

Reinitiation of Consultation on Long-Term Operations of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project Aquatic Science Peer Review

About the Document

Title: Reinitiation of Consultation on Long-Term Operations of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project Aquatic Science Peer Review

Subject and Purpose: The purpose of the Reinitiation of Consultation on Long-Term Operations of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project (ROC on LTO) Aquatic Science Peer Review is to provide the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) with an independent scientific evaluation of draft sections of the FWS' Biological Opinion on ROC on LTO for delta smelt and its critical habitat. FWS requested the review to evaluate the methods and approaches to the analysis of effects of ROC on LTO.

About the Peer Review Process:

The draft sections of the FWS Biological Opinion were reviewed in two separate peer reviews.

Type of review: Panel

Number of Reviewers: Three for the first peer review; four for the second peer review.

The first peer review:

Ernst Peebles, Ph.D., University of South Florida College of Marine Science

Ron Kneib, Ph.D., RTK Consulting Services and Research Scientist Emeritus
University of Georgia

Joe Merz, Ph.D., Cramer Fish Science and Adjunct Professor UC Santa Cruz

The second peer review:

Same reviewers as above plus Michael Chotkowski, Ph.D., U.S. Geological
Survey, Southwest Region

Panel expertise: Expert qualifications included academic and advisory work in relevant fields including aquatic and fisheries science, population dynamics, ecology, and modeling.

Selection of Peer Reviewers: Reviewers were selected by the FWS based on their qualifications and experience.

Management of Peer Review: The first peer review was managed by Anchor QEA, LLC. The second peer review was managed by Atkins.

Schedule for Peer Review: The first peer review began April 12, 2019 and ended April 29, 2019. The second peer review began July 30, 2019 and ended August 12, 2019.

About Public Participation

Opportunities for the Public: Pursuant to the Water Infrastructure for Improvements for the Nation Act, stakeholders were given the opportunity to review and comment through the Bureau of Reclamation on the draft delta smelt and critical habitat sections. There are also quarterly stakeholders meetings that are open to the public where FWS and other Federal agencies update the public on the status of the ROC on LTO and invite comments and questions.

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