Coleman National Fish Hatchery
Adaptive Management Plan

Scoping Report

October 2012

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double-sided printing.

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Contents

Appendices

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1.0 Summary of Scoping Process

The scoping process is used to solicit early input from stakeholders on issues, available information, and potential activities to be addressed in the Coleman National Fish Hatchery (CNFH) Adaptive Management Plan (AMP). This report is an overview of the written and verbal public scoping comments received on the AMP effort. The information provided during scoping is used to help shape the temporal and geographic range and scope of analysis for various resources that may be affected by the project. The purpose of this report is two-fold: 1) it helps establish a written record of all scoping activities and 2) it provides an opportunity to organize comments from stakeholders that will help those developing the AMP refine issues, define the area of study, and identify additional information not currently available to the AMP process.

2.0 Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan Background

Shasta Dam and the Coleman National Fish Hatchery

Shasta Dam was built between 1937 and 1945 as part of the Central Valley Project. The construction on the Sacramento River north of Redding, California resulted in the loss of 187 miles of salmonid habitat accounting for loss of 50% of all salmon spawning and 100% loss for Winter Chinook salmon. The Coleman National Fish Hatchery (CNFH) was built in 1942 in the lower Battle Creek watershed, five miles from the confluence with the Sacramento River, as partial mitigation for the adverse impacts to salmonids from Shasta Dam. The CNFH is one of a few hatcheries built outside of the watershed where the impacts it is intended to mitigate for occur. CNFH releases approximately twelve million juvenile Fall-Run Chinook salmon, one million juvenile late Fall Run Chinook salmon, and six-hundred thousand juvenile Steelhead.

Restoration in the Battle Creek Watershed

Battle Creek is an important tributary to the Sacramento River. It offers geologic and hydrologic conditions capable of supporting threatened and endangered salmonids. To facilitate this potential, an effort called the Battle Creek Salmon & Steelhead Restoration Project was initiated to restore approximately 42 miles of habitat on Battle Creek and 6 miles on Battle Creek tributaries. Actions associated with the restoration effort have focused on modifications of the Pacific Gas and Electric's Battle Creek hydroelectric project facilities and operations to improve in-stream flows and fish passage. The goal is to provide restoration enhancements while continuing to provide clean, renewable energy production. Adaptive management is an integral part of the restoration project to ensure that the goals are met.

Need for Adaptive Management

The Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and local stakeholders all recognize the need for adaptive management at the CNFH as it relates to potential impacts on the Restoration Project located upstream of the CNFH.

Adaptive management is needed for CNFH to address "scientific uncertainties" that underlie all aspects of Battle Creek fisheries management, including the interactions between the Restoration Project and CNFH. Adaptive management is the preferred methodology for incorporating uncertainties into decision-making. While a thorough AMP has been developed for the Restoration Project, no AMP currently exists for the CNFH.

The CNFH Adaptive Management Plan

The CNFH-AMP will identify, study, and evaluate uncertainties regarding the operation of a large-scale fish hatchery in a watershed that includes restoration efforts for natural salmonid populations. The goal of the CNFH-AMP will be to: (1) monitor effects of CNFH activities on Battle Creek, (2) implement adaptive management in coordination with the Restoration Project AMP, and (3) ensure that CNFH activities are compatible with both the objectives of the Restoration Project and the legally mandated goals of the CNFH, including but not limited to those in the CALFED Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). Through the CNFH-AMP, responsible agencies and stakeholders will gain an improved understanding of the Battle Creek watershed that will enable them to better assess whether an alternative management approach to managing the CNFH would achieve the goals and objectives of both the Restoration Project and the CNFH.

The CNFH-AMP will complement the Restoration Project AMP so that salmon and steelhead restoration in Battle Creek and production of salmon and steelhead at CNFH will be adaptively managed through a coordinated process. Together, the Restoration Project AMP and the CNFH-AMP will form a cooperative framework for adaptive management in Battle Creek that coordinates adaptive management under both plans. Technical teams for both the Restoration Project AMP and CNFH-AMP will participate in any additional technical and scientific reviews of the Restoration Project or CNFH. Using a watershed approach, the results of the reviews will be applied to each of the adaptive management programs, including necessary adjustments to accommodate the findings relevant to the individual programs.

The CNFH-AMP will include, at a minimum: goals, objectives, conceptual models, uncertainties, monitoring and data assessment approaches, specification of focused studies, description of decision-making process, funding prioritization, and other elements typical of formal adaptive management. This plan will provide for monitoring and adaptive management of CNFH operations and facilities to ensure that these operations and facilities are compatible with the restoration of populations of salmon and steelhead in Battle Creek and the natural ecosystem processes on which these populations depend.

3.0 Notification Process and Meetings

To achieve the scoping objectives stated in section 1.0, the public was notified of the proposed action and invited to attend a public scoping meeting where their input was solicited. The public was encouraged to provide comments in writing throughout the scoping period or verbally during the public meeting. The formal scoping process for the CNFH AMP began with the notice of a public scoping meeting mailed to the AMP stakeholder list (Appendix A) on May 17, 2012, and the publication of an advertisement in the Redding Record Searchlight and the Red Bluff Daily News on May 17, 2012 (proof of publication Appendix B); the public scoping process concluded on June 25, 2012. In addition, a news release was placed on the Reclamation website homepage.

Scoping Meetings

Interested parties were encouraged to attend a public scoping meeting at the Red Bluff Community Center on May 24 from 6-8 pm. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting and were provided an opportunity to submit oral or written comments on the project. The meeting was structured as shown the following agenda:

- Introductions
- Meeting ground rules
- What is scoping?
- Project background:
    - Coleman National Fish Hatchery
    - Battle Creek Restoration Project
    - Adaptive management planning
- Public scoping comments

The meeting included a presentation on the development of the AMP (Appendix D) as well as informational displays (Appendix E).

Stakeholder Outreach during the AMP Process

Public involvement is expected to continue beyond the formal scoping process. Reclamation is committed to working with the public and interest groups in public informational meetings to continue to develop and refine the AMP process issues and outcomes. Additionally, Reclamation has initiated contact with the Tehama County Board of Supervisors and agreed to provide periodic updates to the Board as the AMP development proceeds. Once the draft AMP has been prepared, it will be made available to all interested parties for review. The availability of the draft AMP will be announced and a public comment period will follow to allow the public opportunity to comment on the AMP. At the conclusion of this public comment period, Reclamation will address the comments and finalize the CNFH-AMP.

4.0 Summary of Comments

Individual verbal and written comments were received during the scoping process. Sixteen people provided verbal comments during the public scoping meeting and two letters were received during the formal scoping period. Letters were received from:

- Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy (June 6, 2012)
- Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy (June 19, 2012).

Comments received during scoping generally fall into the following groups:

- General support for the CNFH-AMP process
- Concern about the cost of restoration
- Concern about the AMP either closing or substantially reducing CNFH operation
- Loss of PG&E hydropower generation due to AMP implementation
- Need to create nexus between watershed/hatchery activities and stressors on salmonids in other parts of the system
- AMP governance
- Economic impact to the region of AMP implementation.

