

KINGS RIVER FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Long Term Implementation Plan

Submitted to:

Executive Policy Committee

Dean Marston, CDFW

Steve Haugen, KRWA

Paul Peschel, KRCD

Prepared by:

Technical Steering Committee

May 2017

Preface

This restructured document is the culmination of the prior Implementation Plans and has been revised and restructured for ease of use in coordination with the Fisheries Management Program (FMP) and the associated Framework Agreement. It is a work product of the Technical Steering Committee (TSC).

This plan contains the long term routine and projected planning activities that are expected to occur in support of the overall FMP. The TSC welcomes, encourages and expects the Executive Policy Committee (ExCom) and the Public Advisory Group (PAG) to comment on and request modification to both specific elements being considered and the general approach being taken. The TSC will revise and reissue this Implementation Plan at the direction of the ExCom.

The TSC would like to acknowledge and thank the PAG for the input that it has given in helping shape this program. This program, the activities it proposes, and the supporting documents have resulted from a consensus driven process, with each of the three participating agencies contributing its particular expertise and perspective.

Introduction

The Kings River Water Association (KRWA), Kings River Conservation District (KRCD), and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) approved the Kings River Fisheries Management Program Framework Agreement on May 28, 1999. On June 26, 2009, the financial commitments of the Framework Agreement were extended another 10 years by all parties involved, with one major funding change. For the next 10 year period, funding provided by CDFW will be in the form of grant funding to complete large capital projects, and the funding provided by KRWA and KRCD will be used to complete smaller projects, maintain monitoring efforts, and be used as local cost-sharing for any of the grant funding provided by CDFW.

The Framework Agreement includes a number of actions designed to protect and enhance fishery habitat within the lower Kings River. To help manage implementation of the various habitat enhancement measures, the Kings River Executive Committee (ExCom) authorized preparation of a Ten-Year Implementation Plan (previously Five-Year Implementation Plan) to be reviewed and updated each year by the Technical Steering Committee (TSC). The Ten-Year Implementation Plan will be revised each year by the TSC, to reflect current information from the ongoing fishery monitoring studies and assessment of habitat enhancement actions, to:

- Provide guidance and a framework for implementing elements of the Framework Agreement;
- Outline qualitative aquatic resource goals for the lower Kings River;
- Outline qualitative aquatic resource goals for Pine Flat Reservoir;
- Identify future compliance monitoring and status reporting opportunities;
- Serve as a “living document”, which will be reviewed and revised, as appropriate, each year based upon analysis of the previous year’s monitoring data, reevaluation of habitat enhancement priorities, opportunities, and constraints;
- Provide a basis to identify specific program priorities and develop technical recommendations for funding allocations; and
- Provide a forum for specific input and recommendations regarding program direction from both the ExCom and PAG through their review and comment on annual revisions to the Ten-Year Plan.

I. Ongoing Program - Support Elements

SE1 Fishery Habitat Master Plan Implementation

Focus on analysis and projects resulting in improved habitat conditions for rainbow trout and native non-game populations of fish within a 9 mile reach of river below Pine Flat Dam.

SE2 Public Education

Public education efforts will continue on through the 2017-2018 program year in the form of continued funding for the replacement of fishing regulations signs. The program will also continue to utilize the Thorburn Spawning Channel and Incubator Building as venues for public education and tours.

SE3 Monitoring (Baseline, Project, and Special Study)

Monitoring continues to be an integral program element in the form of edge habitat and electrofishing surveys, water quality monitoring and tracking released incubator fry.

SE4 Incubator Facility

Launched in winter 2012 the incubator facility was a much improved successor of an earlier rainbow trout incubation program that utilized river bank side stream incubators. Since then over 2 million trout eggs have been incubated within the facility. Diploid trout eggs have been used in the incubator to produce fish with reproductive potential to contribute to in-river spawning. Popular with the public, we will continue to purchase and incubate eggs (approximately 300k per season) through the foreseeable future.

SE5 Reservoir Projects (Pine Flat Reservoir)

The program will allocate up to \$20k annually to the US Army Corps of Engineers for reservoir habitat projects with specific benefit to sport fishes in mind.

II. Ongoing Program Support Elements – Maintenance

The implementation of activities under the Kings River Fisheries Management Program has led to development of facilities that, by their nature, require maintenance, upkeep and repairs. The maintenance elements were previously approved by the ExCom and will be implemented in the future.

M1 Incubator Facility

(Seasonal purchasing of items such as cleaning supplies, iodine, nets, basters, notebooks, bug spray, weed control etc.).

M2 Thorburn Spawning Channel

The program allocates \$2,500 annually to maintenance directly around the Thorburn Spawning Channel (includes brushing, spraying, weed eating, clearing trail, sediment removal etc.).

M3 Permits

The program continues to work toward a permit package for the purpose of maintaining existing in-river habitat projects.

III. Program Support Plans

P1 Rainbow Trout Supplemental Stocking Plan

Develop a Supplemental Stocking Plan that embraces the elements as called out in the Framework Agreement that is science based and considers influences such as: hydrology, climate, habitat, sociology, regulation, fiscal responsibility, and historical lessons learned over the term of the FMP. Once developed, this plan will be a living document that is routinely referenced annually and updated based on lessons learned or new pressures.