

Ed Henke

Historical Research

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EDITED AND ENHANCED
COPY OF SEPT. 13, 2007
LETTER TO NMFS DIRECTED
TO ANTHONY SPINA.

September 27, 2007

(original letter: September 13, 2007)

Mr. Anthony Spina
U.S. Department of Commerce
NOAA/NMFS – SW Region
501 W Ocean Blvd., Suite 4200
Long Beach CA 90802-4213

SUBJECT: HISTORIC HABITAT USED BY ONCORHYNCHUS MYKISS IRIDEUS, AND SPECIFICALLY THE SOUTHERN STEELHEAD, HAPLOTYPES V AND VIII – A REBUTTAL TO CLAIMS BY THE UNITED WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (UWCD) THAT SUCH DIDN'T EXIST WITHIN THE SANTA CLARA RIVER SYSTEM WATERSHED, ONLY NON-INDIGENOUS INTRODUCED SALMONIDS IN THE EARLY 1890S.

Dear Anthony:

A concerned influential scientist provided me with a copy of a letter (with attachments) written by a James M. Kentosh, Manager for Resource Planning for the UWCD, addressed to Dr. David Boughton, Chair, Technical Recovery Team, NMFS, SW Fisheries Science Center, Santa Cruz, California, dated August 15, 2007. I found the contents of this communication very disturbing, and from my historical research perspective and that of many others, it is contrary to historical fact with the claim of non-historical presence of indigenous anadromous salmonids in the Piru Creek system—and it incorrectly identifies habitat as not being used historically by the species, although it had been used for millennia. Like many others, I have great concerns about what has already been professionally defined as to OMI's original habitat areas within the Santa Clara River system, and then being redefined and compromised by UWCD's presentation to FERC's three presidential appointees for final decision making, all of which could have additional long-term deleterious impacts on a resource that is struggling to survive, a once extremely viable resource and prolific invaluable public trust asset, the people's property. We need hard-science decision making, not political science, guiding the very future of the Santa Clara River system's fluvial life forms. Historically, the species had free access to all of the water, available segments within the entire Santa Clara River system and all other Ventura County waterways to procreate. It defies logic to state otherwise.

A major concern is possible acceptance of UWCD's erroneous pronouncement that indigenous populations of steelhead did not historically exist within the Santa Clara River system with statements such as there were no "true runs" of steelhead, that all of those steelhead that were caught in the early years of southern California's history were brought in by railroad car and dumped into every waterway starting in the early 1890s. There's no question a sizable number of non-indigenous salmonids were planted all over southern California into waterways of all sizes and dimensions during and following this period.

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Of additional concern is UWCD's "Pink Exhibit B" that accompanied the copy of the letter whereby they have erased the findings of professionals at the NMFS by claiming all watershed area extremities were not used as "over-summering" habitat in both the Sespe and Piru Creek systems. I one hundred percent disagree.