A complete list of verbal comments as they were recorded at the scoping meeting is included as Appendix F. Written comments are included as Appendix G.

Appendix A: Meeting Announcement Mailed to Stakeholder List

Public Scoping Meeting for the Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan

The Bureau of Reclamation will hold a public scoping meeting to solicit input on the Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan (CNFH AMP) as it relates to potential impacts on the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project (Restoration Project). Adaptive management is needed for CNFH in order to address "scientific uncertainties" that underlie aspects of Battle Creek fisheries management, including the interactions between the Restoration Project and CNFH.

The Restoration Project is a collaborative effort between Reclamation, Pacific Gas & Electric Company, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, various resource agencies and local stakeholders to restore approximately 48 miles of habitat in Battle Creek and its tributaries for threatened and endangered Chinook salmon and Central Valley steelhead, while maintaining clean and renewable energy production at the Battle Creek Hydroelectric Project.

The CNFH AMP will acknowledge, identify, study and evaluate uncertainties regarding the operation of a large-scale fish hatchery in a watershed being restored for natural salmonid populations. The goal of the CNFH AMP will be to: (1) monitor effects of CNFH activities on Battle Creek, (2) implement adaptive management actions in coordination with the Restoration Project AMP, and (3) ensure that CNFH activities are compatible with the objectives of the Restoration Project, in addition to legally mandated goals of the CNFH, including but not limited to those in the CALFED Environmental Impact Statement. Through the CNFH AMP, responsible agencies and stakeholders will gain an improved understanding of the Battle Creek watershed that will enable them to better assess whether an alternative management approach to managing the CNFH would achieve the goals and objectives of both the Restoration Project and the CNFH.

The public scoping meeting will be held:

Red Bluff
Thursday, May 24, 2012, 6–9 p.m.
Red Bluff Community Center, Westside Room
1500 South Jackson Street

The scoping meeting will be the first of three opportunities for the public to comment on the CNFH AMP during its 18-month development timeframe.

Written comments associated with the CNFH AMP scoping process must be received by close of business Monday, June 25, 2012, and should be mailed to Trang Nguyen, Battle Creek Technical Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region, 2800 Cottage Way, MP-200, Sacramento, CA 95825; faxed to 916-978-5345; or emailed to trangnguyen@usbr.gov.

Appendix B: Sample of Newspaper Ads for Public Meetings

Public Scoping Meeting Planned for the Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation will hold a public scoping meeting to solicit input on the Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan (CNFH AMP) as it relates to potential impacts on the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project. Adaptive management is needed for CNFH in order to address "scientific uncertainties" that underlie aspects of Battle Creek fisheries management, including the interactions between the Restoration Project and CNFH.

The public scoping meeting will be held:

- **Thursday, May 24, 2012, 6–9 pm**
  Red Bluff Community Center, Westside Room
  1500 South Jackson Street, Red Bluff, CA 96080

Written comments associated with the AMP scoping process must be received by close of business on June 23, 2012, and should be mailed to Trang Nguyen, Battle Creek Technical Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825; faxed 916-978-5345; or e-mailed to trangnguyen@usbr.gov.

Appendix C: Proof of Newspaper Advertisement

Advertising Order Confirmation

Red Bluff Daily News
PO Box 220, Red Bluff, CA 96080 • 530-527-2151 • Adjudicated 1955 - No. 9670

Ad Order Number
0004428305

Customer
URS Corporation

LEGAL NOTICE

Public Scoping Meeting Planned for the Adaptive Management Plan for the Coleman National Fish Hatchery

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) will hold a public scoping meeting as part of the preparation of an Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) for the Coleman National Fish Hatchery (CNFH). Reclamation, the CNFH funding agency; is working in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) CNFH operators; and local stakeholders such as the Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy in developing the AMP.

Adaptive management is needed for CNFH in order to address "scientific uncertainties" that underlie all aspects of Battle Creek fisheries management, including the interactions between the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project and CNFH. Adaptive management is the preferred methodology for incorporating uncertainties into decision making. While a thorough AMP has been developed for the Restoration Project, no such plan exists for CNFH.

The public scoping meeting to solicit input on issues and potential remedies to be addressed in the AMP will be held:

Thursday, May 24, 2012, 6-8 pm
Red Bluff Community Center, Westside Room
1500 South Jackson Street, Red Bluff, CA 96080

Written comments associated with the AMP scoping process must be received by close of business on June 23, 2012, and should be mailed to Trang Nguyen, Battle Creek Technical Specialist, Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825; faxed 916-978-5345; or e-mailed to trangnguyen@usbr.gov.

PUBLISHED: May 17, 2012

Product	*Requested Placement*	*Requested Position*	*Run Dates*	*# Inserts*
Red Bluff Daily News	Legals CLS NC	General Legal NC-1076~	05/17/12	1
DRBDN CLSOnlineUpsel	Legals CLS NC	General Legal NC-1076~	05/17/12	1

Appendix D: Scoping Meeting Presentation

Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan

Public Scoping Meeting
May 24, 2012
Red Bluff Community Center
Red Bluff, California

Meeting Agenda

- Introductions
- Ground rules
- What is scoping?
- Project background:
  - Coleman National Fish Hatchery
  - Battle Creek Restoration Project
  - Adaptive management planning
- Public scoping comments
- Wrap up

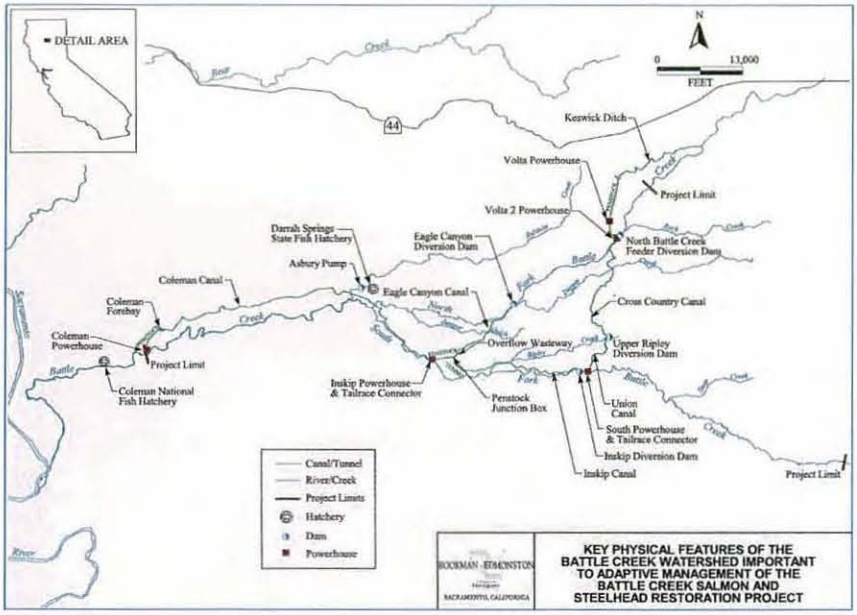
Meeting Ground Rules

- Respect others
- Listen
- Focus on Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan
- Wait to be recognized before speaking
- One person speak at a time
- Be brief to allow all to speak
- Communicate interests, not positions

What is Scoping?

