



Bridges, Bradd &lt;bradd\_bridges@fws.gov&gt;

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## Comments on Santa Ana Sucker Draft Recovery Plan

1 message

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**Todd Chapman** <TChapman@ecorpconsulting.com>

Fri, Jan 23, 2015 at 4:43 PM

To: "Bridges, Bradd (bradd\_bridges@fws.gov)" &lt;bradd\_bridges@fws.gov&gt;

Bradd,

Thanks for the opportunity to review the Draft Recovery Plan. I have worked with the species in each of the recovery units over my career, but I am intimately more familiar with the issues surrounding the Los Angeles/Big Tujunga and San Gabriel Units. I feel that the plan as a whole is very sound, you have hit on all of the major issues surrounding the ultimate recovery of the species. I like the idea of relocation/introduction of new populations but some of the areas which were proposed may not be the most viable. For example, in my opinion the current state of Mill Creek is such that placing fish here would be a mistake. The station fire 2009 has obliterated most of the bank vegetation along most of this reach, fine sediments are also a concern. The main issue with Mill Creek over the past three years has been a lack of surface flows. A Better option currently in the area is the idea of putting fish in Big Tujunga Creek above the Dam which is currently experiencing surface flows. Although later in the year, most water in this system is also absent. What about Alder Creek which is a tributary to the Upper Big Tujunga Creek? Have you considered this area?

What about putting fishes below Hansen dam (mainstem Los Angeles River) wondering if current or future restoration efforts through these areas may open up viable habitat for sucker.

In San Gabriel, I like the idea of putting fish above Cogswell but this area also runs dry late in the season. Portions of the West fork below cogswell which have been described in the plan as containing sucker, actually don't support them due to water depths, and dense riparian cover over the creek (b/n the Dam and fishermans camp). Has there been any discussion of thinning the tree canopy along certain portions of the habitat areas to allow for the production of forage for the species. I have spent 6 years conducting surveys in the OHV area of the angeles forest along the San Gabriel River. You have hit on the impacts of OHV use, the biggest problem here in this portion of the river undoubtedly is human interactions (either OHV or recreational use), it is crazy stupid what some folks do out there. Rock Dams, Trash, etc. the OHV use mainly contributes fine sediments in this area, which creates issues with forage and BMI composition and also embeddedness. We need some temporary bridge crossings out there, along with better enforcement. I do like the idea of exploiting the East fork, curious as to how well they will do up there, part of the problem the further you go up is human interaction (rock dams, other man made barriers). The north fork was mentioned as containing sucker also, in my experience they are only living in the lower portions of this fork. Gradient become an issue a mile or two above the confluence.

By far the main issue which I am intimately aware of is the problem of non-native species (fish and invertebrates). Many of the occupied areas, have a very large problem with these species. We have noted direct predation on adults and juveniles. In my opinion any restoration efforts should include nonnative control actions built into them. Without removal of these species, the populations will not persist. Human interactions which cause the proliferation of these non-native species will also need to be stopped (building of rock dams and crossings) these pooled up habitats promote these predatory species.

These are my main concerns with the plan, I hope I have presented them clearly. Please let me know if you would like me to answer any questions I have generated.

Thanks again for this opportunity.

Todd Chapman

*Todd Chapman*

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