As I stated in prior correspondence to the NMFS, I grew up in Ventura during the 1930s and 1940s and spent many days and hours in the backcountry fishing for trout, steelhead kelts, as well as hunting in both Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. However, I didn't spend an equal amount of time in the Piru Creek watershed – around it, but not in it, but enough to report in my first letter to the NMFS of catching a small steelhead in Piru Creek just below its confluence with the Aqua Blanca, circa 1944. The Sespe, Ventura, and Santa Ynez River systems have similar habitats where I did spend considerable time. Based on the latter explanations and combined with 12+ years of historical research involving anadromous salmonids in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, including closely aligned areas in San Luis Obispo and Los Angeles Counties—with over 80 oral history subjects tied in with over 940 manuscript pages for Ventura County and over 800 for Santa Barbara County—I feel that I can speak with a measure of competence in addressing the subject of migratory and emigration habits of the southern steelhead and their progeny. This species has an inherent penchant and propensity to migrate to the watershed extremities and the perennial segments of its system to seek out desirable year-round water quality, temperatures, etc., by-passing what could later on be interrupted, intermittent segments. Such adaptive behavior patterns were developed over thousands of years to fit into a semi-arid Mediterranean type climate. Steelhead progeny in southern California survived in water temperatures over 70 degrees Fahrenheit, and higher in Baja. Numerous of these type habitat watershed extremities in both Piru and Sespe systems have been painted "Pink" in UWCD's "Exhibit B" rather than remain their natural Green and Blue. Segments of Piru Creek proper are unquestionably non-spawning, "over-summering habitat" just as many/most segments of the main water course of the Santa Clara River; Calleguas Creek; Santa Maria River; and Salinas River, etc.—all functioning primarily as essential conveyance systems for migration and emigration to/from the watershed extremities. I personally found the latter of the previous statement to be the case in major systems such as the Santa Ynez River system; Sisquoc River system; Ventura River system including to the Matilija Creek Falls, year after year; the Coyote Creek system, the Santa Ana Creek system, and through my research, the San Antonio Creek system of the Ventura River system. The only thing inhibiting further migration by the southern steelhead into the watershed was encountering natural barriers or low-water conditions. The southern steelhead obviously used segments of the main courses of the southern California's rivers and streams as both spawning habitat and "over-summering"/rearing habitat.

I'd like to now delve directly into UWCD's claims that non-indigenous species of salmonids planted in Ventura County beginning in the early 1890s via the railroad car included steelhead stocks from the northern California area. Soon to follow will be citations taken from various State of California-created documents, except for the first one, which refute UWCD's claim that

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steelhead in the Santa Clara River system were all introduced from stocks in northern California (Haplotypes I and III), thus discrediting all claims by UWCD that steelhead that were caught in great numbers from the 1890s on were all non-indigenous, not "true runs," and didn't "volitionally" enter Piru Creek, as their various representatives have stated.

To further the discussion on the railroad car fish plantings, bringing all species of salmonids to plant in Ventura County streams in the 1890s, there is absolutely no documentation that steelhead were among any group of the fish in a railroad car during this timeframe. The term "steelhead" originated in approximately 1899. Following that timeframe, the name "steelhead salmon" was even used. Farther north they used the term "cutthroat steelhead" in describing the coastal cutthroat.

The documents to follow are placed in date order of all officially recorded salmonid fish plantings to 1949 involving steelhead and other trout and covering plantings in the two specific watershed areas under discussion in the UWCD's letter to the NMFS of August 15, 2007. You will note recorded steelhead plantings did not occur until 1914. As supplements relative to this 1914 date, I have a photo of 7 steelhead caught in the Sespe. Noted on the face of the photo: Caught by E.A. Case in 30 minutes on the Sespe, July 23, 1905. Mr. Case lived on the Sespe near Fillmore. I interviewed one of his four sons, Harold Case, who was in his late 80s at the time. Also, I have a photo of two people, one holding up a nice steelhead caught at Henley's Camp on the Sespe in the early 1900s. I chose not to enclose copies of these two photos.

THE HISTORICAL RECORDS OF SALMONID FISH PLANTINGS IN THE PIRU CREEK SYSTEM AREA UNDER DISCUSSION, AND MAIN SANTA CLARA RIVER WATERCOURSE, INCLUDING THE FIRST RECORDED ANADROMOUS SALMONID FISH PLANTINGS IN VENTURA COUNTY

- January 1882 – Ventura County – Eastern Brook Trout, White Fish
- March 22, 1894 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Eastern Brook Trout
- Sept. 17, 1894 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Tahoe Trout (Lahontan Cutthroat Trout)
- Sept. 17, 1894 – Piru Creek – Tahoe Trout (Lahontan Cutthroat Trout)
- August 10, 1895 – Santa Clara River – Cutthroat Trout
- Sept. 1910 – Santa Clara River – Rainbow Trout, Loch Leven Trout, Eastern Brook Trout
- Sept. 24, 1913 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Rainbow Trout
- *July 14, 1914 – Santa Paula Canyon Creek – Steelhead
- Oct. 29, 1914 – Sespe Creek – Steelhead
- Oct. 29, 1914 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Steelhead
- Sept. 8, 1915 – Seymore Creek – Loch Leven Trout
- Sept. 8, 1915 – Seymore Creek – Rainbow Trout
- Oct. 5, 1915 – Seymore Creek – Loch Leven Trout
- Oct. 8, 1915 – Lockwood Creek – Rainbow Trout