- **For the public**
  - Opportunity to provide input early in the planning process
- **For the project proponent**
  - Opportunity to solicit comments from stakeholders to refine issues, define area of study, and collect additional information for plan development

The Battle Creek Watershed



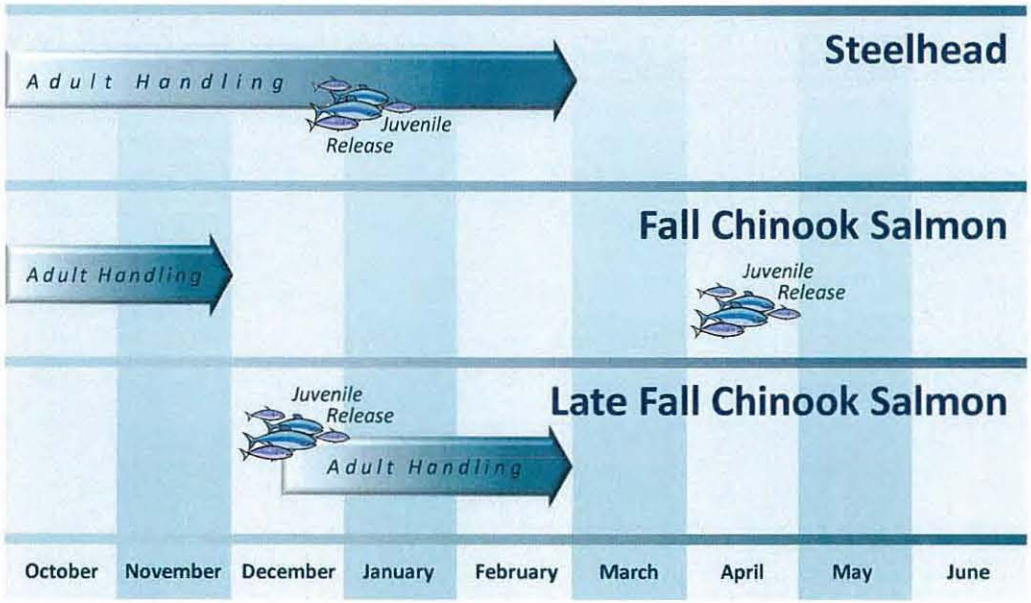
Shasta Dam

- Built between 1937 and 1945 as part of the Central Valley Project
- 187 miles of lost habitat accounting for:
  - 50% of all salmon spawning
  - 100% for Winter Chinook salmon

Coleman National Fish Hatchery (CNFH)

- Built in 1942 in the lower Battle Creek watershed as mitigation for Shasta and Keswick dams
- Five miles from the confluence with the Sacramento River

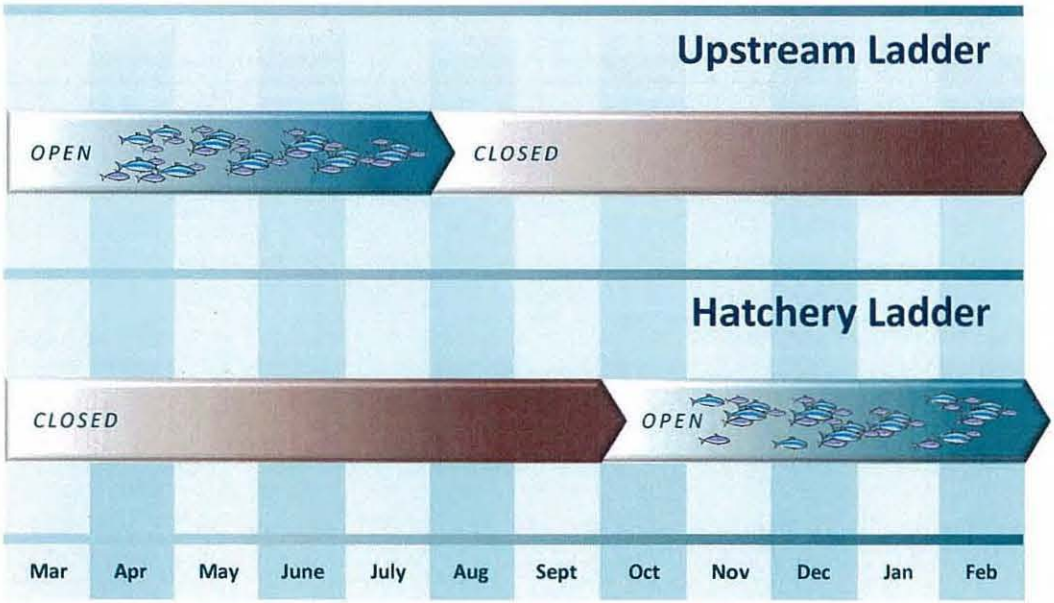
Broodstock Collection and Spawning, and Juvenile Release



Important Hatchery Operational Considerations

- Meet production/mitigation obligations
- Meet regulatory requirements
- Participation in aquatic species recovery actions
- Participation and cooperation in research programs
- Environmental education and outreach
- Integration with Battle Creek restoration efforts

