



United States Department of the Interior

Agenda Item G.1.a
Supplemental Attachment 4
June 2013

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Mid-Pacific Regional Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825-1898

IN REPLY REFER TO:

MP-100
ADM-1.00

MAY 24 2013

RECEIVED

Mr. Donald O. McIsaac, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

MAY 31 2013

PFMC

Dear Dr. McIsaac:

On behalf of Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, I am responding to your letter of April 24, 2013, recommending that the Department of the Interior again provide supplementary flows to prevent a fish die-off in the Lower Klamath River similar to that which occurred in late-summer 2002.

As we demonstrated in 2012, the Bureau of Reclamation is committed to assisting with measures to help preserve the Klamath River fall Chinook salmon run. Included in this commitment is our willingness to release additional water to the Lower Klamath River, if necessary, provided that the justification for such a release is based on scientifically supportable criteria.

After learning of the projected modern-day record fall Chinook run in 2012, Reclamation discussed the implications at length with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, affected tribes, and other Trinity River Restoration Program partners. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Reclamation developed an Environmental Assessment and executed a Finding of No Significant Impact describing flow releases from Trinity Reservoir for flow augmentation in the Lower Klamath River in the late summer. Ultimately, 39,000 acre-feet was released from Trinity Reservoir for flow augmentation, and we were relieved to note there was no significant disease outbreak or mortality.

The September 2013 target flow rate below Iron Gate Dam on the Klamath River is expected to be at or above 1,000 cubic feet per second (cfs), an increase from the 2002 average flow rate of 760 cfs that immediately preceded the fish die-off. As you stated in your letter, hydrologic conditions in the Klamath River Basin are well below normal, and the May 1, 2013, revised inflow forecast for the Trinity River Basin is 795,000 acre-feet, which is a "Dry" water year class as characterized in the 2000 Record of Decision for the Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration. Trinity Reservoir attained a seasonal maximum water surface elevation of 2,351 feet above mean sea level on April 23, 2013, approximately 19 feet below the spillway crest. The May 1, 2013, inflow forecast to the Upper Klamath River Basin for May through September is 52 percent of average at the 50-percent exceedence level, while precipitation in the Upper Klamath River Basin is 87 percent of average as of May 10, 2013.

Should you require additional information, please contact Mr. Brian Person, Area Manager, Northern California Area Office, at 530-275-1554.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David G. Murillo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "D" and "M".

David G. Murillo
Regional Director

cc: Council Members
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Habitat Committee
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Humboldt County Board of Supervisors
825 Fifth Street, Room 111
Eureka, CA 95501