* The records indicate that anadromous salmonid fish plantings in Ventura County first started on July 14, 1914. Quinnet salmon (Chinook/King salmon) were first planted in Coyote Creek, San Antonio Creek, and the Ventura River on July 14, 1914. On this same day steelhead were planted in Santa Paula Canyon Creek, Ventura River, San Antonio Creek, Matilija Creek North Fork, and Conejo Creek.

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- Oct. 8, 1915 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Steelhead
- Sept. 25, 1922 – Piru destination – Loch Leven Trout
- Sept. 25, 1922 – Piru destination – Steelhead
- Sept. 25, 1922 – Piru destination – Rainbow Trout
- Oct. 28, 1922 – Piru destination – Rainbow Trout
- Oct. 15, 1925 – Santa Clara River – Trout
- Oct. 29, 1925 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Trout
- Oct. 29, 1925 – Lockwood Creek – Trout
- Oct. 29, 1925 – Alamo Creek – Trout
- 1930 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Steelhead
- Oct. 19, 1931 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Steelhead
- May 1932 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Rainbow Trout, Steelhead
- May 1932 – Lower Piru Creek – Rainbow Trout, Steelhead
- May 30, 1933 – Aqua Blanca Creek – Loch Leven Trout
- May 30, 1933 – Piru Creek – Loch Leven Trout
- 1934 – Piru Creek, Loch Leven Trout
- 1934 – Aqua Blanca Creek, Loch Leven Trout
- 1935 – Aqua Blanca Creek, Loch Leven Trout
- Sept. 27, 1938 – Piru Creek – Steelhead
- 1942 – Snowy Creek – Rainbow Trout
- 1942-46 – Abadi Creek (Sespe Creek/River system) – Rainbow Trout
- 1945 – Fish Canyon Creek – Rainbow Trout
- May-July 31, 1945 – Santa Clara River – Steelhead rescued from the Santa Ynez River
- Jan. – May 1948 – Piru Creek – Rainbow Trout
- Jan. – April 1949 – Piru Creek – Rainbow Trout
- Jan. – April 1949 – Lockwood Creek – Rainbow Trout
- Oct. – Dec. 1949 – Santa Clara River – Rainbow Trout

Notes: Starting in 1917 a lot of the salmonid fish planting records only noted “county” as destination and “Piru destination.” Creeks planted not noted.

There's a qualified chance that the first state-recorded rainbow trout fish plantings that took place on September 3, 1893 from fish raised at the state's Sisson (Mt. Shasta) Fish Hatchery were stocks taken from the Klamath River system, which was obviously heavy in salmonid populations favoring anadromy. Thus, they could have been steelhead or coastal cutthroat trout progeny, but such a fish stocking date of September 3, 1893 does not take precedence over the fact that the *Ventura Signal*, on April 6, 1872, made an historical recording that a 10-pound trout (anadromous) was caught in Santa Paula Canyon Creek, this some 21 years prior to the first state-recorded rainbow trout plantings in Ventura County streams. This points to the historic presence of indigenous anadromous salmonid populations in all major accessible waterway systems in southern California, as well as in the smaller coastal systems.

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The following is a discussion and documentation cited to refute UWCD's claim of steelhead not migrating beyond Alder Creek on the Sespe, void of reaching the Sespe's watershed extremities.