Coleman National Fish Hatchery Operation of Fish Ladders

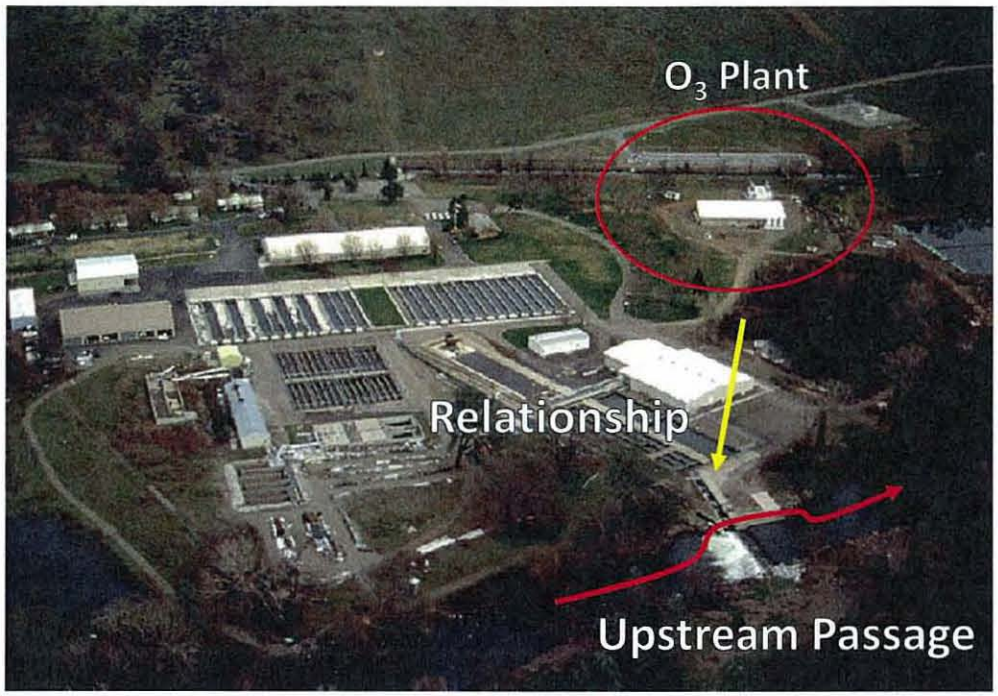


We Have Come a Long Way... Key/Recent Modifications at CNFH

- **1993-2002:**
  Construction of Ozone Water Treatment Plant
- **2007-2008:**
  Modification of barrier weir and fish ladders
- **2008-2010:**
  Modification of facility water delivery system

Construction of Ozone Water Treatment Facility

Largest O_3 Plant for
Fish Culture in the World



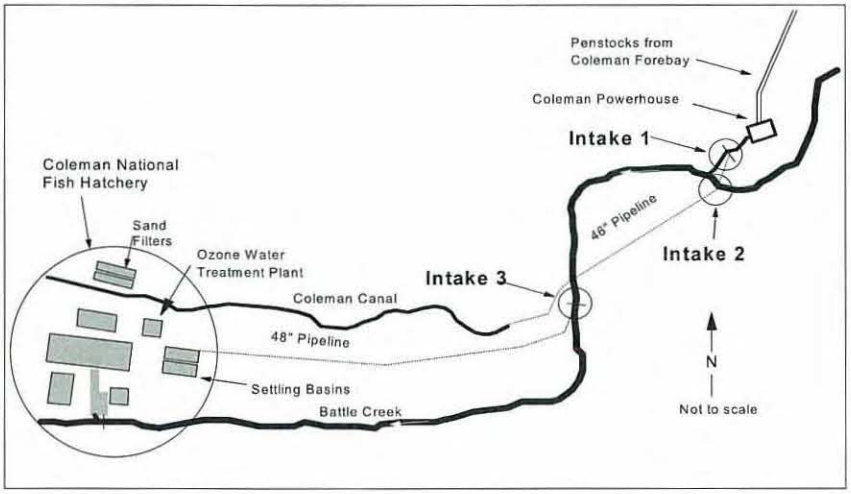
Modification of Barrier Weir and Fish Ladder

Design Criteria

- Ladder Design Criteria: Provide passage up to 3,000 cfs creek flow (overtopped at that flow)
- Ladder and attraction flow up to 10-percent of creek flow (i.e., 300 cfs) -- consistent with design criteria for the Battle Creek Restoration Project

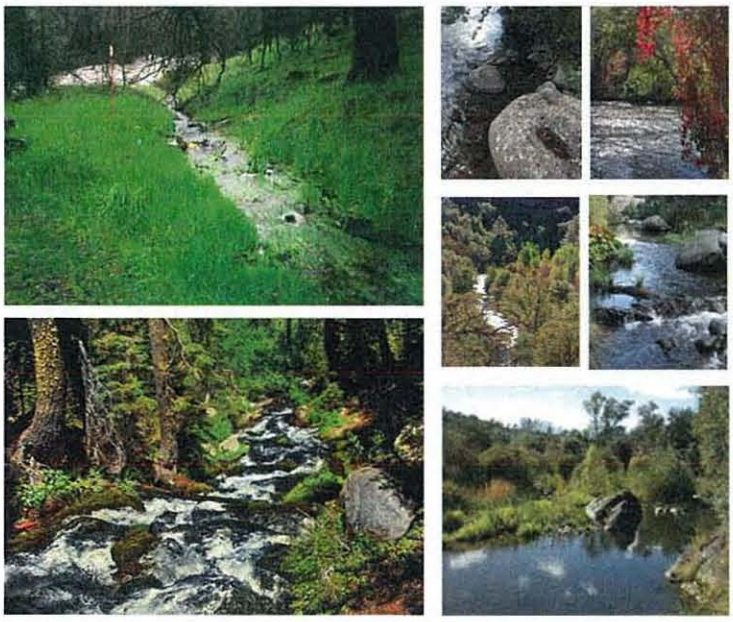
Blocks Undesired Passage

Water Supply Intake Structures



Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project - Background

Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project - Overview



BATTLE CREEK SALMON & STEELHEAD RESTORATION PROJECT

GREATER BATTLE CREEK WATERSHED WORKING GROUP

PROJECTS WITHIN THE BATTLE CREEK WATERSHED

LANDOWNERS

PUBLIC

STAKEHOLDERS

BATTLE CREEK WATERSHED CONSERVANCY

'Restore Anadromous Fish Habitat – Minimize Loss of Hydropower Production'

1999 Memorandum of Understanding
USFWS – PG&E – NMFS – Reclamation – DFG

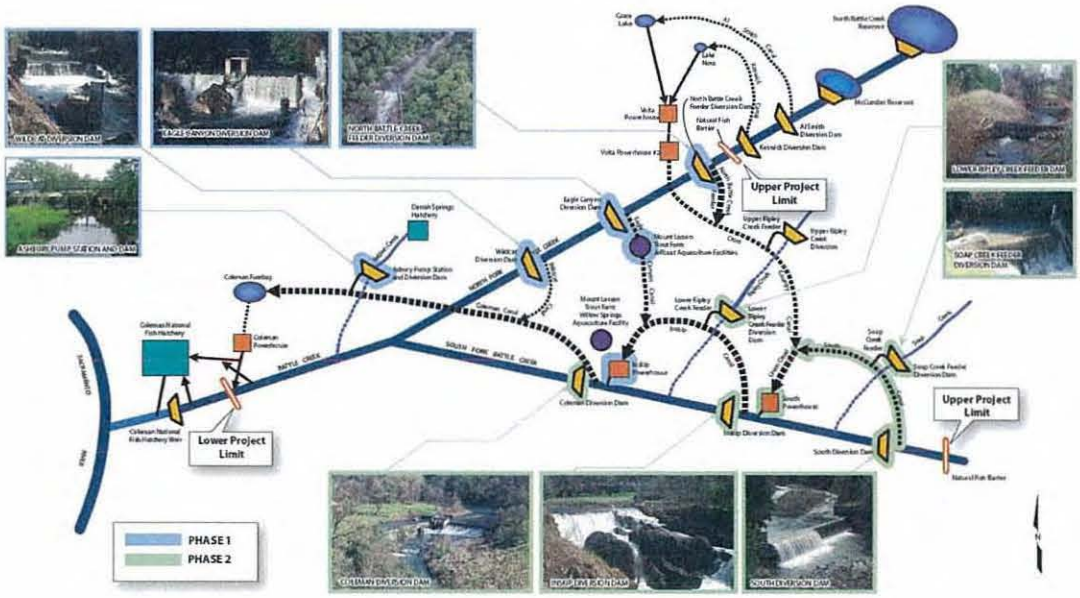
PROJECT MANAGEMENT
Project Management Team (PMT)
Project Manager: Reclamation
Technical Teams
Environmental Compliance
Design/Engineering
Construction
Schedule
Budget

