

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Finding of No Significant Impact

Upper Sacramento River Anadromous Fish Habitat Restoration Project

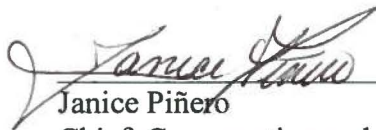
Recommended by:



Date: 2/10/2016

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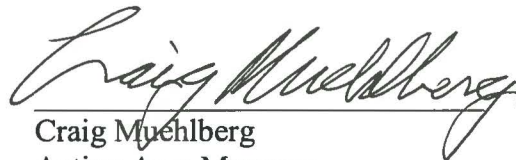
Concurred by:



Date: 2/10/2016

Janice Piñero
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Approved by:



Date: 2/10/2016

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Background

The Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA), section 3406 (b)(13) directs the Department of the Interior to develop and implement a continuing program for the purpose of restoring and replenishing, as needed, salmonid spawning gravel lost due to the construction and operation of Central Valley Project dams and other actions that have reduced the availability of spawning gravel and rearing habitat in the Sacramento River from Keswick Dam to Red Bluff Diversion Dam. This CVPIA program may include preventive measures, such as re-establishment of meander belts in order to avoid further losses of instream and riparian habitat.

Proposed Action

The Bureau of Reclamation proposes to create new side channels, modify existing side channels, and place gravel and instream habitat structure in the Sacramento River between Keswick Dam and Red Bluff. The need for the action derives from the declines of naturally spawned salmonid stocks resulting from several factors, including loss of spawning and rearing habitat. Habitat has declined due in part to the curtailment of coarse sediment recruitment caused by the blockage of the river channel by dams and the change from historic flow variability patterns. Restoration actions included under the Proposed Action will occur at up to three sites per year through 2030. The Proposed Action is further described in the attached environmental assessment (EA) and hereby incorporated by reference.

Findings

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Reclamation has found that the proposed action to create new side channels, modify existing side channels, and place gravel and instream habitat structure is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Consequently, an environmental impact statement is not required. The attached EA was prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action and the no action alternative.

Potential impacts on several environmental resources were examined and found to be minimal or nonexistent. These resources include aesthetics, agriculture and forestry resources, land use and planning, mineral resources, population and housing, public services greenhouse gas emissions, and utilities and service systems. This determination is further supported with the environmental commitments described in the attached EA.

Indian Trust Assets

The Proposed Action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum, December 15, 1993).

Indian Sacred Sites

There are no identified Indian Sacred Sites within the Proposed Action area; therefore this project would not inhibit use or access to any Indian Sacred Sites.

Environmental Justice (Executive Order 12898)

Executive Order 12898 requires each Federal agency to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental impacts, including social and economic effects of its program, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations. During site development, a transient population was present at Site 6, Cypress Ave Bridge North. The Proposed Action would coordinate with landowners, city officials and law enforcement to ensure appropriate engagement with displaced populations and not result in any adverse human health or environmental impacts to minority or low-income populations.

Air Quality

The Proposed Action will involve minor ground disturbance, the operation of construction equipment, and worker commutes that will result in temporary emissions. Temporary project construction emissions will be minimal and the release of greenhouse gases (GHGs) when compared to the scope of the current anthropogenic release of GHGs will be negligible. The Proposed Action will include dust control measures.

Biological Resources

On October 9, 2015, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) provided Reclamation with a Biological Opinion concluding that the proposed action is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the federally listed as endangered Sacramento River winter-run Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) evolutionarily significant unit (ESU), threatened Central Valley spring-run Chinook Salmon (*O. tshawytscha*) ESU, threatened California Central Valley steelhead (*O. mykiss*) Distinct Population Segment (DPS), or threatened Southern DPS of North American Green Sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*), and is not likely to destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat. Additionally, NMFS included an incidental take statement, with reasonable and prudent measures and non-discretionary terms and conditions that are necessary and appropriate to avoid, minimize, or monitor incidental take of listed species associated with the project. Reclamation will implement conservation measures for listed fish species and has incorporated the reasonable and prudent measures into the attached EA and also agreed to implement the discretionary measures for Essential Fish Habitat.

On January 20, 2016, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) provided Reclamation with a concurrence letter concluding that the projects at Market Street, Cypress Avenue, and Kapusta Open Space may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect the federally listed threatened Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*), Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus*

americanus), and California Red-legged Frog (*Rana draytonii*) and their designated or proposed Critical Habitat.

Reclamation will consult with the Service for federally listed species as other restoration areas become defined and more information is available during subsequent phases of the habitat restoration program. Reclamation will adhere to additional site specific measures.

Geology and Soils

Construction activities will involve excavation and grading, which could increase the potential for soil erosion. All disturbed soils within the project site will be stabilized to reduce erosion potential. Planting, seeding with native species, and mulching will be used where feasible.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The adherence to Best Management Practices (BMPs) that dictate the use, containment, and cleanup of contaminants will minimize the risk of introducing such products to the waterway.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The hydrologic effects of the Proposed Action are limited to changes in water surface elevations resulting from the introduction of the gravel and redirection of some flow from the main river down the proposed side-channels. The Proposed Action will be completed in accordance with permit conditions and BMPs to protect water quality.

Noise

Based on construction equipment noise emission levels and the incorporation of the below BMPs, implementation of the Proposed Action will comply with the exterior noise level standards. Noise impacts will be temporary and localized and there will be no long-term operational noise sources.

Recreation and Traffic

Impacts to recreation and traffic from construction activities will be temporary and localized. Activities that may impact public recreation areas will be coordinated with the responsible agencies.

Cultural Resources

Reclamation conducted records searches, consultation, and archaeological pedestrian surveys and reached a finding of no historic properties affected for the selected sites (Keswick Dam, Market Street South, Kutras, Cypress Avenue Bridge North, and Kapusta). Reclamation initiated consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) of this finding of effect through correspondence dated September 30, 2015. SHPO concurred with Reclamation's finding and determination on October 27, 2015.

Additional research and field work will be required as other restoration areas in the project area become defined through the design process. Reclamation will

implement the steps in the Section 106 process as outlined at §800.3 to §800.6 with subsequent phases of the habitat restoration program.

Cumulative Effects

There are no adverse impacts associated with implementation of the Proposed Action with the Environmental Commitments and, therefore, there are no cumulative effects to consider. Implementation of the Proposed Action is not expected to result in significant adverse cumulative effects, in combination with other projects, within or outside of the project area.

Public Review

The EA was made available for public comment. Reclamation issued a press release on November 25, 2015, providing a link to the EA and instructions on how to comment. The City of Redding provided comments and minor corrections and updates were made to the EA. Reclamation determined the comments did not warrant additional NEPA analysis.