- W.E. "Bud" Hartman advised me in letter form that his father (who, if still living, would be 100+ today) traveled and hunted and fished from their Hartman Ranch (lower at Cold Springs on the Upper Sespe) clear over to Big Pine Mountain (head of the Sisquoc River) in Santa Barbara County. In 1938 his father and brother bought the Potrero Seco Ranch, which then became the Upper Hartman Ranch, located near Abadi Creek. Their favorite fishing hole had been at the confluence of Abadi Creek and Willow Creek. His father told him of seeing and catching steelhead to 24 inches in this area. This would have been in the early 1900s. This location is over 50 streambed miles from the confluence of the Sespe and Santa Clara River.
- One of my oldest oral history subjects was Jess King, age 93 at the time. Jess worked for over 20 years as a captain in the Salvation Army. He was a great trout and steelhead fishing enthusiast. Jess stated that he had caught steelhead well above the lower Hartman Ranch (Cold Springs) on the uppermost segment of the Sespe off of what is now Hwy. 33. His stated location was what he called "The Narrows" near the cabin of a very close friend, Emilio (Miller) Ortega, Ventura Postmaster. He also said it was close to another structure, which I thought sounded like the old Lathrop Outfitting Camp for Pine Mountain deer hunters and trout fishermen. This would have taken place in the early 1940s, according to Jess. His estimated size of the steelhead was 7-8 pounds. This area is over 50 streambed miles from the confluence of the Sespe and Santa Clara Rivers.
- I have a photo of a number of steelhead, at least four, that were taken above the lower Hartman Ranch on the Upper Sespe at Cold Springs in the summer of 1936 by George Gonsman, hydrographer for Ventura County.
- Photo of a large steelhead kelt caught by Mary Bowman, wife of Howard Bowman, Undersheriff of Ventura County for many years. This steelhead was caught near Cherry Creek on the Upper Sespe in the summer of 1948. I interviewed Howard when he was 94.

(Note: I chose not to include copies of these two photos.)

In my previous correspondence to the NMFS on July 25, 2007, I submitted a hard copy of the following type research detail regarding the Piru Creek system. The following covers the same such detail involving the Sespe Creek/River system gained through questionnaires provided to old-timers and one through a California Department of Fish and Game source, this to identify the historical presence of anadromous salmonids and native/resident trout in the system.

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- There were 42 segments, named tributaries, forks, including the main channel, that were checked as providing habitat for salmonids. I had listed a total of 51 segments on my last questionnaires that were provided.
- All 42 provided habitat for native/resident trout (82 percent).
- Out of those 42, 21 were also marked as providing habitat for steelhead as well, or 50 percent of those marked as having native/resident trout – or, 41 percent of all the segments of the Sespe system that I had described on the questionnaires.
- One (main course) was marked for salmon. Quinns (Chinook/King salmon) were planted in Ventura County waterways in 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, and 1919. **I firmly believe the records solidly indicate that the starting date for the planting of anadromous salmonids in Ventura County waters included both the steelhead and salmon per the official records as noted on state documents, the year 1914.**
- This documented salmonid habitat of the Sespe system via my questionnaires consisted of an estimated 191.5 streambed miles of used habitat, including the main course to Abadi Creek area and beyond up the Hwy. 33 area.

Enclosed for your perusal/evaluation is a copy of my manuscript page detailing designated Habitat Area No. 3, The Sespe Creek/River System – **Document No. 16.**

UWCD discussed steelhead plantings in the Upper Sespe would have 1-3 years in fresh water and 3-5 years in salt water. I have done extensive research on steelhead longevity which strongly suggests that historically southern steelhead juveniles would reach a size for smolting basically within 1+ years, and would return as mature adults to their natal stream within approximately 2 years. The greatest number would have the following beginning life histories from juveniles to adults: 1+2; 2/1; and 2/2. Age 4 years would be the outside edge of the greatest number of returning adults. Then to confuse things involving such an estimate is the return to the system of its origin within the first year after entering the sea and remaining for a period of time, and then back to the sea. The latter was very prevalent in the early life histories of steelhead before dams and major water diversion projects destroyed their habitat. Charles Outland's letter to Mark Moore (a copy was enclosed in my first communication to NMFS regarding this subject) illustrated some of the first-year turn-arounds in the lower Santa Clara River – a Klamath River half-pounders scenario, which also included coastal cutthroats. With UWCD's projections, adult steelhead could be 6-8 years old on their first spawning run. Not so, and certainly not for the southern steelhead. With pristine habitat, or just good habitat, the majority will have reached fecundity within 4 years.