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT
Adaptive Management
Policy Team Manager: USFWS
Adaptive Management
Technical Team Manager: DFG

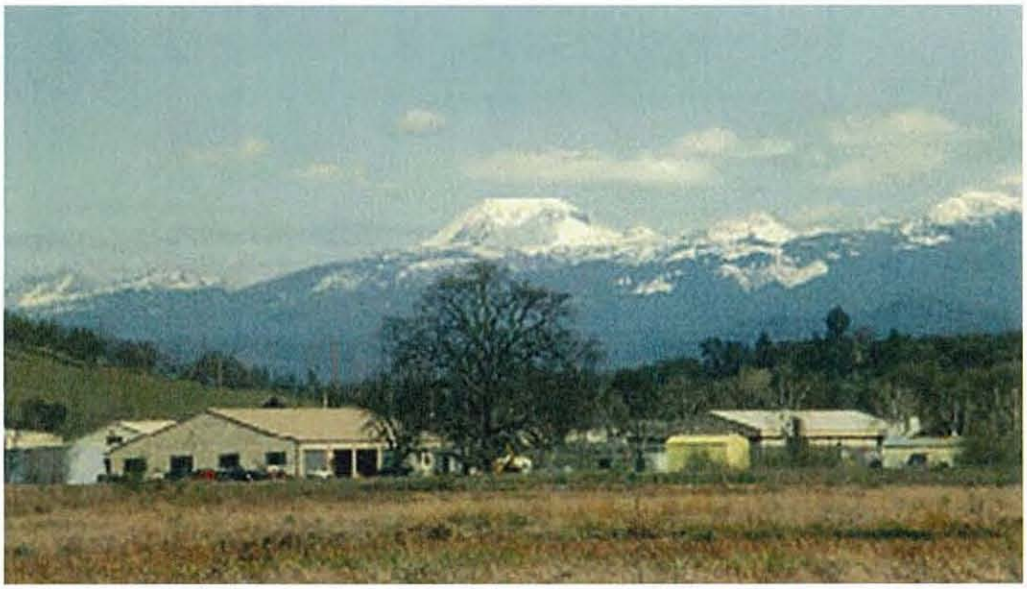
FERC LICENSE AMENDMENT
Manager: PG&E
Construction Easement
Landowner Agreements

FUNDING SOURCES:
- CALFED/California Bay Delta Authority
- The Packard Foundation via The Nature Conservancy
- California Department of Fish and Game
- California Wildlife Conservation Board
- California Department of Transportation
- Iron Mountain Mine Trustee Council
- Recovery Act

Restoration Project Phases and Status



CNFH Adaptive Management Plan



> "We do not learn from a system that is constant. This is not serious if the system is known, is static, and presents no surprises. But resource systems are exactly the opposite. They are known only very partially, which will always be so; they are dynamic and they produce endless surprises –from the collapse of fisheries to the reemergence of other ecosystems. And the act of management and harvesting changes the fundamental structure of the resource itself."

Carl Walters, 1986,
Adaptive Management of Renewable Resources.

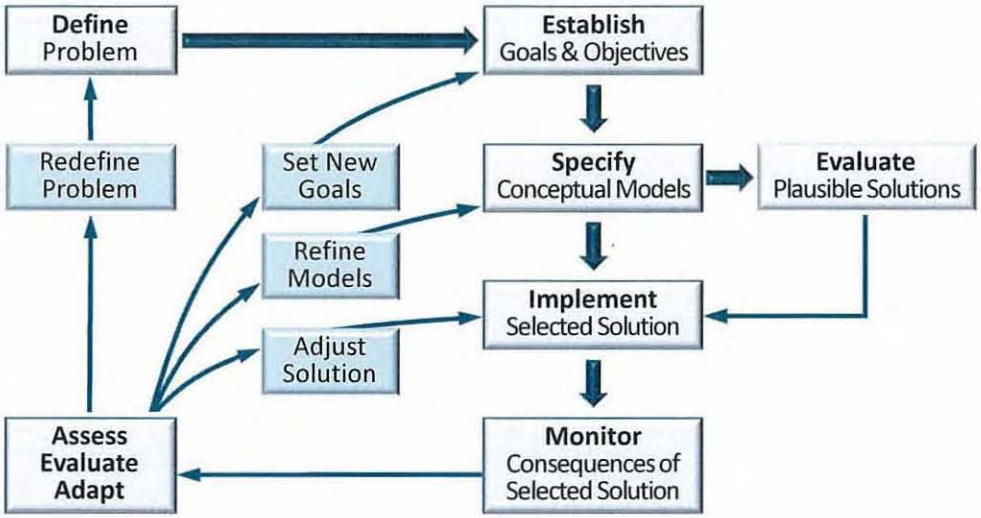
What is Adaptive Management?

- One type of management strategy
- Process that integrate science practices and principles into management system
- Most often considered for use in ecological systems where
  - Conflicts exist
  - The stakes are high
  - There is uncertainty about the best way to proceed

CNFH Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) Purpose Statement

Acknowledge, identify, study, and evaluate uncertainties regarding the operation of a large-scale fish hatchery in a watershed being restored for natural salmonid populations.

Adaptive Management Cycle

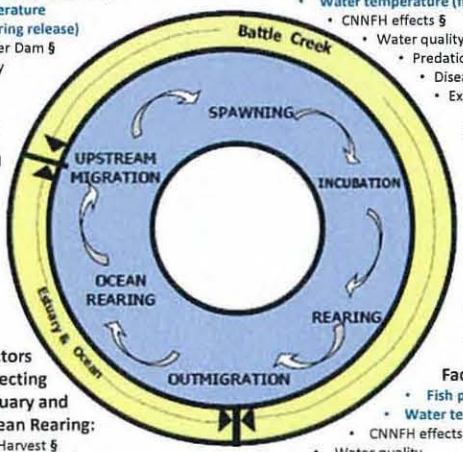


Battle Creek Limiting Factors Model

Showing Key Uncertainties and Linkages

Factors Affecting Upstream Migration:
- **False attraction (facility modifications)**
- **Fish passage at diversion dams (ladders)**
- **Fish passage at barriers (flow)**
- **Water temperature (flow and spring release)**
- CNNFH Barrier Dam §
- Water quality
- Poaching
- Predation
- Competition
- Disease and other natural mortality factors

