez River Fish Management Plan (FMP) prepared by Reclamation and other agencies and parties involved in the Cachuma Project; and (2) the Biological Opinion (BO) prepared by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the Cachuma Project relative to the endangered southern steelhead population that resides in the Santa Ynez River. Management actions in the FMP and BO are designed to improve habitat for the steelhead along the river downstream of Lake Cachuma through mandated flow, habitat, and passage improvements.

**DATES:** Reclamation and COMB will hold a scoping meeting at 7 p.m. on November 19, 2001, in Solvang, California to seek public input on alternatives, possible impacts, and issues to be addressed in the EIS/R. Written comments on the scope of the alternatives and impacts to be considered should be sent to the address below by December 3, 2001.

**ADDRESSES:** The scoping meeting will be at the Veteran's Memorial Building, 1745 Mission Drive in Solvang. Written comments on the scope of the EIS/R should be sent to Mr. David Young, Bureau of Reclamation, South-Central California Area Office, 1243 N Street, Fresno, CA 93721, or by phone at 559-487-5127, or by fax to 559-487-5130.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. David Young at the above address, telephone: (559) 487-5127.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** In June 1994, the Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in

Research and Fish Maintenance (Fish MOU) was executed among various parties with interests along the Santa Ynez River, and is currently being continued through the 2001 Fish MOU. The MOU provides water for fish studies and fish habitat and passage. Since 1993, the Santa Ynez River Technical Advisory Committee (SYRTAC), comprised of various biologists and resource agency personnel, has directed the studies and releases. Signatories to the 1994 MOU include Reclamation, the Santa Barbara County Water Agency, California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Santa Ynez Water River Conservation District—Improvement District #1 (SYRWCD ID#1), Cachuma Conservation Release Board (CCRB), City of Lompoc, and Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District.

One of the primary objectives of the Fish MOU is to identify management actions to improve conditions for native fish and other aquatic resources, including southern steelhead. A draft FMP was prepared by the SYRTAC and issued for public comment in 2000. A final FMP was issued in October 2000. It incorporated the requirements in the BO for the Cachuma Project independently issued by NMFS in September 2000, which includes mandatory terms and conditions that require Reclamation to implement 15 specific reasonable and prudent measures to minimize take of the southern steelhead. Reclamation is currently implementing these measures in coordination with COMB. The 2001 Fish MOU supports the implementation of the BO and the FMP.

The FMP and BO management actions have been designed to benefit steelhead and other aquatic species directly and indirectly by: (1) Creating new habitat and improving existing habitat in the lower river and tributaries; (2) improving access to spawning and rearing habitats in the lower river and tributaries; and (3) increasing public awareness and support for beneficial actions on private lands. Many management actions can be implemented independent of others and as such, can be considered individual "projects."

The FMP management actions or projects would be implemented by one or more agencies, depending upon funding sources, location of a project on federal versus non-federal land, and whether the project is also a mandatory requirement of the steelhead BO. Agencies that may implement projects separately or jointly include

Reclamation, COMB, CCRB, SYRWCD ID#1, and Caltrans.

The EIS/R will address the following management actions and projects contained in the FMP and BO:

**Actions by Reclamation and/or COMB, CCRB, SYRWCD ID#1, & Caltrans**

- Surcharging the reservoir to 3.0 feet to provide water for fish accounts
- Mainstem rearing releases to achieve downstream target flows for rearing habitat; maintain residual pools; revise ramping; use Hilton Creek for releases; conjunctive use of water rights releases with releases for fish; using water from surcharging
- Fish passage supplementation using water from surcharging
- Adaptive Management Account for discretionary releases, using water from surcharging
- Hilton Creek habitat enhancement and fish passage projects: (1) Releases to Hilton Creek; (2) supplemental watering system; (3) cascade chute passage improvement; and (4) channel extension. In addition, Caltrans passage improvement at Hwy 154 culvert will be included.
- Fish rescue program

**Actions That Require Cooperation of Other Agencies and Private Landowners**

- Tributary passage impediment removal. Sites on public and private property on Quiota (6), El Jaro (1), Nojoqui (1) creeks.
- Tributary enhancement measures—riparian restoration; instream habitat enhancement; and conservation easements. These measures are located on private property on Quiota, Alisal, Salsipuedes, El Jaro, Nojoqui, and San Miguelito creeks.
- Mainstem habitat enhancement and protection.

