



April 27, 2009

Recommendations for Process Development and Early Exploration of Issues for YCWA Relicensing of New Bullards Bar (FERC #2246)

Dear Curt Aikens,

The Foothills Water Network would like to offer the following recommendations for the process development and early exploration of issues in the YCWA relicensing. In addition, we are including a contacts list for relicensing stakeholders who wish to be included in YCWA's relicensing participants list.

This letter was jointly developed and signed by non-governmental organizations and by individuals who plan on participating in the YCWA New Bullards Bar relicensing. The Foothills Water Network represents a broad group of non-governmental organizations and water resource stakeholders in the Yuba, Bear, and American Watersheds. The overall goal of the Foothills Water Network is to provide a forum that increases the effectiveness of non-profit conservation organizations to achieve river and watershed restoration and protection benefits for the Yuba, Bear, and American Rivers. This includes negotiations at the county, state, and federal levels, with an immediate focus on the FERC relicensing processes.

Based on our experience with Yuba-Bear / Drum-Spaulding and Middle Fork American relicensings, the Foothills Water Network makes the following recommendations.

Process Development

- Start the relicensing process as early as possible – this summer 2009
- Hire a third-party facilitator for study development and negotiations.
- Convene early collaborative meetings of all relicensing participants for study development with the goal of reaching consensus agreement on studies.
- Schedule at least four days per month of relicensing meetings for summer 2009 through summer 2010, for example, every second and fourth Wednesdays and Thursdays. Base selection of days on other relicensing's schedules. These initial meeting topics should include: communications protocols, study prioritization of development, modeling, PAD issues, understanding the system.
- Include US Army Corps of Engineers as relicensing participant.

Study Development

- Distribute a draft of the Pre-Application Document for early comment by relicensing stakeholders

- Prioritize study development by identifying 1 and 2 year studies or those that will need contingency studies. Use the Drum-Spaulding and Yuba-Bear study prioritization matrix as a starting point.
- First study field season should be summer 2010 so we can get in two years of study and see their results before negotiations begin.
- YCWA should base strawman study proposals off the YB-DS and PCWA studies which were recently agreed on by the agencies, ngos, and tribes.
- Draft communications protocols with the agencies, ngos, and tribes.
- To provide continuity and inform coordinated management of the Yuba-Bear / Drum-Spaulding and Yuba County Water Agency projects, use similar approaches, and the same models, as used in Yuba-Bear / Drum-Spaulding relicensings, for water balance and reservoir and stream temperature modeling.
- Expand the Yuba-Bear / Drum-Spaulding HEC-RES model to include YCWA project.

Early Exploration of Issues

- Studies should address recovery of Spring-run Chinook and Central Valley Steelhead.
- Discuss apportionment of upstream infrastructure and diversion effects on endangered populations downstream of Englebright among YCWA, PG&E, NID and PCWA.
- Foster early discussion of the disposition at Our House Dam of any additional water released from Milton, for study flows before the License is issued, and for aquatic habitat and recreational flows afterwards.
- Foster early discussion of the disposition of cobble, gravel and sand trapped behind Our House Dam.

Thank you for accepting these initial recommendations from the Foothills Water Network. We look forward to working with YCWA in the upcoming relicensing. If you have any questions, please email or call the Foothills Water Network Coordinator, Julie Leimbach 530-622-8497 julie@foothillswaternetwork.org

Sincerely,

Foothills Water Network Yuba-Bear Working Group

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 Allan Eberhart, Sierra Club - Mother Lode Chapter
 Bill Jacobson, Social Alliance Network and Sierra Salmon Alliance
 Bob Center, American Whitewater
 Brian Johnson, Trout Unlimited
 Chris Shutes, California Sportfishing Protecting Alliance
 Dave Steindorf, American Whitewater
 Frank Rinella, Northern Calif. Council Federation of Fly Fishers and Gold Country Fly Fishers
 Gary Reedy, South Yuba River Citizen's League

Steve Rothert, American Rivers

Jack Sanchez, Save Auburn Ravine Salmon and Steelhead