



July 18, 2016

Ms. Eileen Sobeck
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
United States Department of Commerce
1315 East-West Highway, Room 1636
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Administrator Sobeck:

Thank you for the opportunity to meet to discuss the concerns of the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors (SRSC) regarding the need for a robust and coordinated strategy to improve the operations of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and help contribute to the recovery of the winter-run Chinook salmon on the Sacramento River. As we discussed, the SRSC are working closely with federal and state agencies and conservation partners involved on the Sacramento River to improve Sacramento River operations in a manner that will provide water for multiple beneficial uses in the Sacramento Valley, including water for cities and rural communities, farms, birds, fish, and recreation. The strategy also builds upon the [Sacramento Valley Salmon Recovery Program](#) and the significant partnerships between the water users, conservation organizations, and state and federal agencies to help recover salmon in the Sacramento Valley.

As agreed during our July 13, 2016 meeting, progress needs to be made immediately so that an improved decision-making process is in place prior to the commencement of the 2017 irrigation season. We agree with (and embrace) the suggestion that originated in our meeting with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that the SRSC and NMFS along with the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) undertake a “shared and integrated work plan” to develop a new temperature model for Sacramento River operations that will allow better management of Sacramento River temperatures and the cold water pool in Shasta Reservoir. Dueling temperature models are not in the interest of the water users or the fisheries; we must reach consensus on a single model that can be used to assess the available policy options that arise from the model output. We discussed this effort with Reclamation and will be sending a similar letter to them requesting they partner with us as well. As we discussed, the SRSC are committed to providing significant resources to develop a new Sacramento River temperature model. Our mutual goal is to develop a new model that can be put to use

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by February 2017. Accordingly, it is critically important that we immediately begin development of the work plan so that model preparation can commence in a timely manner.

We also discussed the need for shared science and an understanding of what activities and studies the Southwest Fisheries Science Center is undertaking, as well as actions by the SRSC. This information, along with a new model, would be the contents of a shared and integrated work plan. The SRSC will undertake the shared and integrated work plan with the intent of demonstrating how the SRSC, state and federal agencies, and conservation organizations can work together to rapidly improve CVP and SRSC operations and salmon recovery. We urge your agency to participate, and make the development of an improved, consensus Shasta temperature model the highest priority.

We request a joint meeting with your agency and Reclamation at the earliest possible time to identify the next steps that will lead to the development of a shared and integrated work plan to produce a new Sacramento River temperature model by February 2017. Thank you in advance for your timely response.

Sincerely,



Donald Bransford
Board President
Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District



Steven Butler
Board President
Sutter Mutual Water Company



Tom Ramos
Board President
Natomas Mutual Water Company



Fritz Durst
Board President
Reclamation District 108

cc: Will Stelle, NMFS
Maria Rae, NMFS
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David Murillo, Reclamation
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