



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, California 95825-1846

In Reply Refer To

APR 17 2012

Wes Monier
Turlock Irrigation District
333 East Canal Drive
P.O. Box 949
Turlock, California 95381

Subject: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Comments on Turlock Irrigation and Modesto Irrigation District's Tuolumne River Flow Requirement for 2012-2013 for the Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project No. 2299; Tuolumne and Stanislaus Counties, California

Dear Mr. Monier:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the Turlock Irrigation and Modesto Irrigation District's (Districts) proposed instream flow schedule for 2012 -2013 (submitted March 30, 2012) and submits the following comments. The 1996 Order Amending License and Dismissing Rehearing Requests (Order Amending License) (76 FERC 61,117 (July 31, 1996)) amended Article 37 of the Don Pedro Project license to require allocation of volumes of water based on the water year classification to benefit fishery resources in the Tuolumne River. The minimum streamflows were to be based on the table and schedules provided in the Order Amending License, or upon schedules agreed to among the Licensees, California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the Service, and, as added in the Commission's 2009 Order on Rehearing (128 FERC 61,035 (July 16, 2009)), the National Marine Fisheries Service. CDFG has developed a daily flow schedule (submitted April 2, 2012) based upon the base flow and pulse flow amounts as specified in the Order Amending License and the timing of flows of other San Joaquin River tributaries in order to improve the survival of juvenile Chinook salmon in the lower San Joaquin River. The Service supports the CDFG 2012 -2013 flow schedule and agrees that it provides a better opportunity to improve the survival of juvenile Chinook salmon than the schedule proposed by the Districts. Similarly, the CDFG flow schedule extends the fall pulse flow by two days, which we agree will provide more opportunity to attract migrating adult Chinook salmon into the system. Consequently, the Service does not agree to the Districts' proposed instream flow schedule for 2012-2013, but instead supports the daily flow schedule submitted by CDFG.

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Deborah Giglio at (916) 414-6600.

Sincerely,



Daniel Welsh
Assistant Field Supervisor

Enclosure:

FERC P-#2299 Service List

cc:

Kimberly Bose, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Washington DC
Maria Rea, National Marine Fisheries Service, Sacramento, CA
Michael Carlin, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, San Francisco, CA
Casey Hashimoto, Turlock Irrigation District, Turlock, CA
Allen Short, Modesto Irrigation District, Modesto, CA
Tim Heyne, California Department of Fish and Game, La Grange, CA