

## **Mike Chotkowski, field supervisor for the San Francisco Bay - Delta Fish and Wildlife Office answers questions about the Longfin Smelt 12-month finding**

### **[Question 1] How does this finding impact state and federal water pumping operations?**

Mike: This finding only *recommends* listing the longfin smelt, the actual listing is likely several years off, and there will not be any regulatory consequences until that happens. It will likely take several years before longfin smelt, now a candidate species, could be listed. There are currently no impacts to water management in the estuary due to this finding.

### **[Question 2] How do water operations impact longfin smelt?**

Mike: Once longfin smelt are listed the Service will consult with federal and state agencies and others on a project-by-project basis to determine whether proposed activities have a likelihood of effecting longfin smelt. In cases where they do, we will consider measures that might be taken for each of these projects that reduce the impacts to longfin smelt and allow the species to continue unmolested.

### **[Question 3] Once listed, how will the ESA protections impact state and federal water pumping operations?**

Mike: Once longfin smelt are listed the Service will consult with federal and state agencies and others on a project-by-project basis to determine what affect those projects might have on longfin smelt. It would be premature to speculate on the impacts to state and federal water pumping operations. However, at this time, entrainment which is a direct result of water pumping operations is not thought to be one of the principle factors that are affecting longfin smelt abundance.

### **[Question 4] How will this finding impact the completion of the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan?**

Mike: This decision will not impact the completion of the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan. Because the Service has determined that the longfin smelt is warranted for listing, but its "precluded," it now becomes a "candidate species." Service policy dictates that candidate species be considered during internal consultation, however, because longfin smelt is already a covered species within the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan, it is not expected that this listing decision will affect the Bay Delta Conservation Plan development process.