

Russian River Biological Assessment Update



May 4, 2022

Background and Purpose

- 2008 NMFS Biological Opinion (BO) with Reasonable and Prudent Alternative (15-year BO; expiration in Sept. 2023)
 - CESA Consistency Determination with CDFW
- BA being prepared for reinitiation of consultation with NMFS under Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA)
 - Central California Coast Steelhead (threatened)
 - Central California Coast Coho Salmon (endangered)
 - California Coastal Chinook Salmon (threatened)
- BA will also evaluate effects on essential fish habitat (EFH) as required by Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
 - Pacific Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP), Coastal Pelagics FMP, and Pacific Groundfish FMP
- BA serves as basis for California ESA (CESA) coverage with CDFW
 - Central California Coast Coho Salmon (endangered)

Project Elements

- Reservoir Operations - Coyote Valley Dam (CVD) and Warm Springs Dam (WSD)
 - Flood Control Operations
 - Water Supply Operations
- Dry Creek Habitat Enhancements
- Channel Maintenance Actions
 - Russian River mainstem and Dry Creek
(maintenance of facilities associated with CVD and WSD operations)
- Central Sonoma Watershed Project and associated flood control facilities operations
- Russian River Estuary Management
- Monitoring of Salmonids in the Russian River and Dry Creek
- Adaptive Management

- Hatchery Operations
 - Coho Hatchery and Genetic Management Program
 - Steelhead Hatchery and Genetic Management Program

Approach and Process

- Agency kick-off – April 28, 2021
 - Sonoma Water, Corps, NMFS, CDFW
- Monthly Management Team meetings
 - Sonoma Water, Corps
- Focused Sub-group meetings
 - 9 Environmental Baseline meetings
 - 7 Proposed Action meetings
- CESA-focused meetings with CDFW

Approach and Process

- Document work completed under 2008 BO:
 - Completed activities (and resulting conditions) part of the **Environmental Baseline**
 - Continued or new proposed activities characterized as part of the **Proposed Action**
- Organization of BA
 - Introduction and Background
 - Consultation to Date
 - Description of the Proposed Action
 - Environmental Baseline
 - Status of the Species and Critical Habitat
 - Effects of the Proposed Action
 - Direct and Indirect, Interrelated and Interdependent, Cumulative
 - Integration and Synthesis of Effects
 - Conclusions and Determinations
 - Literature Cited
 - Technical Appendices/Enclosures
 - EFH Assessment
 - CESA-specific documentation

Schedule

- Environmental Baseline and Proposed Action
 - Ongoing (multiple iterations)
- Introduction and Background, Status of the Species and Critical Habitat
 - June 2022 (Sonoma Water and Corps review)
- Complete Administrative Draft BA
 - July 2022 (Sonoma Water and Corps review)
- Complete Draft BA
 - September 2022 (NMFS and CDFW)
- Support to Sonoma Water and Corps (in consultation with NMFS and CDFW) to complete BO and obtain CESA coverage
 - October 2022 through September 2023

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