I have reviewed Crosby's book and his summer catch of 400 trout in the Upper Sespe, and it is no measure of what is there in the winter months. The kelts immediately go back to the sea, and

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the ones that arrive late and are trapped by rapidly dropping water conditions are not feeding in riffles, but are found at the bottom of deep pools and hiding under banks/rocks, not raising to Crosby's flies in shallow riffle runs. Personal experience told me that they could basically only be caught on bait. Some of his sizable fish could already have experienced some ocean time. Also, resident/rainbow trout could be in the 400 trout mix, carrying genetic markers of Haplotype V's and VIII's. We caught trout in the Upper Coyote Creek in May 1940s that were 8-9 inches long with fully mature eggs. Also, one of my old oral history subjects who was raised on the Santa Ynez River in Solvang, J.C. "Jake" Burchardi, advised me that he caught 9-inch trout with fully mature eggs in the Solvang area of the Santa Ynez River.

UWCD says doubtful steelhead habitat in Mud Creek. I have documented two Mud Creeks, one flowing into Santa Paula Canyon Creek and one into the Santa Clara River from the north/west side. Both Mud Creeks were documented on my research questionnaires for native/resident trout – steelhead progeny?

UWCD's attached DFG stream surveys were almost 100 percent confined to segments of the main Piru Creek, not the watershed extremities of its many tributary systems. Again, segments of the main Piru Creek functioned historically as an essential conveyance system for migratory salmonids to reach the watershed extremities. I'm sure the DFG personnel doing the surveys did so in convenient areas readily available by car. Again, I documented 26 named tributaries/forks in the Piru Creek system that were historically documented as having native/resident trout, and 7 as having steelhead. Also, I provided a US Fish and Wildlife Service document indicating steelhead had migrated some 60 miles into the Piru Creek system. The habitat used consisted of an estimated 195.25 streambed miles, including the main course. In 1997 an article appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* regarding a California Department of Fish and Game electro-shock study on Piru Creek that indicated that a 1½ mile segment had produced 6,000 trout per mile, for a total of 9,000 trout. The trout averaged 5-8 inches, with a few to 15 inches (Document No. 12).

When I obtained a copy of this article in 2005, I immediately contacted one of my good friends, who had retired from DFG, for his help. He advised that I should contact a Roger Bloom, who conducted these types of studies. On March 10, 2005, I contacted Roger Bloom, whom I found to be very congenial. He advised he would send me a copy of his bio-mass study of Piru Creek indicating "heavy duty results," but first he must get clearance for publication from higher-ups. I again stated my needs for bio-mass information, and he said, "Big in Piru Creek." I tried contacting him in follow-up calls, with no luck, and finally gave up. No report came from him. It would seem the political process at the top was hard at work to withhold such information. (Correspondence – Document No. 13)

As supplements to this presentation, I have enclosed some old Ventura County news article quotations and their documents, along with two DNA research papers, all of which I hope you'll find relevant to the issue at hand and helpful to final decision making involving the very future of

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this historic, invaluable anadromous salmonid resource of the Santa Clara River system (and other).

