



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
West Coast Region
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 5-100
Sacramento, California 95814-4700

August 17, 2016

David Murillo
Regional Director
Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region
2800 Cottage Way, E-1604
Sacramento, California 95825

Mark Cowin
Director
Department of Water Resources
1416 Ninth Street, Room 1115-1
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Reinitiation of OCAP Consultation

Dear Directors Murillo and Cowin:

Thank you for your August 2, 2016, letter requesting reinitiation of Endangered Species Act (ESA) section 7 consultation on the Coordinated Long-Term Operation of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project. We agree that reinitiation is required under the terms of the 2009 Biological Opinion and ESA regulations (50 CFR 402.16). Reasons for the reinitiation include new information related to the effects of multiple years of drought, recent data demonstrating extremely low abundance levels for endangered Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon and threatened Central Valley spring-run Chinook salmon, and new information resulting from ongoing scientific collaboration.

We agree with your proposal to develop a Consultation Agreement this fall that will outline the tasks, process, and schedule to complete a Biological Assessment and Biological Opinion. Due to staff resource constraints, however, we will not be able to begin work on this reinitiation until we complete the California WaterFix Biological Opinion and the Shasta Reasonable and Prudent Alternative adjustment efforts. Formal section 7 consultation will not begin until the initiation package pursuant to the requirements of 50 CF 402.14(c) is complete.

We recognize that this type of operations consultation is most efficiently done with participation of multiple agencies, including the Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Water Resources, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service. As required, the consultation will utilize the best scientific and commercial information available. We agree that the consultation process should be informed by the Collaborative Science and Adaptive Management Program and



Collaborative Adaptive Management Team process, the Delta Science Program, and the Interagency Ecological Program as appropriate.

Thank you for your request to reinitiate consultation. We look forward to continuing our collaborative work as we move forward on this important issue.

Sincerely,



William W. Stelle, Jr.
Regional Administrator

Cc: Division Chron File: ARN 151422SWR2006SA00268

Renn Lohofener – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Charlton Bonham – California Department of Fish and Wildlife