



July 5, 2023

Mr. Paul Souza  
Regional Director, Pacific Southwest Region  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
2800 Cottage Way  
Sacramento, California 95825

Subject: Salmon Fishing Groups and Sacramento River Settlement Contractors Bridge Group Hatchery Production Proposal

Dear Paul,

We want to sincerely thank you for your willingness to meet with our collective groups to discuss actions that can immediately address the needs of fall run and winter run salmon with the goal of increasing populations in the near future. We have named ourselves the Bridge Group with our goal being to bridge divides and bring constructive solutions to historic problems and disagreements.

In our May 24 and June 13 meetings with you, we verbally walked through changes in hatchery practices that could benefit fall run salmon production this fall when adults come into the upper Sacramento River to spawn. Since time is of the essence, with full salmon fishery closures, we are providing you with this written proposal which needs immediate attention, discussion, and direction so it can be implemented in time.

**Global Proposal: Maximize current hatchery capacity to 19-20 million eyed eggs with current infrastructure and add 6 million eyed eggs with expanded egg tray stacks.**

**Specific Actions:**

1. Livingston Stone
  - a. Move and rear 1.5-2.0 million fall run eyed eggs to inside building to juvenile stage,
    - i. Rear eggs and juveniles in Sacramento River water to decrease straying

- ii. With Shasta near flood stage this fall, increased winter releases will occur. Release juveniles into the Sacramento River during higher flows
- iii. Expand parental based tagging (PBT) capability above and below Shasta/Keswick Dams.

## 2. Coleman

- a. Raise an additional 5.7 million Fall Run eyed eggs
  - i. Will need to acquire additional stacks of egg trays to implement.
  - ii. Expand usage of existing raceways
  - iii. Plan for Future Capacity Increases to 26 million fall chinook salmon
- b. Release Schedule
  - i. With Shasta near flood stage this fall, increased winter releases will occur. Release juveniles into the Sacramento River during higher flows
  - ii. 2 million release/PBT button up fry
  - iii. Rice fields study 5 million /PBT Fry 500/lb.
  - iv. Remaining fry released in river side channels or tributaries
  - v. CWT 12 million smolts released from Coleman
  - vi. CWT 2 million smolts trucked to ocean LVS hatchery
- c. Evaluate PBT capability, PBT not only allows for monitoring of adult returns and genetics but also allows for earlier release schedules concurrent with flow events and improved river conditions.

**Costs:** The above proposal will result in additional costs as outlined below, the Bridge group is willing to discuss cost sharing in this effort with FWS and Reclamation, but discussions need to happen immediately given equipment purchase lead times:

- a. Purchase 48 stacks of 16 trays vertical salmon egg trays \$231,000 (assuming 120,000 eggs per 16 tray stack)
- b. Plumbing equipment and labor to new trays - \$20,000 (FWS/USBR staff or hire contractor)
- c. Additional Coded wire tagging of 2 million smolts
- d. Trucking to release points
  - a. In River
  - b. Ocean
  - c. Rice Fields
- e. PBT Lab and Staff

We acknowledge this is a significant ask for this fall/winter but these actions should have already been occurring. We know there will be concerns about staff limitations, physical hatchery space, permitting or other agency approvals; however, interestingly we are proposing simply how the hatchery historically operated in the 1990s. Our group is ready to assist financially, with staffing, and working to get this approved with the other agencies.

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss our proposal in more detail and implement a plan that can get this done. Please coordinate with James Stone and Thad Bettner.

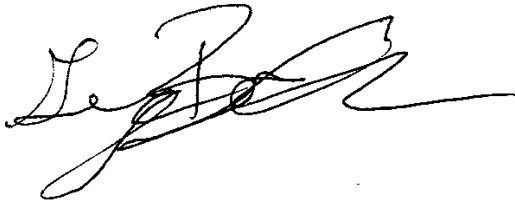
Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of James M. Stone in black ink.

James Stone, Executive Director and President  
Northern California Guides and Sportsmen's Association

Handwritten signature of Roger Cornwell in blue ink.

Roger Cornwell, Chair  
Sacramento River Settlement Contractors

Handwritten signature of George Bradshaw in black ink.

George Bradshaw, President  
Pacific Coast Federation Fishermen's Association

Handwritten signature of Todd Manley in black ink.

Todd Manley  
Northern California Water Association

cc: Ernest Conant  
David Mooney  
Donald Bader  
Chuck Bonham