



**ITEM 14. PROVIDE DIRECTION TO STAFF ON
RESPONSE TO NATIONAL MARINE
FISHERIES SERVICE 2012 PUBLIC REVIEW
DRAFT SOUTH-CENTRAL CALIFORNIA
COAST STEELHEAD RECOVERY PLAN**

Meeting Date: December 10, 2012

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Draft Steelhead Recovery Plan

- Published by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in October 2012
- Applies to Central Coast streams from the Pajaro River south to Arroyo Grande Creek, just south of Pismo Beach in San Luis Obispo County.
- 80 to 100 year period to fully recover steelhead and re-establish a sport fishery.
- Estimated to cost \$560 million
- Described as a “guidance ” document, not a mandatory regulatory document
- Comments due by December 18, 2012

Steelhead by the Numbers

- Early 20th century - up to 8,000 returning adults (CDFG)
- 1975 - last time the run exceeded 1,000
- 1991 - one adult counted at San Clemente Dam
- 1997 - listed as threatened
- 2000 - nearly 900 in 2000
- 2003 to present - less than 500
- 2006 – critical habitat designated (146 miles of streams)

Carmel River Basin Assessment

- 1/3 of indicators rated conditions for steelhead as impaired (fair condition) or severely impaired (poor condition).
- Dams and diversions (including groundwater extractions) have had the most severe adverse impacts on steelhead populations.
- Critical recovery action (highest priority):
 - *Removal of the main stem dams.*
 - *Los Padres Dam is characterized as*
“A pervasive threat to anadromous *O. mykiss*.”

Threats Assessment

<u>Threat Source</u>	<u>Carmel River</u>
■ Dams and Surface Water Diversion	100%
■ Groundwater Extraction	100%
■ Levees and Channelization	100%
■ Recreational Facilities	100%
■ Urban Development	100%
■ Roads and Culverts	100%
■ Agricultural Development	0%
■ Non-Point Source Pollution	0%
■ Mining	0%

Percentages indicate the proportion of all the watersheds in each Biogeographic Population Group where the severity of a given threat source was identified as “High” or “Very High” as part of the Conservation Action Planning Workbook analyses.

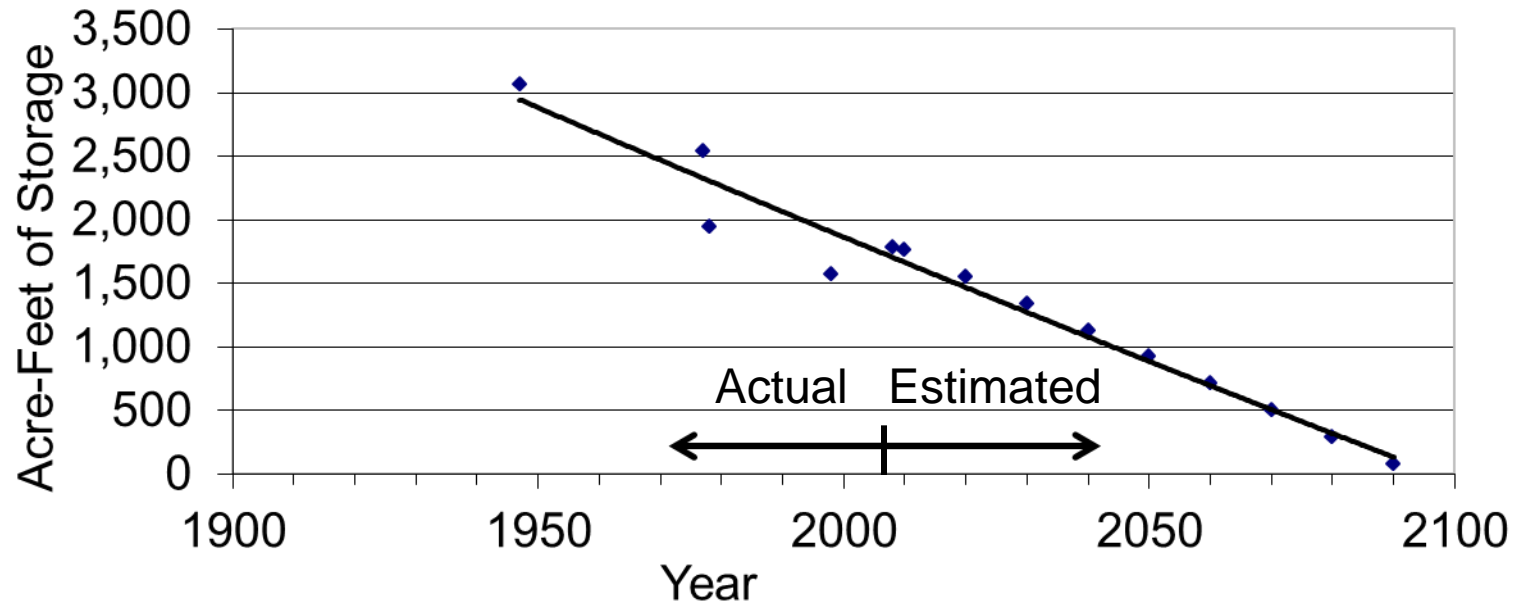
Critical Recovery Actions

Critical recovery actions having the highest priority:

