

PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224
Portland, Oregon 97201

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Lawrence D. Six

CHAIRMAN
Frank R. Warrens

Telephone: (503) 326-6352

August 23, 1995

The Honorable Bruce Babbitt
Secretary of the Department of Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Babbitt:

In 1992, in response to the long standing decline in numerous Central Valley anadromous fish populations, and in the recreational and commercial fisheries associated with them, Congress passed the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA). The Pacific Fishery Management Council believes the CVPIA addresses those declines in a reasonable and holistic fashion, and provides for a comprehensive solution to the problems causing the declines. Given the important role which the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) must play in the implementation of the CVPIA, the Council wishes to take this opportunity to express our concerns, and to express support for your timely and effective implementation of these important fishery mitigation measures.

Among the beneficial provisions in the CVPIA, the Council views two as especially key to meaningful and successful restoration of salmon and steelhead stocks. Those key provisions are (1) an allowance for 800,000 acre-feet of water for Central Valley fisheries and wildlife purposes and (2) the provision for 340,000 acre-feet for interim Trinity River flows while studies and an Environmental Impact Statement are completed to more precisely determine the actual flow needs.

Many naturally produced Central Valley salmon stocks have been reduced to chronic low levels due to water diversion activities, and the need for adequate river flows is long overdue to prevent further listings under the Endangered Species Act and to allow for robust salmon fisheries. Effectively utilizing no less than the full 800,000 acre-feet of storage available to fishery and wildlife purposes in the Central Valley is extremely important to the future health of the ocean salmon fishing industry for California and southern Oregon.

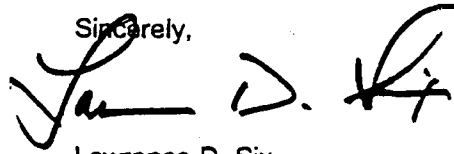
Adequate Trinity River flows also are extremely important to ocean salmon fishery management as abundance of Klamath River fall chinook is one of the key factors in determining ocean fisheries off California and southern Oregon. Despite extensive reductions in ocean and river harvest, the natural spawning escapement floor for Klamath River fall chinook (35,000 adults) has not been met for five years. Until comprehensive flow studies are completed, it is not possible to know if the interim 340,000 acre-feet of storage provided under the CVPIA for Trinity River flows will be sufficient to assure long-term productivity of natural stocks in the Klamath River Basin.

The Council strongly supports the fishery goals, objectives, and provisions of the CVPIA, in particular, the Anadromous Fish Restoration Program being developed pursuant to the legislation. To date, implementation of the CVPIA fishery habitat provisions promises to produce beneficial results to anadromous fish populations and to the fisheries they sustain. The Council notes the work already

Honorable Bruce Babbitt
August 23, 1995
Page 2

accomplished by the BOR and the USFWS in implementing these programs and encourages continued impetus in the remaining implementation of the fisheries mitigation, enhancement, and restoration provisions of the CVPIA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lawrence D. Six". The signature is stylized with a large initial "L" and a distinct "D".

Lawrence D. Six
Executive Director

JCC:sjk

c: Roger G. Patterson
Michael J. Spear
Rolland Schmitter
Hilda Diaz-Soltero