

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

1416 NINTH STREET, P.O. BOX 942836
SACRAMENTO, CA 94236-0001
(916) 653-5791



February 21, 2020

The Honorable Jim Nielsen
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5064
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Nancy Skinner
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5094
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Mike McGuire
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5061
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Scott Wiener
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5100
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Senators Nielsen, Skinner, McGuire, and Wiener:

Thank you for your letter dated February 6, 2020, requesting the Department of Water Resources (DWR) to accelerate implementation of a fish weir on the Feather River and a retrofit of the Thermalito Afterbay. These two projects are identified in the Settlement Agreement for Licensing of the Oroville Facilities, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Project No. 2100 (Settlement Agreement) and fall under the set of measures that the settling parties agreed should be mandatory conditions of the license and subject to FERC jurisdiction. Further development of facility modifications to improve water temperature conditions must wait until FERC has issued the license. The Ecological Committee, to be comprised of federal and State regulatory agencies, local government entities, local Native American tribes and other non-governmental entities, will also need the opportunity to develop final plans for submittal to FERC. Development of the Feather River fish weir and many other measures in the Settlement Agreement will be required to go through the same process.

Please know that DWR shares your desire to preserve salmon and other native fish species and has taken actions to do so while awaiting license issuance. These actions include: (1) continuing fish hatchery funding; (2) supplementing spawning gravel in the Feather River; (3) conducting a reconnaissance study of flows and temperatures to support native fish species; and (4) funding the Oroville Wildlife Area. In addition, this coming spring, as part of an early implementation of the Voluntary Agreements, DWR is planning to adjust flows at the Oroville Facilities to provide a temporary pulse flows to create optimal conditions for fish in the upper Feather River.

The Honorable Jim Nielsen, et al

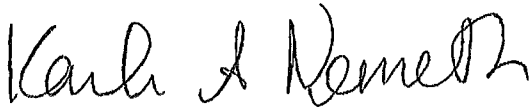
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DWR is committed to implementing actions that benefit salmon and native fish species. Building upon actions that DWR has already undertaken, we look forward to implementing the additional fishery restoration measures contemplated by the Settlement Agreement once FERC issues the new license. We encourage your support for issuance of the new FERC license to enable these and the numerous other recreation and restoration benefits included in the Settlement Agreement and anticipated in the new FERC license to move forward.

Please let us know if you have any questions or would like us to provide additional information regarding the Settlement Agreement actions or DWR's other efforts to benefit anadromous fish species.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karla A. Nemeth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karla A. Nemeth
Director

cc: (See attached list.)

Distribution List

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