DOCUMENTS 1-9 – HISTORICAL NEWS ARTICLES REGARDING SALMONIDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES IN VENTURA COUNTY, WITH DATES STARTING IN THE 1870s AND ENDING IN 1911

- Document 1. 1870s: Fish and wildlife in abundance.
- Document 1. April 6, 1872: 10-pound trout caught in Santa Paula Canyon Creek
- Document 2. January 25, 1873: Salmon and mountain trout abound in rivers and creeks.
- Document 3. May 10, 1873: Jerked venison 20 cents a pound.
- Document 4. November 29, 1873: Quail, \$1 a dozen.
- Document 2. November 27, 1875: Fish and game – rivers and streams abound with trout,
- Document 4. April 4, 1876: Salmon 15 cents a pound.
- Document 4. April 22, 1876: Ventura River sparkling – Santa Clara River lined with timber.
- Document 4. June 10, 1876: Mountain trout now available in the markets.
- Document 5. January 20, 1877: Fishing and hunting prevailing sports.
- Document 3. February 9, 1878: Catching 100 trout in few hours in Sespe.
- Document 1. September 21, 1878: Speckled trout of Sisar (tributary to Santa Paula Canyon Creek)
- Document 6. October 12, 1878: Three kinds of trout in Ventura County streams.
- Document 5. October 19, 1878: Close of trout season on Tuesday last.
- Document 6. April 28, 1883: Estimate ton of trout caught in Santa Paula Canyon Creek and Sespe daily.
- Document 6. May 31, 1884: Trout in Santa Paula Canyon Creek average 12-16 inches. (Ocean time?)
- Document 6. August 2, 1886: Trout caught in Santa Paula Canyon Creek 22 inches long.
- Document 6. May 13, 1889: Catching 130 trout in one day on Santa Clara River.
- Document 6. June 26, 1891: Fish Commissioner discovers trout in Santa Clara River.
- Document 6. March 16, 1894: Salmon trout caught on sandbar in Santa Clara River.
- *Document 7. March 1899: Leiva and Garcia catch 14-pound steelhead from Ventura River. (I knew Henry Leiva.)
- Document 8. June 8, 1908: Lands 22-inch trout out of Ventura River.
- *Document 9. May 1911: Biggest trout on record landed from the Ventura River, 36 inches and 14 pounds. (Caught by John Reppy.)

DOCUMENTS 10-16: RESEARCH AND OTHER

- Document 10. Research paper on molecular genetics by Dr. Jennifer L. Nielsen, March 27, 1995 publication.
- Document 11. August 1, 1997: Dr. Jennifer L. Nielsen's letter of response regarding her DNA analysis of my brother Ben's trout caught in lower Santa Ana Creek on April 13, 1995, presumably washed down the Robles Diversion-Dam Canal into Santa Ana Creek from the Ventura River. Four southern steelhead progeny, Haplotypes V and VIII, were identified.
- Document 12. November 28, 1997: "Water Flow Battle Could Leave Fishery Up a Creek." California Department of Fish and Game electroshock study finds in 1½ mile segment of Piru Creek about 6,000 fish per mile, or 9,000 fish in a 1 ½ mile segment.
- Document 13. March 30, 2005: Correspondence from Roger Bloom, California Department of Fish and Game, regarding electroshock study I'd hoped to obtain regarding 6,000 trout per mile in Piru Creek.
- Document 14. A research paper on mitochondrial DNA analysis by Dr. Jennifer L. Nielsen, et al., AFS publication 1997. Discusses my brother Ben's taxidermed steelhead tails of fish he caught in the Ventura River in the 1940s that we sent to Dr. Nielsen for her DNA analysis.
- Document 15. February 2, 2004: A photo of Dr. Jennifer L. Nielsen's website showing a picture of my brother Ben with a nice 22-inch female steelhead he caught in the Ventura River near the Shell Hole in the winter of 1953. Also, discusses DNA analysis of steelhead tails of fish caught by Ben in the 1940s.
- Document 16. Copy of my designated Habitat Area No. 3, Sespe Creek/ River System, questionnaire results of salmonids historically present in this system, and other related data.

