

FACT SHEET

Why "Removal of Los Padres Dam" Should be Eliminated as an Action Item in the South-Central California Coast Steelhead Recovery Plan

- No analysis has been completed about the direct effects of dam removal to steelhead and their habitat, either positive or negative, and included in support of the Recovery Plan findings.
- The plan provides no analysis of the effects that removal of Los Padres Dam would have on existing water supply functions or on existing pre-1914, appropriative, and riparian water rights. There are many property owners with Carmel River water rights whose businesses rely on the managed releases from Los Padres Dam.
- Los Padres Reservoir serves as a point of storage associated with a portion of our local water supplier's water rights. Currently, 100% of its usable storage capacity is used to sustain river flows during the summer and fall dry season. Water from storage is recaptured in the lower river for municipal water supply. Without these releases in the dry season, there would be at least some period with little or no flow in the last 15 miles of the river in about half of all years.
- After the rainy season ends, in most years all the tributaries except Pine Creek and San Clemente Creek, which are sparsely inhabited, go dry and the main stem "loses" flow in the downstream direction. The Recovery Plan proposes no analysis of the effects of main stem riparian diversions or tributary diversions during the dry season. Cumulatively, these diversions have the potential to dewater portions of the lower river in the dry season, even in the absence of diversions for water supply during the same period.
- There are 19 bridges across the Carmel River and approximately 1,600 parcels in the 100-year floodplain downstream of San Clemente Dam. Resumption of the natural sediment load in the river by removing Los Padres Dam would likely have consequences in portions of the alluvial section, including increased flood elevations in some reaches and channel braiding. These effects should be modeled and described before adding dam removal to the Recovery Plan.
- A cessation of releases from storage at Los Padres Dam could result in a reduction in streamflows at the current San Clemente Dam site during about half of all water years that would make the Sleepy Hollow Steelhead Rearing Facility inoperable.
- No funding source for dam removal is identified. Over the next 20 to 30 years, local ratepayers will be required to fund about \$450 million – or more than \$11,000 per water connection – to remove San Clemente Dam and build replacement water supply projects. Additional expenditures by ratepayers to deal with the removal of Los Padres Dam in the foreseeable future would meet significant public opposition.
- The recovery plan offers only one option for the dam – removal – with no analysis of alternatives, such as a maintenance dredging program, downstream habitat improvements, and improved fish passage facilities throughout the watershed.

These groups have expressed their support for the long-term retention of the Los Padres Dam on the Carmel River ...

Monterey Peninsula Water Management District

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Carmel River Steelhead Association

Carmel River Watershed Conservancy

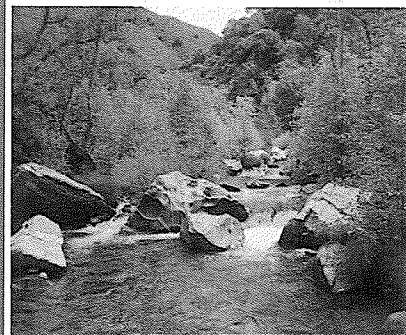
Trout Unlimited

Central Coast Fly Fishing

Pajaro Valley Rod and Gun Club

Salinas Valley Fly Fishers Club

HS Hilbert, Fishing Guide



There has been insufficient analysis of short-term and long-term impacts to steelhead, water rights, property, infrastructure, and streamside resources from recovery actions, and alternatives should be evaluated in a more comprehensive manner. Further, more extensive public outreach and engagement is warranted.

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General Recommendations:

- An alternatives analysis to proposed recovery actions should be completed
- Analysis of short-term and long-term impacts and/or benefits to steelhead, water rights, property, infrastructure, and streamside resources from recovery actions should be completed
- A more comprehensive cost estimate should be completed
- A benefit/cost analysis of proposed recovery actions should be completed
- The Monterey Peninsula Community should be engaged

We strongly urge you to remove all discussion of decommissioning Los Padres Dam from the Recovery Plan and engage our local Monterey Peninsula community in discussion about impacts before revisiting the issue.

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