

COUNTY OF SONOMA AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY REPORT	Clerk of the Board Use Only	
	Meeting Date _____	Held Until _____
Agenda Item No: _____	Agenda Item No: _____	

Department: Sonoma County Water Agency	(X) 4/5 Vote Required
--	-------------------------

Contact: Keenan Foster	Phone: (707) 547-1941	Board Date: 04-21-09	Deadline for Board Action:
----------------------------------	---------------------------------	--------------------------------	-----------------------------------

AGENDA SHORT TITLE:
Statement of Understanding for Bay Area Steelhead Recovery

- REQUESTED BOARD ACTION(S):**
1. Authorize the General Manager/Chief Engineer to sign the Statement of Understanding for the Central California Coast Steelhead Recovery Program.
 2. Authorize the General Manager/Chief Engineer to provide up to \$25,000 to retain a consultant to work with Bay Area flood control and water districts and National Marine Fisheries Service to incorporate ongoing fisheries related programs and initiatives as well as institutional constraints into the federal recovery plan for Central California Coast Steelhead.
 3. Resolution authorizing the Auditor-Controller to adjust Zone 2A Petaluma Fund Balance (\$10,000).
 4. Resolution authorizing the Auditor-Controller to adjust Zone 3A Valley of the Moon Fund Balance (\$10,000).
 5. Resolution authorizing the Auditor-Controller to adjust Russian River Projects Fund Balance (\$5,000).

CURRENT FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>		<u>ADD'L FUNDS REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL</u>	
Estimated Cost	\$ 25,000	Contingencies	\$
		(Fund Name:)	
Amount Budgeted	\$	Unanticipated Revenue	\$
		(Source:)	
Other Avail Approp	\$	Other Transfer(s)	\$ 25,000
(Explain below)		(Source: Fund Balance)	
Additional Requested:	\$ 25,000	Add'l Funds Requested:	\$ 25,000

Explanation (if required): Additional appropriation in 673301-6570 (\$10,000), 673400-6570 (\$10,000), and 674515-6570 (\$5,000). Fund Balance will be appropriated with Board approval.

Prior Board Action(s):

06/13/06: Authorized Memorandums of Agreement between the SCWA and National Marine Fisheries Service supporting development of federal recovery plans for Central California Coast Steelhead and California Coastal Chinook Salmon.

06/06/06: Authorized Memorandum of Agreement between the SCWA and National Marine Fisheries Service to support the development of Russian River Salmonid Coalition Plan and prepare biological opinions for the Russian River Section 7 Consultation (\$200,000).

02/28/06: Authorized Memorandum of Agreement between the SCWA and National Marine Fisheries Service for Development of a Coho Salmon Threats Assessment (\$200,000).

01/24/06: Approved Preliminary Memorandum of Understanding to develop a salmonid conservation strategy with stakeholders in the Alexander Valley.

Alternatives - Results of Non-Approval:
Not signing the Statements of Understanding and funding the Agency's share could affect the Agency's ability to incorporate ongoing programs and initiatives focused on water supply, sanitation, stream maintenance, and management of the Russian River Project into the federal recovery plan for Central California Coast Steelhead.

Background: Statement of Understanding Central California Coast Steelhead Recovery Program on file with Clerk.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is required by the Endangered Species Act to prepare recovery plans for federally listed salmonids. Sonoma County overlaps with three separate Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESU) of salmon for coho salmon, Chinook salmon, and steelhead. Steelhead in our region are part of the Central California Coast (CCC) steelhead ESU. This ESU extends from the Russian River (Mendocino and Sonoma counties), incorporates San Francisco Bay streams in Marin, Napa, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, and San Mateo counties, and coastal streams from the Russian River to the San Lorenzo River in Santa Cruz County. While the Russian River may support the largest viable population of steelhead in the CCC ESU, recovery of this species is tied to actions taken throughout the entire ESU.