Factors Affecting Spawning and Incubation:
- **Spawning habitat quantity (flow)**
- **Spawning habitat quality (sediment release)**
- **Redd dewatering (ramping rates)**
- **Water temperature (flow and spring release)**
- CNNFH effects §
- Water quality
- Predation
- Disease and other natural mortality factors
- Exotic species invasions



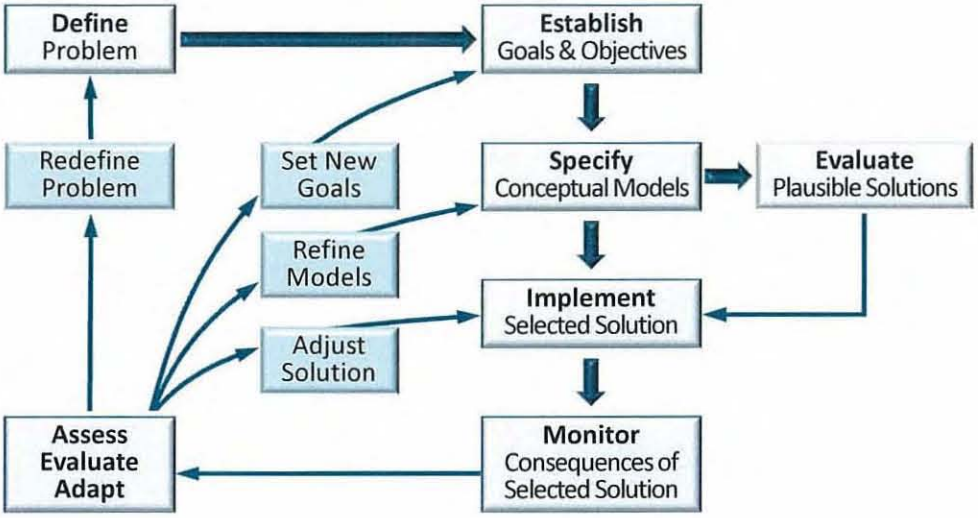
Factors Affecting Rearing:
- **Rearing habitat quantity (flow)**
- **Stranding (ramping rates)**
- **Water temperature (flow and spring release)**
- CNNFH effects §
- Water quality
- Habitat quality
- Food and nutrient availability
- Predation
- Competition for resources other than space
- Disease and other natural mortality factors
- Exotic species invasions

Factors Affecting Estuary and Ocean Rearing:
- Harvest §
- Estuary and ocean conditions

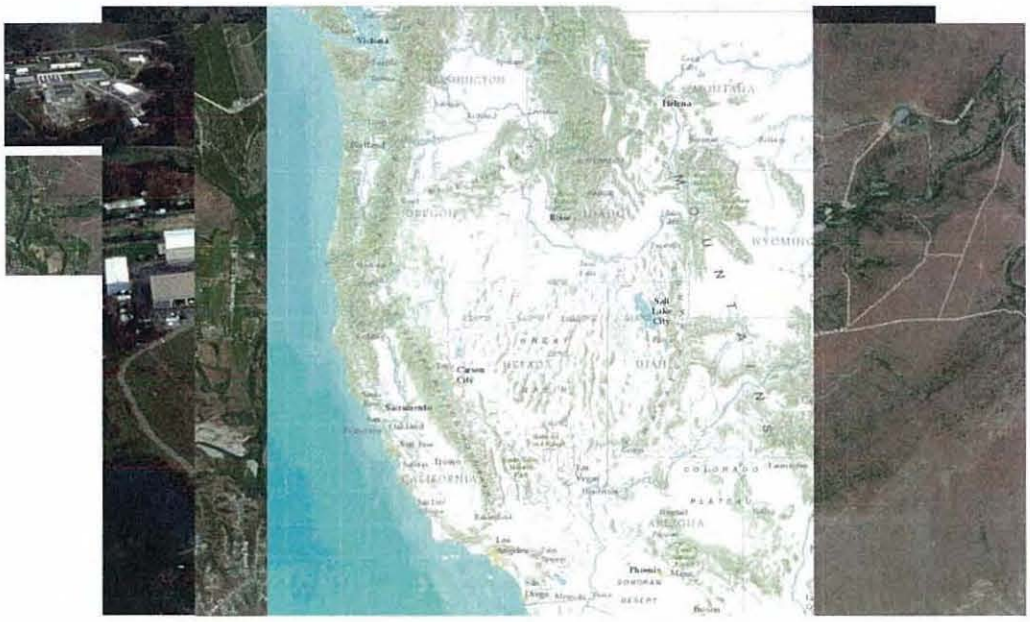
Factors Affecting Outmigration:
- **Fish passage at diversion dams (screens)**
- **Water temperature (flow and spring release)**
- CNNFH effects §
- Water quality
- Food and nutrient availability
- Predation
- Competition
- Disease and other natural mortality factors

- *Factors in* **bold blue** *are addressed by Restoration Project*
- *§ indicates factors addressed through linkages to other programs*

Adaptive Management Cycle



Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan - Scope



AMP Draft Outline

- Project description
- Describe adaptive management process
- Identify priority problems
- Describe action alternatives
- Describe recommended studies
- Identify linkages to other programs

CNFH AMP Development Process

- Consultants to the Lead agency develop the plan with advice from Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Input/review from Science Panel
- Public review and comment
- Finalize AMP

Critical AMP Milestones

- **May/June 15 2012:**
  Draft AMP outline
- **Dec/Jan 2013:**
  Administrative draft AMP
- **April/May 2013:**
  Public review and comment on draft AMP
- **July/Sept 2013:**
  Final AMP released

Scoping Comments

- Focus comments on CNFH AMP
- Verbal comments
  - State your name
  - Provide comment
  - Make sure it is captured correctly
- Written comments
  - Leave them in comment box OR
  - Mail them (fold, staple, stamp)
- E-mail them to trangnguyen@usbr.gov

Thank you.

Appendix E: Scoping Meeting Informational Displays

Battle Creek Limiting Factors Model

Showing Key Uncertainties and Linkages

Factors Affecting Upstream Migration:

