



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
South-Central California Area Office
1243 N Street
Fresno, CA 93721-1813

IN REPLY REFER TO:

SCC-400
2.2.1.06

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mr. Erik Ekdahl
Deputy Director of Water Rights
State Water Resources Control Board
Attention: Mr. Arvin Chi
P.O. Box 2000
Sacramento, CA 95812-2000
erik.ekdahl@waterboards.ca.gov
arvin.chi@waterboards.ca.gov

Subject: Notification of Hilton Creek Flow Interruption and Rescue Efforts – Cachuma Project, California

Dear Mr. Ekdahl:

Pursuant to Term 15(c) of the State Water Resources Control Board (Board) Order WR 2019-0148, we are informing you of rescue efforts associated with the unexpected interruption of Hilton Creek flows on August 2, 2022 and on September 3, 2022.

On the evening of August 2, 2022 at approximately 8:00 pm, an unplanned commercial power outage occurred when an object struck a powerline which resulted in the interruption of Hilton Creek Watering System (HCWS) lake-based Pumps to both the Upper Release Point (URP) and Lower Release Point (LRP). Emergency Backup Pumps were started by approximately 9:30 pm and flows were reestablished to the URP by approximately 10:15 pm that evening. On the night of August 2, 2022, a total of 32 juvenile *O. mykiss* were rescued/relocated and between the night of August 2, 2022 and August 6, 2022 a total of nine (9) juvenile *O. mykiss* mortalities were collected.

During the continuing August 2, 2022 emergency operations, starting on August 8, 2022 the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), in coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), led a rescue/relocation effort with the assistance of Cachuma Operation and Maintenance Board (COMB). The *O. mykiss* that were fully dependent upon pumped flows from the URP were moved to the reaches below the LRP where gravity flows were and continue to be available. Summary reporting provided by COMB indicated that CDFW had relocated 399 *O. mykiss* and collected approximately seven (7) *O. mykiss* mortalities. A blocking seine net was

INTERIOR REGION 10 • CALIFORNIA-GREAT BASIN

CALIFORNIA*, NEVADA*, OREGON*

* PARTIAL

installed concurrent with this rescue to prevent repopulation of the upper reach. On August 11, 2022 the HCWS was reconfigured to provide continued flows via gravity to the LRP and HCWS lake-based pumped supplemental flows to the URP. This operational alignment continues to this day with the exception of an interruption on September 3, 2022 when a mechanical failure of Pump #1 on the lake platform was identified around 7:45 am. The mechanical failure had resulted in an interruption of pumped flows to the URP, while flows continued to the LRP via gravity. By approximately 11:15 am Pump #2 was primed and started with flow restored to the URP. The transient in HCWS flow can be observed at the United States Geological Survey gage monitoring location number 11125600 (<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/monitoring-location/11125600/>). There were two (2) juvenile *O. mykiss* rescued and six (6) juvenile *O. mykiss* mortalities collected in the upper reach of Hilton Creek.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact David E. Hyatt at (559) 262-0334, via electronic mail dhyatt@usbr.gov or for the hearing impaired at TDD (800) 877-8339.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Jackson, P.E.

MICHAEL
JACKSON

Digitally signed by
MICHAEL JACKSON

Date: 2022.10.26
13:51:32 -07'00'

Michael P. Jackson, P.E.

Area Manager

cc: Ms. Diane Riddle
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100
diane.riddle@waterboards.ca.gov

Ms. Mara Irby
Hearings Unit Chief
State Water Resources Control Board
Division of Water Rights
P.O. Box 100
Sacramento, CA 95812-0100
mara.irby@waterboards.ca.gov