Since the Russian River supports and represents a significant portion of the steelhead ESU, it will be critical for water supply and flood control planning to be involved with the development of the federal steelhead recovery plan. The plan will likely identify recovery strategies that will be incorporated into the conditions of permits required to perform work in rivers, streams, flood channels, and other waterways that support steelhead. Often recovery plans do not adequately incorporate ongoing local efforts to support fisheries accomplished by local agencies and non-profits.

Much of the data obtained to develop recovery strategies comes from non-agency sources and is inaccurate or outdated. This can result in strategies that are unrealistic, isolated, excessively expensive, and otherwise very burdensome on the agencies that must implement the strategies and their ratepayers. In contrast, in our region NMFS has been working diligently to bring in local expert opinion and build a coalition of public works, flood control, and water supply agencies to collaboratively build the foundations for a Bay Area Steelhead Recovery Plan. Sonoma County Water Agency (Agency) involvement will facilitate incorporation of already identified or pending Agency projects as necessary for recovery efforts as well as for flood control and stream maintenance, groundwater recharge, and water quality enhancement. Additionally, projects and programs listed in a recovery plan provide support and justification for efforts to obtain federal and state grants, and other funding.

Late last year the Agency and Zone 7 Water Agency (Zone 7), located in eastern Alameda County, entered into discussions with NMFS to explore this type of collaborative approach to the development of the steelhead recovery of CCC steelhead. Those discussions were very productive and are summarized in a document entitled "Statements of Understanding" recently signed by the NMFS assistant regional administrator and the general managers of the Agency and Zone 7. In short, the water agencies agree to provide information to NMFS in exchange for the opportunity to help develop the recovery strategies. The Agency and Zone 7 also will assist in asking other agencies in the CCC area to participate.

B1
Continued...

Attachments: Resolutions (R1), (R2), & (R3)

On File With Clerk: Statement of Understanding Central California Coast Steelhead Recovery Program

CLERK OF THE BOARD USE ONLY

Board Action (if other than "Requested")

Vote:

Background (continued):

To assist the agencies in providing NMFS data and other information in a consistent format to use in developing recovery strategies, it will be beneficial to retain the services of an organization currently involved with San Francisco Bay Area fisheries resources [such as CEMAR (Center for Ecosystem Management and Restoration), or equivalent as determined collaboratively by San Francisco Bay Area Steelhead Recovery Partners (formalized as signatories to the SOU)]. The Agency seeks approval of efforts to work with NMFS in the development of the CCC steelhead recovery plan and expenditure of up to \$25,000 to provide as the Agency's share of consultants' expenses.

The Agency has been part of discussions involving development of a steelhead recovery plan for the CCC ESU since early 2006. Largely, the San Francisco Bay Area Steelhead Recovery Partners are the same flood control, water and public works agencies, involved with preparing Integrated Watershed Management Plans (IRWMP) for the region. This effort builds on projects and funding identified under the state's IRWMP program to develop regional solutions for water, wastewater, and related resource management. The exact Agency's share of the consultant cost is not known at this time. Although the maximum individual agency contribution needed to support the effort is anticipated to be \$25,000, this amount is anticipated to be reduced as other agencies agree and sign the SOU.

REQUESTED BOARD ACTION(S):

1. Authorize the General Manager/Chief Engineer to sign the Statement of Understanding for the Central California Coast Steelhead Recovery Program.
2. Authorize the General Manager/Chief Engineer to provide up to \$25,000 to retain a consultant to work with Bay Area flood control and water districts and National Marine Fisheries Service to incorporate ongoing fisheries related programs and initiatives as well as institutional constraints into the federal recovery plan for Central California Coast Steelhead.
3. Resolution authorizing the Auditor-Controller to adjust Zone 2A Petaluma Fund Balance (\$10,000).
4. Resolution authorizing the Auditor-Controller to adjust Zone 3A Valley of the Moon Fund Balance (\$10,000).
5. Resolution authorizing the Auditor-Controller to adjust Russian River Projects Fund Balance (\$5,000).