

KINGS RIVER FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Annual Implementation Plan

Program Year 2019 - 2020

Submitted to:

Executive Policy Committee

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Approved by the Executive Policy Committee 22 May 2019

Introduction

Following are the planned program elements for program year 2019 - 2020. These elements align with the Long Term Implementation Plan and support the creation of the annual budget.

The results will be documented in the Annual Technical Report; which will also include additional supporting documents, such as the annual population surveys and a final budget to actual report.

I. Program - Support Elements (SE)

SE1 Fishery Habitat Master Plan

In 2018 Cramer Fish Sciences Inc. was awarded a contract to evaluate previously flown Green LiDAR data, with the expectation that the resulting report would aid in planning future habitat projects and/or identifying management goals. A draft report was submitted to the Technical Steering Committee of the Kings River Fisheries Management Program (KRFMP) for review in February 2019. Comments from the Committee are being reviewed by Cramer Fish Sciences to be included in a final draft. The KRFMP will review the final report, which may guide KRFMP goals and objectives. The KRFMP will decide the best use of the report pursuant to review, cost/benefit analysis, public input and investigating grant funding sources while reviewing possible enhancement projects. Any resulting project work would not be anticipated to begin until 2020. However, a budget will be included to allow for planning, engineering, and/or permitting costs.

SE2 Public Education

The program will continue efforts to update the KRFMP website <http://krfmp.org> on a regular basis in order to provide timely public information. We will continue to aid with safety and informational sign placement in public use areas and continue to involve local school districts and universities in educational opportunities with the incubator building, annual electrofishing survey and other sampling events.

SE3 Monitoring (Baseline, Project, and Special Study)

Provide public information on river flows and water temperature, through sharing of the monthly Pine Flat Reservoir temperature profiles and the daily hydrologic and climatic summary reports throughout the temperature management period when in effect. Additional monitoring efforts will be considered as applicable in the upcoming year, which may include electrofishing surveys, snorkel surveys, creel surveys, hook and line surveys, genetic sampling or other methodologies to track species or capture episodic events.

SE4 Incubator Facility

Fisheries population surveys results suggest that rainbow trout from the incubator are present in survey reaches, which demonstrates that the incubator facility is a valuable resource to nominally increase trout numbers. Nominally, three cycles of 100k diploid rainbow trout eggs will be purchased for incubation, each season (November 2019 – April 2020) at a cost of approximately \$5,000/cycle. When ready, each round of fry will be released into multiple river locations at approximately eight-week intervals.

SE5 Reservoir Projects (Pine Flat Reservoir)

US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Pine Flat staff and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Reservoir Biologist seek to work with the KRFMP on new habitat strategies in the upcoming program year. The Program routinely commits annual funds in support of reservoir habitat projects. Project proposals for 2019-2020 are being drafted and will be reviewed by the KRFMP.

SE6 River Access Areas Partnership

Public access areas are an important asset on the Kings River that can be subject to abuse. East Choinumni Park (Frustration Lake) and the West bank of Winton Park have been specifically identified as areas where visitors illegally drive vehicles into the river. The Kings River Conservancy (KRC) has initiated a plan to improve public access areas, which includes obstructing unnecessary vehicle access into the river. In support of these efforts funds will be directed toward obstructing unnecessary vehicle access in these locations. Vehicle access restriction projects will be in cooperation with land owners and KRFMP. Limiting vehicular access in these areas will likely reduce illegal dumping and the chance for vehicle oil spills directly into the river.

II. Program - Maintenance (M)

M1 Incubator Facility

Routine operations and maintenance activities will continue in the facility. Additional upgrades to water conveyance piping and egg jar utilization /operation will be made this year. The pumps will be serviced with new filters elements purchased prior to the 2019-2020 rearing season. A sign for the incubator building will be included this year in honor of building sponsor Mr. Ted Martin.