- **False attraction (facility modifications)**
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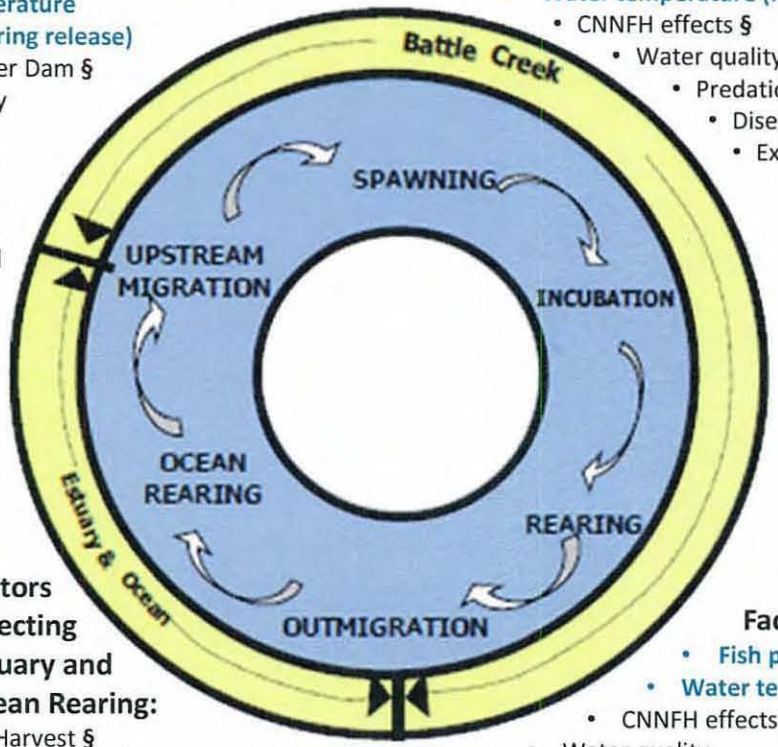

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- Exotic species invasions

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Factors Affecting Outmigration:

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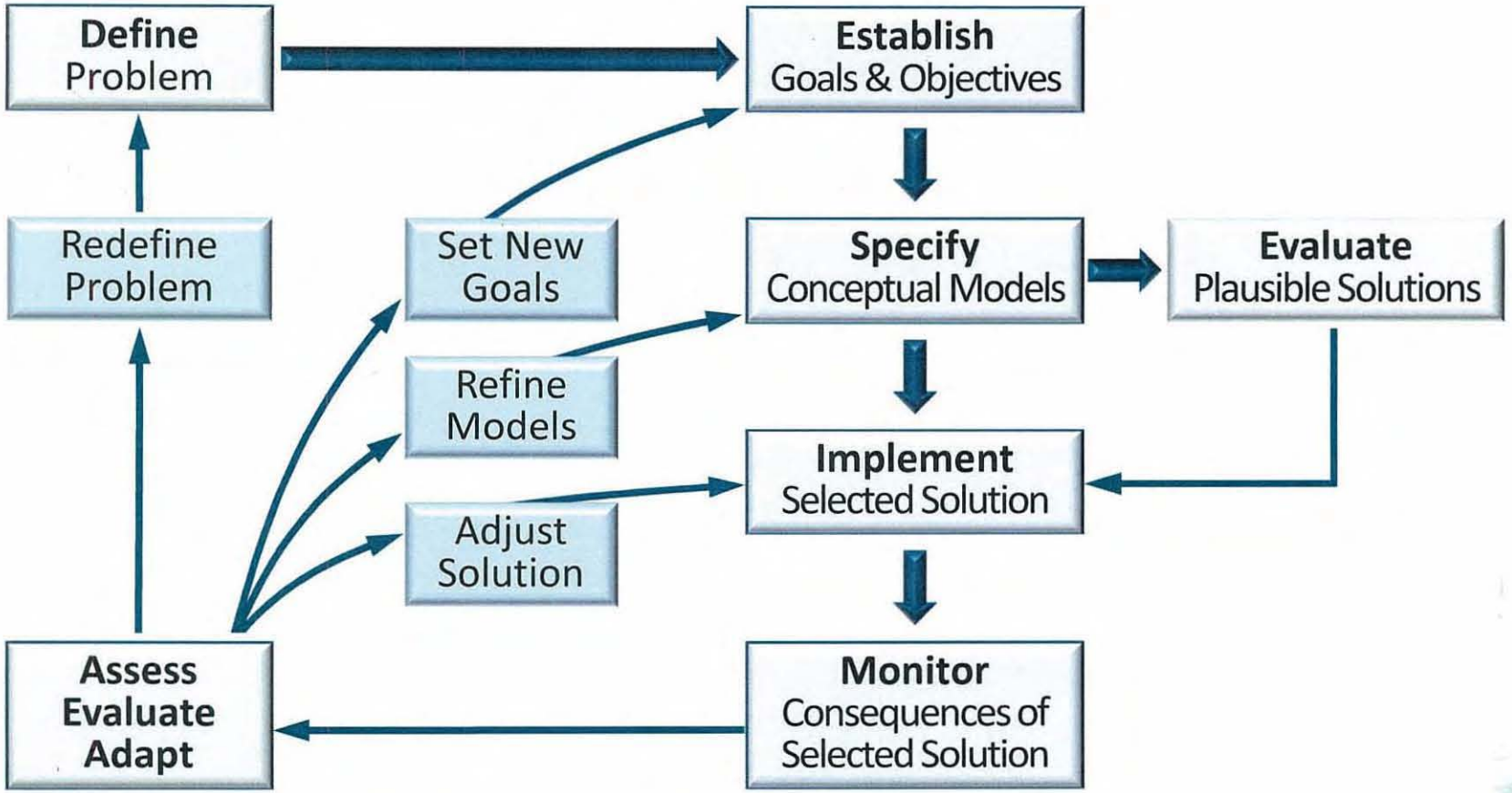
Adaptive Management Cycle



BATTLE CREEK SALMON & STEELHEAD RESTORATION PROJECT

GREATER BATTLE CREEK WATERSHED WORKING GROUP

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FERC LICENSE AMENDMENT
Manager: PG&E
Construction Easement
Landowner Agreements

FUNDING SOURCES:
- **CALFED/California Bay Delta Authority**
- **The Packard Foundation via The Nature Conservancy**
- **California Department of Fish and Game**
- **California Wildlife Conservation Board**
- **California Department of Transportation**
- **Iron Mountain Mine Trustee Council**
- **Recovery Act**

Appendix F: Verbal Scoping Meeting Comments Matrix

Date	Commenter/ Affiliation	Comment
May 24, 2012	Public	How long will the monitoring go on?
May 24, 2012	Public	Will hatchery operations be shut down during AMP planning or implementation?
May 24, 2012	Public	How will lost power be replaced?
May 24, 2012	Public	Consider economic realities during plan development.
May 24, 2012	Public	Need to link these loses in Battle Creek and the hatchery to the system loses (Delta pumps)
May 24, 2012	Public	Spending $130 million on salmon is stupid.
May 24, 2012	Public	Will the hatchery be there when you get finished?
May 24, 2012	June Cooper/Tea Party	Coordinate with Board of Supervisors so they know what you are doing in Battle Creek.
May 24, 2012	June Cooper/Tea Party	Why are the gates now locked on PG&E facilities and dams?
May 24, 2012	Public	Who will be in operational control of this plan (governance)?
May 24, 2012	Public	How do you keep the bias out of the AMP? Starting from a point that already seems biased because you are assuming the hatchery stays. How is bias controlled if bias exists within those making the decisions about the plan?
May 24, 2012	Public	Will the AMP acknowledge mitigation requirements fulfilled by the hatchery?
May 24, 2012	Public	Dams shouldn't be removed to meet ESA requirements.
May 24, 2012	Tom Knight/Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy	Supporting of AMP for restoration project and supportive of role of the hatchery; support funding for continued efforts to make them work together more efficiently. Hatchery plays a significant role in restoration of wild fish in Battle Creek.
May 24, 2012	Public	More auto dealerships in Red Bluff.
May 24, 2012	Public	Upstream restoration project may not be the best priority use for dollars in Tehama County.
May 24, 2012	Scott Ferris/ fishing guide	Advocate for anadromous fish restoration. Support AMP for hatchery and request you look at big picture for future generations. CNFH probably the best investment we have made to mitigate impacts from Shasta and Keswick. Best bang for the buck when you compare to other things that didn't work. Stop picking on Coleman and start working together.
May 24, 2012	Public	If we can't get the fish safely through the Delta, it doesn't make any difference what we do here.