The management actions described in the FMP/BO will be implemented in a phased manner over the next 7 years. Projects that will be implemented in the next 2–3 years include: modifying spillgates for 3-foot surcharge; implementing releases using long-term rearing, passage, and Adaptive Management accounts; installing pump system and variable intake facility for the Hilton Creek supplemental watering system; and completing the modification of passage impediments on Hilton Creek.

The EIS/R will evaluate the environmental impacts of the projects in the FMP/BO, as a whole, in a programmatic manner. As the FMP/BO is implemented over time, the EIS/R can be used for tiering project-specific Environmental Assessments. The EIS/R

will address impacts of certain FMP/BO management actions at a project level such as surcharging Lake Cachuma to 3.0 feet and several of the Hilton Creek projects.

The FMP/BO is designed to improve environmental conditions for fish and aquatic and riparian habitats. As such, the EIS/R will be focused on incidental adverse impacts associated with implementing the FMP/BO projects. Most of these impacts would be temporary, and associated with construction and access. However, other unintended impacts would be addressed such as loss of oak trees at Lake Cachuma due to surcharging, displacement or disruption of recreational facilities at the lake due to surcharging, increased need for flood control maintenance in the river, and possible conversion of more arid habitats to aquatic habitats.

The following alternatives would be addressed in the EIS/R, as well as any others identified in the scoping process:

- No project alternative
  - No surcharging alternative
  - Phased surcharging: 1.8 feet, then 3.0 feet
  - Smaller surcharging (1.8 feet)
- Our practice is to make comments, including names and home addresses of respondents, available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their home address from public disclosure, which we will honor to the extent allowable by law. There also may be circumstances in which we would withhold a respondent's identity from public disclosure, as allowable by law. If you wish us to withhold your name and/or address, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public disclosure in their entirety.

Dated: October 11, 2001.

**Frank Michny,**

*Regional Environmental Officer.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

**Bureau of Reclamation**

**Notice of Availability for public comment of the Draft Municipal and Industrial (M&I) Water Shortage Policy, Central Valley Project (CVP), California**

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has developed, in

consultation with the CVP municipal and industrial (M&I) Water Service contractors, a draft CVP M&I Water Shortage Policy. The purposes of the M&I Water Shortage Policy are to (1) define water allocations applicable to all CVP M&I contractors during times of reduced water supplies, (2) establish a minimum water supply level that with the M&I contractor's drought water conservation measures and other water supplies should sustain urban areas during drought situations, and (3) during severe or continuing droughts would, as much as possible, protect public health and safety, and (4) provide information to help M&I contractors develop drought contingency plans. This policy is in furtherance of the June 9, 1997 Central Valley Project Improvement Act Administrative Proposal on Urban Water Supply Reliability.

**DATES:** Submit written comments on the Draft CVP M&I Water Shortage Policy on or before November 29, 2001 to the address below.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the Draft CVP M&I Water Shortage Policy may be requested by writing Alisha Sterud at the above address or by calling (916) 978–5195 or retrieved from the Web site at [www.mp.usbr.gov/cvpia/3404c/mi\\_shortage.html](http://www.mp.usbr.gov/cvpia/3404c/mi_shortage.html). Written comments on the Draft CVP M&I Water Shortage Policy should be addressed to the Bureau of Reclamation, Attention: Alisha Sterud, MP–400, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For additional information, please contact Alisha Sterud at (916) 978–5195, or e-mail: [asterud@mp.usbr.gov](mailto:asterud@mp.usbr.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The CVP (Central Valley Project) is operated under Federal statutes authorizing the CVP and by the terms and conditions of water rights acquired pursuant to California law. During any year, there may occur constraints on the availability of CVP water for an M&I (municipal and industrial) contractor under its contract. The cause of the water shortage may be drought, unavoidable causes, or restricted operations resulting from legal obligations or mandates. Those legal obligations include but are not limited to the Endangered Species Act, the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA), and conditions imposed on CVP's water rights by the State of California. This policy establishes the terms and conditions regarding the constraints on availability of water supply for the CVP M&I water service contracts.