



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Pacific Southwest Region
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2606
Sacramento, California 95825-1846

In reply refer to:
FWS R8/FAC

August 3, 2016

To: Regional Director, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region
Acting Director, California Department of Water Resources

From: Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 8 

Subject: Response to Request for Reinitiation of Section 7 Consultation Addressing Coordinated Long-Term Operation of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP)

We are in receipt of your request to reinitiate section 7 consultation on the Coordinated Long-Term Operation (LTO) of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP). We agree with your assessment that reinitiation of consultation is required under the terms of the 2008 Biological Opinion and the reinitiation regulations, due to multiple dry years and new information. We recognize that this new information is demonstrating the increasingly imperiled state of the Delta Smelt and its designated critical habitat, and that emerging science shows the importance of outflows to all life stages of Delta Smelt and to maintaining the primary constituent elements of designated critical habitat.

We agree with your proposal to develop a Consultation Agreement this fall that will outline the tasks, process and schedule to complete a Biological Assessment and Biological Opinion. We recognize that this type of operations consultation is most efficiently done with participation of Reclamation, DWR, NMFS, DFW and the Service. As required, the consultation will utilize the best scientific and commercial information available, and we agree that the consultation process should be informed by the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program and Collaborative Adaptive Management Team process, the Delta Science Program, and the Interagency Ecological Program as appropriate.

Thank you for your request to reinitiate consultation and your letter regarding the Delta Smelt Resiliency Strategy. We appreciate your efforts towards providing additional protections for the imperiled Delta Smelt and its designated critical habitat.