- Manage surface and groundwater to provide flow for adults and juveniles
- Remove San Clemente Dam, Old Carmel River Dam, and Los Padres Dam
- Restore estuarine (Carmel River lagoon) and freshwater rearing habitats

Los Padres Dam Siltation

Los Padres Reservoir Storage Decline



Los Padres Dam Fish Passage



Carmel River State Beach

Monterey County required to stop breaching sandbar



Recovery Actions (continued)

Activities related to Critical Recovery Actions

- Develop water management plan for dam operations and river diversions
- Create fish passage around dams
- Implement flood control maintenance program
- Conduct groundwater analysis, monitoring and management
- Complete a Carmel River lagoon restoration and management plan

Recovery Actions (continued)

Other activities to improve habitat

- Implement agricultural land-use planning standards
- Conduct passage barrier assessments
- Remove or modify barriers
- Restore natural channel features
- Vegetate levees
- Restore streambanks and riparian corridor
- Remove non-native species
- Modify plans for recreational areas

Recovery Actions (continued)

Other Activities

- Manage roadways and adjacent riparian corridor
- Retrofit storm drains to filter runoff
- Modify applicable County and/or City Local Coastal Plans
- Implement urban land-use planning policies and standards
- Modify NPDES wastewater discharge permits (e.g., Carmel Area Wastewater Treatment Facility)
- Implement an integrated wildland fire and hazardous fuels management plan

Recovery Plan Costs

<u>Action</u>	<u>Cost (millions)</u>
■ Remove San Clemente Dam	\$ 84
■ Remove Old Carmel River Dam ¹	\$ 1
■ Remove Los Padres Dam ²	\$ 150
■ Restore natural channel	\$ 17
■ Implement streamside restoration	\$ 10.5
■ Estuary restoration	\$ 2
■ Other	\$ 1.5
■ Total	\$ 266 million

1. Potential cost if removed with San Clemente Dam.

2. Based on 2004 estimate by CDFG of \$1 million/vertical foot of dam removed.

Water Supply Planning Committee

Recovery Plan - no analysis or recognition of:

- Existing water supply problem for the Monterey Peninsula
- Potential effects to existing water rights
- Water supply benefits to river from releases at Los Padres Dam
- Alternatives to dam removal
- Potential impacts to the community from the loss of a water supply
- Costs to ratepayers associated with dam removal

Water Supply Planning Committee

Committee Recommendations:

1. The plan should seek to manage the Carmel River in order to recover steelhead while providing some water supply to the community.
2. MPWMD should reach out to the community to explain the importance of dealing with Los Padres Dam and to help the community come to a consensus about the dam.
3. MPWMD should seek support from local groups and request that those groups send comment letters to NMFS concerning the Recovery Plan.
4. MPWMD should be actively involved in seeking public ownership of Los Padres Dam.

Staff Analysis

- Staff agrees with the Water Supply Planning Committee on Recovery Plan flaws and committee recommendations 1, 2, and 3.
- Short term and long term benefits and costs of ownership should be evaluated if ownership of Los Padres Dam is pursued (recommendation 4).

Staff Analysis (continued)

Additional items to address in the Recovery Plan:

- Benefit/cost analysis of recovery actions
- Need methods to fund recovery actions
- Need method to monitor recovery actions and establish recovery targets (numbers of fish)
- Need a full-scale analysis of effects to steelhead from removal of Los Padres Dam

Staff Recommendation

1. Written comments about the Recovery Plan should be conveyed to the National Marine Fisheries Service concerning the flaws and recommendations identified by MPWMD Committees, staff, and others as appropriate.
2. The Board of Directors may wish to consider directing staff and the Carmel River Advisory Committee to move forward with planning for a community workshop on the future of Los Padres Dam and other proposed Recovery Plan actions.

For More Information

Staff reports and presentation materials can be found on the District's website at:

www.mpwmd.net

PowerPoint presentations will be posted on the website the day after the meeting

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