* I have estimated that the large steelhead noted in Documents 7 and 9, of 1899 and 1911 respectively, could have had life histories spanning a total of 6-8 years based upon length and weight, and could have been on their third spawning run when captured.

The estimated life history of Leiva and Garcia's steelhead could have emerged from its redd about the time the first railroad car arrived in the early 1890s in Ventura County with a load of trout to plant. J. W. Reppy, Jr., caught the 36-inch, 14-pounder three years prior to the first recorded steelhead plantings in Ventura County in 1914. I interviewed his relative, John Reppy, who was a retired Appellate Court Judge in Los Angeles and a delightful person to converse with, regarding his family history and early family summer outings at Lyons Hot Springs on Matilija Creek in the early 1920s.

A quick final discussion. Based upon research and extrapolations made from scientific studies, there are an estimated 35,667,852 cubic yards of sedimentation build-up behind Santa Felicia/Piru Dam as of 2006 – a loss of 22 percent of its original capacity of 100,000 AF, and now only a 78,000 AF capacity. Pyramid Dam has an estimated loss of 5 percent of its original capacity due to an estimated impounding of 16,383,432 cubic yards of sedimentation build-up behind its concrete wall. The total sedimentation stored behind these two dams on Piru Creek amount to a horrendous estimated 52,051,284 cubic yards of sedimentation. The sand content within this sedimentation has never reached its natural historical intended offshore littoral cell, which in turn builds and maintains our beaches. We are on the threshold of the serious effects of global warming and resultant rising sea levels with flat unarmed beaches created by years of dam building and watershed alterations by man's imperfect hand – a looming threat to coastal communities.

What contributed dramatically to the demise of the southern steelhead of the Santa Clara River system was the early construction in 1925 of the crude Butler Diversion-Dam above Saticoy, the precursor to the UWCD's Vern Freeman Diversion-Dam. I have a number of oral history subjects who discuss how both adult and juvenile steelhead smolts were lost to this crude diversion of Santa Clara River water, with both these generations of steelhead being diverted away from the main river course and out into settling ponds/fields to rot and die. Charles Outland's letter to Mark Moore amplifies on the damage done to the historical anadromous salmonid resources of the Santa Clara River system when in about 1946 they started diverting water in the winter months—prior, it was late April. There are a lot more stories to be told about the over-exploitation of the Santa Clara River system water, public trust property, that negatively impacted the indigenous fish and wildlife resources.

If the State of California stands by and allows the segment of Piru Creek below Pyramid Dam to basically dry up, they will have violated their own state Constitution. Section 5937 (and prior, 525 passed into law in 1915) state simply that fish that exist below a proposed dam/diversion, whether indigenous or non-indigenous (planted), must be kept in "good condition." Section 5937 is also an expression of the State's Constitution. Of all of the top level communications I viewed regarding this subject, under discussion, no copy has ever been noted going to the Department of Fish and Game. Even a fool who couldn't find his butt with a camera knows the DFG is subservient to the State Department of Water Resources. The DFG is a non-entity in such decision making.

A thought that crossed my mind was that part of the plan to dewater Piru Creek below Pyramid Dam, besides more water going south to the Los Angeles Basin area, etc., was to help, in part, to stop the serious sedimentation build-up in Santa Felicia/Piru Dam. Going in, and prior to the building of Santa Felicia, the planners knew very well what the average annual sedimentation rate would be per square mile of watershed area. If they didn't, they were just another group that cameras wouldn't help. We are truly a resource-disposable society.

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I hope that the NMFS will see within this documentation, its supplements and enclosures that the best decision for the resource is: 1) to not turn off the water between Pyramid and Santa Felicia Dam; 2) to release water from Santa Felicia down the Santa Clara River; and 3) to stop compromising the Santa Clara River system and instead enhance its water flow for the benefit and perpetuation of the indigenous fluvial fauna of the system.

Thank you for your indulgence.

Best personal regards.

Sincerely,



Ed Henke

cc: Honorable Kathy Long, Ventura County Board of Supervisors