Appendix G: Written Scoping Comments

Public Comments on the CNFH AMP, May 2012

Submitted by the Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy

The Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy is in full support of the Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan as the key component of the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project. While continuing to fulfill its mandate to mitigate the effects of Shasta Dam, the CNFH must implement new and creative solutions to the passage of wild fish into the Battle Creek watershed. Recommendations of the Technical Advisory Board should be quickly applied to operations at the CNFH.

Tom Knight, Secretary

BCWC Board of Directors

May 24th, 2012

Scoping Comments on the CNFH Adaptive Management Plan

Submitted by the Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy

The Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project has been the result of historic collaboration of local, state and federal agencies as well as P. G. & E., Mt. Lassen Trout Farm, and many local property owners. The BCWC acknowledges the countless hours of planning and compromise that has made this project a reality. The BCWC is a proud participant in this continuing process. The removal of dams and creation of new fish ladders on north and south Battle Creek will create a more ideal environment for the return of wild fish. The critical element in this effort will be the ability of the CNFH to facilitate the passage of wild fish. How can the maximum number of wild fish pass through the Coleman National Fish Hatchery into the Battle Creek watershed with the minimal impact on mandated hatchery operations?

The Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy Board of Directors fully supports the concept of an Adaptive Management Plan for the Coleman National Fish Hatchery. In our opinion, the scientific analyses provided by fish biologists monitoring Battle Creek and formulated by the Technical Advisory Committee should be the basis for changes in procedures at the CNFH needed to facilitate passage of wild fish into the Battle Creek watershed above the hatchery. To successfully achieve the goals of the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project, The CNFH will need to actively implement suggested changes in procedures and policies in a timely manner. The Adaptive Management Plan provides the best framework for this implementation and is absolutely critical to the success of the Restoration Project.

The BCWC understands the mandated charge of the CNFH to mitigate the effects of Shasta Dam, the construction of which destroyed a significant salmon and steelhead fishery in Northern California. A re-evaluation of these goals is appropriate at this time, concurrent with the implementation of the Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project. The CNFH AMP should consider whether current hatchery operations are satisfactorily meeting the stated mitigation goals, or whether alternative strategies could further optimize the achievement of those goals with regards to both steelhead and salmon. Furthermore, with the added charge of facilitating the recovery of wild fish of both species into upper Battle Creek, the Hatchery ought to consider adjustments in policies and procedures to manage both goals.

Sport fishing and commercial fishing are vitally important to the state's economy and culture. The production of hatchery fish is important, in so far as such activities do not impede the successful re-introduction of wild salmon and steelhead into the Battle Creek watershed. The BCWC welcomes the participation of the CNFH as an active partner in the Restoration Project. How can the CNFH improve the passage of wild fish through the hatchery? The answer to that

question is critical to the success of the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project. The barrier weir at the CNFH stops more than 98% of all fish attempting to swim up Battle Creek, which means that wild fish are at the total mercy of the policies and procedures of the hatchery. The Restoration Project can only succeed if the CNFH adopts an active approach, one in which experimental changes are implemented as recommended by the Technical Advisory Board and based in good science. A higher priority needs to be given to the health of wild salmon and steelhead as they pass through the hatchery. As stated in a letter dated January 19, 2012, from the BCWC to Maria Rea of the National Marine Fisheries Service, the BCWC believes the CNFH Biological Assessment is inadequate because it fails to properly address the CNFH role in the recovery of wild salmon and steelhead in Battle Creek. Legislative mandates to restore habitat for these fish require the operations of the CNFH to be compatible with wild species recovery and natural production.

As a key participant in the Restoration Project, the CNFH has agreed to implement the Adaptive Management Plan. But what does that mean? It is the position of the Battle Creek Watershed Conservancy that the hatchery will need to modify current practices in ways yet unforeseen to maximize survivability of wild fish and their introduction into the upper Battle Creek watershed. Recommendations of fish biologists ought to be the basis of guidelines for changes in hatchery operations. Such recommendations need to be quickly applied and then studied to evaluate the resultant changes. This is the core of adaptive management.

A hypothetical example might be something like this: fish biologists note that wild fish swim upstream in Battle Creek mostly at night, while resting in deep holes and shady areas during the day. To move wild fish through the hatchery expeditiously, a night shift is added to the hatchery payroll with the result that wild fish move through the hatchery and into the Battle Creek watershed much faster than they otherwise would and there is less interference with the daily processing of returning hatchery fish. The CNFH AMP should also address the production of steelhead at this location and consider whether the mitigation goals for steelhead might be better suited for another location to minimize the negative impact on wild steelhead returning to Battle Creek.

Noting the behavioral differences between wild and hatchery fish may play a critically important role in establishing procedures to segregate them and reduce wild fish mortality. The ability and willingness of the CNFH to quickly apply creative solutions will play a pivotal role in the re-establishment of a wild salmon and steelhead fishery in Battle Creek.

Tom Knight, Secretary

BCWC

COMMENT CARD

Pacific Gas and Electric Company

Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan

Public Scoping Meeting

RED BLUFF – Thursday, May 24, 2012 – 6-9 p.m.

This scoping meeting will be the first of three opportunities for the public to comment on the CNFH AMP during a 18-month development timeframe.

Name: Jack Blanke

Address: P.O. Box 514 Cottonwood, CA 96022

Email: None Phone: (530) 347-6485

Affiliation: Retired

Comment (Please Print): Why is the CNFH Adaptive Management Plan even being done? The CNFH is well managed at present and to spend money on another management plan seems to be unnecessary.

Comments must be received electronically or postmarked on or before Monday, June 25, 2012.

Thank you for your participation in this important process. Please leave your form at the comment table or mail it to: *Bureau of Reclamation, Attn: Trang Nguyen, Battle Creek Technical Specialist, MP-200, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, CA 95825* or fax to: *916-978-5345;* or email to: *trangnguyen@usbr.gov.*

COMMENT CARD

Pacific Gas and Electric Company

Coleman National Fish Hatchery Adaptive Management Plan

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Bureau of Reclamation
Trang Nguyen
Battle Creek Technical Specialist, MP-200
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

REDDING, CA 096
PM
31 MAY
2012

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
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