M2 Thorburn Spawning Channel

Flood releases occurring 2016-2017 water year that deposited a considerable amount of fine sediment within the Thorburn Channel and at its head gate, resulting in reduced flow. Sediment removal and the restoration of channel function will be a priority in the upcoming year.

III. Program – Plans (P)

P1 Rainbow Trout Supplemental Stocking Plan

Stocking has been an important element of the Kings River Fisheries Management Program and will continue through 2019-2020. Supplemental trout stocking numbers are called out in the following table pulled from the ExCom approved Kings River Fishery Management Program Lower Kings River 2018 Supplemental Rainbow Trout Stocking Plan. The program will utilize program funds for the purchase of additional CDFW and or private hatchery produced diploid rainbow trout for the Lower Kings River (Reach 1 and Reach 2) per Table 1 below:

Table 1: KRFMP Supplemental stocking information 2019-2020

	Incubator Fry	Hatchery Fingerling	Sub-catchable	Catchable	Trophy
Number/Year Stocked by CDFW	0	Variable depending on Hatchery production	25,000	20,000	1,500 (as available)
KRFMP Augmentation	300,000	0	0	20,000 - 50,000	1,000 ¹
Total Annual Stocking	300,000	Variable depending on Hatchery production	25,000 ²	60,000	2,500
Trout Length (inches)	N/A	N/A	4 - 6	10 - 13 (3/lb)	>16" (>2.5lbs.) Age 2-3yrs.
% Put-and-Take Zone	30	100	70	80	75 ³
% Catch-and-Release Zone	70	0	30	20	25
Stocking Season⁴	Fall/Winter, Spring	Variable	Fall/Winter	Variable ⁵	Fall/Winter
Estimated % Angler Harvest	1	N/A	8	59.8	59.8
Estimated # Angler Harvest	3,000	N/A	1,920	35,880	1,495

1 Variable and will only occur based on supplemental stocking needs i.e. needs may shift to catchable allotment / broodstock requirements.

2 The numbers of sub-catchable trout planted is expected to vary among years in response to factors such as high flows, seasonally elevated water temperatures, and demands for catchable trout to support the recreational fishery (sub-catchable trout may be held in the hatchery and grown to catchable size prior to release depending on management objectives and other factors within each year).

3 CDFW routinely plants trophy trout in the put-and-take zone. Trophy trout produced through KRFMP funding augmentation may be planted in the catch-and-release zone as well as the put-and-take zone of the lower river.

4 In accordance with the California Fish and Game Commission policy, trout are not stocked when water temperatures are greater than 75 F (24 C). Trout may not be planted from the hatchery during periods of flood control releases or high flows that limit access to planting locations or risk staff safety.

5 The seasonal period of trout planting may vary among years in response to a variety of factors such as seasonal high flows (e.g., catchable trout may be planted at a reduced rate if river flows are greater than 2,000 cfs). CDFW base stocking practices may occur year-round.

P2 Fishery Management Plan - Extension:

The KRFMP was originally made effective May 28, 1999 and Amended June 26, 2009 under those terms to extend the program an additional 10 years. Funding for the recent

term of the KRFMP's financial commitment expires May 2019. The respective parties under the plan (CDFW, KRWA and KRCD) have worked collaboratively on an extension that will continue the Program through May 2029.

IV. Projected Budgeted for Program Year 2019 - 2020

The Fisheries Management Program funding for the elements listed below will be allocated and utilized as listed within the text of this document upon the approval of the Executive Committee.

Table 2: 2019 - 2020 Projected Budget

Element#	Description	Projected Budget
SE1	Fishery Habitat Master Plan	\$5,000
SE2	Public Education	\$5,000
SE3	Monitoring	\$20,000
SE4	Incubator Facility (eggs)	\$15,000
SE5	Reservoir Projects	\$15,000
SE6	River Access Areas	\$6,000
M1	Incubator Facility	\$2,000
M2	Thorburn Spawning Channel	\$5,000
P1	Stocking Plan	\$74,100
Total Projected Budget 2019-2020		\$147,100